

Q# A 34-H  
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Owens, Arthur M.

Dr. Arthur M. Owens - 2

It would seem from this statement, as well as the record of the lives of Bible patriarchs, that the effects of sin and the length of life and the size of man took place shortly after the flood. There is a statement in the comments of Ellen G. White in the Commentary, Vol. 2, on page 1081, in which we read:

"Since the fall the race had been decreasing in size and physical strength, May 28, 1964, and physical strength, up to the period of Christ's advent to the earth."

Arthur M. Owens, M.D.

I do not see this as being in conflict with the statement more recently made in the Commentary of the Spiritual Gifts, Volume IV, published in 1864, which states that there was a decrease in size and physical strength, and this began essentially at the time of the flood.

Dear Dr. Owens:

I have your letter, written May 18, in which you present several questions. In the first you ask if we can help you find a statement which you remember as reading: "Men who lived in the days of Abraham and Noah resembled the angels in form and comeliness." I am sorry but we are unable to direct you to such a statement if it exists. We do read in Patriarchs and Prophets that: "Man was made in the image of God, both in outward resemblance and in character. Man was formed in the likeness of God. His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. . . ."

"As man came forth from the hand of his Creator, he was of lofty stature and perfect symmetry. His countenance bore the ruddy tint of health, and glowed with the light of life and joy." -- Page 45.

In 1864 Spiritual Gifts, Volume IV, was published. In a chapter entitled "Health," beginning on page 120, we find an interesting statement: "After the flood the people ate largely of animal food. God saw that the ways of man were corrupt, and that he was disposed to exalt himself proudly against his Creator, and to follow the inclinations of his own heart. And he permitted that long-lived race to eat animal food to shorten their sinful lives. Soon after the flood the race began to rapidly decrease in size, and the length of years. There were a class of very large animals which perished at the flood. I God knew that the strength of man would decrease, and these mammoth animals could not be controlled by feeble man."

It would seem from this statement, as well as the record of the lives of Bible patriarchs, that the effects of sin and the length of life and the size of man took place shortly after the Flood. There is a statement in the comments of Ellen G. White in the Commentary, Vol. 5, on page 1081, in which we read:

"Since the fall the race had been decreasing in size and physical strength, and sinking lower in the scale of moral worth, up to the period of Christ's advent to the earth."

I do not see this as being in conflict with the Spiritual Gifts statement, but rather being a statement more loosely worded and without the precision of the Spiritual Gifts statement. I would understand from these statements, therefore, that there was a decrease both in life span and physical size, probably running along parallel, and this began essentially at the time of the flood.

I am sorry that we don't find the particular statement you wish. In a way I doubt if there is such a statement because Adam's situation would be different from Noah's. Your second question relates to a mimeographed document of some 100 pages reporting an interview between Dr. J. H. Kellogg and the two elders of the Battle Creek Church, George Amadon and A. C. Bourdeau, just before Dr. Kellogg was disfellowshipped in 1907. This report was made by Dr. Kellogg's secretary and probably is a correct report of what Dr. Kellogg said. You make reference to a statement on page 80 where Dr. Kellogg reports that-

"Sister White had had troubles. She and the Elder had had a quarrel. He had gone off and left her, and for two weeks he would not go out to the old brick house by the mill-pond to sleep with her. He would not stay in the house with her."

This, Dr. Kellogg says, took place twenty-nine or thirty years before. This would place it in the years 1877 or 1878. We have no knowledge of this experience from any authentic source, nor do we find anything in Sister White's correspondence of that period which makes reference to this. The only reference I have ever seen to this is in this report and I must tell you, Dr. Owens, that Dr. Kellogg could not be depended upon for his presentations. He came to the point in his experience where he did not feel confined to the truth. In fact, it is written in the court records of the state of Michigan that, "No dependence whatsoever can be placed in the testimony of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg." If his report on this is as correct as his representations on some other points, I think we may discount this very largely. But, I repeat again, we have no source of information on this except what Dr. Kellogg stated in this interview.

I do know that during these years Elder James White was not well. There were times when his moves were somewhat erratic. But Ellen White always dealt with him very tenderly, very understandingly, and manifested the greatest of confidence in him and affection for him. This is very clear from her correspondence to him when they were separated, he in the East and she in the West or vice-versa, as the demands of the cause or James White's state of health made necessary such separation. That is, Sister White would be continuing her work and Elder James White was unable to accompany her. They were a very well-adjusted couple and each had the greatest respect and affection for the other.

This is about all the information that I have on this point, but I would discount the weight of Dr. Kellogg's report. I think your observation is quite correct. If this were an authentic case, it could not be kept a secret. It would have been known to our folk back at the time and we would have met it long before this.

Your third question relates to the background of the message, "Backsliding in Health Reform." This is dealt with very fully in a mimeographed document which was prepared by my father, Elder Daniells, and myself, a copy of which we are sending to you as a part of this communication. You will observe that the major part of the letter that Sister White wrote to Elder Daniells was embodied by her in her talk to the General Conference in 1909, as we find it recorded in Testimonies, Volume 9, page 153 and onward. You will observe that Ellen White saw Elder Daniells when he asked to see her on this matter. It has been reported by a Seventh-day Adventist physician, a well-meaning man but one who does not always check all of his facts, that Sister White refused to see Elder Daniells because of his attitude toward this testimony. This is not the truth. There was a time, shortly after this, that Sister White refused to see Elder Daniells and this was because of his neglect of evangelism in the large cities. And on one occasion when he was on the Pacific Coast he wished to see Sister White and she would not see him. I wish you could read the letter that he wrote that evening on the train. The experience shook Elder Daniells to the very core and he came to see the manner in which city evangelism was being neglected. He placed the responsibilities of administration of the General Conference in the hands of a half a dozen men for a few months time and went up to New York City and held a large evangelistic effort. It did something to Elder Daniells. It did something to evangelism among Seventh-day Adventists. I have heard Elder Daniells tell the story. There is no connection between the matter of the message on health reform and her refusing to see Elder Daniells.

You say that you can keep my reply in the strictest of confidence if I make such a request. I do not make any such request. We have never been ashamed of the facts, nor fearful of the facts. It is the distortion of truth, or partial truth, which may give concern. I trust that the information that we have given will be helpful to you and if we can help

you further, feel free to write to us again.

In closing, let me observe that you have read again and again in the Kellogg statement that he could see as clearly as he could see anything that this denomination would go to pieces, that it was on the wrong track. Well, you can observe the truthfulness of the Doctor's prediction. Elder Daniells, Elder W. C. White, and others who were called upon to deal with the crisis over pantheism and over the Battle Creek Sanitarium and Dr. Kellogg's attitudes, were honorable men, men who loved the Lord and served the Lord. And of course as long as their work was not in harmony with what the Doctor wished, he would endeavor to place their attitudes and actions in the very worst light. This he has done.

With the best of wishes, I am

Sincerely your brother,

Arthur L. White, Secretary  
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Encl.