

THE LAST DAYS

By Ellen G. White

A Book Preview by the Editor
Leo R. Van Dolson

Since we retired, my wife, Bobbie Jane, and I have been working part time for the Ellen G. White Estate. One of our most fascinating assignments has been to prepare a compilation of the Ellen G. White writings on final events.

This project was begun by Donald Mansell several years ago when he served on the staff of the White Estate. He launched a thorough review of the manuscripts in the vaults in Washington, searching for everything available that Ellen G. White had written about the last days. When Don left the White Estate, Gerard Damsteegt was assigned to organize into book form the materials that Don had spent so much time and effort collecting.

By the time of our retirement, Gerard had relocated at Andrews University, and so we were asked to put the materials into final form for publication. How amazed we were when, soon after our arrival in Kennebunkport, Maine, the United Parcel Service delivered four large cartons containing 27 thick notebooks full of copied originals and retyped Ellen White manuscripts that Don and Gerard had assembled.

It is our understanding that approximately 80 percent of this material has never been published. What a blessing we have received as we have worked through the manuscripts, arranging and editing selections for publication!

We have narrowed the exciting materials to 267 pages of single-spaced typed manuscript. As of the present date, the Pacific Press still

needs a few months to get the material published, but we have been given permission by the White Estate to share with the readers of the JOURNAL some of the gems we came across. My two most notable favorites were these:

The Practical Significance of the Investigative Judgment. We should be astonished at our own indifference when we should be all life and vivacity [if we] could see the work that is going on in heaven. Here is the work of our Intercessor.

The great antitypical day of atonement and the work of judgment is going on with the dead, and how soon will it begin with the living? When every one of our cases will pass in review before God? And let it be understood by you that, if you do not [do] the work that God has given you, you will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary and found wanting. To us who have this hope and faith it is a dangerous thing to be putting off the day of God.

A living church is a working church and a working church is a living church. We must educate ourselves to be thinking and dwelling upon the great scenes of the judgment just before us; and then, as we keep the scenes of the great day of God before us when everything will be revealed, it will have an effect upon our character. One brother said to me, "Sister White, do you think the Lord will come in ten years?"

"What difference does it make to you whether He shall come in two, four, or ten years?"

"Why," he said, "I think I would do differently in some things than I now do if I knew the Lord was to come in ten years."

"What would you do?" I asked.

"Why," he said, "I would sell my property and begin to search the Word of God and try to warn the people and get them to prepare for His coming, and I would plead with God that I might be ready to meet Him."

Then I said, "If you knew that the Lord was not coming for twenty years, you would live differently?"

He answered, "I think I would."

Then I said, "You know your Master's will, and it is your duty to do just as though you knew that He was coming in [ten] years."

I opened the Scriptures and read to him . . . and he was convicted that he should change his course, and he did change his course of action. . . . How selfish was the expression that he would live a different life if he knew his Lord was to come in ten years! Why, Enoch walked with God 300 years. This is a lesson for us that we shall walk with God every day, and we are not safe unless we are waiting and watching. We must have an eye single to God's glory.—Manuscript 10, 1886 ("Preparation for Christ's Coming," July 23, 1886).

The Bright Home of the Saints. The bright home of the saints was presented vividly before me. . . . I seemed to be there, where all was peace, where no stormy conflicts of earth could ever come. Heaven, a kingdom of righteousness where all the holy and pure and blest are congregated . . . living and walking in happy, pure intimacy, praising God and the Lamb who sitteth on the throne. Their voices [are] in perfect harmony. They never do each other wrong. Princes of heaven, the potentates of this mighty realm, are rivals only in good; seeking the happiness and joy of each other. The greatest there is least in self-esteem, and the least is greatest in his gratitude and wealth of love.

There are no dark errors to cloud the intellect. Truth and knowledge, clear, strong, and perfect, have chased every doubt away, and no gloom of doubt casts its baleful shadow upon its happy inhabitants. No voices of contention mar the sweet and perfect peace of heaven. Its inhabitants know no sorrow, no grief, no tears. All is in perfect harmony, in perfect order and perfect bliss. . . .

Heaven, sweet heaven, the saints' eternal home, the abode for the toilers, where the weary who have borne the heavy burdens through life find rest, peace, and joy. They sowed in tears, they reap with joy and triumph. Heaven is a home where sympathy is alive in every heart, expressed in every look. Love reigns there.—Letter 30, 1882 (To G. I Butler, summer 1882).

Other Selections

The manuscript as submitted contains 27 chapters, divided into four sections. The selections that follow have been chosen from these four sections and are arranged under the section titles.

Section 1: The Conditions Surrounding the Advent

The Last Scenes of This Earth's History. In the last scenes of this earth's history, war will rage. There will be pestilence, plague, and famine. The waters of the great deep will overflow their boundaries. Property and life will be destroyed by fire and flood. Disasters will come unexpectedly upon the world. This should show us that the souls for whom Christ has died should be fitting up for the mansions that He has gone to prepare for them. There is a rest from earth's conflict. Where is it? "That where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). Heaven is where Christ is. Heaven would not be heaven to those who love Christ, if He were not there.—Manuscript 41, 1896 ("Words of Christ").

Human Theories Designed to Undermine Confidence in the Adventist Message. The world's opinion will oppose the very work that must be done in order that the safety of the flock of God shall not be imperiled. The fact that men . . . are imperiled by the sophistries that are coming in . . . shows that a power from beneath is making its imprint on human minds. Every movement made now is to be carefully guarded, for the forces of Satan have minds under their control, and will strive through them to unsettle faith in the experience of the past, which bears the signature of heaven. The delusive influences working upon human minds are of a character to unsettle the faith of the people of God in the experience of the past, which has borne the signature of heaven . . . [and] in the testimonies which the Lord has given His people. . . .

History is being repeated. The perils that God's people encountered in past ages . . . will be encountered again, intensified. . . . Unless we give the most earnest heed to the Word of God, human minds will work up theories according to their own deficient practices . . . and will misrepresent and misapply a "Thus saith the Lord." A departure from the great principles Christ has laid down in His teachings, a working out of human projects, using the Scriptures to justify a wrong course of action under the perverse working of Lucifer, will confirm men in misunderstanding, and the truth that they need to keep them from wrong practices will leak out of the soul like water from a leaky vessel.—Manuscript 5, 1904 (Diary, Jan. 20, 1904).

Apostasy and Shaking in the Church. Many will stand in our

pulpits with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan. If doubts and unbelief are cherished, the faithful ministers will be removed from the people who think they know so much. . . .

God himself will work for Israel. Every lying tongue shall be silenced. Angel hands shall overthrow the deceptive schemes that have been formed. The bulwarks of Satan will never triumph. Victory will attend the third angel's message. As the Captain of the Lord's host tore down the walls of Jericho, so will the Lord's commandment-keeping people triumph, and all opposing elements be defeated. . . .

Some will go out from among us who will bear the ark no longer. But these cannot make walls to obstruct the truth, for it will go onward and upward to the end.—Manuscript 92, 1897 ("God's Messengers," Aug. 12, 1897).

How Sabbath Keepers Are to Deal with Sunday Laws. To defy the Sunday laws will but strengthen in their persecution the religious zealots who are seeking to enforce them. Give them no occasion to call you lawbreakers. . . . Keep right on with your [missionary] work, with your Bibles in your hands, and the enemy will see that he has worsted his own cause.

One does not receive the mark of the beast because he shows that he realizes the wisdom of keeping the peace by refraining from work that gives offense, doing at the same time a work of the highest importance. . . . Whenever it is possible, let religious services be held on Sunday. Make these meetings intensely interesting. Sing genuine revival hymns, and speak with power and assurance of the Saviour's love. Speak on temperance and on true religious experience. You will thus learn much about how to work, and will reach many souls.

Make no demonstrations on Sunday in defiance of law. . . . We can use Sunday as a day on which to carry forward work that will tell on the side of Christ. We are to do our best, working with all meekness and lowliness.—Letter 132, 1902 (To A. G. Daniells and G. A. Irwin, Aug. 17, 1902).

Section 2: The Proclamation of the Adventist Message

Focus on the Message. Be sure, when you go out to teach others

not to get your minds upon little things, but keep your mind upon the great work of God for Satan will surely turn you off if possible. Do not try to be original and get up something you have not heard your brethren speak of, for many have been shipwrecked in this way. Keep the mind upon the third angel's message. When you keep this before the minds of the people they will see wisdom in it. But when you get a great many little trifling things before them they become confused just like the Jews. What we want to do is to get the truth before the people.—Manuscript 91, 1886 (“Morning Talk,” Sept. 21, 1886).

The Certainty of Eternal Life. If I know my own heart, it is to do the will of God to the very letter. I am willing to be a pilgrim and a stranger here, for I am seeking a city whose builder and maker is God. It is only a little while that we shall have to work, and we want to do our work with diligence. We want to make sure of eternal life. We do not want to follow our inclinations or our pleasure, but just do the will of God and wait for His salvation and the final reward. I have peace and joy in my Saviour. I am looking to the great beyond, and, if the Master says “Well done,” I shall be entirely satisfied. I love Jesus. I love to do His will. I ask not position or honor or ease or convenience. I want to labor together with God, practicing self-denial and self-sacrifice, and be a partaker with Christ of His sufferings [in order] that I may be a partaker with Him of His glory.—Letter 62, 1886 (To J. H. Kellogg, ca. Aug. 2, 1886).

This Is No Time to Haul Down Our Colors. The Sabbath is God's memorial of His creative work, and it is a sign that is to be kept before the world. There is to be no compromise with those who are worshiping an idol Sabbath. We are not to spend our time in controversy with those who know the truth, and upon whom the light of truth has been shining, when they turn away their ear from the truth to turn to fables.

I was told that men will employ every policy to make less prominent the difference between the faith of Seventh-day Adventists and those who observe the first day of the week. In this controversy the whole world will be engaged, and the time is short. This is no time to haul down our colors.

A company was presented before me, under the name of Seventh-

day Adventists, who were advising that the banner or sign which makes us a distinctive people should not be held out so strikingly, for they claimed it was not the best policy in securing success to our institutions. This distinctive banner is to be borne through the world to the close of probation.—Manuscript 15, 1896 (“Revelation,” Mar. 27, 1896).

Fearful Perils Will Face the Leaders of God’s Cause. Fearful perils are before those who bear responsibilities in the cause of God, perils the thought of which make me tremble. But the word comes, “My hand is upon the wheel, and I will not allow men to control My work for these last days. My hand is turning the wheel, and My providence will continue to work out the divine plans, irrespective of human inventions.” Men’s plans will be overthrown and the Lord God of heaven will reveal His glory.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit will work out Heaven’s law. These three great Powers have pledged themselves to bring to naught the inventions of idolatrous minds. They have put the infinite treasures of heaven at the command of God’s struggling people. [God says,] “As the wheel is turned by a divine hand, the philosophy of the wisest men who are working contrary to My purposes will become intricate and confused.” . . .

In the great closing work we shall meet with perplexities that we know not how to deal with, but let us not forget that the three great Powers of heaven are working, that a divine hand is on the wheel, and that God will bring His purposes to pass.—Manuscript 118, 1902 (“Christ’s Method of Imparting Truth,” Oct. 6, 1902).

Section 3: Dangers Facing God’s People

When Will the End Come? There must be no concealing of the principles of our faith. The third angel’s message is to be sounded by God’s people. It is to swell to the loud cry. The Lord has a time appointed when He will bind off the work. But when is that time? When the truth to be proclaimed for these last days shall go forth as a witness to all nations, then shall the end come. If the power of Satan can come into the very temple of God and manipulate things as he pleases, the time of preparation will be prolonged.—Letter 83, 1896 (To O. A. Olsen, May 22, 1896).

Good and Evil Angels Will Appear on Earth as Human Beings. Satan will use every opportunity to seduce men from their allegiance to God. He and the angels who fell with him will appear on the earth as men, seeking to deceive. God's angels also will appear as men, and will use every means in their power to defeat the purposes of the enemy. We too have a part to act. We shall surely be overcome unless we fight manfully the battles of the Lord.—Letter 83, 1903 (To H. W. Kellogg, May 13, 1903).

Undermining the Testimonies and Foundations. We met a very intelligent young man [in Norwich, Mass.] . . . who is altogether filled with the idea that no one is quite as smart as himself. He has been studying up the messages in Revelation and he thinks he has discovered wonderful light. But is it that "wonderful light" that will flash forth all along the pathway till the end of time [or is it] the theory that tears away and takes the vitals out of all the past experience in the messages? To see such a youth, of a babe's experience, turning away [from] the pillars of our faith seems just terrible. . . .

The enemy has made his masterly efforts to unsettle the faith of our own people in the testimonies, and when these errors come in they claim to prove all the positions by the Bible, but they misinterpret the Scriptures. They make bold assertions . . . and misapply the prophecies of the Scriptures to prove falsehood. And after men have done their work of weakening the confidence of our churches in the testimonies, they have torn away the barrier [in order] that unbelief in the truth shall become widespread and there is no voice to be lifted up to stay the force of error. This is just as Satan designed it should be, and those who have been preparing the way for the people to pay no heed to the warnings and reproofs of the testimonies of the Spirit of God will see that a tide of errors of all kinds will spring into life. They will claim Scripture as their evidence and deceptions of Satan in every form will prevail.—Letter 109, 1890 (To W. C. White, and J. E. White and wife, Dec. 6, 1890).

Section 4: Preparation for the Second Advent

Jesus Does Not Change Our Characters at the Second Advent. If you would be a saint in heaven you must first be a saint on

earth. The traits of character you cherish in life will not be changed by death or by the resurrection. You will come up from the grave with the same disposition you manifested in your home and in society. Jesus does not change the character at His coming. The work of transformation must be done now. Our daily lives are determining our destiny. Defects of character must be repented of and overcome through the graces of Christ and a symmetrical character must be formed while in this probationary state that we may be fitted for the mansions above.—Letter 18b, 1891 (To Bro. and S. Kynett, Feb. 15, 1891).

Temptations Stronger Near the End. As we near the end, temptations will be stronger and more seductive, but we need not yield to them, we need not open the door of the heart and invite Satan to enter. There is no power in earth or hell [strong enough] to compel . . . you to sin and dishonor your holy faith.—Letter 18b, 1891. (To Bro. and S. Kynett, Feb. 15, 1891).

Believers in Ellen G. White's Inspiration Will Be Safe From Heresies, Especially Those Concerning the Sanctuary. Men may get up scheme after scheme and the enemy will seek to seduce souls from the truth, but all who believe that the Lord has spoken through Sister White, and has given her a message, will be safe from the many delusions that will come in these last days.

I know that the sanctuary question stands in righteousness and truth just as we have held it for so many years. It is the enemy that leads minds off on sidetracks. He is pleased when those who know the truth become engrossed in collecting Scriptures to pile up around erroneous theories which have no foundation in truth.—Letter 50, 1906 (To W. W. Simpson, Jan. 30, 1906).

Preparation for What Is Coming. The perils of the last days are upon us and, at this time, we are each determining what our destiny for eternity shall be. Individually we are to form characters that will stand the test of the judgment. Individually we are to give in the church where we are an example of faithfulness and consecration. The ministry of the Word is designed to prepare a people to stand in the times of temptation in which we live. . . .

There has been revealed to me the grave dangers we shall meet in these last days of peril and temptation. Our only reliable light and

guide for this time is the Word of God. We must take this Word as our Counselor and faithfully follow its instructions or we shall find that we are being controlled by our own peculiar traits of character and our lives will reveal a selfish work that will be a hindrance and not a blessing to our fellow men.—Manuscript 61, 1909 (“Words of Instruction,” Sept. 17, 1909).

History is being repeated. The perils that God's people encountered in past ages . . . will be encountered again, intensified. . . Unless we give the most earnest heed to the Word of God, human minds will work up theories according to their own deficient practices . . . and will misrepresent and misapply a “Thus saith the Lord.” A departure from the great principles Christ has laid down in His teachings, a working out of human projects, using the Scriptures to justify a wrong course of action under the perverse working of Lucifer, will confirm men in misunderstanding, and the truth that they need to keep them from wrong practices will leak out of the soul like water from a leaky vessel.—Ellen G. White, Manuscript 5, 1904 (Diary, Jan. 20, 1904).