

Ellen G. White Estate

LIFE SKETCHES MANUSCRIPT

ELLEN G. WHITE

Life Sketches Manuscript

Ellen G. White

1915

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About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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1915 Life Sketches Working Manuscript
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material from previously
unpublished interviews with Ellen White.

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Introduction

Ellen Gould Harmon was born in Gorham, Cumberland County, Maine, November 26, 1827. A few years after her birth the family moved to Portland, where most of her early life was spent. Her father, Robert Harmon, was a man of acknowledged integrity, and an earnest, devoted Christian. Her mother was also a devout Christian of amiable disposition, and of marked activity in all enterprises for the relief of the poor and afflicted. They were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in which they were prominent laborers for the conversion of sinners, and for the upbuilding of the cause of God. This relation they maintained for forty years. During this time they had the joy of seeing their children, eight in number, all converted and gathered into the fold of Christ.

They were in humble circumstances, but they were industrious, self-reliant, and pious. The characteristic virtues which have rendered famous the earlier homes of New England,—such as reverence for God and respect for parental authority,—were early and firmly inculcated; and the children were faithfully taught, by both precept and example, those lessons of integrity and diligence which have molded the characters of many of the world's noblest workers. Every morning and evening they had family worship, and sang the praises of God.

[2] Both the parents possessed a large degree of physical endurance, and the children inherited this blessing, as also the activity, force of character, and executive ability, which were especially developed in the mother.

In Ellen, both mental and physical development was rapid and vigorous. While but a child, she displayed a love of study, a quick perception, and a retentive memory. She was of a buoyant, hopeful disposition, fond of society, courageous, resolute, and persevering. It was but natural that her parents should regard her with peculiar interest, and entertain high hopes for her future. But by a painful accident, the circumstances of which are related in her own language

in the first chapter following, these hopes appeared to be utterly blighted.

Young as she was, Ellen felt as keenly as her parents the disappointment occasioned by this apparent ruin of the prospects of her life. Instead of being a strong, self-reliant child, with buoyancy of spirit, she became feeble, timid, and despondent. But the noble qualities of her mind and heart were not destroyed; and the prospect of being deprived of the common pleasure of life, and perhaps of life itself, turned her attention to the higher joys of heaven. Naturally sensitive, and very conscientious, she realized, to an unusual degree for one so young, her need of the grace and mercy of God to enable her to endure the trials of life, and to fit her for the world to come; and she embraced the faith of Christ with all the ardor of her nature, and very early became noted for her piety and religious devotion.

The following is the account of her religious experience as written by herself.

[3]

Chapter 1—Childhood

I was born at Gorham, Maine, November 26, 1827. My parents, Robert and Eunice Harmon, were for many years residents of the state. In early life they became earnest and devoted members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In that church they held prominent connections and labored for the conversion of sinners, and to build up the cause of God, for a period of forty years. During this time they had the joy of seeing their children, eight in number, all converted and gathered into the fold of Christ. Their decided advent views, however, led to the separation of the family from the Methodist church in the year 1843.

The Accident

At the age of nine years, an accident happened to me, which was to affect my whole life. In company with my twin sister and one of our schoolmates, I was crossing a common in the city of Portland, ME, when a girl about thirteen years of age, becoming angry at some trifle, followed us, threatening to strike us. Our parents had taught us never to contend with anyone, but if we were in danger of being abused or injured, to hasten home at once. We were doing this with all speed, but the girl followed us as rapidly with a stone in her hand. I turned my head to see how far she was behind us, and as I did so, she threw the stone and it hit me on the nose. I was stunned by the blow, and fell senseless to the ground.

[4]

When consciousness returned, I found myself in a merchant's store, my garments covered with blood, which was pouring from my nose and streaming over the floor. A kind stranger offered to take me home in his carriage, but not realizing my weakness, I told him that I preferred to walk rather than soil his carriage. Those present were not aware that my injury was so serious, and allowed me to go; but after walking only a few rods, I grew faint and dizzy. My twin sister and my schoolmate carried me home about one half mile.

I have no recollection of anything further for some time after the accident. My mother said that I noticed nothing, but lay in a stupor for three weeks. No one but herself thought it possible for me to recover; but for some reason she felt that I would live. A kind neighbor, who had been very much interested in my behalf, at one time thought me to be dying. She wished to purchase a burial robe for me, but my mother said, "Not yet;" for something told her that I would not die. The neighbors finally did make the robe but it was never used by me.

When I aroused to consciousness, it seemed to me that I had been asleep. I did not remember the accident, and was ignorant for the cause of my illness. A great cradle had been made for me, and in it I lay for many weeks. As I began to gain a little strength, my curiosity was aroused by overhearing those who came to visit me say, "What a pity!" "I should not have known her," etc. I asked for a looking glass, but at first was refused. When I was allowed to have it, I was shocked at the change in my appearance. Every feature of my face seemed altered. The bone of my nose had been broken, and had to be removed; this caused the disfigurement. Friends who visited us looked with pity upon me, and advised my parents to prosecute the father of the girl. But my mother was for peace; she said that if such a course would bring me back my health and natural looks, there would be something gained; but as this was impossible, it was best not to make enemies by following such advice. [5]

Physicians thought that a silver wire might be put in my nose to hold it in shape. This would have been very painful, and they feared it would be of little use, as I had lost so much blood and sustained such a severe shock that my recovery was very doubtful. Even if I revived, it was their opinion that I could live but a short time. I was reduced almost to a skeleton.

At the time of my misfortune, my father was absent in Georgia. When he returned, he embraced my brothers and sisters, and then inquired of me. I, timidly shrinking back, was pointed out by my mother, but my own father did not recognize me. It was hard for him to believe that I was his little Ellen whom he had left only a few months before a healthy, happy child. This cut my feelings deeply, but I tried to appear cheerful, though my heart seemed breaking.

Life a Burden

The thought of carrying my misfortune through life seemed to me insupportable. I could see no pleasure in my existence. I did not wish to live, and yet feared to die, for I was unprepared. When Christian friends visited the family, they would ask my mother if she had talked to me about dying. I overheard this, and it roused me, and I began to pray the Lord to prepare me for death. I desired to become a Christian, and prayed earnestly for the forgiveness of my sins. A peace of mind resulted. I loved every one, and felt desirous that all should have their sins forgiven, and love Jesus as I did.

I well remember one night. The snow was on the ground, and the heavens were lighted up, and the sky looked red and angry and seemed to open and shut, while the snow had the appearance of blood. The neighbors were very much frightened. Mother took me out of bed in her arms, and carried me to the window. I was happy, for I thought Jesus was coming, and I longed to see Him. My heart was full; I clapped my hands for joy, and thought my sufferings were ended. But I was disappointed; the singular appearance faded away from the heavens, and the next morning the sun rose as usual.

[6]

A Bitter Lesson

I gained strength very slowly. As I became able to join play with my young friends, I was forced to learn the bitter lesson that one's personal appearance often makes a difference in the treatment he receives from his companions.

[7]

Many times in those childhood days I was made to feel my misfortune keenly. My feelings were unusually sensitive, and caused me great unhappiness. Often with wounded pride, mortified and wretched in spirit, I sought a lonely place, and gloomily pondered over the trails I was daily doomed to bear.

The relief of tears was denied me. I could not weep readily, as could my twin sister; though my heart was heavy, and ached as if it were breaking, I could not shed a tear. I often felt that it would greatly relieve me to weep away my sorrow. Sometimes the kindly sympathy of friends banished my gloom, and removed, for a time, the leaden weight that oppressed my heart.

How vain and empty the pleasures of earth looked to me then! How changeable the friendships of my young companions! Yet these little schoolmates were not unlike the majority of the great world's people. A pretty face, a handsome dress, attracts them; but let misfortune take these away, and the fragile friendship grows cold and broken. But when I turned to my Saviour, He comforted me.

Efforts for an Education

My health seemed to be hopelessly impaired. For two years I could not breathe through my nose. I was able to attend school but little; for it seemed impossible for me to study and to retain [8] what I learned. The same girl who was the cause of my misfortune, was appointed monitor by our teacher, and it was among her duties to assist me in my writing and other lessons. She always seemed sincerely sorry for the great injury she had done me, although I was careful not to remind her of it. She was tender and patient with me, and seemed sad and thoughtful as she saw me laboring under serious disadvantages to get an education. As I endeavored to bend my mind to my studies, the letters on the page would run together, great drops of perspiration would stand on my brow, and a faintness and dizziness would come over me. I had a serious cough, and my whole system seemed debilitated.

My hand trembled so that I made but little progress in writing, and could get no farther than the simple copies in coarse hand. It was not until I began to have visions that I could write so anyone could read it. One day the impression came to me as strong as if some one had spoken it, "Write, write your experiences." I took up a pen, and found my hand perfectly steady, and from that day to this it has never failed me. The other hand has given out so that I could not use it, but this one never has.

Before my nose was broken, I had a clear and resonant voice and enjoyed reading. In school the teacher would often ask me to read the lesson for the rest to repeat, and many times I was called downstairs to the primary room to read their lesson to the little children. I could not understand why I was never called on in this way.

Years afterward, as my husband and I were riding on the cars, I [9]

was reading him an article he had written, and we were correcting it. Before long a lady touched me, saying, "Are you Ellen Harmon?"

"Yes, but how did you know me?" I replied.

"Why," she said, "I knew you by your voice. I attended school on Brackett Street in Portland, and you used to come and read our lessons to us. We could understand them better when you read than when any one else did."

But years after my nose was broken I could not breathe through it, and was obliged to learn to speak and sing with the use of abdominal muscles. This, I have since learned, is the correct method of using the voice, as it relieves the throat from any strain in either speaking or singing.

One time my husband's eldest brother John was visiting us, and he asked me to sing. "Won't you sing that hymn, 'When Faint and Weary Toiling?'" he said

"Can't you sing it, Ellen?" my husband said.

"I don't know but I can, if you will unite with me," I answered.

So he did, and we sang. Brother John looked at me very earnestly, and finally, when we had finished, he said, "Where did you get that voice? I never heard anything like it."

[10] When I was only about eleven years old, I heard a minister read the account of Peter's imprisonment, as recorded in the Book of Acts; and he read in so impressive a manner that the details of the story and all their reality seemed to be passing before my eyes. So deep was the impression made upon my mind that I have never forgotten it. When, a few years afterward, I was speaking in general meetings, I met this man again; and at the close of my discourse he asked, "How did you get that wonderful voice?" I told him that the Lord had given it to me. (When I began my public labors I had no voice, except when I stood before the congregation to speak. At other times I could not speak above a whisper.) "And," I added, "I have often thought of what you said to the people when some one asked you how you became a minister. You told them that your friends said you could never be a minister, because you could not speak properly; but you went away by yourself, and talked to the trees in the woods; and then when driving oxen, you would talk to them just as if you were in a meeting. 'This,' you said, 'is the way I learned to speak in public.'"

My teachers advised me to leave school, and not pursue my studies further until my health should improve.

Three years later I made another effort to obtain an education, by entering a seminary for young ladies in Portland. But on attempting to resume my studies, my health again failed, and it became apparent that if I remained in school, it would be at the expense of my life. It was the hardest struggle of my young days to yield to my feebleness, and decide that I must give up my studies, and relinquish the cherished hope of gaining an education. I did not attend school after I was twelve years old.

[11]

My ambition to become a scholar had been very great, and when I pondered over my disappointed hopes, and the thought I was to be an invalid for life, I was unreconciled to my lot, and at times murmured against the providence of God in thus afflicting me. The future stretched out before me dark and cheerless.

Had I opened my mind to my mother, she might have instructed, soothed, and encouraged me; but I concealed my troubled feeling from my family and friends, fearing that they could not understand me. The happy confidence in my Saviour's love that I had enjoyed during my illness was gone. My prospect of worldly enjoyment was blighted, and heaven seemed closed against me.

After I struggled with this unreconciled spirit for days, the tempter came in a new guise, and increased my distress by condemning me for having allowed such rebellious thought to take possession of my mind. My conscience was perplexed, and I knew no way to extricate myself from the labyrinth in which I was wondering.

At times my sense of guilt and responsibility to God lay so heavy upon my soul that I could not sleep, but lay awake for hours, thinking of my lost condition and what was best for me to do. The consequence of my unfortunate accident again assumed gigantic proportions in my mind. I seemed to be cut off from all chance of earthly happiness, and doomed to continual disappointment and mortification. Even the tender sympathy of my friends pained me, for my pride rebelled against being in a condition to excite their pity.

[12]

I had the highest reverence for ministers of the gospel and for all Christians, but felt that they were so far removed from me, so much nobler and purer than I was, that I dared not approach them on the subject that engrossed my thoughts. Religion seemed too holy

and sacred for me to obtain. I was ashamed to reveal the lost and wretched condition of my heart. No one conversed with me on the subject of my soul's salvation, and no one prayed with me. So I locked my secret agony within my heart, and did not seek the advice of experienced Christians as I should have done.

Chapter 2—Conversion

[13]

In March 1840, William Miller visited Portland, ME and gave a course of lectures on the second coming of Christ. These lectures produced a great sensation and the Christian church on Casco Street, where the lectures were given, was crowded day and night. No wild excitement attended these meetings but a deep solemnity pervaded the minds of those who heard. Not only was a great interest manifested in the city, but the country people flocked in day after day bringing their lunch baskets, and remaining from morning until the close of the evening meeting. In company with my friends I attended these meetings. Mr. Miller traced down the prophecies with an exactness that struck conviction to the hearts of his hearers. He dwelt upon the prophetic periods, and piled up proofs to strengthen his position. Then his solemn and powerful appeals and admonitions to those who were unprepared held the crowds as if spellbound.

Englishman's Prediction of the End of the World

Four years previous to this, on my way to school, I had picked up a scrap of paper containing an account of a man in England who was preaching that the earth would be consumed in about thirty years from that time. I took this item home, and read it to the family. In contemplating the event predicted, I was seized with terror; the time seemed too short for the conversion and salvation of the world. Such a deep impression was made upon my mind by the little paragraph on the scrap of waste paper, that I could scarcely sleep for several nights, and prayed continually to be ready when Jesus came.

[14]

Announcement of the Second Advent

I had been taught that a temporal millennium would take place prior to the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven; but now I was listening to the most solemn and powerful sermons, and to the

startling announcement that Christ was coming in 1843, only a few short years in the future.

Special meetings were appointed where sinners might have an opportunity to seek their Saviour and prepare for the fearful events soon to take place. Terror and conviction spread through the entire city. Prayer meetings were established, and there was a general awakening among the various denominations; for they all felt more or less the influence that proceeded from the teaching of the near coming of Christ.

[15] When sinners were invited forward to the anxious seat, hundreds responded to the call; and I, among the rest, pressed through the crowd and took my place with the seekers. But there was in my heart a feeling that I could never become worthy to be called a child of God. I had often sought for the peace there is in Christ, but I could not seem to find the freedom desired. A terrible sadness rested on my heart. I could not think of anything I had done to cause me to feel sad; but it seemed to me that I was not good enough to enter heaven, that such a thing would be altogether too much for me to expect.

Prevented from Seeking Advice

A lack of confidence in myself and a conviction that it would be impossible to make any one understand my feelings, prevented me from seeking advice and aid from my Christian friends. Thus I wandered needlessly in darkness and despair, while they, not penetrating my reserve, were entirely ignorant of my true state.

One reason that led me to conceal my feelings from my friends was the dread of hearing a word of discouragement. My hope was so small and my faith so weak that I feared if another should take a similar view of my condition, it would plunge me into despair. Yet my heart longed for someone to tell me what I should do to be saved, what steps to take to meet my Saviour and give myself entirely up to the Lord. I regarded it a great thing to be a Christian, and supposed that it required some peculiar effort on my part. My mind remained in this condition for months.

One evening my brother Robert and myself were returning home from a meeting where we had listened to a most impressive discourse

on the approaching reign of Christ upon the earth, followed by an earnest and solemn appeal to Christians and sinners to prepare for the judgment and the coming of the Lord. My soul had been stirred within me by what I had heard. And so deep was the sense of conviction in my heart that I feared the Lord would not spare me even to reach home. [16]

These words kept ringing in my ears “The great day of the Lord is at hand! Who shall be able to stand when He appeareth?” The language of my heart was, “Spare me, O Lord, through the night! Take me not away in my sins. Pity me, save me.”

For the first time I tried to explain my feelings to my brother, who was two years older than myself. I told him that I dared not rest or sleep until I knew that God had pardoned my sins. My brother made no immediate reply, but the cause of his silence was soon apparent,—he was weeping in sympathy with my distress. This encouraged me to confide in him still more. I told him that I had coveted death in the days when life seemed so heavy a burden; but now the thought that I might die in my present sinful state, and be eternally lost, filled me with terror. I asked him if he thought God would spare my life through that one night, if I spent it agonizing in prayer to Him. He answered, “I think He will, if you ask Him in faith; and I will pray for you and for myself Ellen, we must never forget the words we have heard this night.” Arriving at home, I spent most of the long hours of darkness in prayer and tears.

Methodist Camp Meeting

[17]

I had usually attended the Methodist meetings with my parents; but since becoming interested in the soon appearing of Christ, I had attended the meetings on Casco Street.

The following summer my parents went to the Methodist camp meeting at Buxton ME, taking me with them. I was fully resolved to seek the Lord in earnest there, and obtain, if possible, the pardon of my sins. There was a great longing in my heart for the Christian’s hope and the peace that comes from believing.

I was much encouraged while listening to a discourse from the words, “I will go in unto the king, ... and if I perish, I perish.” In his remarks the speaker referred to those who were wavering between

hope and fear, longing to be saved from their sins and receive the pardoning love of Christ, yet held in doubt and bondage by timidity and fear of failure. He counseled such ones to surrender themselves to God, and venture upon His mercy without delay. They would find a gracious Saviour ready to extend to them the scepter of mercy, even as Ahasuerus offered to Esther the signal of his favor. All that was required of the sinner, trembling in the presence of his Lord, was to put forth the hand of faith and touch the scepter of His grace. That touch insured pardon and peace.

[18] Those who were waiting to make themselves more worthy of divine favor before they ventured to claim the promises of God, were making a fatal mistake. Jesus alone cleanses from sin; He only can forgive our transgressions. He has pledged Himself to listen to the petition and grant the prayer of those who come to Him in faith.

Many have a vague idea that they must make some wonderful effort in order to gain the favor of God. But all self-dependence is vain. It is only by connecting with Jesus through faith that the sinner can become a hopeful, believing child of God.

These thoughts comforted me, and gave me a view of what I must do to be saved. I could not see my way more clearly, and the darkness began to pass away. I earnestly sought pardon for my sins, and strove to give myself entirely to the Lord. But my mind was often in great distress, because I did not experience the spiritual ecstasy that I supposed would be the evidence of my acceptance with God, and I dared not believe myself converted without it. How much I needed instruction concerning the simplicity of faith!

Fanaticism

Some things at this camp-meeting perplexed me exceedingly. I could not understand the exercises of many persons during the conference meetings, both at the stand and in the tents. They shouted at the top of their voices, clapped their hands, and appeared greatly excited. Quite a number fell, through exhaustion, it appeared to me; but those present said they were sanctified to God, and this wonderful manifestation was the power of the Almighty upon them. After lying motionless for a time, these persons would rise, and again talk and shout as before.

In some of the tents, meetings were continued through the night, by those who were praying for freedom from sin and the sanctification of the Spirit of God. Quite a number became sick in consequence of the excitement and loss of sleep and were obliged to leave the ground. [19]

These singular manifestations brought no relief to me, but rather increased my discouragement. I despaired of ever becoming a Christian if in order to obtain the blessing it was necessary for me to be exercised as these people were. I was terrified by such peculiar demonstrations, and at a loss to understand them.

I passed into a tent where the people were praying and shouting, some confessing their sins and crying for mercy, while others were rejoicing in their new-found happiness.

A Little Girl and Her Parasol

My attention was attracted to a little girl who seemed to be in great distress. Her face would pale and flush by turns, as though she were passing through a severe conflict. Tightly clasped in her arms was a pretty little parasol. Occasionally she would loosen her hold on it for a moment, as if about to let it fall, then her grasp would tighten on it again; all the time she seemed to be regarding it with a peculiar fascination.

At last she cried out, "Dear Jesus, I want to love Thee and go to heaven! Take away my sins! I give myself to Thee parasol and all." She threw herself into her mother's arms, weeping and exclaiming, "Ma, I am so happy, for Jesus loves me, and I love Him better than my parasol or anything else." [20]

The face of the child was fairly radiant. She had surrendered her little all. In her childish experience she had fought the battle, and won the victory. There was much weeping and rejoicing in the tent. The mother was deeply moved, and very joyful that the Lord had added her dear child as a lamb to His fold.

She explained to those present that her little daughter had received the parasol as a present not long before; she was very much delighted with it, and had kept it in her hands most of the time, even taking it to bed with her. During the meeting her tender heart had been moved to seek the Saviour. She had heard that nothing must

be withheld from Jesus; that nothing short of an entire surrender of ourselves and all we have would be acceptable to Him.

The little parasol was the child's earthly treasure, upon which her heart was set, and in the struggle to give it up to the Lord, she had passed through a trial keener, perhaps, than that of the mature Christian who sacrifices this world's treasures for the sake of Christ.

It was afterward explained to the little girl that since she had relinquished her parasol to Jesus, and it no longer stood between herself and her love for Him, it was right for her to retain it and use it in a proper manner.

Many times in after life that little incident has been brought to mind. When I have seen men and women holding desperately to the riches and vanity of earth, yet anxiously praying for the love of Christ, I have thought, "How hard it is to give up the parasol!" Yet Jesus gave up heaven for our sake, and became poor, that we, through His poverty and humiliation, might secure eternal riches.

The Burden Lifted

While bowed at the altar with others who were seeking the Lord, all the language of my heart was, "Help, Jesus; save me, or I perish! I will never cease to entreat until my prayer is heard and my sins are forgiven!" I felt my needy, helpless condition as never before. But suddenly, as I prayed, my burden left me, and my heart was light. At first a feeling of alarm came over me, and I tried to resume my load of distress. It seemed to me that I had no right to feel joyous and happy. But Jesus seemed very near to me; I felt able to come to Him with all my griefs, misfortunes, and trials, even as the needy ones came to Him for relief when He was upon earth. There was a surety in my heart that He understood my peculiar trials, and sympathized with me. I can never forget this precious assurance of the pitying tenderness of Jesus toward one so unworthy of His notice. I learned more of the divine character of Christ in that short period, when bowed among the praying ones, than ever before.

One of the mothers in Israel came to me and said, "Dear child, have you found Jesus?" I was about to answer, "Yes," when she exclaimed, "Indeed you have. His peace is with you; I see it in your face!" Again and again I said to myself, "Can this be religion? Am

I not mistaken?" It seemed too much for me to claim, too exalted a privilege. Though too timid to confess it openly, I felt that the Saviour had blessed me and pardoned my sins. [22]

Immaculate Children

I can now look back on my youthful experience, and see how near I came to making a fatal mistake. I had read many of the religious biographies of children who had possessed numberless virtues and lived faultless lives. I had conceived a great admiration for the paragons of perfection there represented. But far from encouraging me in my efforts to become a Christian, these books were as stumbling blocks to my feet; for I despaired of ever attaining to the perfection of the youthful characters in those stories, who lived the lives of saints, and were free from all the doubts and sins and weaknesses under which I staggered. Their faultless lives were followed by a premature but happy death, and the biographers tacitly intimated that they were too good and pure for earth, therefore God, in His divine pity, had removed them from its uncongenial atmosphere.

The similarity of these avowedly true histories seemed to point the fact to my youthful mind that they really presented a correct picture of a child's Christian life. I repeated to myself again and again, "If this is true, I can never be a Christian. I can never hope to be like those children." This thought drove me almost to despair. But when I learned that I could come to Jesus just as I was, that the Saviour had come to ransom just such unworthy sinners as I was, then light broke upon my darkness, and I could claim the promises of God. [23]

Later experiences have convinced me that these biographies of immaculate children mislead the youth. They extol the amiable qualities of their characters, and suppress their faults and failures. If they were represented as struggling with temptations, occasionally vanquished, yet triumphing over their trials in the end, if they were represented as subject to human frailties and beset by ordinary temptations, then children would see that they had experienced like trials with themselves, yet through the grace of God had conquered. Such examples would give them fresh courage to renew their efforts to serve the Lord, hoping to triumph as those before them had done.

But the sober realities and errors of the young Christian's life were vigorously kept out of sight, while the virtues were so exaggerated as to lift them far above the common level of ordinary children, who naturally despair of ever reaching such excellence, and therefore give up the effort, in many cases, and gradually sink into a state of indifference.

Change Wrought by Conversion

Soon after this the camp-meeting closed, and we started for home. My mind was full of the sermons, exhortations, and prayers we had heard. It seemed to me that every one must be at peace with God, and animated by His Spirit. Everything that my eyes rested upon seemed to have undergone a change.

[24] During the meeting, clouds and rain prevailed a greater part of the time, and my feelings had been in harmony with the weather. Now the sun shone bright and clear, and flooded the earth with light and warmth. The trees and grass were a fresher green, the sky a deeper blue, and the birds sang more sweetly than ever before; they seemed to be praising the Creator in their songs. The very earth seemed to smile under the peace of God. So the rays of the Sun of Righteousness had penetrated the clouds and darkness of my mind, and dispelled its gloom. I did not care to talk, for fear this happiness might pass away, and I should lose the precious evidence of Jesus' love for me.

As we neared our home in Portland we passed men at work upon the street. They were conversing with one another upon ordinary topics, but my ears were deaf to everything but the praise of God, and their words came to me as grateful thanks and glad hosannas. Turning to my mother, I said, "Why, these men are all praising God, and they haven't been to the camp-meeting." I did not then understand why the tears gathered in my mother's eye, and a tender smile lit up her face, as she listened to my simple words. They had recalled a similar experience of her own.

My mother was a great lover of flowers, and took much pleasure in cultivating them, and thus making her home attractive and pleasant for her children. But our garden had never before looked so lovely to me as upon the day of our return. I recognized an expression of

the love of Jesus in every shrub, bud, and flower. These things of beauty seemed to speak in mute language of the love of God. [25]

There was a beautiful pink flower in the garden, called the Rose of Sharon. I remember approaching it and touching the delicate petals reverently; they seemed to possess sacredness in my eyes. My heart overflowed with tenderness and love for these beautiful creations of God. I could see divine perfection in the flowers that adorned the earth; God tended them, and His all-seeing eye was upon them. He had made them, and called them good.

“Ah,” thought I, “if He so loves and cares for the flowers that He has decked with beauty, how much more tenderly will He guard the children who are formed in His image.” I repeated softly to myself, “I am a child of God; His loving care is around me. I will be obedient, and in no way displease Him; but will praise His dear name, and love Him always.”

My life appeared to me in a different light. The affliction that had darkened my childhood seemed to have been dealt me in mercy, for my good, to turn my heart away from the world and its unsatisfying pleasures; and incline it toward the enduring attractions of heaven.

Uniting with the Methodist Church

Soon after our return from the camp-meeting, I, with several others, was taken into the church on probation. My mind was very much exercised on the subject of baptism. Young as I was, I could see but one mode of baptism authorized by the Scriptures, and that was immersion. Some of my sisters tried in vain to convince me that sprinkling was Bible baptism. The Methodist minister consented to immerse the candidates if they conscientiously preferred that method, although he intimated that sprinkling would be equally acceptable with God. [26]

Finally the time was appointed for us to receive this solemn ordinance. It was a windy day when we, twelve in number, went down into the sea to be baptized. The waves ran high and dashed upon the shore, but in taking up this cross my peace was like a river. When I arose from the water, my strength was nearly gone, for the power of the Lord rested upon me. I felt that henceforth I was not of this world, but had risen from the watery grave into a newness of

life. The same day in the afternoon I was received into the church in full membership. A young woman stood by my side who was also a candidate for admission to the church. My mind was peaceful and happy till I noticed the gold rings glittering upon this sister's fingers, and the large, showy earrings in her ears. I then observed that her bonnet was adorned with artificial flowers, and trimmed with costly ribbons arranged in bows and puffs. My joy was dampened by this display of vanity in one who professed to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. I expected that the minister would give some whispered reproof or advice to this sister; but he was apparently regardless of her showy apparel, and no rebuke was administered.

[27] We both received the right hand of fellowship. The hand decorated with jewels was clasped by the representative of Christ, and both our names were registered upon the church book.

This circumstance caused me no little perplexity and trial as I remembered the apostle's words, "In like manner, also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." The teaching of this scripture seemed to be openly disregarded by those whom I looked upon as devoted Christians, and who were much older in experience than myself. If it was indeed as sinful as I supposed to imitate the extravagant dress of the worldings, surely these Christians would conform to the Bible standard. Yet for myself, I determined to follow my convictions of duty. I could but feel that it was contrary to the spirit of the gospel to devote God-given time and means to the decoration of our persons; that humility and self-denial would be more befitting those whose sins had cost the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God.

Chapter 3—Christian Experiences

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In June 1842, Mr. Miller gave his second course of lectures at the Casco Street church in Portland. I felt it a great privilege to attend these lectures; for I had again fallen under discouragement, and did not feel prepared to meet my Saviour. This second course created much more excitement in the city than the first. With few exceptions, the different denominations closed the doors of their churches against Mr. Miller. Many discourses from the various pulpits sought to expose the alleged fanatical errors of the lecturer; but crowds of anxious listeners attended his meetings, and many were unable to enter the house. The congregation was unusually quiet and attentive.

Personal Description of Wm Miller

Mr. Miller's manner of preaching was not flowery or oratorical, but he dealt in plain and startling facts that roused his hearers from their apathy, substantiating his statements by Scripture proof as he progressed. A convincing power attended his words, that seemed to stamp them as the language of truth.

He was courteous and sympathetic. When every seat in the house was full, and the platform and places about the pulpit seemed crowded, I have seen him leave the desk, walk down the aisle, and take some feeble old person by the hand and find a seat for him, then return and resume his discourse. He was indeed rightly called "Father Miller," for he had a watchful care over those who came under his ministrations, was affectionate in his manner, of a genial disposition and tender heart.

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He was a very interesting speaker and his exhortations, both to professed Christians and the impenitent, were appropriate and powerful. Sometimes a solemnity so marked as to be painful, pervaded his meetings. A sense of the impending crisis of human events impressed the minds of the listening crowds. Many yielded

to the conviction of the Spirit of God. Gray-haired men and aged women with trembling steps sought the anxious-seat, with those in the strength of maturity, the youth, and the children. Groans and the voice of weeping and of praise to God were mingled at the altar of prayer.

I frequently attended the meetings, and believed that Jesus was soon to come in the clouds of heaven; but my great anxiety was to be ready to meet Him. My mind constantly dwelt upon the subject of holiness of heart. I longed above all things to obtain this great blessing, and to feel that I was entirely accepted of God.

Views of Sanctification

[30] Among the Methodists I had heard much in regard to sanctification, but had no definite idea in regard to it. This blessing seemed away beyond my reach, a state of purity my heart could never know. I had seen persons lose their physical strength under the influence of strong mental excitement, and had heard this pronounced to be the evidence of sanctification. But I could not comprehend what was necessary in order to be fully consecrated to God. My Christian friends said to me, "Believe in Jesus now! Believe that He accepts you now!" This I tried to do, but found it impossible to believe that I had received a blessing, which, it seemed to me, should electrify my whole being. I wondered at my own hardness of heart in being unable to experience the exaltation of spirit that others manifested. It seemed to me that I was different from them, and forever shut out from the perfect joy of holiness of heart.

My ideas concerning justification and sanctification were confused. These two states were presented to my mind as separate and distinct from each other; yet I failed to comprehend the difference or understand the meaning of the terms, and all the explanations of the preachers only increased my difficulties. I was unable to claim the blessing for myself, and wondered if it were to be found only among the Methodists, and if, in attending the Adventist meetings, I was not shutting myself away from that which I desired above all else,—the sanctifying Spirit of God.

Still I observed that some of those who claimed to be sanctified manifested a bitter spirit when the subject of the soon coming of

Christ was introduced; this did not seem to me a manifestation of the holiness which they professed. I could not understand why ministers from the pulpit should so oppose the doctrine that Christ's second [31] coming was near. Reformation had followed the preaching of this belief, and many of the most devoted ministers and laymen had received it as the truth. It seemed to me that those who sincerely loved Jesus would be ready to accept the tidings of His coming, and rejoice that it was at hand.

I felt that I could claim only what they called justification. In the word of God I read that without holiness no man shall see God. Then there was some higher attainment that I must reach before I could be sure of eternal life. I studied over the subject continually; for I believed that Christ was soon to come, and feared He would find me unprepared to meet Him. Words of condemnation rang in my ears day and night, and my constant cry to God was, "What shall I do to be saved?" In my mind the justice of God eclipsed His mercy and love.

An Eternally Burning Hell

The mental anguish I passed through at this time was very great! I had been taught to believe in an eternally burning hell and as I thought of the wretched state of the sinner without God, without hope, I was in deep despair. I feared that I should be lost, and that I should live throughout eternity suffering a living death. The horrifying thought was ever before me that my sins were too great to be forgiven.

The frightful descriptions that I had heard of souls in perdition sank deep into my mind. Ministers in the pulpit drew vivid pictures of the condition of the lost.

They taught that God proposed to save none but the sanctified; [32] that the eye of God was upon us always; that God Himself was keeping the books with the exactness of infinite wisdom; and that every sin we committed was faithfully recorded against us and would meet its just punishment. Satan was represented as eager to seize upon his prey, and bear us to the lowest depths of anguish, there to exult over our sufferings in the horrors of an eternally burning hell, where, after the tortures of thousands upon thousands of years,

the fiery billows would roll to the surface the writhing victims, who would shriek, "How long, O Lord, how long?" Then the answer would thunder down the abyss, "Through all eternity!" Again the molten waves would engulf the lost, carrying them down into the depths of an ever-restless sea of fire.

While listening to these horrible descriptions, my imagination would be so wrought upon that the perspiration would start, and it was difficult to suppress a cry of anguish, for I seemed already to feel the pains of perdition. Then the minister would dwell upon the uncertainty of life: one moment we might be here, and the next in hell, or one moment on earth and the next in heaven. Would we choose the lake of fire and the company of demons, or the bliss of heaven with angels for our companions? Would we hear the voice of wailing and the cursing of lost souls through all eternity, or sing the songs of Jesus before the throne?

[33] Our heavenly Father was presented before my mind as a tyrant, who delighted in the agonies of the condemned; not as the tender, pitying Friend of sinners, who loves His creatures with a love past all understanding, and desires them to be saved in His kingdom.

My feelings were very sensitive. I dreaded giving pain to any living creature. When I saw animals ill-treated, my heart ached for them. Perhaps my sympathies were more easily excited by suffering, because I myself had been the victim of thoughtless cruelty, resulting in the injury that had darkened my childhood. But when the thought took possession of my mind that God delighted in the torture of His creatures, who were formed in His image, a wall of darkness seemed to separate me from Him. When I reflected that the Creator of the universe would plunge the wicked into hell, there to burn through the ceaseless rounds of eternity, my heart sank with fear, and I despaired that so cruel and tyrannical a being would ever condescend to save me from the doom of sin. I thought that the fate of the condemned sinner would be mine,—to endure the flames of hell forever, even as long as God Himself existed. This impression deepened upon my mind until I feared that I should lose my reason. I looked upon the dumb beasts with envy, because they had no soul to be punished after death. Many times the wish arose that I had never been born.

Almost total darkness settled upon me, and there seemed no way out of the shadows. Could the truth have been presented to me as I

now understand it, much perplexity and anguish would have been spared me. If the love of God had been dwelt upon more, and His stern justice less, the beauty and glory of His character would have inspired me with a deep and earnest love for my Creator.

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Chapter 4—Beginning Of Public Labor

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

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

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I frequently remained bowed in prayer nearly all night, groaning and trembling with inexpressible anguish and a hopelessness that passes all description. "Lord, have mercy!" was my plea, and like the poor publican, I dared not lift even my eyes to heaven, but bowed my face upon the floor. I became very much reduced in flesh and strength, yet kept my suffering and despair to myself.

Dream of Temple and Lamb

While in this state of despondency, I had a dream that made a deep impression upon my mind. I dreamed of seeing a temple, to which many persons were flocking. Only those who took refuge in that temple would be saved when time should close; all who remained outside would be forever lost. The multitudes without who were going about their various ways, derided those who were

entering the temple, and told them that this plan of safety was a cunning deception, that in fact there was no danger whatever to avoid. They even laid hold of some to prevent them from hastening within the walls.

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

On entering the building, I saw that the vast temple was supported by one immense pillar and to this was tied a lamb all mangled and bleeding. We seemed to know that this lamb had been torn and bruised on our account. All who entered the temple must come before it and confess their sins.

Just in front of the lamb were elevated seats upon which sat a company looking very happy. The light of heaven seemed to shine upon their faces, and they praised God and sang songs of glad thanksgiving that sounded like the music of the angels. These were those who had come before the lamb, confessed their sins, received pardon, and were now waiting in glad expectation of some joyful event. [37]

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

I awoke in agony of mind, and could hardly convince myself that I had been dreaming. It seemed to me that my doom was fixed, that the Spirit of the Lord had left me, never to return.

Dream of Seeing Jesus

Soon after this I had another dream, I seemed to be sitting in abject despair, with my face in my hands, reflecting like this: If

[38] Jesus were upon earth, I would go to Him, throw myself at His feet, and tell Him all my sufferings. He would not turn away from me; He would have mercy upon me, and I would love and serve Him always.

Just then the door opened, and a person of beautiful form and countenance entered. He looked upon me pitifully, and said, "Do you wish to see Jesus? He is here, and you can see Him if you desire. Take everything you possess, and follow me."

I heard this with unspeakable joy, and gladly gathered up all my little possessions, every treasured trinket, and followed my guide. He led me to a steep and apparently frail stairway. As I began to ascend the steps, he cautioned me to keep my eyes fixed upward lest I should grow dizzy and fall. Many others who were climbing the steep ascent fell before gaining the top.

Finally we reached the last step, and stood before a door. Here my guide directed me to leave all the things that I had brought with me. I cheerfully laid them down; he then opened the door, and bade me enter.

[39] In a moment I stood before Jesus. There was no mistaking that beautiful countenance. Such a radiant expression of benevolence and majesty could belong to no other. As His gaze rested upon me, I knew at once that He was acquainted with every circumstance of my life and all my inner thoughts and feelings. I tried to shield myself from His gaze, feeling unable to endure His searching eyes; but He drew near with a smile, and laying His hand upon my head, said, "Fear not." The sound of His sweet voice thrilled my heart with a happiness it had never before experienced. I was too joyful to utter a word, but, overcome with emotion, sank prostrate at His feet.

While I was lying helpless there, scenes of beauty and glory passed before me, and I seemed to have reached the safety and peace of heaven. At length my strength returned, and I arose. The loving eyes of Jesus were still upon me, and His smile filled my soul with gladness. His presence awoke in me a holy reverence and an inexpressible love.

My guide now opened the door and we both passed out. He bade me take up again all the things I had left without. This done, he handed me a green cord coiled up closely, which he said represented faith. This cord he directed me to place next my heart, and when

I wished to see Jesus, to take it and stretch it to the utmost. He cautioned me not to let it remain coiled for any length of time, lest it should become knotted and difficult to straighten. I placed the cord near my heart, and joyfully descended the narrow stairs, praising the Lord, and telling all whom I met where they could find Jesus. This dream gave me hope, and the beauty and simplicity of trusting in God began to dawn upon my soul.

Counsel of Elder Stockman

To my mother I now confided all my sorrows and perplexities. She tenderly sympathized with and encouraged me, advising me to go for counsel to Elder Stockman, who was then preaching the advent doctrine in Portland. I had great confidence in him, for he was a devoted servant of Christ.

Upon hearing my story, he placed his hand affectionately upon my head, saying with tears in his eyes, “Ellen, you are only a child. Yours is a most singular experience for one of your tender age. Jesus must be preparing you for some special work.” [40]

He told me that even if I were a person of mature years and thus harassed by doubt and despair, he should tell me that he knew there was hope for me through the love of Jesus. The very agony of mind I had suffered was positive evidence that the Spirit of the Lord was striving with me. He said that when the sinner becomes hardened in guilt, he does not realize the enormity of his transgression, but flatters himself that he is about right, and in no particular danger. The Spirit of the Lord leaves him, and he becomes careless and indifferent or recklessly defiant. This good man told me of the love of God for His erring children; that instead of rejoicing in their destruction, He longed to draw them to Himself in simple faith and trust. He dwelt upon the great love of Christ and the plan of redemption.

Elder Stockman spoke of my early misfortune, and said it was indeed a grievous affliction, but he bade me believe that the hand of a loving Father had not been withdrawn from me; that in the future life, when the mist that then darkened my mind had vanished, I would discern the wisdom of the providence which had seemed so cruel and mysterious; Jesus said to His disciples, “What I do thou

[41] knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.” In the great future we should no longer see as through a glass darkly, but come face to face with the mysteries of divine love. “Go free, Ellen,” he said; “return to your home trusting in Jesus, for He will not withhold His love from any true seeker.”

He then prayed earnestly for me, and it seemed that God would certainly regard the prayer of His saint, even if my humble petitions were unheard. My mind was much relieved, and the wretched slavery of doubt and fear departed as I listened to the wise and tender counsel of this teacher in Israel.

During the few minutes in which I received instruction from Elder Stockman, I had obtained more knowledge on the subject of God’s love and pitying tenderness, than from all the sermons and exhortations to which I had ever listened.

First Public Prayer

I returned home, and again went before the Lord, promising to do and suffer anything He might require of me, if only the smiles of Jesus might cheer my heart. The same duty was again presented to me that had troubled my mind before,—to take up my cross among the assembled people of God. An opportunity was not long wanting; there was a prayer-meeting that evening at my uncle’s, which I attended.

[42] As the others knelt for prayer, I bowed with them, trembling, and after a few had prayed, my voice arose in prayer before I was aware of it. The promises of God appeared to me like so many precious pearls that were to be received only for the asking. As I prayed, the burden and agony of soul that I had so long endured, left me, and the blessing of the Lord descended upon me like the gentle dew. I praised God from the depths of my heart. Everything seemed shut out from me but Jesus and His glory, and I lost consciousness of what was passing around me.

The Spirit of God rested upon me with such power that I was unable to go home that night. When I awakened to realization, I found myself cared for in the house of my uncle. Neither my uncle nor my aunt enjoyed religion, though the former had once made a profession but had since backslidden. I was told that he had

been greatly disturbed while the power of God rested upon me in so special a manner, and had walked the floor, sorely troubled and distressed in his mind.

When I was first struck down, some of those present were greatly alarmed, and were about to run for a physician, thinking that some sudden and dangerous indisposition had attacked me; but my mother bade them let me alone, for it was plain to her, and to the experienced Christians, that it was the wonderful power of God that had prostrated me. When I returned home on the following day great change had taken place in my mind. It seemed to me that I could hardly be the same person that left my father's house the previous evening. This passage was continually in my thoughts: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." My heart was full of happiness as I softly repeated these words.

View of the Father's Love

[43]

Faith now took possession of my heart. I felt an inexpressible love for God, and had the witness of His Spirit that my sins were pardoned. My peace and happiness were in such marked contrast with my former gloom and anguish that it seemed to me as if I had been rescued from hell and transported to heaven. I could even praise God for the misfortune that had been the trial of my life, for it had been the means of fixing my thoughts upon eternity. Naturally proud and ambitious, I might not have been inclined to give my heart to Jesus had it not been for the sore affliction which had cut me off, in a manner, from the triumphs and vanities of the world.

My views of the Father were changed. I now looked upon Him as a kind and tender parent, rather than a stern tyrant compelling men to a blind obedience. My heart went out to Him in a deep and fervent love. Obedience to His will seemed a joy; it was a pleasure to be in His service. No shadow clouded the light that revealed to me the perfect will of God. I felt the assurance of an indwelling Saviour, and realized the truth of what Christ had said: "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

For six months not a shadow clouded my mind, nor did I neglect one known duty. My whole endeavor was to do the will of God, and keep Jesus and heaven continually in mind. I was surprised and

[44] enraptured with the clear views presented to me of the atonement and the work of Christ. I will not attempt further to explain the exercises of my mind; suffice is to say that old things had passed away, all things had become new. There was not a cloud to mar my perfect bliss. I longed to tell the story of Jesus' love, but felt no disposition to engage in common conversation with anyone. My heart was so filled with love to God and the peace that passeth understanding, that I loved to meditate and pray.

Testimony Borne in Advent Meeting

The night after receiving so great a blessing, I attended the Adventist meeting. When the time came for the followers of Christ to speak in His favor, I could not remain silent, but rose and related my experience. Not a thought had entered my mind of what I should say; but the simple story of Jesus' love to me fell from my lips with perfect freedom, and my heart was so happy to be liberated from its bondage of dark despair that I lost sight of the people about me and seemed to be alone with God. I found no difficulty in expressing my peace and happiness, except for the tears of gratitude that choked my utterance as I told of the wondrous love that Jesus had shown for me.

Elder Stockman was present. He had recently seen me in deep despair, and as he now saw my captivity turned, he wept aloud, rejoicing with me, and praising God for this proof of His tender mercy and loving kindness.

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Testimony in Baptist Church

Not long after receiving this great blessing, I attended a conference meeting at the Freewill Baptist church, where Elder S.E. Brown was pastor. I was invited to relate my experience, I felt not only great freedom of expression, but happiness, in telling my simple story of the love of Jesus and the joy of being accepted of God. As I spoke in simple language, with subdued heart and tearful eyes, my soul seemed drawn toward heaven in thanksgiving, and the melting power of the Lord came upon the assembled people, many weeping

and others praising God. Sinners were invited to arise for prayers, and many responded to the call.

Laboring for Young Friends

My heart was so thankful to God for the blessing He had given me that I longed to have others participate in this sacred joy. My mind was deeply interested for those who might be suffering under a sense of the Lord's displeasure and the burden of sin. I felt that no one could resist the evidence of God's pardoning love that had wrought so wonderful a change in me. The reality of true conversion seemed so plain to me that I felt like helping my young friends into the light, and at every opportunity exerted an influence toward this end.

I arranged meetings with my young friends, some of whom were considerably older than myself, and a few were married. A number of them were vain and thoughtless; to these my experience sounded like an idle tale, and they did not heed my entreaties. But I determined that my efforts should never cease till these dear souls, for whom I had so great an interest, yielded to God. Several entire nights I spent in earnest prayer for those whom I had sought out and brought together for the purpose of laboring and praying with them,

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Some of these had met with us from curiosity to hear what I had to say; others thought me beside myself to be so persistent in my efforts, especially when the young people manifested no concern on their own part. But at every one of our little meetings I continued to exhort and pray for each one separately until every one had yielded to Jesus, acknowledging the merits of His pardoning love, and been truly converted.

Night after night in my dreams I seemed to be laboring for the salvation of souls. At such times special cases were presented to my mind; these I afterward sought out and prayed with. In every instance but one, these persons yielded themselves to the Lord.

Some of our more formal brethren feared that I was too zealous for the conversion of souls; but time seemed to me so short that it behooved all who had a hope of a blessed immortality, and looked for the soon coming of Christ, to labor without ceasing for those who were still in their sins and standing on the awful brink of ruin.

[47] Although I was very young, the plan of salvation was so clear to my mind, and my personal experience had been so marked, that upon considering the matter I knew it was my duty to continue my efforts for the salvation of precious souls, and to pray and confess Christ at every opportunity. My entire being was offered to the service of my Master. Let come what would, I determined to please God, and to live as one who expected the Saviour to come and reward the faithful. Like a little child, I went to God as to my father, asking Him what He would have me to do. Then as my duty was made plain to me, it was my greatest happiness to perform it. Peculiar trials sometimes beset me. Those older in experience than myself endeavored to hold me back and cool the ardor of my faith; but with the smiles of Jesus brightening my life, and the love of God in my heart, I went on my way with a joyful spirit.

Sympathy of my Brother Robert

As I recall the experiences of my early life, my brother, the confidant of my hopes and fears, the earnest sympathizer with me in my Christian experience, comes to my mind with a flood of tender memories. He was one of those to whom sin presents but few temptations. Naturally devotional, he never sought the society of the young and gay but chose rather the company of Christians, whose conversation would instruct him in the way of life. His manner was serious beyond his years; he was gentle and peaceful, and his mind was almost constantly filled with religious thoughts. His life was pointed to, by those who knew him, as a pattern to the youth, a living example of the grace and beauty of true Christianity.

Chapter 5—Leaving The Methodist Church

[48]

My father's family still occasionally attended the Methodist church, and also the class-meetings held in private houses.

One evening my brother Robert and myself went to class-meeting. The presiding elder was present. When it came my brother's turn to bear testimony, he spoke with great humility, yet with clearness, of the necessity for a complete fitness to meet our Saviour when He should come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. While my brother was speaking, a heavenly light glowed upon his usually pale countenance. He seemed to be carried in spirit above present surroundings, and spoke as if in the presence of Jesus. When I was called upon to speak, I arose, free in spirit, with a heart full of love and peace. I told the story of my suffering under the conviction of sin, how I had at length received the blessing so long sought,—an entire conformity to the will of God,—and expressed my joy in the tidings of the soon coming of my Redeemer to take His children home.

Disapproval Shown in Class-meeting

In my simplicity I expected that my Methodist brethren and sisters would understand my feelings and rejoice with me, but I was disappointed; several sisters groaned and moved their chairs noisily, turning their backs upon me. I could not think what I had said to offend them, and spoke very briefly, feeling the chilling influence of their disapprobation.

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When I had ceased speaking, the presiding elder asked me if it would not be more pleasant to live a long life of usefulness, doing others good, than for Jesus to come speedily and destroy poor sinners. I replied that I longed for the coming of Jesus. Then sin would have an end, and we should enjoy sanctification forever, with no devil to tempt and lead us astray.

He then inquired if I would not rather die peacefully upon my bed than to pass through the pain of being changed, while living, from mortality to immortality. My answer was, that I wished for Jesus to come and ransom His children, that I was willing to live or die as God willed, and could easily endure all the pain that could be borne in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; that I desired the wheels of time to roll swiftly round, and bring the welcome day when these vile bodies should be changed, and fashioned like unto Christ's most glorious body. I also stated that when I lived nearest to the Lord, then I most earnestly longed for His appearing. Here some present seemed to be greatly displeased.

As the presiding elder addressed others in the class, he expressed great joy in anticipating the temporal millennium, when the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and longed to see this glorious period ushered in.

[50] After the meeting closed, I was conscious of being treated with marked coldness by those who had formerly been kind and friendly to me. My brother and I returned home feeling sad that we should be so misunderstood by our brethren, and that the subject of the near coming of Jesus should awaken such bitter antagonism in their hearts.

The Safe Path

On the way home we talked seriously concerning the evidences of our new faith and hope. "Ellen," said Robert, "are we deceived? Is this hope of Christ's soon appearing upon the earth a heresy, that ministers and professors of religion oppose it so bitterly? They say that Jesus will not come for thousands and thousands of years. If they even approach the truth, then the world can not come to an end in our day."

I dared not give unbelief a moment's encouragement, but quickly replied, "I have not a doubt but that the doctrine preached by Mr. Miller is the truth. What power attends his words! What conviction is carried home to the sinner's heart!"

We talked the matter over candidly as we walked along, and decided that it was our duty and privilege to look for the Saviour's coming and that it would be safest to make ready for His appearing,

and be prepared to meet Him with joy. If He did come, what would be the prospect of those who were now saying, "My Lord delayeth His coming," and had no desire to see Him? We wondered how ministers dared to quiet the fears of sinners and backsliders by saying, "Peace, peace," while the message of warning was being given all over the land. The period seemed very solemn to us; we felt that we had no time to lose. [51]

"A tree is known by its fruits," remarked Robert. "What has this belief done for us? It has convinced us that we were not ready for the coming of the Lord; that we must become pure in heart, or we cannot meet our Saviour in peace. It has aroused us to seek for new strength and grace from God.

"What has it done for you, Ellen? Would you be what you are now if you had never heard the doctrine of Christ's soon coming? What hope has it inspired in your heart? What peace, joy, and love has it given you? And for me it has done everything. I love Jesus, and all Christians. I love the prayer-meeting. I find great joy in reading my Bible and in prayer. If this precious faith has done so great a work for us, will it not do as much for all who believe it, and earnestly long for the appearing of the Lord?" We both felt strengthened by this conversation, and resolved that we would not be turned from our honest convictions of truth, and the blessed hope of Christ's soon coming in the clouds of heaven. We were thankful that we could discern the precious light, and rejoice in looking for the coming of the Lord.

Last Testimony in Class-meeting

Not long after this, we again attended the class-meeting. We wanted an opportunity to speak of the precious love of God that animated our souls. I particularly wished to tell of the Lord's goodness and mercy to me. So great a change had been wrought in me, that it seemed my duty to improve every opportunity of testifying to the love of my Saviour. [52]

When my turn came to speak, I stated the evidences I enjoyed of Jesus' love, and that I looked forward with the glad expectation of meeting my Redeemer soon. The belief that Christ's coming was

near stirred my soul to seek more earnestly for the sanctification of the Spirit of God.

Here the class-leader interrupted me, saying, "You received sanctification through Methodism, through Methodism sister, not through an erroneous theory." I felt compelled to confess the truth that it was not through Methodism that my heart had received its new blessing, but by the stirring truths concerning the personal appearing of Jesus. Through them I had found peace, joy, and perfect love. Thus my testimony closed, the last that I was to bear in class with my Methodist brethren.

Robert then spoke in his quiet way, yet in so clear and touching a manner that some wept and were much moved; but others coughed dissentingly, and seemed quite uneasy.

After leaving the classroom, we again talked over our faith, and marveled that our Christian brethren and sisters could so ill endure to have a word spoken in reference to our Saviour's coming. We thought if they loved Jesus as they should, it would not be so great an annoyance to hear of His second advent, but on the contrary, they would hail the news with joy.

[53] We were convinced that we ought no longer to attend the class meeting. The hope of the glorious appearing of Christ filled our souls, and would find expression when we rose to speak. This seemed to kindle the ire of those present against the two humble children who dared, in the face of opposition, to speak of the faith that had filled their hearts with peace and happiness. It was evident that we could have no freedom in the class meeting; for our testimony provoked sneers and taunts that reached our ears at the close of the meeting, from brethren and sisters whom we had respected and loved.

A Little Missionary Society

The Adventists held meetings at this time in Beethoven Hall, and my father, with his family, attended them quite frequently. The period of the second advent was thought to be in the year 1843. The time seemed so short in which souls could be saved that I resolved to do all in my power to lead sinners into the light of truth. But it

seemed impossible for one so young, and in feeble health, to do much in the great work.

Two of my sisters were at home then,—Sarah, who was several years older than myself, and my twin sister Elizabeth. We talked the matter over among ourselves, and decided to earn what money we could, and use it in buying books and tracts to be distributed gratuitously. This seemed the best we could do, and we did it gladly.

Our father was a hatter and it was my allotted task to make the crowns of the hats, that being the easiest part of the work. I also knit stockings at twenty-five cents a pair.

My heart was so weak that I was obliged to sit propped up in bed to do this work; but day after day I sat there, happy that my trembling fingers could do something to bring in a little pittance for the cause I loved so dearly. Twenty-five cents a day was all I could earn. How carefully would I lay aside the precious bits of silver, which were to be expended for reading matter to enlighten and arouse those who were in darkness. [54]

I had no temptation to spend my earnings for my own personal gratification. My dress was plain; nothing was spent for needless ornaments, for vain display appeared sinful to me. Thus I had ever a little fund in store with which to purchase suitable books. These were placed in the hands of experienced persons to send abroad.

Every leaf of this printed matter was precious in my eyes; for it was a messenger of light to the world, bidding them prepare for the great event near at hand. The salvation of souls was the burden of my mind, and my heart ached for those who flattered themselves that they were living in security, while the message of warning was being given to the world.

Natural Mortality Questioned

One day I listened to a conversation between my mother and a sister, in reference to a discourse which they had recently heard, to the effect that the soul had not natural immortality. Some of the minister's proof-texts were repeated. Among them I remember these impressed me very forcibly:

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”“The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything.”“Which in His times He [55]

shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality.”“To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life.”

“Why,” said my mother, after quoting the foregoing passage, “should they seek for what they already have?” I listened to these new ideas with an intense and painful interest. When alone with my mother, I inquired if she really believed that the soul was not immortal. Her reply was that she feared that we had been in error on the subject as well as upon some others.

“But Mother,” said I, “do you really believe that the soul sleeps in the grave until the resurrection? Do you think that the Christian, when he dies, does not go immediately to heaven, nor the sinner to hell?”

She answered, “The Bible gives us no proof that there is an eternally burning hell. If there is such a place, it should be mentioned in the Sacred Book.”

When my mother said to me, “Ellen, the minister says that we have been mistaken; there is no eternal hell,” I said to her, “O Mother, don’t tell anybody; I am afraid that nobody would seek the Lord”

[56] “If this is sound Bible truth,” she replied, “instead of preventing the salvation of sinners, it will be the means of winning them to Christ. If the love of God will not induce the rebel to yield, the terrors of an eternal hell will not drive him to repentance. Besides, it does not seem a proper way to win souls to Jesus by appealing to one of the lowest attributes of the mind—abject fear. The love of Jesus attracts; it will subdue the hardest heart.”

It was some months after this conversation before I heard anything further concerning this doctrine; but during this time my mind had been much exercised upon the subject. Then I heard it preached, and believed it to be the truth. From the time light in regard to the sleep of the dead dawned upon my mind, the mystery that had enshrouded the resurrection vanished, and the great event itself assumed new and sublime importance.

My mind had often been disturbed by its efforts to reconcile the immediate reward or punishment of the dead with the undoubted fact of a future resurrection and judgment. If at death the soul entered upon eternal happiness or misery, where was the need of a

resurrection of the poor moldering body? But this new and beautiful faith taught me the reason why inspired writers had dwelt so much upon the resurrection of the body; it was because the entire being was slumbering in the grave.

I could now clearly perceive the fallacy of our former position on this question. The confusion and uselessness of a final judgment, after the souls of the departed had already been judged once and appointed to their lot, was very plain to me now. I saw that the hope of the bereaved lies in looking forward to the glorious day when the Lifegiver shall break the fetters of the tomb, and the righteous dead shall arise and leave their prison-house, to be clothed with glorious immortal life. [57]

The Pastor's Visit

Our family were all interested in the doctrine of the Lord's soon coming. My father had long been considered one of the pillars of the Methodist church where he lived. He had been appointed to act as exhorter, and leader of meetings held in homes at a distance from the city. The whole family had been active members of the church; but we made no secret of our new belief, although we did not urge it upon others on inappropriate occasions, or manifest any unfriendliness towards our church. However, the Methodist minister made us a special visit, and took occasion to inform us that our faith could not agree with Methodism. He did not inquire our reasons for believing as we did, nor make any reference to the Bible in order to convince us of our error; but he stated that we had adopted a new and strange belief that the Methodist Church could not accept.

My father replied that he must be mistaken in calling this a new and strange doctrine, for Christ Himself, in teaching the disciples, had preached His second advent. He had said, "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." When He was taken up to heaven, and His faithful followers stood gazing after their vanishing Lord, "Behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;" which also said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus [58]

which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.”

“And,” said my father, warming with his subject, “the inspired Paul wrote a letter to encourage his brethren in Thessalonica, saying, ‘To you who are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.’ ‘For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.’

“There is high authority for our faith. Jesus and His apostles dwell upon the event of the second advent with joy and triumph; and the holy angels proclaim that Christ, who ascended to heaven shall come again. This is our offense,—believing the word of Jesus and His disciples. This is a very old doctrine, and bears no taint of heresy.”

[59] The minister did not attempt to refer to a single text that would prove us in error, but excused himself on the plea of want of time. He advised us to withdraw quietly from the church, and avoid the publicity of a trial. We were aware that others of our brethren were meeting with similar treatment for a like cause, and we did not wish it understood that we were ashamed to acknowledge our faith, or were unable to sustain it by Scripture; so my parents insisted that they should be acquainted with the reasons for this request.

The only answer to this was an evasive declaration that we had walked contrary to the rules of the church, and the best course would be voluntarily to withdraw from it to save a trial. They answered that they preferred a regular trial, and demanded to know what sin was charged to us, as we were conscious of no wrong in looking for and loving the appearing of the Savior.

Church Trial

Not long afterward, we were notified to be present at a meeting to be held in the vestry of the church. There were but few present. The influence of my father and his family was such that our opposers had no desire to present our cases before a larger number of the congregation. The single charge preferred was that we had walked contrary to their rules. Upon our asking what rules we had violated, it was stated, after a little hesitation, that we had attended other meetings, and had neglected to meet regularly with our class. We stated that a portion of the family had been in the country for some time past, that none who remained in the city had been absent from class meeting more than a few weeks, and they were morally compelled to remain away because the testimonies they bore met with such marked disapprobation. We also reminded them that certain persons who had not attended class meeting for a year were yet held in good standing. [60]

It was asked if we would confess that we had departed from their rules, and if we would also agree to conform to them in the future. We answered that we dared not yield our faith or deny the sacred truth of God; that we could not forego the hope of the soon coming of our Redeemer; that after the manner which they called heresy we must continue to worship the Lord. In his defense my father quoted these words: "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." In his defense he received the blessing of God, and we all left the vestry with free spirits, happy in the consciousness of doing right and in the approving smile of Jesus.

Expelled from the Methodist Church

The next Sunday at the commencement of the love feast, the presiding elder read off our names, seven in number, as discontinued from the church. He stated that we were not expelled on account of any wrong or immoral conduct, that we were of unblemished character and enviable reputation; but we had been guilty of walking contrary to the rules of the Methodist Church. He also declared that

a door was now open, and all who were guilty of a similar breach of the rules would be dealt with in like manner.

[61] There were many in the church who waited for the appearing of the Saviour, and this threat was made for the purpose of frightening them into subjection. In some cases this policy brought about the desired result, and the favor of God was sold for a place in the church. Many believed, but dared not confess, their faith, lest they should be turned out of the synagogue. But some left soon afterward, and joined the company of those who were looking for the Savior.

Chapter 6—Opposition Of Formal Brethren

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For six months not a cloud intervened between me and my Saviour. Whenever there was a proper opportunity, I bore my testimony in the Adventist meetings, and was greatly blessed. At times the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me with such power that my strength was taken from me. This was a trial to some who had come out from the formal churches and remarks were often made that grieved me much. Many could not believe that one could be so overpowered by the Spirit of God as to lose all strength. My position was exceedingly painful.

I began to reason with myself whether I was not justified in withholding my testimony in meeting, and thus restraining my feelings, when there was such an opposition in the hearts of some who were older in years and experience than myself. I adopted this plan of silence for a time trying to convince myself that to repress my testimony would not hinder me from faithfully living out my religion. I often felt strongly impressed that it was my duty to speak in meeting, but refrained from doing so, and was sensible of having thereby grieved the Spirit of God. I even remained away from meetings sometimes because they were to be attended by those whom my testimony annoyed. I shrank from offending my brethren, and in this allowed the fear of man to break up that uninterrupted communion with God which had blessed my heart for so many months.

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Young Man Prostrated by Power of God

We had appointed evening prayer meetings in different parts of the city to accommodate all who wished to attend. The family that had been most forward in opposing me was present at one of these meetings. Upon this occasion, while those assembled were engaged in prayer, the Spirit of the Lord came upon the meeting, and one of the members of this family was prostrated as one dead. His relatives stood weeping around him, rubbing his hands and applying

restoratives. At length he gained sufficient strength to praise God, and quieted their fears by shouting with triumph over the marked evidence he had received of the power of the Lord upon him. The young man was unable to return home that night.

This was believed by the family to be a manifestation of the Spirit of God, but did not convince them that it was the same divine power that had rested upon me at times, robbing me of my natural strength and filling my soul with the peace and love of Jesus. They were free to say that my sincerity and perfect honesty could not be doubted, but they considered me self-deceived in taking that for the power of the Lord which was only the result of my own overwrought feelings.

[64] My mind was in great perplexity in consequence of this opposition, and as the time drew near for our regular meeting, I was in doubt whether or not it was best for me to attend. For some days previous I had been in great distress on account of the feeling manifested toward me. Desiring to escape the criticism of my brethren, I decided to remain at home. In trying to pray, I repeated these words again and again, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The answer that came to my heart seemed to bid me trust in my heavenly Father, and wait patiently to know His will. I yielded myself to the Lord with the simple trust of a little child, remembering He had promised that those who follow Him shall not walk in darkness.

Finally a sense of duty impelled me to go to the meeting, and I went with the full assurance that all would be well. While we were bowed before the Lord, my heart was drawn out in prayer, and filled with a peace that only Christ can give. With child-like faith I could only say, "Heaven is my home, and Christ my Redeemer." My soul rejoiced in the love of my Saviour, and physical strength left me.

Opposition Overcome

One of the family before mentioned as being opposed to the manifestations of the power of God upon me, on this occasion stated his belief that I was under an excitement which he thought it my duty to resist, but instead of doing so, he thought I encouraged it as a mark of God's favor. His doubts and opposition did not affect me at this time, for I seemed shut in with the Lord, and lifted above

all outward influence but he had scarcely stopped speaking when a strong man, a devoted and humble Christian, was struck down before his eyes by the power of God, and the room was filled with the Holy Spirit. [65]

Upon recovering, I was very happy in bearing my testimony for Jesus, and in telling of His love for me. I confessed my lack of faith in the promises of God, and my error in checking the promptings of His Spirit from fear of men, and acknowledged that, notwithstanding my distress, He had bestowed upon me unlooked-for evidence of His love and sustaining grace.

The brother who had opposed me then rose, and with tears confessed that his feelings in regard to me had been all wrong. He humbly asked my forgiveness, and said, "Sister Ellen, I will never again lay a straw in your way. God has shown me the coldness and stubbornness of my heart, which He has broken by the evidence of His power. I have been very wrong."

Then, turning to the people, he said; "When Sister Ellen seemed so happy, I would think, why don't I feel like that?" Why doesn't Brother Rich receive some such evidence? For I was convinced that he was a devoted Christian, yet no such power had fallen upon him. I offered a silent prayer that if this was the holy influence of God, Brother Rich might experience it this evening. Almost as the desire went up from my heart, Brother Rich fell, prostrated by the power of God, crying, 'Let the Lord work!' My heart is convinced that I have been warring against the Holy Spirit, but I will grieve it no more by stubborn unbelief. Welcome, light! Welcome, Jesus! I have been backslidden and hardened, feeling offended if any one praised God and manifested a fullness of joy in His love; but now my feelings are changed, my opposition is at an end. Jesus has opened my eyes, and I may yet shout His praises myself. I have said bitter and cutting things of Sister Ellen, that I sorrow over now, and I pray for her forgiveness, and for that of all others who are present." [66]

Brother Rich then bore his testimony. His face was lighted with the glory of heaven as he praised the Lord for the wonders He had wrought that night. Said he, "This place is awfully solemn because of the presence of the Most High. Sister Ellen, in future you will have our help and sustaining sympathies, instead of the cruel opposition

that has been shown you. We have been blind to the manifestations of God's Holy Spirit."

There had never been a question as to my sincerity, but many had thought me young and impressible, and that my feelings were the effect of excitement. They regarded it my duty to repress my feelings. But all the opposers were now brought to see their mistake, and to confess that the work was indeed of the Lord.

[67] In a prayer-meeting soon afterward, the brother who had confessed that he was wrong in his opposition, experienced the power of God in so great a degree that his countenance shone with a heavenly light, and he fell helpless to the floor. When his strength returned, he again acknowledged that he had been ignorantly warring against the Spirit of the Lord in cherishing the feeling he had against me. In another prayer meeting still another member of the same family was exercised in a similar manner, and bore the same testimony. A few weeks later, while the large family of Brother Pearson was engaged in prayer at their own house, the Spirit of God swept through the room, and prostrated the kneeling suppliants. My father happening in soon afterward found them all, both parents and children, helpless under the power of the Lord.

Cold formality now began to melt before the mighty influence of the Most High. All who had opposed me confessed that they had grieved the Holy Spirit by so doing, and they united in sympathy with me and in love for the Saviour. My heart was glad that divine mercy had smoothed the path for my feet to tread, and rewarded my faith and trust so bounteously. Unity and peace now dwelt among our people who were looking for the coming of the Lord.

Chapter 7—Advent Experience

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With carefulness and trembling we approached the time * when our Saviour was expected to appear; and with solemn earnestness we sought, as a people, to purify our lives that we might be ready to meet Him at His coming.

Meetings in Portland, ME

Notwithstanding the opposition of ministers and churches, Beethoven Hall in the city of Portland, was nightly crowded; especially was there a large congregation on Sundays.

Elder Stockman was a man of deep piety. He was in feeble health, suffering from consumption; yet when he stood before the people, he seemed to be lifted above physical infirmity, and his face was lighted with the consciousness that he was teaching the sacred truth of God. There was a solemn, searching power in his words that struck home to many hearts. He sometimes expressed a fervent desire to live until he should welcome the Saviour coming in the clouds of heaven. Under his ministration, the Spirit of God convicted many sinners, and brought them into the fold of Christ.

Meetings were still held at private houses in different parts of the city, with the best results. Believers were encouraged to work for their friends and relatives, and conversions were multiplying day by day.

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All classes flocked to the meetings at Beethoven Hall. Rich and poor, high and low, ministers and laymen were all, from various causes, anxious to hear for themselves the doctrine of the second advent. Many came, who, finding no room to stand, went away disappointed.

*The year 1843, Jewish time, was believed to reach from March 21, 1843, to March 21, 1844. Those who received the advent faith looked for the coming of Christ during that year.

The order of the meetings was simple. A short and pointed discourse was usually given, then liberty was granted for general exhortation. There was as a rule the most perfect stillness possible for so large a crowd. The Lord held the spirit of opposition in check while His servants explained the reasons of their faith. Sometimes the instrument was feeble, but the Spirit of God gave weight and power to His truth. The presence of the holy angels was felt in the assembly, and numbers were daily added to the little band of believers.

On one occasion, while Elder Stockman was preaching, Elder S. E. Brown, a Christian minister, whose name has been mentioned before in this narrative, was sitting in the desk, listening to the sermon with intense interest. He became deeply moved, and suddenly his face grew pale as that of the dead, and he reeled in his chair. Elder Stockman caught him in his arms just as he was falling to the floor, and laid him on the sofa back of the desk, where he lay powerless until the discourse was finished

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Exhortation of Elder Brown

He then arose, his face still pale, but shining with light from the Sun of Righteousness and gave a very impressive testimony. He seemed to receive holy unction from above. He was usually slow of speech, with an earnest manner, entirely free from excitement. On this occasion his solemn, measured words carried with them a new power, as he warned sinners and his brother ministers to put away unbelief, prejudice, and cold formality, and like the noble Bereans, search the Sacred Writings, comparing scripture with scripture, to ascertain if these things were not true. He entreated the ministers present not to feel themselves injured by the direct and searching manner in which Elder Stockman had presented the solemn subject that interested all minds. Said he: "We want to reach the people; we want sinners to be convicted and become truly repentant before it is too late for them to be saved, lest they shall take up the lamentation, 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.' Brethren in the ministry say that our arrows hit them; will they please stand aside from between us and the people, and let us reach the hearts of sinners? If they make themselves a target for our aim, they

have no reason to complain of the wounds they receive. Stand aside, brethren, and you will not get hit!”

He related his own experience with such simplicity and candor that many who had been greatly prejudiced were moved to tears. The Spirit of God was felt in his words and this shone from his countenance. With a holy exaltation he boldly declared that he had taken the word of God as his counselor; that his doubts had been swept away and his faith confirmed. With earnestness he invited his brother ministers, church members, sinners, and infidels to examine the Bible for themselves, and charged them to let no man turn them from the purpose of ascertaining what is the truth. [71]

When he had finished speaking, those who desired the prayers of the people of God were invited to rise. Hundreds responded to the call. The Holy Spirit rested upon the assembly. Heaven and earth seemed to approach each other until a late hour of the night. The power of the Lord was felt upon young, old, and middle aged.

Elder Brown did not either then or afterward sever his connection with the Christian church, but he was looked upon with great respect by his people.

As we returned to our homes by various ways, voices would reach us from different directions, one praising God, and as if in response, another and still another shouting, “Glory to God, the Lord reigneth.” Men sought their homes with praises upon their lips, and the glad sound rang out upon the still night air. No one who attended those meetings can ever forget those scenes of deepest interest.

In the Hours of Waiting for Christ

All who sincerely love Jesus can appreciate the feelings of us who watched with the most intense longing for the coming of our Saviour. The point of expectation was nearing. The time when we hoped to meet Him was close at hand.

We approached this hour with a calm solemnity. The true believers rested in a sweet communion with God, and earnest of the peace that was to be theirs in the bright hereafter. None who experienced this hope and trust can ever forget those precious hours of waiting. [72]

Worldly business was for the most part laid aside. We carefully examined every thought and emotion of our hearts, as if upon our

deathbeds, and expecting in a few hours to close our eyes forever upon earthly scenes. There was no making of “ascension robes” for the great event; we felt the need of internal evidence that we were prepared to meet Christ, and our white robes were purity of soul, characters cleansed from sin by the atoning blood of our Saviour.

Our Disappointment

But the time of expectation passed. This was the first close test brought to bear upon those who believed and hoped that Jesus would come in the clouds of heaven. The disappointment of God’s waiting people was great. The scoffers were triumphant, and won the weak and cowardly to their ranks. Some who had appeared to possess true faith seemed to have been influenced only by fear; and now their courage returned with the passing of the time and they boldly united with the scoffers, declaring that they had never been duped really to believe the doctrine of Miller, who was a mad fanatic. Others, naturally yielding or vacillating, quietly deserted the cause. I thought, If Christ had indeed come, what would have become of those weak and changing ones? They professed to love and long for the coming of Jesus; but when He failed to appear, they seemed greatly relieved, and went back to their carelessness and disregard of true religion.

We were perplexed and disappointed, yet did not renounce our faith. Many still clung to the hope that Jesus would not long delay His coming; the word of the Lord was sure, it could not fail. We felt that we had done our duty, we had lived up to our precious faith; we were disappointed, but not discouraged. The signs of the times denoted that the end of all things was at hand; we must watch and hold ourselves in readiness for the coming of the Master at any time. We must wait with hope and trust, not neglecting the assembling of ourselves together for instruction, encouragement, and comfort that our light might shine forth into the darkness of the world.

Error in Reckoning

Our calculation of the prophesied time was so simple and plain that even the children could understand it. From the date of the

decree of the king of Persia, found in [Ezra 7](#), which was given in 457 before Christ, the 2300 years of [Daniel 8:14](#) must terminate with 1843. Accordingly we looked to the end of this year for the coming of the Lord. We were sadly disappointed when the year entirely passed away, and the Saviour had not come.

It was not at first perceived that if the decree did not go forth at the beginning of the year 457 B.C., the 2300 years would not be completed at the close of 1843.

Later it was found that the decree was given near the close of the year 457 B.C., and therefore the prophetic period must reach to the fall of the year 1844. Therefore the vision of time did not tarry, though it had seemed to do so. We learned to rest upon the language of the prophet: "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." [74]

The mistake made in reckoning the prophetic periods was not at once discovered even by learned men who opposed the views of those who were looking for Christ's coming. Scholars declared that Mr. Miller was right in his calculation of the time, although they disagreed with him in regard to the event that would crown that period. But they, and the waiting people of God, were in a common error on the question of time.

We fully believe that God, in His wisdom, designed that His people should meet with a disappointment, which was well calculated to reveal hearts and develop the true character of those who had professed to look for and rejoice in the coming of the Lord. Those who embraced the first angel's message (see [Revelation 14:6, 7](#)) through fear of the wrath of God and His judgments, not because they loved the truth and desired an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, now appeared in their true light. They were among the first to ridicule the disappointed ones who sincerely longed for and loved the appearing of Jesus,

Those who had been disappointed were not long left in darkness; for in searching the prophetic periods with earnest prayer, the error was discovered, and the prophetic pencil traced down through the tarrying time. In the joyful expectation of the coming of Christ, the apparent tarrying of the vision had not been taken into account, and [75]

was a sad and unlooked for surprise. Yet this very trial was necessary to develop and strengthen the sincere believers in the truth.

Hope Renewed

Our hopes now centered the coming of the Lord in 1844. This was also the time for the message of the second angel, who, flying through the midst of heaven, cried, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city." That message was first proclaimed by the servants of God in the summer of 1844. As a result, many left the familiar churches. In connection with this message the midnight cry was given: "Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him!" * In every part of the land light was given concerning this message, and the cry aroused thousands. It went from city to city, from village to village, and into remote country regions. It reached the learned and talented, as well as the obscure and humble.

"This was the happiest year of my life." My heart was full of glad expectation; but I felt great pity and anxiety for those who were in discouragement and had no hope in Jesus. We united, as a people, in earnest prayer for a true Christian experience and the unmistakable evidence of our acceptance with God.

[76] We needed great patience, for the scoffers were many. We were frequently greeted by scornful allusions to our former disappointment. "You have not gone up yet; when do you expect to go up?" and similar taunts were often vented upon us by our worldly acquaintances, and even by some professed Christians who accepted the Bible, yet failed to learn its great and important truths. Their blinded eyes seemed to see but a vague and distant meaning in the solemn warning, "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world," and in the assurance that the saints will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.

Attitude of the Churches

The orthodox churches used every means to prevent the belief in Christ's soon coming from spreading. No liberty was granted in their meetings to those who dared mention a hope of the soon coming

* See [Matthew 25:1-13](#)

of Christ. Professed lovers of Jesus scornfully rejected the tidings that He whom they claimed as their best Friend was soon to visit them. They were excited and angered against those who proclaimed the news of His coming, and who rejoiced that they should speedily behold Him in His glory.

Every moment seemed to me of the utmost importance. I felt that we were doing work for eternity, and that the careless and uninterested were in the greatest peril. My faith was unclouded, and I appropriated to myself the precious promises of Jesus. He had said to His disciples, "Ask, and ye shall receive." I firmly believed that whatever I asked in accordance with the will of God, would certainly be granted to me. I sank in humility at the feet of Jesus, with my heart in harmony with His will. [77]

It was my custom to visit families, and engage in earnest prayer with those who were oppressed by fears and despondency. My faith was strong, and I did not doubt for a moment that God would answer my prayers. Without a single exception, the blessing and peace of Jesus rested upon us in answer to our humble petitions and the hearts of the despairing ones were made joyful by light and hope.

At this time my health was very poor, my lungs were seriously affected, and my voice failed. The Spirit of God often rested upon me with great power, and my frail body could scarcely endure the glory that flooded my soul. The name of Jesus filled me with rapture. I seemed to breathe in the atmosphere of heaven, and rejoiced in the prospect of soon meeting my Redeemer, and living forever in the light of His countenance.

Period of Preparation

With diligent searching of heart and humble confessions, we came prayerfully up to the time of expectation. Every morning we felt that it was our first work to secure the evidence that our lives were right before God. We realized that if we were not advancing in holiness, we were sure to retrograde. Our interest for one another increased; we prayed much with and for one another. We assembled in the orchards and groves to commune God and to offer up our petitions to Him, feeling more fully in His presence when surrounded by the works of nature. The joys of salvation were more necessary to [78]

us than our food and drink. If clouds obscured our minds, we dared not rest or sleep till they had been swept away by the consciousness of our acceptance with the Lord.

Thus the waiting people of God approached the hour when they fondly hoped their joys would be complete in the coming of the Saviour. But the time again passed unmarked by the advent of Jesus. It was hard to take up the cares of life that we thought had been laid down forever. It was a bitter disappointment that fell upon the little flock whose faith had been so strong and whose hope had been so high. But we were surprised that we felt so free in the Lord, and were so strongly sustained by His strength and grace.

The experience of the former year was however repeated to a greater extent. Again a large class renounced their faith. Some who had been very confident were so deeply wounded in their pride that they felt like fleeing from the world. Like Jonah, they complained of God, and chose death rather than life. Those who had built their faith upon the evidence of others, and not upon the word of God, were again as ready to change their views. The hypocrites, who had hoped to deceive the Lord as well as themselves with their counterfeit penitence and devotion, now felt relieved from impending danger and openly opposed the cause they had lately professed to love.

[79] The weak and the wicked united in declaring that there could be no more fears or expectations. The time had passed, the Lord had not come, and the world would remain the same for thousands of years. This second great test revealed a mass of worthless drift that had been drawn into the strong current of the advent faith, and been borne along for a time with the true believers and earnest workers.

We were disappointed, but not disheartened. We resolved to refrain from murmuring at the trying ordeal by which the Lord was purging us from the dross and refining us like gold in the furnace; to submit patiently to the process of purifying that God deemed needful for us; and to wait with patient hope for the Saviour to redeem His tried and faithful ones. We were firm in the belief that the preaching of definite time was of God. It was this that led men to search the Bible diligently, discovering truths they had not before perceived.

Jonah was sent of God to proclaim in the streets of Nineveh that within forty days the city would be overthrown; but God accepted the humiliation of the Ninevites, and extended their period of probation.

Yet the message that Jonah brought was sent of God, and Nineveh was tested according to His will. The world looked upon our hope as a delusion, and our disappointment as its consequent failure; but though we were mistaken in the event that was to occur at that period, there was no failure in reality of the vision that seemed to tarry.

The words of the Saviour in the parable of the wicked servant apply very forcibly to those who ridicule the near coming of the Son of man: "If that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servant, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites." [80]

We found everywhere the scoffers whom Peter said should come in the last days, walking after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." But those who had looked for the coming of the Lord were not without comfort. They had obtained valuable knowledge in searching the Word. The plan of salvation was plainer to their understanding. Every day they discovered new beauties in the sacred pages, and a wonderful harmony running through all, one scripture explaining another, and no word used in vain.

Our disappointment was not so great as that of the disciples! When the Son of man rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, they expected Him to be crowned king. The people flocked from all the region about, and cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" And when the priests and elders besought Jesus to still the multitude, He declared that if they should hold their peace, even the stones would cry out, for prophecy must be fulfilled. Yet in a few days these very disciples saw their beloved Master, whom they believed would reign on David's throne, stretched upon the cruel cross above the mocking, taunting Pharisees. Their high hopes were succeeded by bitter disappointment, and the darkness of death closed about them. Yet Christ was true to His promises. Sweet was the consolation He gave His people, rich the reward of the true and faithful.

Mr. Miller and those who were in union with him supposed that the cleansing of the sanctuary, spoken of in [Daniel 8:14](#), meant the [81]

purifying of the earth prior to its becoming the abode of the saints. This was to take place at the advent of Christ, therefore we looked for that event at the end of the 2300 days, or years. But after our disappointment the Scriptures were carefully searched with prayer and earnest thought, and after a period of suspense as to our true position, light poured in upon our darkness; doubt and uncertainty was swept away. Instead of the prophecy of [Daniel 8:14](#) referring to the purifying of the earth, it was now plain that it pointed to the closing work of our High Priest in heaven, the finishing of the atonement, and the preparing of the people to abide the day of his coming.

Chapter 8—My First Vision

[82]

It was not long after the passing of the time in 1844, that my first vision was given me. I was visiting Mrs. Haines at Portland, a dear sister in Christ, whose heart was knit with mine, and five of us, all women, were kneeling quietly at the family altar. While we were praying, the power of God came upon me as I had never felt before.

I seemed to be surrounded with light, and to be rising higher and higher above the dark world. I turned to look for the advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, "Look again, and look a little higher." At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the advent people were traveling to the city which was at the farther end of the path. Behind them, at the beginning of the path, was a bright light which an angel told me was the midnight cry. This light shone all along the path, and gave light for their feet, that they might not stumble. Jesus Himself went just before His people, leading them to the city; and as long as they kept their eyes fixed on Him, they were safe. But soon some grew weary, and said the city was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, from which came a light that waved over the advent band; and they shouted "Alleluia!" Others rashly denied the light behind them, and said it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness; and they stumbled, and lost sight of the mark and of Jesus, and fell off the path, down into the dark and wicked world below.

[83]

Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spoke the time, He poured upon us the Holy Spirit, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai.

The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads were the words, "God, New Jerusalem," and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name. At our happy, holy state the wicked were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us into prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and they would fall helpless to the ground. Then it was that the synagogue of Satan knew that God had loved us who could wash one another's feet, and salute the brethren with a holy kiss, and they worshiped at our feet.

[84] Soon our eyes were drawn to the east for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man's hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer, and became lighter glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly, and lay on His shoulders; and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle, in His left a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through.

Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, "Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?" Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: "Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you." At this our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sung again, while the cloud drew still nearer to the earth.

Then Jesus' silver trumpet sounded, as He descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire. He gazed on the graves of the sleeping saints, then raised His eyes and hands to heaven, and cried, "Awake! Awake! Awake! Ye that sleep in the dust, and arise!" Then there was a mighty earthquake, the graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. The 144,000 shouted "Alleluia!" as they recognized their friends who had been torn from them by death, and in the same moment we were changed, and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.

We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought the crowns, and with His own right hand placed them on our heads. He gave us harps of gold and palms of victory. Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square. Some of them had very bright crowns, others not so bright. Some crowns appeared heavy with stars, while others had but few. All were perfectly satisfied with their crowns. And they were all clothed with a glorious white mantle from their shoulders to their feet. Angels were all about us as we marched over the sea of glass to the gate of the city. Jesus raised His mighty, glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate, swung it back on its glittering hinges, and said to us, "You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in." We all marched in and felt that we had a perfect right in the city. [85]

Here we saw the tree of life and the throne of God. Out of the throne came a pure river of water, and on either side of the river was the tree of life. On one side of the river was a trunk of a tree, and a trunk on the other side of the river, both of pure, transparent gold. At first I thought I saw two trees; I looked again, and saw that they were united at the top in one tree. So it was the tree of life on either side of the river of life. Its branches bowed to the place where we stood; and the fruit was glorious; it looked like gold mixed with silver.

We all went under the tree and sat down to look at the glory of the place, when Brethren Fitch and Stockman, who had preached the gospel of the kingdom, and whom God had laid in the grave to save them, came up to us, and asked us what we had passed through while they were sleeping. We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us, that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, "Alleluia! Heaven is cheap enough!" and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven's arches ring. [86]

Vision of New Earth

With Jesus at our head we all descended from the city down to this earth, on a great and mighty mountain, which could not bear Jesus up, and it parted asunder, and there was a mighty plain. Then we looked up and saw the great city, with twelve foundations and

twelve gates, three on each side, and an angel at each gate. We all cried out, "The city, the great city, it's coming, it's coming down from God out of heaven!" and it came and settled on the place where we stood.

Then we began to look at the glorious things outside of the city. There I saw most glorious houses that had the appearance of silver, supported by four pillars set with pearls most glorious to behold. These were to be inhabited by the saints. In each was a golden shelf. I saw many of the saints go into the houses, take off their glittering crowns, and lay them on the shelf, then go out into the field by the houses to do something with the earth; not as we have to do with the earth here; no, no. A glorious light shone all about their heads, and they were continually shouting and offering praises to God.

[87] I saw another field full of all kinds of flowers, and as I plucked them, I cried out, "They will never fade." Next I saw a field of tall grass, most glorious to behold; it was living green, and had a reflection of silver and gold, and it waved proudly to the glory of King Jesus. Then we entered a field full of all kinds of beasts,—the lion, the lamb, the leopard, and the wolf all together in perfect union. We passed through the midst of them, and they followed on peaceably after. Then we entered a wood, not like the dark woods we have here; no, no; but light and all over glorious; the branches of the trees waved to and fro, and we all cried out, "We will dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods." We passed through the woods, for we were on our way to Mount Zion. As we were traveling along, we met a company who also were gazing at the glories of the place. I noticed red as a border on their garments; their crowns were brilliant; their robes were pure white. As we greeted them, I asked Jesus who they were. He said they were martyrs that had been slain for Him. With them was an innumerable company of little ones; they also had a hem of red on their garments.

Mount Zion was just before us, and on the mount was a glorious temple, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies. And I saw the little ones climb, or, if they chose, use their little wings and fly to the top of the mountains, and pluck the never-fading flowers. There were all kinds of trees around the temple to beautify the place; the box, the pine the fir, the oil, the myrtle, the pomegranate, and the fig-tree bowed down with the weight of its

timely figs,—these made the place all over glorious. And as we were about to enter the holy temple, Jesus raised His lovely voice and said, “Only the 144,000 enter this place,” and we shouted “Alleluia!”

This temple was supported by seven pillars all of transparent gold, set with pearls most glorious. The wonderful things I there saw, I can not describe. Oh that I could talk in the language of Canaan, then could I tell a little of the glory of the better world. I saw there tables of stone in which the names of the 144,000 were engraved in letters of gold. [88]

After we beheld the glory of the temple, we went out, and Jesus left us, and went to the city. Soon we heard His lovely voice again, saying, “Come, My people, you have come out of great tribulation, and done My will, suffered for Me; come in to supper, for I will gird Myself, and serve you.” We shouted, “Alleluia! Glory!” and entered into the city.

And I saw a table of pure silver; it was many miles in length, yet our eyes could extend over it. I saw the fruit of the tree of life, the manna, almonds, figs, pomegranates, grapes, and many other kinds of fruit.

I asked Jesus to let me eat of the fruit. He said; “Not now. Those who eat of the fruit of this land go back to earth no more. But in a little while, if faithful, you shall both eat of the fruit of the tree of life, and drink of the water of the fountain.” And He said “You must go back to earth again, and relate to others what I have revealed to you.” Then an angel bore me gently down to this dark world.

After I came out of vision, a gloom was spread over all I beheld. Oh, how dark the world looked to me! While under the power of the Lord, I was filled with joy, seeming to be surrounded by holy angels in the glorious courts of heaven, where all is peace and gladness; and it was a sad and bitter change to wake up to the realities of mortal life. I wept when I found myself here, and felt homesick. I had seen a better world, and it had spoiled me for this.

Sometimes I think I can stay here no longer, all things of earth look so dreary. I feel very lonely here, for I have seen a better land. “Oh that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away, and be at rest!” [89]

I related this vision to the believers in Portland, and they had full confidence that it was from God. They all believed that God

had chosen this way, after the great disappointment in October, to comfort and strengthen His people. The Spirit of the Lord attended the testimony, and the solemnity of eternity rested upon us. An unspeakable awe filled me that I, so young and feeble, should be chosen as the instrument by which God would give light to His people.

Chapter 9—Call To Travel

[90]

In my second vision, about a week after the first, the Lord gave me a view of the trials through which I must pass, and told me that I must go and relate to others what He had revealed to me. It was shown me that my labors would meet with great opposition, and that my heart would be rent with anguish; but the angel assured me, “The grace of God is sufficient for you; He will hold you up.”

After I came out of this vision I was exceedingly troubled, for it pointed out my duty to go out among the people and present the truth. My health was so poor that I was in constant bodily suffering, and to all appearance had but a short time to live. I was only seventeen years of age, small and frail, unused to society and naturally so timid and retiring that it was painful for me to meet strangers. Having little self-confidence, I was unreconciled to going out into the world, and dreaded to meet its sneers and opposition.

For several days, and far into the night, I prayed that this burden might be removed from me, and laid upon some one more capable of bearing it. But the light of duty did not change, and the words of the angel sounded continually in my ears, “Make known to others what I have revealed to you.”

Hitherto when the Spirit of God had urged me to duty, I had risen above myself, forgetting all fear and timidity in the great theme of Jesus love and the wonderful work He had done for me. The constant assurance that I was fulfilling my duty and obeying the will of God, gave me a confidence that surprised me, for it was foreign to my nature. At such times I felt willing to do or suffer anything in order to help others into the light and peace of Jesus.

[91]

But it seemed impossible for me to accomplish this work that was presented before me; even to attempt it seemed certain failure. The trials attending it appeared more than I could endure. How could a child in years, go forth from place to place, unfolding to the people the holy truths of God! My heart shrank in terror from the thought.

My brother Robert, but two years older than myself, could not accompany me, for he was feeble in health, and his timidity was greater than mine; nothing could have induced him to take such a step. My father had a family to support, and could not leave his business; but he repeatedly assured me that if God had called me to labor in other places, He would not fail to open the way for me. But these words of encouragement brought little comfort to my desponding heart; the path before me seemed hedged in with difficulties that I was unable to surmount.

[92] I coveted death as a release from the responsibilities that were crowding upon me. At length the sweet peace I had so long enjoyed left me, and despair again pressed upon my soul. My prayers all seemed vain, and my faith was gone. Words of comfort, reproof, or encouragement were alike to me; for it seemed that no one could understand me but God, and I feared that He had taken His favor from me forever. As I thought of the light that had formerly blessed my soul, it seemed doubly precious in contrast with the darkness that now enveloped me.

The believers in Portland were ignorant concerning the exercises of my mind that had brought me into this state of despondency; but they knew that for some reason my mind had become depressed, and they felt that this was sinful on my part, considering the gracious manner in which the Lord had manifested Himself to me. Meetings were held at my father's house but my distress of mind was so great that I did not attend them for some time. My burden grew heavier until the agony of my spirit seemed more than I could bear.

At length I was induced to be present at one of the meetings in my own home. The church made my case a special subject of prayer. Father Pearson, who in my earlier experience had opposed the manifestations of the power of God upon me, now prayed earnestly for me, and counseled me to surrender my will to the will of the Lord. Like a tender father he tried to encourage and comfort me, bidding me believe I was not forsaken by the Friend of sinners. I felt too weak and despondent to make any special effort for myself, but my heart united with the petitions of my friends. I cared little now for the opposition of the world, and felt willing to make every sacrifice if only the favor of God might be restored to me.

Father Pearson's Testimony

While prayer was offered for me, that the Lord would give me strength and courage to bear the message, the thick darkness that had encompassed me rolled back, and a sudden light came upon me. Something that seemed to me like a ball of fire struck me right over the heart. My strength was taken away, and I fell to the floor. I seemed to be in the presence of the angels. One of these holy beings again repeated the words, "Make known to others what I have revealed to you." [93]

Father Pearson, who could not kneel on account of his rheumatism, witnessed this occurrence. When I revived sufficiently to see and hear; he rose from his chair, and said, "I have seen a sight such as I never expected to see. A ball of fire came down from heaven, and struck Sister Ellen Harmon right on the heart. *I saw it! I saw it!* I can never forget it. It has changed my whole being. Sister Ellen, have courage in the Lord. After this night I will never doubt again. We will help you henceforth, and not discourage you."

Fear of Self-exaltation

One great fear that had oppressed me was that if I obeyed the call of duty, and went out declaring myself to be one favored of the Most High with visions and revelations for the people, I might yield to sinful exaltation, and be lifted above the station that was right for me to occupy, bring upon myself the displeasure of God, and lose my own soul. I had known of several such cases, and my heart shrunk from the trying ordeal.

I now entreated that if I must go and relate what the Lord had shown me, I might be preserved from undue exaltation. Said the angel, "Your prayers are heard, and shall be answered. If this evil that you dread threatens you, the hand of God will be stretched out to save you; by affliction He will draw you to Himself, and preserve your humility. Deliver the message faithfully; endure unto the end, and you shall eat the fruit of the tree of life and drink the water of life." [94]

Travels in Maine

After recovering consciousness of earthly things, I committed myself to the Lord, ready to do His bidding, whatever that might be.

It was not long before the Lord opened the way for me to go with my brother-in-law to my sisters in Poland, thirty miles from my home, and while there I had an opportunity to bear my testimony. For three months my throat and lungs had been so diseased that I could talk but little, and that in a low, husky tone. On this occasion I stood up in meeting and began speaking in a whisper. I continued thus for about five minutes, when the soreness and obstruction left my lungs, my voice became clear and strong, and I spoke with perfect ease and freedom for nearly two hours. When my message was ended, my voice was gone until I stood again before the people, when the same singular restoration was repeated. I felt a constant assurance that I was doing the will of God, and saw marked results attending my efforts.

Provisionally the way was opened for me to go to the central part of Maine. Brother Wm. Jordan was going on business to Orrington, accompanied by his sister, and I was urged to go with them. As I had promised the Lord to walk in the path He opened before me, I dared not refuse. The Spirit of God attended the message I bore at this place; hearts were made glad in the truth, and the desponding [95] ones were cheered and encouraged to renew their faith. At Orrington I met Elder James White. He was acquainted with my friends, and was himself engaged in the work for the salvation of souls.

I also visited Garland, where a large number collected from different quarters to hear my message.

Soon after this I went to Exeter, a small village not far from Garland. Here a heavy burden rested upon me, from which I could not be free until I had related what had been shown me in regard to some fanatical persons who were present. This I did, mentioning that I was soon to return home, and had seen that these persons were anxious to visit Portland, but that they had no work to do there, and could only injure the cause by their fanaticism. I declared that they were deceived in thinking that they were actuated by the Spirit of God.

My testimony was very displeasing to these persons and their sympathizers. It cut directly across their anticipated course, and in consequence aroused in them feelings of bitterness and jealousy toward me.

Arrest of Elder Damman

From Exeter I went to Atkinson. One night I was shown something that I did not understand. It was to this effect that we were to have a trial of our faith. The next day, Sunday, as I was speaking, two men looked in the window of the room where we were assembled. We were satisfied as to their object: They were coming to arrest us.

They entered, and rushed past me to Elder Israel Damman. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon him, his strength was taken away, and he fell helpless to the floor. The officer cried out, "In the name of the State of Maine, lay hold of this man." Two men seized his arms and two his feet, and attempted to drag him from the room. The power of God was present. The true servants of God, their countenances lighted up with His glory, made no resistance, but began to sing, "We left old mystic Babylon, To sound the jubilee," and the men who had taken hold of Elder Damman were unable to carry out their design. They would move him a few inches, and then their hands would slip off, and they would rush out of the room. These men could not endure the power of God present in that room, and it was a relief to them to get out.

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Their number increased to twelve, but for about forty minutes Elder Damman was held by the power of God, and the combined strength of all those men could not move him from the floor.

Then we all felt at the same moment that Elder Damman must go. God had manifested His power for His glory, but He would be further glorified in suffering him to be taken from us. I said, "Elder Damman, the Lord bids you go with these men to this trial." At this the men took him up as easily as they would a helpless child, and carried him from the room.

Elder Damman was taken to a hotel, where he was guarded. The man who was given charge of him did not like the duty. He said that Elder Damman was singing and praying and praising the Lord all night, so that he could not sleep, and he would not watch over such

[97] a man. No one else wished the duty of guarding Elder Damman, so after promising that he would appear for trial, he was released, and allowed to go about the village as he pleased. He was invited by friends to share their hospitality.

At the hour appointed for the trial, Elder Damman was present. A lawyer offered his services. The charge brought against Elder Damman was that he was a disturber of the peace. Many witnesses were brought forward to sustain this charge, but their testimony was at once broken down by the testimony of Elder Damman's acquaintances present, who were called to the stand.

Among those present there was much curiosity to know what Elder Damman and his friends believed, and he was asked to give them a statement of his belief. In a clear manner, for he was a forcible speaker, he told them from the Scriptures the reasons of his faith.

It was also stated that the Adventists sang curious hymns, and he was asked to sing one. A number of brethren were present, who had excellent voices, and they joined with him in singing,

“When I was down in Egypt's land, I heard my Savior
was at hand,” etc.

Elder Damman was asked if he had a spiritual wife. He told them that he had a lawful wife, and he could thank God that she had been a very spiritual woman since his acquaintance with her.

Finally he was ordered to pay the costs of the trial and was then released.

After this I returned to Portland; having traveled and labored for three months, bearing the testimony that God had given me, and experiencing His approbation at every step.

Chapter 10—Answers To Prayer

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In the spring of 1845 I made a visit to Topsham, Maine. On one occasion quite a number of us were assembled at the house of Brother Stockbridge Howland. His eldest daughter, Miss Frances Howland, a very dear friend of mine, was sick with the rheumatic fever and under the doctor's care. Her hands were so badly swollen that the joints could not be distinguished. As we sat together speaking of her case, Brother Howland was asked if he had faith that his daughter could be healed in answer to prayer. He answered that he would try to believe that she might, and presently declared that he did believe it possible.

We all knelt in earnest prayer to God in her behalf. We claimed the promise, "Ask, and ye shall receive." The blessing of God attended our prayers, and we had the assurance that God was willing to heal the afflicted one. Elder Damman cried out, "Is there a sister here who has faith to go and take her by the hand, and bid her arise in the name of the Lord?"

Sister Frances was lying in the chamber above, and before he ceased speaking Sister Curtis was on her way to the stairs. She entered the sickroom with the Spirit of God upon her, and taking the invalid by the hand, said, "Sister Frances, in the name of the Lord arise, and be whole." New life shot through the veins of the sick girl, a holy faith took possession of her, and obeying its impulse, she rose from her bed, stood upon her feet, and walked the room, praising God for her recovery. She was soon dressed, and came down into the room where we were assembled, her countenance lighted up with unspeakable joy and gratitude.

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The next morning she took breakfast with us. Soon after, as Elder White was reading from the fifth chapter of James for family worship, the doctor came into the hall, and, as usual, went upstairs to visit his patient. Not finding her there, he hurried down, and with a look of alarm opened the door of the large kitchen where we were

all sitting, his patient with us. He gazed upon her with astonishment, and at length ejaculated, "So Frances is better!"

Brother Howland answered, "The Lord has healed her," and the reader resumed his chapter where he had been interrupted, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him." The doctor listened with a curious expression of mingled wonder and incredulity upon his face, nodded, and hastily left the room. The same day Sister Frances rode three miles, returning home in the evening, and although it was rainy, she sustained no injury, and continued to improve rapidly in health. In a few days, at her request, she was led down into the water and baptized. Although the weather and the water were very cold, and her disease rheumatic fever, she received no injury, but from that time was free from the disease, and in the enjoyment of her usual health.

[100] At this time Brother W. H. Hyde was very sick with dysentery. His symptoms were alarming, and the physician pronounced his case almost hopeless. We visited him and prayed with him, but he had come under the influence of certain fanatical persons, who were bringing dishonor upon our cause. We wished to remove him from among them, and petitioned the Lord to give him strength to leave that place. He was strengthened and blessed in answer to our prayers, and rode four miles to the house of Brother Patten, but after arriving there he seemed to be rapidly sinking.

The fanaticism and errors into which he had fallen through an evil influence seemed to hinder the exercise of his faith, but he gratefully received the plain testimony borne him, made humble confession of his fault, and took his position firmly for the truth.

Only a few who were strong in faith were permitted to enter the sickroom. The fanatics whose influence over him had been so injurious, and who had persistently followed him to Brother Patten's, were positively forbidden to come into his presence, while we prayed fervently for his restoration to health. I have seldom known such a searching out to claim the promises of God. The salvation of the Holy Spirit was revealed, and power from on high rested upon our sick brother and upon all present.

Brother Hyde immediately dressed and walked out of the room, praising God, and with the light of heaven shining upon his countenance. His recovery was complete and permanent.

Chapter 11—Meeting Fanaticism

From Topsham we returned to Portland, and found there quite a number of our faith from the East. Among them were the very fanatics to whom I had borne my testimony at Exeter, declaring that it was not their duty to visit Portland. Some of these persons had laid aside reason and judgment; they trusted every impression of their excitable and over-wrought minds. Their demonstrative exercises, which they claimed were the result of the working of the Spirit of God, were unworthy of their exalted profession. My heart ached for God's people. Must they be deceived and led away by this false enthusiasm? I faithfully pronounced the warnings given me of the Lord; but they seemed to have little effect, except to make these persons of extreme views jealous of me.

There were some who professed great humility and advocated creeping on the floor like children, as an evidence of their humility. They claimed that the words of Christ in [Matthew 18:1-6](#) must have a literal fulfillment at this period, when they were looking for their Saviour to return. They would creep around their houses, on the street, over bridges, and in the church itself.

I told them plainly that this was not required; that the humility which God looked for in His people was to be shown by a Christ-like life, not by creeping on the floor. All spiritual things are to be treated with sacred dignity. Humility and meekness are in accordance with the life of Christ, but they are to be shown in a dignified way.

An old gentleman, who had heard me speak, made a request for an interview with me. During our talk he said, "Miss Harmon, do you advocate the creeping position?" I said, "I do not. I have plainly stated that this action is a dishonor to God. A Christian reveals true humility by showing the gentleness of Christ, by being always ready to help others, by speaking kind words and performing unselfish acts, which elevate and ennoble the most sacred message that has come to our world."

During this interview, a sister whom I loved as a Christian came into the room on her knees. Said the old gentleman in clear, distinct tones,

“If man was made to walk erect,
The serpent made to crawl,
Why imitate the odious thing
That introduced the fall?”

The false impressions of these fanatics might have turned me from my duty, had not the Lord previously shown me where to go and what to do. Although so young and inexperienced, I was preserved from falling into the snare of the enemy, through the mercy of God, in giving me special instructions whom to fear and whom to trust. Had it not been for this protection, I now see many times when I might have been led from the path of duty.

Instruction Whom to Trust

On this occasion a talented minister came to me and said he would accompany me to Portsmouth, for he wanted my message to be given there. He was one of those who were indulging fanatical fancies, and I had been warned to be afraid of all such ones. I told him that I could not go with him. I had been instructed that men would come to me, urging that I should go with them to this place and that place, but that I was not to go. At the same time it was presented to me that I could trust Elder James White, that he would guard me and that with him I would be in no danger.

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Chapter 12—Labors In New Hampshire

About this time I was shown that it was my duty to visit our people in New Hampshire. My constant and faithful companion at this time was Sister Louisa Foss, a sister of Samuel Foss, the husband of my sister Mary. I can never forget her kind and sisterly attention to me in my journeys. We were also accompanied by Elder Files and his wife, who were old and valued friends of my family, and by Brother Ralph Haskins and Elder James White.

We were cordially received by our friends in New Hampshire, but there were wrongs existing in that field which burdened me much. We had to meet a Spirit of self—righteousness that was very depressing. I had previously been shown the pride and exaltation of certain ones whom we visited, but I had not the courage to meet them with my testimony. Had I done so, the Lord would have sustained me in doing my duty.

Encouragement for Elder Morse

While visiting at the house of Elder Washington Morse, the burden did not leave me, but I did not yet feel sufficiently strong to bear my testimony, which would have placed the oppressive burden upon those to whom it belonged.

During our stay at this house, I was very ill, prayer was offered in my behalf, and the Spirit of God rested upon me.

I was taken off in vision, and some things were shown me concerning the case of Elder Morse in connection with the disappointment of 1844.

Elder Morse had been firm and consistent in the belief that the Lord would come at that time; but when the period passed without bringing the event expected, he was perplexed and unable to explain the delay. Although bitterly disappointed, he did not renounce his faith, as some did, calling it a fanatical delusion; but he was bewildered, and could not understand the position of God's people on

prophetic time. He had been so earnest in declaring that the coming of the Lord was near, that when the time passed, he was despondent, and did nothing to encourage the disappointed people, who were like sheep without a shepherd, left to be devoured of wolves.

Jonah's Disappointment

The case of Jonah was presented before me. God commanded him to go to Nineveh, and deliver the message that He gave him. Jonah obeyed. The solemn cry was heard throughout the streets of the wicked city, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

The city was a marvel of wealth and magnificence; yet the king believed the warning, and he and his people humbled themselves before the Lord, with fasting and sackcloth. A merciful God accepted their repentance and lengthened the days of their probation. He turned away His fierce anger, and awaited the fruits of Nineveh's humiliation.

But Jonah dreaded being called a false prophet. He murmured at the compassion of God in sparing the people whom he had warned of destruction. He could not bear the thought of standing before the people as a deceiver. He overlooked the great mercy of God toward the repentant city, in the personal humiliation of seeing his prophecy unfulfilled. [106]

Elder Morse was in a condition similar to that of the disappointed prophet. He had proclaimed that the Lord would come in 1844. The time had passed. The check of fear that had partially held the people was removed, and they indulged in derision of those who had looked in vain for Jesus. Elder Morse felt that he was a byword among his neighbors, an object of jest, and he could not be reconciled to his position. He did not think of the mercy of God in granting the world a longer time in which to prepare for His coming that the warning of His judgment might be heard more widely, and the people tested with greater light.

Instead of being discouraged at his disappointment, as was Jonah, Elder Morse should have cast aside his selfish sorrow and gathered up the rays of precious light that God had given His people. He should have rejoiced that the world was granted a reprieve, and been

ready to aid in carrying forward the great work yet to be done upon the earth, in bringing sinners to repentance and salvation.

A False Report

[107] It has been reported that on the occasion of this vision, I declared that in forty years the end of the world would come. No such words were uttered by me. I had no light concerning the end of time, The subject of Nineveh, its lengthened probation, and the consequent grief of Jonah, were presented to me as parallel with our own disappointment in 1844. The case of Elder Morse was presented to me as one that represented the condition of a large class of our people at that time. Their duty was plainly marked out; they were to trust in the wisdom and mercy of God, and patiently labor as His providence opened the way before them.

Chapter 13—Misapprehension of the Message

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I was shown that although, like the destruction of Nineveh, the event so solemnly proclaimed in 1844 did not occur, the message was none the less of God, and accomplished the purpose that He designed it should. Subsequent light upon the prophecies revealed the event that did take place then,—that our great High Priest entered the most holy place of the sanctuary in heaven, to finish the atonement for the sins of men. Nevertheless, God willed that His servants should proclaim the approaching end of time, and it was for a wise purpose.

Disappointment of the First Disciples

Christ sent His disciples forth with the message, “The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.” That message was based on the prophecy of [Daniel 9](#). The sixty-nine weeks were declared by the angel to extend to “the Messiah the Prince,” and with high hopes and joyful anticipations the disciples looked forward to the establishment of Messiah’s kingdom at Jerusalem, to rule over the whole earth.

They preached the message that Christ had committed to them, though they themselves misapprehended its meaning. They performed their duty in presenting to the Jewish nation the invitation of mercy; and then, at the very time when they expected to see their Lord ascend the throne of David they beheld Him seized as a malefactor, scourged, derided, and condemned, and lifted up on the cross of Calvary. What despair and anguish wrung the hearts of those disciples during the days while their Lord was sleeping in the tomb!

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But purposes of infinite mercy were reaching their fulfillment, even through the disappointment of the disciples. While their hearts had been won by the divine grace and power of His teaching who “spake as never man spake,” yet, intermingled with the pure gold of their love for Jesus, was the base alloy of worldly pride and selfish

ambition. Even in the Passover chamber, at that solemn hour when their Master was already entering the shadow of Gethsemane, there was “a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.” Their vision was filled with the throne, the crown, and the glory; while just before them lay the shame and agony of the garden, the judgment hall, the cross of Calvary. It was their pride of heart, their thirst for worldly glory that had led them to cling so tenaciously to the false teaching of their time, and to pass unheeded the Saviour’s words, showing the true nature of His kingdom, and pointing forward to His agony and death. And these errors resulted in the trial, sharp, but needful, which was permitted for their correction.

Though the disciples had mistaken the meaning of their message, and had failed to realize their expectations, yet they had preached the warning given them of God, and the Lord would reward their faith and honor their obedience. To them was to be entrusted the work of heralding to all nations the glorious gospel of their risen Lord. It was to prepare them for this work that the experience which seemed to them so bitter had been permitted.

Saith the Lord, “My people shall never be ashamed.” “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” When on His resurrection day these disciples met the Saviour, and their hearts burned within them as they listened to His words; when they looked upon the head and hands and feet that had been bruised for them; when, before His ascension, Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up His hands in blessing, bade them, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel,” adding, “Lo, I am with you alway;” when on the day of Pentecost the promised Comforter descended, and the power from on high was given, and the souls of the believers thrilled with the conscious presence of their ascended Lord,—then, even though, like His, their pathway led through sacrifice and martyrdom, would they have exchanged the ministry of the gospel of His grace, with the “crown of righteousness” to be received at His coming, for the glory of an earthly throne, which had been the hope of their earlier discipleship? He who is “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,” had granted them, with the fellowship of His sufferings, the communion of His joy,—the joy of “bringing many sons unto glory,” joy unspeakable, “an eternal weight of glory,”

to which, says Paul, “our light affliction, which is but for a moment,” is “not worthy to be compared.”

The Disappointment in 1844

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The experience of the disciples, who preached the “gospel of the kingdom” at the first advent of Christ, has its counterpart in the experience of those who proclaimed the message of His second advent. As the disciples went out preaching, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand,” so Miller and his associates proclaimed that the longest and last prophetic period brought to view in the Bible was about to expire, that the judgment was at hand, and the everlasting kingdom was to be ushered in.

The preaching of the disciples in regard to time was based on the seventy weeks of [Daniel 9](#). The message given by Miller and his associates announced termination of the twenty-three hundred days of [Daniel 8:14](#), of which the seventy weeks form a part. The preaching of each was based upon the fulfillment of a different portion of the same great prophetic period.

Like the first disciples, William Miller and his associates did not, themselves, fully comprehend the import of the message which they bore. Errors that had been long established in the church prevented them from arriving at a correct interpretation of an important point in the prophecy. Therefore, though they proclaimed the message which God had committed to them to be given to the world, yet through a misapprehension of its meaning, they suffered disappointment.

God accomplished His own beneficent purpose in permitting the warning of the judgment to be given just as it was. The great day was at hand, and in His providence the people were brought to the test of a definite time in order to reveal to them what was in their hearts. The message was designed for the testing and purification of the church. They were to be led to see whether their affections were set upon this world or Christ and heaven. They professed to love the Saviour; now they were to prove their love. Were they ready to renounce their worldly hopes and ambitions, and welcome with joy the advent of their Lord? The message was designed to enable them to discern their true spiritual state; it was sent in mercy to arouse them to seek the Lord with repentance and humiliation.

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The disappointment also, though the result of their own misapprehension of the message which they gave, was to be overruled for good. It would test the hearts of those who had professed to receive the warning. In the face of their disappointment, would they rashly give up their experience, and cast away their confidence in God's word? Or would they, in prayer and humility, seek to discern where they had failed to comprehend the significance of the prophecy? How many had moved from fear, or from impulse and excitement? How many were half-hearted and unbelieving? Multitudes professed to love the appearing of the Lord. When called to endure the scoffs and reproach of the world, and the test of delay and disappointment, would they renounce the faith? Because they did not immediately understand the dealings of God with them, would they cast aside truths sustained by the clearest testimony of His word?

What Did Take Place in 1844?

[113] Both the prophecy of [Daniel 8:14](#), "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," and the first angel's message, "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come," pointed to Christ's ministration in the most holy place, to the investigative judgment, and not to the coming of Christ for the redemption of His people and the destruction of the wicked. The mistake had not been in the reckoning of the prophetic periods, but in the event to take place at the end of the twenty-three hundred days. Through this error the believers had suffered disappointment, yet all that was foretold by the prophecy, and all that they had any Scripture warrant to expect, had been accomplished. At the very time when they were lamenting the failure of their hopes, the event had taken place which was foretold by the message, and which must be fulfilled before the Lord could appear to give reward to His servants.

Christ had come, not to the earth, as they expected, but, as foreshadowing in the type, to the most holy place of the temple of God in heaven. He is represented by the prophet Daniel as coming at this time to the Ancient of days: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven,

and came,” not to the earth, but “to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him.”

This coming is foretold also in the prophet Malachi; “The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.” The coming of the Lord to His temple was sudden, unexpected, to His people. They were not looking for Him *there*. They expected Him to come to earth “in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel.”

Another Message to be Given

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But the people were not yet ready to meet their Lord. There was still a work of preparation to be accomplished for them. Light was to be given, directing their minds to the temple of God in heaven; and as they should by faith follow their High Priest in His ministration there, new duties would be revealed. Another message of warning and instruction was to be given to the church.

Says the prophet: “Who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above, are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God’s people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of [Revelation 14](#).

When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing. “Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.” Then the church, which the Lord at

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His coming is to receive to Himself, will be “a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” Then she will look forth “as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.”

Chapter 14—False Sanctification

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At Claremont, New Hampshire, we were told that there were two parties of Adventists, one party denying their former faith, and another, a small number, who believed that in their past experience they had been led by the providence of God. We were directed to two men especially as holding views similar to our own. We found that there was much prejudice against these men, but supposed that they were persecuted for righteousness' sake. We called on them, and were kindly received and courteously treated. We soon learned that they claimed perfect sanctification, declaring that they were above the possibility of sin.

A Little Ragged Boy

These men wore excellent clothes, and had an air of ease and comfort. While we were talking with them, a little boy, about eight years old, and literally clad in dirty rags, entered the room in which we were sitting. We were surprised to find that this child was the son of one of these men. The mother looked exceedingly ashamed and annoyed; but the father, utterly unconcerned, continued to talk about his high spiritual attainments, without the slightest recognition of his little son.

His sanctification had suddenly lost its charm in my eyes. Wrapped in prayer and meditation, throwing off all the toil and responsibilities of life, this man had failed to provide for the actual wants of his family or give his children the least fatherly attention. He seemed to forget that the greater our love for God, the stronger should be our love and care for those whom He has given us. The Saviour never taught idleness and abstract devotion, to the neglect of the duties lying directly in our pathway.

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This husband and father declared that the attainment of true holiness carried the mind above all earthly thoughts. Still, he sat at the table and ate temporal food. He was not fed by a miracle.

Someone had to provide the food that he ate, although about this matter he troubled himself little, his time being so entirely devoted to spiritual things. Not so his wife, upon who rested the burden of the family. She toiled unremittingly in every department of household labor to keep up the home. Her husband declared that she was not sanctified, that she allowed worldly things to draw her mind away from religious subjects.

I thought of our Saviour, who labored so untiringly for the good of others. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," He declared. The sanctification that He taught was shown by deeds of kindness and mercy, and the love that leads men and women to regard others better than themselves.

In speaking of faith, one of them said, "All that we have to do is to believe, and whatever we ask of God will be given us."

[118] Elder White suggested that there were conditions attached to this promise, "If ye abide in Me," Christ said, "and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." "Your theory of faith," he continued, "must have a foundation. It is as empty as a flour barrel with both heads out. True charity never covers up sins that are unrepented of and unconfessed. She drops her mantle over those faults only that are confessed and renounced. True charity is a very delicate personage, never stepping outside of Bible truth."

Protected from an Unholy Influence

A sister of one of these men requested a private interview with me. She had much to say concerning entire consecration to God, and endeavored to draw out my views in regard to this subject. While talking, she held my hand in hers and with the other softly stroked my hair. I prayed that angels of God might protect me from the unholy influence which this attractive young woman was seeking to exercise over me with her fair speeches and gentle caresses. She had much to say in regard to the spiritual attainments and great faith of her brother. Her mind seemed to be wholly occupied with him and his experience. I felt that I must be guarded in what I said, and was glad when the interview was ended.

These men, who made such lofty professions, were deceiving the unwary. They had much to say about charity covering a multitude of sins. I could not agree with their views and feelings, and felt that they were wielding a terrible power for evil, and was glad to get away from their presence.

In the afternoon we went to the house of Brother Collier, where we proposed to hold a meeting that evening. We asked Brother Collier some questions regarding these men, but he gave us no information. "If the Lord sent you here," he said, "you will ascertain what spirit governs them, and will solve the mystery for us."

A Foul Spirit Rebuked

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At the meeting, while I was earnestly praying for light and the presence of God, these men began to groan and to cry, "Amen!" apparently throwing their sympathy with my prayer. But my heart was immediately oppressed with a great weight. The words died upon my lips, and darkness overshadowed the whole meeting.

Elder White arose, and said, "I am distressed. The Spirit of God is grieved. I resist this influence in the name of the Lord. O God, rebuke this foul spirit."

I was immediately relieved, and rose above the shadows. But again, while I was speaking words of encouragement and faith to those present, their groanings and amens chilled me. Once more Elder White rebuked the spirit of darkness, and again the power of God rested upon me while I spoke to the people. These agents of the enemy were then so bound as to be unable to exert their baleful influence again that night.

After the meeting, Elder White said to Brother Collier, "Now I can tell you concerning these two men. They are acting under a satanic influence, yet attributing all to the Spirit of the Lord."

"I believe God sent you to encourage us," he replied. "We call their influence mesmerism. They affect the minds of others in a remarkable way, and have controlled some to their great damage. We seldom hold meetings here; for they intrude their presence, and we can have no union with them. They manifest deep feeling, as you observed tonight, but they crush the very life from our prayers,

and leave an influence blacker than Egyptian darkness. I have never seen them tied up before tonight.”

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The “Cannot-sin” Theory

During family prayer that night, the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and I was shown many things in vision. These men were presented to me as doing great injury to the cause of God. While professing sanctification, they were transgressing the sacred law. They were corrupt at heart, and those in union with them were under a satanic delusion, obeying their carnal instincts instead of the word of God.

They held that those who are sanctified can not sin. And this naturally led to the belief that the affections and desires of the sanctified ones were always right, and never in danger of leading them into sin. In harmony with these sophistries, they were practicing the worst sins under the garb of sanctification and through their deceptive, mesmeric influence were gaining a strange power over some of their associates, who did not see the evil of these apparently beautiful but seductive theories.

Terrible was their power over the people, for while holding their attention and winning their confidence through a mesmeric influence, they led the innocent and unsuspecting to believe that this influence was the Spirit of God. Therefore those who followed their teachings were deceived into the belief that they and their associates, who claimed to be wholly sanctified, could fulfill all the desires of their hearts without sin.

Clearly the deceptions of these false teachers were laid open before me, and I saw the fearful account that stood against them in the book of records, and the terrible guilt that rested upon them for professing complete holiness while their daily acts were offensive in the sight of God. Some time after this, the characters of these persons were developed before the people and the vision given in reference to them was fully vindicated.

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“Believe in Christ,” was the cry of these claimants of sanctification. “Only believe; this is all that is required of you. Only have faith in Jesus.”

Self-distrustfulness the Mark of a True Christian

The words of John came forcibly to my mind, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," I was shown that those who triumphantly claim to be sinless, show by their very boasting that they are far from being without taint of sin. The more clearly fallen man comprehends the character of Christ, the more distrustful will he be of himself, and the more imperfect will his works appear to him, in contrast with those which marked the life of the spotless Redeemer. But those who are far from Jesus, those whose spiritual perceptions are so clouded by error that they cannot comprehend the character of the great Exemplar, conceive of Him as altogether such a one as themselves, and dare to talk of their own perfection of holiness. But they are far from God; they know little of themselves, and less of Christ.

None of the apostles or prophets claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God has honored with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their own nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ. So will it be with all who behold Christ.

Those who have experienced the cleansing efficiency of the blood of Christ upon their hearts, will be like their Master, pure, peaceable, and lowly. No matter how bold one may be in his claims of spiritual soundness and perfection of character, if he lacks Christian grace and humility, sin is still in his nature, and unless it is purged from him, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. The truly holy, those who walk with God, as did Enoch, will not boast of their piety, but will be free from spiritual pride and self-exaltation. Those who know most of God, and who keep their eyes fixed on the Author and Finisher of their faith, will see nothing good or great in themselves. After they have done all in their power to be faithful, they will still feel that they are unprofitable servants.

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The Pharisee and the Publican

Those who claim to be sinless are in the condition of the Pharisee, who boasted of his almsgiving, thanking God that he was not like the publican. The poor publican had no piety or goodness to boast of. But bowed down by grief and shame, he sent up from his stricken soul a longing cry for God's mercy. He dared not even lift up his eyes toward heaven, but beat upon his breast, praying; "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner." The sin—pardoning Redeemer tells us that this man went to his house justified rather than the other.

[123] Those who are whole need not a physician; those who look upon themselves as sinless do not feel a yearning desire for the wisdom, light, and strength of Jesus. They are content with their own attainments, and hear not the blessed words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." They feel no necessity for growth in grace. They do not feel, as did Paul, that he must keep his body under, lest; after preaching to others, he himself should be a castaway. The apostle declared that he died daily. Every day he battled with temptations and hid himself in Christ. Men who boast of their holiness are far from God. They have not Jesus in their hearts, and do not realize their own unworthiness.

Spurious sanctification leads directly away from the Bible. Those who claim this sanctification reduce religion to a fable, and make feelings and impressions their criterion. They profess to be sinless, and boast of their righteousness, but they teach that men are at liberty to transgress the law of God. A presentation of the claims of the law arouses their opposition and excites their anger and contempt.

A Last-day Delusion

This error is one of the delusions of the last days, and has its origin in will-worship, rather than in submission to the will of God. Those whose faith is not firmly established upon the word of God will be misled by it; and the saddest part of all is that so few who are deceived by this error ever again find their way to the light.

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, but of a lifetime. It is the result of yielding the heart to Christ, and accepting the conditions

of salvation. It is a refining process, that day-by-day God carries on in the hearts of all true believers, until they are complete in Him.

Let a living faith run like threads of gold through the performance of even the smallest duty. Then all the daily work will promote Christian growth. There will be a continual looking unto Jesus. Love for Him will give vital force to everything that is undertaken. Thus through the right use of our talents we may link ourselves by a golden chain to the higher world. This is true sanctification; for sanctification consists in the cheerful performance of daily duties in perfect obedience to the will of God. [124]

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Chapter 15—Meeting Fanaticism In Maine

The Journey to Springfield

The next morning after our meeting at Brother Collier's, we started on our way to Springfield, NH. Elder James White, Sister Louise Foss, and several others were in the company. The roads were very bad, and our two teams had hard work. Part of the time we traveled over bare ground, and then at times through heavy snowdrifts that still remained.

At one place while we were crossing heavy drifts, and part of our company were walking, the wheels on one side broke through the drift, and I was thrown out of the wagon, severely injuring my side. After this I rode many miles in great pain, and was not able to walk into the house when we arrived at our destination.

During the night I could not sleep because of the pain in my side. Then Sister Foss united with me in pleading with God for His blessing and for relief from pain. About midnight the blessing of God rested upon me, and I was taken off in vision. Some of those sleeping in the house were awakened by my voice while in vision, as I spoke of the things that I saw. This was the first time I had heard the voice of God in connection with the time of trouble.

[126] At this time I was shown that by the fanatical spirit, which some were cherishing, reproach was being brought upon the cause of God in Maine, and believers were being disheartened and scattered. I saw that some in whom we had placed great confidence, had been indulging in fanciful and dangerous theories, and under a cloak of godliness, were teaching heresies and were causing fear among the trembling, conscientious believers. I saw that it was my duty to return to Maine, and bear my testimony against the errors that were arising there.

Return to Portland, ME

When we returned to Portland, we found the brethren in great discouragement and confusion. Some were refraining wholly from labor, and were full of censure for those opposed to their fanatical views.

Fanciful Doctrines

Joe Turner, who had been a powerful speaker among the Adventists of Maine, had lost his bearings, and was a leader in the fanaticism. Among the fanciful doctrines, he taught that Christ had come; that the marriage referred to in the parable in Matthew twenty-five had taken place; that on the tenth day of the seventh month of 1844, the virgins went in with Christ to the marriage and the door was shut; that those who had gone in with Him were saved, and those who had not gone in with him were lost.

He also taught that the six thousand years of the earth's history were ended; that this period represented the period that men should work; and that we had entered the seventh thousandth year, which was the great Sabbath of rest. Therefore he taught that Adventists ought not to do any more work.

He and others went so far as to teach that if Adventists continued to engage in ordinary labor, they could not be saved in the kingdom of God. [127]

Visions at Sister Haines's

Shortly after our return to Portland, a meeting was appointed at the home of Sister Haines, that I might have the opportunity to relate what had been shown to me. While I was praying for strength to discharge this painful duty, the Spirit of God rested upon me. I was taken off in vision, and in the presence of Joe Turner I was shown the errors of his teachings and his ungodly course. Those present said that I talked it out plainly before him.

At the first, when I spoke in vision of the pride and self-exaltation that were being manifested by some of the ministers who had acted a part on the advent movement, he said, "Amen," but when I pointed him out as the one who loved the flattery of women, and at the same

time neglected his own family, he declared that another spirit had come in, and that I was under the influence of a sort of mesmerism.

After I came out of vision and had related what had been shown me, he acknowledged that the part of my testimony which had no reference to his course was right, but said that the part which reproved his conduct was wrong. He said that it would take a critical spiritual observer to detect the difference; that this was the same spirit, which had always followed him to crush him.

[128] I was convinced that from that time he would resist and oppose my testimony, and would labor to deceive souls to their ruin. My heart was oppressed as I thought of the reproach that would be brought upon the cause of God through the influence of this man and those who should unite with him, and I left the meeting in anguish of spirit.

This man and some of his associates were studying a science which some called spiritual magnetism, but which was the rankest mesmerism. He said he could take a child and hold it up on his hand, and so influence it that he could take his hand away and the child would stay where he had held it.

Comfort for a Broken-hearted Wife

After I had borne my testimony, as stated, I hurried away to find his wife, for I had a message of comfort for her. I found her at home, weeping. She said, "Sister Ellen, my heart is breaking." I related the vision of reproof given me for her husband, which she confirmed. She told me that her husband had often brought to the home a young sister, and spent much time conversing with her and exercising his mesmeric influence over her. As a result, this young woman thought she had visions in which she was instructed that she must go with him and engage in public labor. "And because I can not receive these things," she said, "He tells me that I am a lost soul." I told her that the Lord was not in any such work as she had described and as had been revealed to me, and that she should not accept the words of censure and discouragement. Other honest, precious souls had been told by these fanatics that they were rejected of God. These cruel words, coming from men whom they believed to be men of God, wholly overthrew some, while others were much discouraged for a

time; but comforting testimonies were given me by God for them, which gave them hope and courage. [129]

Fanatics Refused a Home at My Fathers

From my sister Sarah I learned that Joe Turner and one of his associates, in following their impressions which they claimed to be the leading of the Lord, had been making my fathers house their home. My parents were disgusted as they saw reason and judgment laid aside by them, and protested against their fanatical course. But finding that they could not be freed from their company, they closed their homes and went to Poland, where my two married sisters were living. This did not please the self-willed egotist, and when we arrived at Portland, he told me that my father was a doomed man; that my mother and sisters might be saved, but my father would be lost. The reason offered was that my father would not give him possession of his house when he went to Poland.

My sister Sarah and I went to Poland, where my parents rehearsed their trials, and mentioned incidents, which had occurred at Portland, all of which confirmed the vision given me in New Hampshire.

The Fruits of Fanaticism

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When I again returned to Portland, there were [sic] increasing evidence of the desolating effects of this fanaticism. The fanatical ones seemed to think that religion consisted in great excitement and noise. They would talk in a manner that would irritate unbelievers, and have an influence to cause them to hate them and the doctrines they taught. Then they would rejoice that they had suffered persecution. Unbelievers could see no consistency in such a course. The brethren in some places were prevented from assembling for meetings. The innocent suffered with the guilty.

I carried a sad and heavy heart much of the time. It seemed so cruel that the cause of Christ should be injured by the course of these injudicious men. They were not only ruining their own souls, but placing upon the cause a stigma that could not easily be removed. And Satan loved to have it so. It suited him well to see the truth

handled by unsanctified men; to have it mixed with error, and then all together trampled in the dust. He looked with triumph upon the confused, scattered state of God's children.

[131] Mr. Turner labored to turn my friends and even my relatives against me, and with some success. Why did he do this?—Because I had faithfully related that which was shown me respecting his unchristian course. He circulated falsehoods to destroy my influence and to justify himself. My lot seemed hard. Discouragement pressed heavily upon me; and the condition of God's people so filled me with anguish that for two weeks I was prostrated with sickness. My friends thought I could not live; but brethren and sisters who sympathized with me in this affliction met to pray for me. I soon realized that earnest, effectual prayer was being offered in my behalf. Prayer prevailed, and the power of the strong foe was broken, and I was released, and immediately taken off in vision.

Promise of Special Help

In this view I saw that human influence should never afflict me again as it had in the past. I was instructed that if I felt a human influence affecting my testimony, no matter where I might be, I had only to cry to God, and another angel would be sent to my rescue. I already had one guardian angel attending me continually, but when necessary, the Lord would send another to strengthen me, and raise me above the power of every earthly influence. In this vision I saw for the first time the glory of the new earth.

Vision of the New Earth *

With Jesus at our head, we all descended from the city down to this earth, on a great and mighty mountain, which could not bear Jesus up, and it parted asunder, and there was a mighty plain. Then we looked up and saw the great city, with twelve foundations, and twelve gates, three on each side, and an angel at each gate. We all cried out. "The city, the great city, it's coming down from God out

*This vision describes events to take place at the close of the one thousand years after Christ's second advent. [Revelation 20; 21; 22; Zechariah 14:4, 3](#)

of heaven,” and it came and settled on the place where we stood. Then we began to look at the glorious things outside of the city.

There I saw most glorious houses, that had the appearance of silver, supported by four pillars set with pearls, most glorious to behold. These were to be inhabited by the saints. In each was a golden shelf. I saw many of the saints go into the houses, take off their glittering crowns, and lay them on the shelf, then go out into the field by the houses to do something with the earth; not as we have to do with the earth here; no, no. A glorious light shone all about their heads, and they were continually shouting and offering praises to God. [132]

I saw another field full of all kinds of flowers, and as I plucked them, I cried out, “They will never fade.” Next I saw a field full of tall grass, most glorious to behold; it was living green, and had reflections of silver and gold, as it waved proudly to the glory of King Jesus.

Then we entered a field full of all kinds of beasts,—the lion, the lamb, the leopard, and the wolf, all together in perfect union. We passed through the midst of them, and they followed peaceably after.

Then we entered a wood, not like the dark woods we have here; no, no; but light, and all over glorious; the branches of the trees waved to and fro, and we all cried out, “We will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.” We passed through the woods, for we were on our way to Mount Zion.

As we were traveling along, we met a company who also were gazing at the glories of the place. I noticed red as a border on their garments; their crowns were brilliant; their robes were pure white. As we greeted them, I asked Jesus who they were. He said they were martyrs that has been slain for Him. With them was an innumerable company of little ones; they also had a hem of red on their garments.

Mount Zion was just before us, and on the mount was a glorious temple, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies. And as I saw the little ones climb, or, if they chose, use their little wings and fly to the top of the mountains, and pluck the never fading flowers. There were all kinds of trees around the temple to beautify the place,—the box, the pine, the fir, the oil, the myrtle, the pomegranate, and the fig-tree bowed down with the weight of its timely figs; these made the place all over glorious. And [133]

as we were about to enter the holy temple, Jesus raised His lovely voice and said “Only the 144,000 enter this place,” and we shouted “Alleluia.”

This temple was supported by seven pillars, all of transparent gold, set with pearls most glorious. The wonderful things I saw, I cannot describe. O that I could talk in the language of Canaan, then I could tell a little of the glory of the better world. I saw there, tables of stone in which the names of the 144,000 were engraved in letters of gold.

After we beheld the glory of the temple, we went out, and Jesus left us, and went to the city. Soon we heard His lovely voice again, saying, “Come my people, you have come out of great tribulation, and done My will, suffered for Me, come in to supper; for I will gird Myself and serve you.” We shouted “Alleluia, glory,” and entered into the city.

[134] And I saw a table of pure silver; it was many miles in length, yet our eyes could extend over it. I saw the fruit of the Tree of Life, the manna, the almonds, figs, pomegranates, grapes, and many other kinds of fruit. I asked Jesus to let me eat of the fruit. He said, “Not now. Those who eat of the fruit of this land, go back to earth no more. But in a little while, if faithful, you shall both eat of the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the water of the fountain.” And He said, “You must go back to the earth again, and relate to others what I have revealed to you.”

Then an angel bore me gently down to this dark world. Sometimes I think I can stay here no longer, all the things of earth look so dreary. I feel very lonely here, for I have seen a better land. O that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest.

The Better Land

The following poem was composed by Wm. H. Hyde, who wrote it while I was describing the beauties of the heavenly land and of Christ our Saviour, as I had just seen them in vision. He was sitting behind me, and when I closed, he came around in front of the company present, and putting music to the words, sang it with wonderful effect.

We have heard from the bright, the holy land,—
 We have heard and our hearts are glad;
For we were a lonely pilgrim band,
 And weary worn and sad.
They tell us the pilgrims have a dwelling there,
 No longer are homeless ones;
And we know that the goodly land is fair,
 Where life's pure river runs.

They say green fields are waving there,
 That never a blight shall know;
And the desert wild are blooming fair,
 And the roses of Sharon grow.
There are lovely birds in the bowers green—
 Their songs are blithe and sweet;
And their warblings gushing ever new,
 The angels harpings great.

We have heard of the palms, the robes, the crowns,
 And the silvery band in white;
Of the city fair, with pearly gates,
 All radiant with light.

We have heard of angels there, and saints,
 With their harps of gold, how they sing;
Of the mount, with the fruitful tree of life,
 Of the leaves that healing bring.

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The King of that country, He is fair,
 He's the joy and the light of the place;
In His beauty we shall behold Him there,
 And bask in His smiling face.
We'll be there, we'll be there in a little while;
 We'll join the pure and the blest;
We'll have the palm, the robe, the crown,
 And forever be at rest.

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Chapter 16—Resisting The Spirit

About this time I was subjected to a severe trial. If the Spirit of God rested upon anyone in meeting, and he glorified God by praising Him, some raised the cry of mesmerism; and if it pleased the Lord to give me a vision in meeting, some would say that it was the effect of excitement and mesmerism. Grieved and desponding, I often went alone to some retired place to pour out my soul before Him who invites the weary and heavy laden to come and find rest. As my faith claimed the promises, Jesus would seem very near. The sweet light of heaven would shine around me, and I would seem to be encircled by the arms of my Saviour, and would there be taken off in vision. But when I would relate what God had revealed to me alone, where no earthly influence could affect me, I was grieved and astonished to hear some intimate that those who lived nearest to God were most liable to be deceived by Satan.

According to this teaching, our only safety from delusion would be to remain at a distance from God, in a backslidden state. Oh, thought I, has it come to this, that those who honestly go to God alone to plead His promises, and to claim His salvation, are to be charged with being under the foul influence of mesmerism? Do we ask our kind Father in heaven for bread, only to receive a stone or scorpion? These things wounded my spirit, and wrung my soul with keen anguish, well nigh to despair.

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Some Erroneous Theories

Some would have had me believe that there was no Holy Spirit, and that all the exercises that holy men of God experienced were only the effect of mesmerism or the deception of Satan. Some had taken extreme views of certain texts of Scripture, refraining wholly from labor, and rejecting all those who would not receive their ideas on this and other points pertaining to religious duty.

God revealed these errors to me in vision, and sent me to instruct His erring children; but many of them wholly rejected the message, and charged me with conforming to the world. On the other hand, the nominal Adventists charged me with fanaticism, and I was falsely represented as the leader of the fanaticism, which I was laboring constantly to arrest.

Different times were set for the Lord to come, and were urged upon the brethren. But the Lord showed me that they would pass by, for the time of trouble must come before the advent of Christ, and that every time a date was set, and passed, it would weaken the faith of God's people. For this I was charged with being the evil servant that said, "My Lord delayeth His coming."

All these things weighed heavily upon my spirits, and in my confusion I was sometimes tempted to doubt my own experience.

While at family prayers one morning, the power of God began to rest upon me, and the thought rushed into my mind that it was mesmerism, and I resisted it. Immediately I was struck dumb, and for a few moments was lost to everything around me.

I then saw my sin in doubting the power of God, and that for so doing I had been struck dumb, but that my tongue should be loosed in less than twenty-four hours. A card was held up before me, on which were written in letters of gold the chapter and verse of fifty texts of scripture.

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After I came out of vision, I beckoned for the slate, and wrote upon it that I was dumb, also what I had seen, and that I wished the large Bible. I took the Bible, and readily turned to all the texts that I had seen upon the card, which were as follows:

Luke 1:20	2 Corinthians 4:6-9, 17, 18
John 16:15	1 Peter 1:5-7
Acts 2:4, 429-31	1 Thessalonians 3:8
Matthew 7:6-12, 15; 24:24	Mark 15:17, 18
Colossians 2:6-8	John 9:20-27; 14:13-15; 15:7, 8
Hebrews 10:35-39; 4:10-12	Mark 1:23-25
Philippians 1:6, 27-29; 2:13-15	Romans 8:38, 39

Ephesians 6:10-18; 4:32	Revelation 3:7-13; 14:4, 5
1 Peter 1:22	Philippians 3:20
John 13:34, 35	James 5:7, 8
2 Corinthians 13:5	Philippians 3:21
1 Corinthians 3:10-13	Revelation 14:14-17
Acts 20:28-30	Hebrews 4:9
Galatians 1:6-9	Revelation 21:2; 14:1; 22:1-5
Luke 12:3-7; 10, 11	

I was unable to speak all day. Early the next morning my soul was filled with joy, and my tongue was loosened to shout the high praises of God. After that I dared not doubt, or for a moment resist the power of God, whatever others might think of me.

[139] Up to the time of my first vision, as before stated, I could not write; my trembling hand was unable to hold my pen steadily. While in vision, I was commanded by an angel to write the vision. I obeyed and wrote readily. My nerves were strengthened, and my hand became steady.

It was a great cross for me to relate to the erring what had been shown me concerning them. It caused me great distress to see others troubled and grieved. And when obliged to declare the messages, I would often soften them down, and make them appear as favorable for the individual as I could, and then would go by myself and weep in agony of spirit. I looked upon those who seemed to have only their own souls to care for, and thought if I were in their condition I would not murmur. It was hard to relate the plain, cutting testimonies given me of God. I anxiously watched the result, and if the persons reprov'd rose up against the reproof, and afterward opposed the truth, these queries arose in my mind: Did I deliver the message just as I should? Could there not have been some way to save them? And then such distress pressed upon my soul that I often felt that death would be a welcome messenger, and the grave a sweet resting place.

The Sin of Unfaithfulness

I did not realize that I was unfaithful in thus questioning and doubting, and did not see the danger and sin of such a course, until in vision I was taken into the presence of Jesus. He looked upon me with a frown, and turned His face from me. It is not possible to describe the terror and agony I felt. I fell upon my face before him, but had no power to utter a word. Oh, how I longed to be covered and hid from that dreadful frown! Then could I realize, in some degree, what the feelings of the lost will be when they cry, "Mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb."

Presently an angel bade me rise, and the sight that met my eyes can hardly be described. Before me was a small company whose hair and garments were torn, and whose countenances were the very picture of despair and horror. They came close to me, and rubbed their garments upon mine. As I looked at my garments, I saw that they were stained with blood. Again I fell like one dead, at the feet of my accompanying angel. I could not plead one excuse, and longed to be away from that holy place.

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The angel raised me to my feet, and said, "This is not your case now, but this scene has passed before you to let you know what the situation must be if you neglect to declare to others what the Lord has revealed to you. But if you are faithful to the end, you shall eat of the tree of life, and drink of the river of the water of life. You will have to suffer much, but the grace of God is sufficient."

I then felt willing to do all that the Lord might require of me to do, that I might have His approbation, and not feel His dreadful frown.

In later years additional instruction was given me regarding faithfulness in presenting to the people the messages that have been given to me for them.

During the night of December 5, 1868, I had a most impressive dream. A person brought to me a web of white cloth, and bade me to cut it into garments for persons of all sizes, of all descriptions of character, and in all circumstances in life. I was told to cut them out, and hang them up all ready to be made when called for. I had the impression that many for whom I was required to cut out garments

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were unworthy.

I inquired if that was the last piece of cloth I should have to cut, and was told that it was not; that as soon as I had finished this one, there were others for me to take hold of. I felt discouraged at the amount of work before me, and stated that I had been engaged in cutting garments for others for more than twenty-years, and my labors had not been appreciated, neither did I see that my work had accomplished much good.

I spoke to the person who brought the cloth to me, of one woman in particular, for whom he had told me to cut out a garment. I stated that she would not prize the garment, and that it would be a loss of time and material to present it to her. She was very poor, of inferior intellect, and untidy in her habits, and would soon soil it.

The person replied, "Cut out the garments. This is your duty. The loss is not yours, but Mine. God sees not as a man sees. He lays out the work that He would have done, and you do not know which will prosper, this or that. It will be found that many such poor souls will go into the kingdom, while others, who are favored with all the blessings of life, having good intellects and pleasant surroundings, giving them all the advantages of improvement, will be left out. It will be seen that these poor souls have lived up to the feeble light they had, and having improved by the limited means within their reach, lived much more acceptably than others who have enjoyed full light, and ample means for improvement."

[142] I then held up my hands, calloused as they were with long use of shears, and stated that I could but shrink at the thought of pursuing this kind of labor longer. The person then repeated, "Cut out the garments. Your release has not yet come."

With feelings of great weariness, I arose to engage in the work. Before me lay new, polished shears, which I commenced using. At once my feelings of weariness and discouragement left me, the shears seemed to cut with hardly an effort on my part, and I cut out garment after garment with comparative ease.

Another Conflict with Mesmerism

While visiting my sister in Poland, I was afflicted with sickness. Those present united in prayer in my behalf, and the disease was

rebuked. Angels seemed to be in the room, and all was light and glory. I was again taken off in vision, and shown that I must go about three miles to a meeting, and when there should learn what the Lord would have me do.

We went to the meeting, and found a large number of brethren and sisters assembled. We were surprised to find Joe Turner there. He had boasted that he understood the art of mesmerism, and said that he could mesmerize Ellen Harmon, and could prevent her from having a vision or relating one in his presence. There were many present who had heard his boastful assertions.

During the meeting I arose to speak. Then my visions came up fresh before me, and I began relating them. Soon I felt a human influence being exerted against me. I looked at Mr. Turner, and saw that he had his hand up to his face, and was looking through his fingers. His eyes were intently fixed upon me, his lips were compressed, and a low groan now and then escaped him. In a moment I remembered the promise which the Lord had given me,—that if I were in danger of being affected by an earthly influence, and would ask for another angel, one would be sent to protect me. [143]

Turning to this man, I related what the Lord had shown me in Portland; raising my hands to heaven, earnestly cried, “Another angel, Father, another angel!” I knew that my request was granted. I felt shielded by the strong Spirit of the Lord. I was borne above every earthly influence, and with freedom finished my testimony. The believers were comforted, and rejoiced in the Lord.

Some of my friends asked Mr. Turner why he had not stopped me from relating the vision, as he said he would. He answered, “Oh, some of you would have her talk.”

After the meeting we returned to my sister’s with strong confidence, rejoicing in God.

Fruits of the No-work Doctrine

There were some in Paris, ME, who believed that it was sin to work. Elder Jesse Stevens was the leader in this error, and exerted strong influence over others. For years he had been a Methodist preacher, and was considered a humble, faithful Christian. By his zeal for the advent message and apparently holy living, he had won

the confidence of many, and some believed him to be especially directed by God.

[144] The Lord gave me a reproof for this man, declaring that he was going contrary to the word of God in abstaining from labor, in urging his errors upon others, and in denouncing all who did not receive them. He rejected every evidence which the Lord gave to convince him of his error, and was determined to make no change in his course. He took weary journeys, walking great distances to places where he would receive only abuse, and thought that in so doing he was suffering for Christ's sake. Impressions were followed and reason and judgment were laid aside.

Not only did the Lord give me a faithful message for this man, but also I was sent long distances to warn the people of God against the errors he was urging upon them. At one time I was shown that I must go to Paris, ME, for a meeting was appointed there which I must attend. I followed the direction given me, and upon arriving learned that Elder Stevens had notified the brethren that there was to be a great meeting the next day at the house of Brother C. in which an important matter was to be brought out. He urged all to attend.

The next morning we went to the place appointed for the meeting. When Elder Stevens came in and saw us present, he seemed troubled. The meeting opened with prayer. Then as I tried to pray, the blessing of the Lord rested upon me, and I was taken off in vision.

Elder Stevens had declared that he would listen to nothing but the Bible. I was shown the teachings of the Bible in contrast with his errors. I then saw that the frown of God was upon him because he was leading honest, conscientious souls astray. They saw inconsistencies in his faith, and their judgment told them he was wrong, yet they feared to differ with him.

His object in appointing that meeting had been to make an effort to strengthen the cords of error with which he had bound these souls.

[145] I saw that God would work for the salvation of His people; that Elder Stevens would soon manifest himself, so that all the honest in heart would see that he was not actuated by a right spirit, and that his career would soon close. Soon afterward the snare was broken, and he had but little more influence over the brethren. He denounced the visions of being of the devil, and continued to follow his impressions, until his mind was deranged and his friends were obliged to confine

him. At last he made a rope of some of his bed clothing, with which he hanged himself, and his followers were brought to realize their condition.

God ordained that the beings He created should work. Upon this their happiness depends. Healthy young men and women have no need of cricket, ball playing, or any kind of amusement just for the gratification of self, to pass away the time. There are useful things to be done by every one of God's created intelligences. Someone needs from you something that will help him. No one in the Lord's great domain of creation was to be made a drone. Our happiness increases and our powers develop as we engage in useful employment.

Action gives power. Entire harmony pervades the universe of God. All heavenly beings are in constant activity, and the Lord Jesus, in His life work, has given an example for everyone. He went about "doing good." God established the law of obedient action. Silent but ceaseless, the objects of His creation do their appointed work. The ocean is in constant motion. The springing grass, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, does its errand, clothing the fields with beauty. The leaves are stirred to motion, and yet no hand is seen to touch them. The sun, moon, and stars are useful and glorious in fulfilling their mission. [146]

At all times the machinery of the body continues its work. Day by day the heart throbs, doing its regular, appointed task, unceasingly forcing its crimson current to all parts of the body. Action, action, is seen pervading the whole living machinery. And man, his mind and body created in God's own similitude, must be active in order to fill his appointed place. He is not to be idle. Idleness is sin.

An Evidence of God's Care

After returning to Portland, I was shown that I must go to Portsmouth the next day and bear my testimony there.

At that time my sister Sarah traveled with me, and Elder White was to accompany us. We had no means with which to pay our fare, but prepared to go, trusting the Lord to open the way.

Our house was not far from the station, and the first car bell was ringing as I put on my bonnet. Then I looked out of the window, and

saw a good brother driving rapidly up to our gate, his horse reeking with sweat.

He quickly entered the house, and asked, "Is there anyone here who needs means? I was impressed that someone here needed money."

We hastily related that we were going to Portsmouth at the Lord's bidding, and had no means with which to go, but were resolved to start, trusting in the providence of God to open the way.

The brother handed us money enough to carry us to Portsmouth and back, and said, "Take a seat in my wagon, and I will carry you to the depot."

[147] He told us that while on the way to my father's, his horse had seemed determined to come with great speed the whole distance of twelve miles. We had barely time to take our seats in the cars when the train started.

Thus the Lord tested and proved us, and strengthened our faith as we were brought into a very strait place, and were carried through by the manifestation of His providence.

I had freedom in bearing my testimony in Portsmouth.

Chapter 17—Labors In Massachusetts

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Not long after our visit to Portsmouth, I was shown that I must visit Massachusetts, and there bear my testimony. This was in the summer of 1845. My sister Sarah accompanied me. When we reached Boston, we learned that Joe Turner, whose course in Maine had caused so much trouble, had arrived in Boston a few hours before us. It was evident that our being sent to Boston just at that time, was to save God's people from falling under his influence.

Meeting in Roxbury

It was arranged that I should go to Roxbury, and there relate my message. I found a large company gathered in a private house. I felt the opposition that existed in the hearts of some of the brethren, yet in the strength of the Lord I delivered my unpopular message.

As I was speaking, a sister who had been opposed to my work, arose and interrupted me. She grasped my hand, saying, "I said that the devil sent you, but I can doubt your message no longer." Then she declared to those present that she believed I was a child of God, and that he had sent me.

The power of the Lord attended the testimony I bore. All in the meeting were greatly blessed, and many testified that they were comforted and refreshed. The leader of the meeting, his countenance beaming with joy, arose and said, "The same power attends this message that attended the truth in 1844. I do not expect to find another so green a spot this side of our deliverance."

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In Dorchester

From Roxbury we went to Dorchester, and had a meeting in the house of Brother Otis Nichols. At this meeting the leader of the company at Roxbury again testified that the Lord had abundantly blessed him and said he could go forty days on the strength he there received.

But Joe Turner was exerting his influence to discourage the brethren, and to close up the way, by spreading lying reports concerning my work. The brother who had been made so happy as he received my testimony fell under his influence, and as his mind turned, he became unsettled, then unstable and unhappy, and finally took up the spiritualistic view of the second advent, and received the grossest errors.

I next visited Randolph and New Bedford. In these places also the Lord gave me liberty to bear my testimony. It was generally received, and the desponding and weak were strengthened.

Kindness of Brother and Sister Nichols

[150] Brother and Sister Nichols invited Sarah and me to make their house our home. This kindness we gladly accepted. They took us in their carriage from place to place to hold meetings, and were ever ready with words of encouragement and comfort. When in trial, their prayers often ascended to heaven in my behalf, until the clouds dispersed, and the light of heaven again cheered me.

They did not grow weary in their kindness. They were attentive to all our wants, and generously supplied us with means to travel.

Because Brother and Sister Nichols believed me to be a child of God, chosen to bear a special testimony to His people, they were often reproached and were obliged to be in almost constant conflict. No means were left untried to turn them against me. But a faithful record is kept of their acts of love and benevolence, and He who seeth in secret and is acquainted with every kind and generous act, will reward them openly.

At Carver

In a few weeks I visited Carver, and found that a few had been influenced by false reports of my enemies. But in many instances, where the way had been previously closed against my testimony, it was now opened for me to bear it, and I had more friends than before.

A Girl Cured of Fits

In the house where we tarried, there was a young sister who was the subject of fits. She had a most distressing attack while we were there. All seemed to be alarmed. Some said, "Go for the doctor;" others, "Put on the tea-kettle for hot water." I felt the spirit of prayer. We prayed to the Lord to deliver the afflicted. In the name and strength of Jesus, I put my arms around her, and lifted her up from the bed, rebuking the power of Satan, and bidding her, "Go free." She instantly recovered from the fit, and praised the Lord with us. We had a solemn, refreshing experience in this place. We told the brethren and sisters that we had not come to defend character, nor to expose the wickedness of men who were laboring to destroy our influence, but to do our Master's will. We said that God would take care of the results of the efforts made by designing men. Our hearts were strengthened, and the church encouraged. [151]

Conflict with False Doctrines

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About this time Sister C. S. Minor returned from Philadelphia to her home in Roxbury. She had recently made a trip to Jerusalem, Palestine, and was advocating some of the sentimental spiritualistic views that were coming in like a flood to ruin the faith of the Adventist people.

Spiritualistic View of Second Advent

The spiritual view of Christ's coming was ensnaring many. This great deception of Satan led many sophistries and corrupting errors. I could not understand the spiritualistic theories presented but the Lord gave me a message to bear, which cut its way through the entangling sophistries. Many accepted the evidence that God was working through a humble instrument, and laid aside their fanciful theories. With them the controversy was at an end.

At Roxbury we met a company over whom it seemed impossible to break the spell. The words of Scripture seemed to have no influence on them. They were bound by hypnotic influence.

I was invited to attend a meeting in Roxbury, and relate what the Lord had shown me. Brother Nichols took my sister and me to the

meeting, where we found twenty persons assembled. Among them were brethren and sisters whom I dearly loved. They had acted a noble part in the advent movement, but they had been led astray by spiritualistic theories and fanciful doctrines, which led on and on, till they calumniated in lovesick sentimentalism and rank fanaticism.

[153] Some of the company assembled were individuals whom I had been shown were strong fanatics. They dealt in human or satanic influence, and called it the Spirit of God. I had not seen them before with my natural eyes, yet as I looked upon them, their countenances were familiar to me; for their course of life, their errors and corrupting influences had been shown me. The power of God came upon me, and I warned them of their dangers.

The leading ones, considering this a favorable opportunity to exert their influence over me, and cause me to yield to their views, urged me to relate the visions. But I was impressed that their only object was to mangle the truths presented in the visions, and spiritualize away their literal meaning. I felt that they would endeavor to throw a Satanic influence upon me, and call it the power of God. I felt forbidden to relate my visions to this company, and I refused to tell them anything except the part which related to them. They flattered, but it had no effect. Then they tried to terrify me, commanding me. They said it was my duty to tell them the visions.

We told them we had no fellowship with their spirit, and that in the name of the Lord we would resist it. I faithfully warned those whom I believed to be honest, and begged them to renounce their errors, and leave the company that was leading them astray. I told them that the views that they had accepted were but the Alpha of a great deception.

[154] Those were troublous times. If we had not stood firmly then, we should have made a shipwreck of our faith. Some said we were stubborn; but we were obliged to set our faces as a flint, and not turn to the right hand nor to the left. Those who believed in the spiritual coming of Christ, were insinuating, like the great serpent in the garden. When it suited their purposes they would show such a mild, meek spirit that we had to be on our guard, strengthened on every side with Scripture testimony concerning the literal, personal appearing of our Saviour. I left them, free from their influence and

spirit. In a few weeks a portion of that company were left to run into the basest fanaticism.

In later years I have been shown that the false theories advanced in the past have by no means been given up. As favorable opportunities come, they will have a resurrection. Let us not forget that everything that can be shaken will be shaken. The enemy will be successful in overthrowing the faith of some, but those who are true to principles will not be shaken. They will stand firm amid trial and temptation. The Lord has pointed out these errors, and those who do not discern where Satan has come in, will continue to be led in false paths. Jesus bids us be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, which are ready to die.

We are not called upon to enter controversy with those who hold false theories. Controversy is unprofitable. Christ never entered into it. "It is written" is the weapon used by the world's Redeemer. Let us keep close to the Word. Let us allow Jesus and His messengers to testify. We know that their testimony is true.

Christ is over all the works of His creation. In the pillar of fire, He guided the children of Israel, His eyes seeing past, present, and future. He is to be recognized and honored by all who love God. His commandments are to be the controlling power in the lives of His people.

The tempter comes with the supposition that Christ has removed His seat of honor and power into some unknown region, and that men need no longer be inconvenienced by exalting His character and obeying His law. Human beings are to be a law unto themselves, he declared. The sophistries exalt self and make nothing of God. Restraint and moral control in the human family are destroyed. Restraint upon vice grows more and more feeble. The world loves not, fears not God. And those who do not love or fear God soon lose all sense of obligation to one another. They are without God and without hope in the world. [155]

Those teachers who do not daily bring the Word of God into their life-work, are in great peril. They have not a saving knowledge of God or of Christ. It is those who do not live the truth who are most inclined to invent sophistries to occupy the time and absorb the attention that ought to be given to the study of God's Word. It is a fearful mistake for us to neglect the study of the Bible to

investigate theories that are misleading, diverting minds from the words of Christ to fallacies of human production.

We need no fanciful teaching regarding the personality of God. What God desires us to know of Him is revealed in His Word and His works. The beautiful things of nature reveal His character and His power as Creator. They are His gift to the race, to show His power, and to show that He is a God of love. But no one is authorized to say that God Himself in person is in flower or leaf or tree. These are the things of God's handiwork, revealing His love for mankind.

[156] Christ is the perfect revelation of God. Let those who desire to know God, study the work and teaching of Christ. To those who receive Him and believe on Him, he gives power to become the sons of God.

Personality of God and Christ

I had often been shown the lovely Jesus, that He is a person. I had asked Him if His father was a person, and had a form like Himself. Said Jesus, "I am in the express *image* of My Father's *person*." I had often seen that the spiritual view took away the glory of heaven, and that in many minds the throne of David and the lovely person of Jesus had been burned by the fire of spiritual interpretation.

Chapter 18—Second Visit To Massachusetts

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Soon after our meeting in Roxbury, Sarah and I returned to Portland. Later, by invitation of Brother and Sister Nichols, we returned to Massachusetts, and for a time made their house our home.

No Work Theory Again

At this time there was in Boston and vicinity a large company of those who held that it was a sin to labor. Their principal message was, "Sell that ye have, and give alms." They said we were in the jubilee, that the land should rest, and that the poor must be supported without labor. Sargent and Robbins were among the leaders in this fanaticism. They denounced my visions as being of the devil, because I had reproved their errors. They were severe upon all who did not believe them.

While we were at the house of Brother Nichols, these men came from Boston to ask a favor of him, and said that they had come to have a visit and tarry over the night with him. Brother Nichols replied that he was glad they had come, for Sisters Sarah and Ellen Harmon were in the house, and he wished them to become acquainted with us. They at once changed their minds about staying over night, and could not even be persuaded to come in to the house. Brother Nichols asked if I might relate my message in Boston, and if they would hear and then judge, should I go there. "Yes," said they; "Come to Boston next Sabbath; we would like the privilege of hearing her." [158]

Accordingly we planned to visit Boston, but in the evening, while engaged in prayer, I was shown in vision that we must not go to Boston, but in the opposite direction, to Randolph, because the Lord had a work for us to do there.

Meeting in Randolph

We went to Randolph, and found a large room full of people who had gathered for a meeting, and among them were the very men who said they would be pleased to hear my message in Boston. As we entered, Robbins and Sargent looked at each other in surprise, and began to groan. They had promised to meet me in Boston, but thought they would disappoint us by going to Randolph, and would warn the brethren there against us. In the forenoon meeting they did not have much freedom. During intermission one of them remarked that good matter would be brought out in the afternoon. Robbins told my sister that I could not have a vision where he was.

In the afternoon, while we were pleading with God in prayer, the blessing of the Lord rested on me, and I was taken off in vision. I was again shown the errors of these deceived men and others united with them. I saw that they could not prosper, that their errors would confuse and distract; that some would be deceived by them, but that truth would triumph in the end, and error be brought down. I was shown that they were not honest.

[159] Then the future was opened before me, and I saw that they would continue to despise the teachings of the Lord, that they would reject reproof and resist God's Spirit until their folly should be manifest to all, and they would finally be left in total darkness. A chain of truth was presented to me from the Scriptures, in contrast with their errors.

When I came out of vision, candles were burning. I had been in vision nearly four hours. As I was unconscious of all that transpired around me while in vision, I will copy from Brother Nichols' description of that meeting.

Description by Otis Nichols

“Sister Ellen was taken off in vision with extraordinary manifestations, and continued talking in vision with a clear voice, which could be distinctly understood by all present, until about sundown. Sargent, Robbins, and one other were much exasperated, as well as excited, to hear Sister Ellen talk in vision, which they declared was of the devil. They exhausted all their influence and bodily strength

to destroy the effect of the vision. They would unite in singing very loud, and then alternately would talk and read from the Bible, in a loud voice in order that she might not be heard, until their strength was exhausted, and their hands would shake so that they could not read from the Bible. But amidst all this confusion and noise, Ellen's clear and shrill voice, as she talked in vision, was distinctly heard by all present. The opposition of these men continued as long as they could talk and sing, notwithstanding some of their own friends rebuked them, and requested them to stop. 'But,' said Robbins, 'you are bowed to an idol; you are worshipping a golden calf.'

The Open Bible Test

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"Mr. Thayer, the owner of the house, was not fully satisfied that her vision was of the devil, as Robbins declared it to be. He wanted it tested in some way. He had heard that visions of Satan's power were arrested by opening the Bible and laying it on the person in vision, and asked Sargent if he would test it in that way, which he declined to do. Then Mr. Thayer took a heavy, large quarto Bible which was lying on the table and seldom used, opened it, and laid it open upon the breast of Ellen while in vision, as she was inclined backward against the wall in the corner of the room.

"Immediately after the Bible was laid upon her, she arose upon her feet, and walked into the middle of the room, with the Bible open in one hand, and lifted it as high as she could reach, and with her eyes steadily looking upward, declared in a solemn manner, 'The inspired testimony from God' or words of the same import.

"And then, while the Bible was extended in one hand, and eyes looking upward, and not on the Bible, she continued for a long time to turn over the leaves with the other hand, and place her finger upon certain passages, and correctly repeat the words with a solemn voice.

"Many present looked at the passages where her finger was pointed, to see if she repeated them correctly, for her eyes at the same time were looking upward. Some of the passages referred to were judgments against the wicked and blasphemers; and others were admonitions and instructions relative to our present condition.

"In this state she continued all afternoon until near sunset, when she came out of vision. When Ellen arose in vision upon her feet,

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with the heavy Bible in her hand, and walked the room, uttering passages of Scripture, the opposers were silenced. For the remainder of the time they were troubled, with many others; but they shut their eyes and braved it out without making any acknowledgement of their feelings.”

Strange Experiences in Portland

After returning from our visit in Massachusetts, we passed through strange experiences in Portland.

One evening as we were engaged in prayer, the window was broken just above my head, and the glass came down upon me. I continued praying. One man in his blind rage was cursing and swearing while we continued to plead with God that when His indignation should come upon the shelterless heads of poor sinners, we might be hid in the secret pavilion. The man’s voice hushed, and he was seen hastening from the place. He could not endure the sound of prayer, nor the thought of judgment.

Visit of the Policemen

Some of our wicked, profane neighbors complained that they were disturbed by our frequent praying, and we were several times interrupted by them. One afternoon an officer was sent to visit us, while some of our neighbors raised their windows to hear the result. Father was away at his business, and mother stepped to the door. He told her that complaints had reached him that we disturbed the peace of the neighborhood by noisily praying, and sometimes by praying in the night, and he was requested to attend to the matter.

Mother answered that we prayed morning and night, and sometimes at noon, and should continue to do so; that Daniel prayed to his God three times a day, notwithstanding the king’s decree.

He said he had no objection to prayer; if there was more of it in the neighborhood it would be better. “But,” said he, “they complain of your praying in the night.”

He was told that if any of the family were sick, or in distress of mind in the night, it was our custom to call upon God for help, and we found relief.

He was referred by our neighbor who used strong drink. His voice was often heard cursing and blaspheming God. "Why did not the neighbors send you to him," my mother said, "to still the disturbances he causes in the neighborhood? He serves his master; we serve the Lord our God. Why is it that his curses and blasphemy seem not to disturb the neighbors, while the voice of prayer greatly troubles them?"

"Well," said the officer, "what shall I tell them that you will do?"

My mother replied, "Serve God, let the consequences be what they may."

The officer left, and we had no further trouble from that quarter.

Anger of Young Men

A few days after, while our family was quietly engaged in evening prayer, some young men, imitating the example of their parents, began making noise around the house. At length they ran for an officer. He came, and they told him to listen. Said he, "Is this what you have called me for? That family is doing what every family ought to do. They are making no disturbances; and if you call me out for this purpose again, I will put you in the lock-up, for disturbing a peaceable family while attending their religious duties." After this we were not molested.

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Fear of Thunder

That summer the neighbors were terrified by frequent thunder and lightning. A number were instantly killed; and if there was an appearance of a thunderstorm, some of the parents would send their children to our house to invite one of the family to visit them, and stay until the storm was over. The children innocently told the whole story, saying: "Ma says the lightning will not strike a house where the advent people are."

One night there was a fearful storm. The heavens presented a continual sheet of lightning. A few rushed from their beds into the street, calling upon God for mercy, crying, "The judgment day has come."

My brother Robert, who was a devoted Christian, was very happy. He went out of the house and walked to the head of the street, praising the Lord. He said he never prized the hope of the Christian as he did that night, when he saw the terror and insecure position of those who had no hope in Christ.

Chapter 19—The Sabbath of the Lord

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During the latter part of 1845 and the beginning of 1846, I suffered great feebleness. At times I was called out to labor in various places, and was given strength to bear my testimony to the people. And although often wonderfully sustained during these labors, I afterward found myself weak and full of suffering.

Elder Joseph Bates

While on a visit to New Bedford, MA, in 1846, I became acquainted with Elder Joseph Bates. He had early embraced the advent faith, and was an active laborer in the cause. I found him to be a true Christian gentleman, courteous and kind. He treated me tenderly as though I were his own child. The first time he heard me speak, he manifested great interest. After I ceased speaking, he arose and said, “I am a doubting Thomas. I do not believe in visions. But if I could believe the testimony the sister related tonight was indeed the voice of God to us, I would be the happiest man alive. My heart is deeply moved. I believe the speaker to be sincere, but can not explain in regard to her being shown the wonderful things she has related to us.”

Elder Bates rested upon Saturday, the seventh day of the week, and he urged it upon our attention as the true Sabbath. I did not feel its importance, and thought that he erred in dwelling upon the fourth commandment more than the other nine.

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The Sanctuary and the Sabbath

But the Lord gave me a view of the heavenly sanctuary. The temple of God was open in heaven, and I was shown the ark of God covered with the mercy-seat. Two angels stood one at either end of the ark, with their wings spread over the mercy-seat, and their faces turned toward it. This my accompanying angel informed

me represented all the heavenly host looking with reverential awe toward the law of God, which had been written by the finger of God.

Jesus raised the cover of the ark, and I beheld the tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written. I was amazed as I saw the fourth commandment in the very center of the ten precepts, with a soft halo of light encircling it. Said the angel, "It is the only one of the ten which defines the living God who created the heavens and the earth and all things therein."

When the foundations of the earth were laid, then also was laid the foundation of the Sabbath. I was shown that if the true Sabbath were kept, there would never have been an infidel or an atheist. The observance of the Sabbath would have preserved the world from idolatry.

Repairers of the Breach

[166] The fourth commandment has been trampled upon, therefore we are called upon to repair the breach in the law and plead for the desecrated Sabbath. The man of sin who exalted himself above God, and thought to change times and laws, brought about the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. In doing this he made a breach in the law of God. Just prior to the great day of God, a message is sent forth to warn the people to come back to their allegiance to the law of God which antichrist has broken down. Attention must be called to the breach in the law by precept and example.

I was shown that the precious promises of [Isaiah 58:12-14](#) apply to those who labor for the restoration of the true Sabbath.

"And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: they shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in."

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then thou shalt delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places

of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.”

The Work of the Third Angel

I was shown that the third angel proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, represents the people who receive this message and raise the voice of warning to the world, to keep the commandments of God and His law as the apple of the eye, and that in response to this warning many would embrace the Sabbath of the Lord.