

ELLEN G. WHITE

*Publications*

DF

Office Address:

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20012

November 27, 1973

DF 164  
⑪  
144,000

Pastor David Moróz, President  
Missao Brasil Central  
Caixa Postal, 60  
74000 Goiania, Goias, Brazil

Dear Brother Moróz:

On October 17 during the Annual Council held here in Washington, I received your letter written October 10 in which you enclosed a copy of a letter being circulated by the "Reformers," purporting to be a communication written by my father, W. C. White, in 1929. This relates to the 144,000. You asked if this letter is authentic and if so, is there not a conflict in the views expressed here and in the published writings of Ellen G. White.

First of all, I can state that my father did on April 18, 1929 write a letter presenting his views concerning the 144,000. I am enclosing a copy as we have it in our files. There are some inaccuracies in the copy you sent to us, yet it is essentially what was written by my father. In this letter, W. C. White expresses his views on the matter and summons his memory of some statements made by his mother which he presents in support of his views. It will be observed that W. C. White near the close of his letter, states, "If you ask me to make an argument on this matter, I will freely say that I am not prepared to enter into argument regarding the 144,000. I am willing to wait until the saints are resurrected and taken to the heavenly city for a definite knowledge regarding God's plan in this matter." He closes with the words, "I suggest to you that you lay aside all perplexities regarding this matter, and that you joy in the salvation of Christ and use your every energy to encourage and help others along the Christian way."

These words indicate that none of us should be dogmatic in the matter as to just who will constitute the 144,000. And I would state here that it is my opinion that it is God's purpose that we shall not know precisely how the 144,000 will be made up. If we did know this, we would be tempted to number Israel. The important point is that we should understand the qualifications of this group and Sister White tells us that "we are to strive to be among the 144,000."

W. P. BRADLEY  
President

T. CARCICH  
Vice-President

A. L. WHITE  
Secretary

D. A. DELAFIELD  
Associate Secretary

PAUL GORDON  
Assistant Secretary

Pastor David Moroz--2

I believe that we should preface anything that we might write in regard to this matter with the admonition written by Ellen White in 1901:

"Christ says that there will be those in the church who will present fables and suppositions, when God has given grand, elevating, ennobling truths, which should ever be kept in the treasure-house of the mind. When men pick up this theory and that theory, when they are curious to know something it is not necessary for them to know, God is not leading them. It is not His plan that His people shall present something which they have to suppose, which is not taught in the Word. It is not His will that they shall get into controversy over questions which will not help them spiritually, such as Who is to compose the hundred and forty-four thousand? This those who are the elect of God will in a short time know without question.

"My brethren and sisters, appreciate and study the truths God has given for you and your children. Spend not your time in seeking to know that which will be no spiritual help. 'What shall I do to inherit eternal life?' This is the all-important question, and it has been clearly answered. 'What is written in the law? how readest thou?'--E. G. White MS 26, 1901 (Published in Selected Messages, Book 1, pp. 174-175.

I am enclosing a mimeographed sheet entitled "Counsel Regarding the Question of the 144,000" with the statement given above as the opening item.

The issue of course is, will there be as a part of the 144,000 those who have died in the faith of the Third Angel's Message. Elder Uriah Smith, editor of the Review and Herald, on August 10, 1897, made it clear that it was his opinion that there would be. Elder Loughborough, in a pamphlet he published privately entitled "The Sealing Message," set forth the argument that the 144,000 would be comprised of those who would be translated without seeing death and those who had died in the Third Angel's Message. My father, W. C. White, in the letter we have just referred to, expressed his views as being such. But none of these men were inspired writers; they were entitled to their views and they were free to express their views. But as we seek to settle the question, we must take into account three factors. One, those we have referred to were expressing their personal views as they held them, and as they pointed out, based somewhat on their understanding of what Ellen White taught. Two, Ellen White's clear-cut statement that it was not God's will that we should get into controversy over such questions as who is to compose the 144,000. She urges that we avoid being dogmatic on questions which are "not taught in the word," and which must be based on supposition. Three, Ellen White's clear-cut statement in Great Controversy on this question found near the close of the chapter entitled "God's People Delivered," and appearing on pp. 648 and 649 of the standard English printing. I shall present this here, breaking up the very long paragraph into several shorter paragraphs and emphasizing some of the sentences.

"Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire,--so resplendent is it with the glory of God,--are gathered the company that have 'gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.' With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, 'having the harps of God,' they stand, the hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from among men; and there is heard, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, 'the voice of harpers harping with their harps.' And they sing 'a new song' before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb-- a song of deliverance.

"None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience--an experience such as no other company have ever had. 'These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.' These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as 'the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.' Revelation 15:2, 3; 14:1-5. These are they which came out of great tribulation; they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob's trouble; they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God's judgments.

"But they have been delivered, for they have 'washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' 'In their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault' before God. 'Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.' They have seen the earth wasted with famine and pestilence, the sun having power to scorch men with great heat; and they themselves have endured suffering, hunger, and thirst. But 'they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'" Revelation 7:14-17 (Emphasis supplied)

To me, the wording here is very clear. Those who are to be counted among the 144,000 will be those who are translated from the earth from among the living. They have come out of great tribulation. They have passed through the time of Jacob's trouble. They have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God's judgments. They have witnessed the seven last plagues. I think we could find no escape from this clear-cut depiction.

Now when Ellen White died, there were 120,000 Seventh-day Adventists in all the world, and there was a question as to where we would get the 144,000. And it is quite logical to reason that if there is a company of people who are given special privileges, that certainly there must be with this company those who have stood out in their service to Christ in sacrifice and suffering. In my father's letter, he writes concerning Sister Hastings who died

David Moroz--4

in 1850, and what Ellen White said about her. He writes from memory. When we place the statement before us, the wording offers some suggestions. The statement is found today in Selected Messages, Book 2, p. 263. It reads:

"I saw that she was sealed and would come up at the voice of God and stand upon the earth and would be with the 144,000."

In this same connection we might look carefully at the words of the angel to Ellen White as recorded in Early Writings on page 40. In vision she had visited another planet. She asked if she couldn't stay there. But the angel told her, "You must go back, and if you are faithful, you with the 144,000, shall have the privilege of visiting all the worlds and viewing the handiwork of God."

Please not that these statements both indicate that Sister Hastings, and Sister White, if faithful, would be with the 144,000. She does not state that they would be one of the 144,000. When we look at the special resurrection coming at the close of the seven last plagues, we find that "at the midnight hour that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people," (GC p. 636) "graves are opened," and "all who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified to hear God's covenant peace with those who have kept His law." (GC p. 637)

The very comforting truths taught concerning the special resurrection are often overlooked by Seventh-day Adventists. None who have died in the faith of the third angel's message will be denied the privilege of witnessing the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. They will be alive and with the 144,000 standing upon the earth when the trump of God is heard calling the righteous dead from their graves.

I am led to wonder if an understanding of these truths may not have led some of our early workers to believe that those that Ellen White said would be "with" the 144,000 would be a part of the 144,000.

Now, down through the years, there have been some who have taught that all who have died in the third angel's message would be among the 144,000. This brought very great discouragement to a number of people for they looked around and were led to conclude that if all those who have died in the message would be a part of the 144,000 and there were to be only 144,000, what chance was there for them? I am speaking now of speculation and conjecturing which led some to go into periods of great darkness for many years. I have correspondence supporting this thought. We do know this that there is no quota which will keep any honest soul out of the kingdom of God. Christ stands with outstretched hands inviting all who will to come. And while there may be certain features regarding just who will make up the 144,000 that have not been clearly revealed to us, none need stand in fear of being arbitrarily excluded from the reward of the faithful. And I think we do well to follow Ellen White's counsel to leave this question as one which shall not lead us into controversy, but with

Pastor David Moroz--5

faith and confidence, study the qualifications of the 144,000 and with the blessing of being clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness and of walking in all the light the Lord has given us, move confidently toward the experience of receiving the reward which the Lord has for His people when Christ shall come.

With the best of wishes, I am

Sincerely your brother,

*Arthur L. White*

Arthur L. White, Secretary

ALW:fs  
Enclosures