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Q + A
31-A-1

The Ellen G. White Estate

(Incorporated)



"Elmshaven" St. Helena, California
February 24, 1936.

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Ellensburg, Washington

Dear Brother

I must no longer delay a reply to your letter of January 27. Since it was received I have been heavily pressed with work that could not wait, so all my correspondence has been delayed.

I rejoice with you that you have been permitted to hear and to accept God's truth for these last days. Your reference to being instructed by dreams, reminds me that many people in many places seem to receive suggestions from the Lord through this means. In "Testimonies for the Church", Volume 1, pages 569 and 570 is a statement to the effect that there are three classes of dreams,-- 1. The multitude of dreams that arise from the common things of life, with which the Spirit of God has nothing to do; 2. False dreams that are inspired by the spirit of Satan to lead into deception; and 3, Dreams from the Lord. Their genuinness must be proved by taking into account the persons who have them, the circumstances under which they are given, and their harmony with the revealed word of God.

It is in God's providence that as the work closes, our lay brethren will come to feel more and more the burden of telling the world that Christ is coming and that the end of the world is near. This many are doing today, in connection with their daily vocations, as farmers, as carpenters, tradesmen, and skilled laborers in many lines. As you read the Review, you will observe that the work of lay-evangelism is being better understood and more faithfully carried forward than in recent years. Many who engage in this work will be led on to efficiency, and their brethren will discern this and invite them to take more and more responsibility.

Regarding the posture of God's prophets in vision, and especially the posture of Ellen White, I am inclined to believe that the posture is not so important a matter as might appear from the contrasts you have mentioned. The reference in I Cor. 14:25 to one who "falling down on his face" will worship God is not to the prophet, but to one that "believeth not," or "one unlearned," who hearing the message of the prophet is constrained to believe, as he sees that the "secrets of his heart made manifest."

I may say that I have seen my mother in vision many times. Sometimes she would be given a vision when praying and her body would become limp and she would sink slowly to the floor either sideways and sometimes backward. In fact there was no uniform posture maintained in her visions. If the vision came when she was in a chair she might retain her sitting position for a time, then rise to her feet, and after a time sit again in the chair. At times when she was sick in bed, she would be given a vision, while remaining lying on her back.

While the physical phenomena connected with a vision do indicate that a supernatural force has taken control of the individual, yet these may be counterfeited by the enemy. But it is the nature of the message itself, and the fruit borne by the gift that must remain the final test of the genuineness of the revelation.

You refer to a suggestion made by Mrs. White in 1908 that our people should sign an anti-meat pledge. She did not herself issue a pledge, however, as you infer in your letter. You say that you feel that perhaps you should get out this pledge and stir up our people to take their stand and return. Great tact is needed for such a move, or unnecessary divisions and controversy will be created. I would advise you before taking any steps in such a matter to counsel freely with your brethren in the ministry and Conference officers.

I am glad to report that in this Union our officials have led out in pledging themselves to maintain the standards of health reform outlined in the Testimonies and they have met a hearty response on the part of the church members, as they have tactfully and logically presented the reasons for such a step. This encourages us to believe that the Lord will impress our leading brethren generally to follow such a worthy example.

There is nothing in Sister White's writings as far as we know stating that the saints will spend a Sabbath on some planet on their way to the heavenly city. We firmly believe the statement that they will be seven days ascending to the city and that they all will have kept a Sabbath on the way, but we do not find in our collection of Sister White's writings a statement that they will spend a Sabbath on a planet on the way to the New Jerusalem.

We rejoice in your earnestness. We pray that God may lead you on from light to light, that you may have divine guidance and much blessing in working for the Master.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely your brother,

WCW:lfw.

W. C. White