

Q+A. 43-C-4

Great Controversy, did Ellen record  
all historical facts in, first from vision  
received, or did she write after reading  
secular history?

December 9, 1958

2343 Pitts Place S. E.  
Washington 20, D. C.

Dear Brother

Thank you for your kind words concerning your visit here at our offices a week ago. You tell us that you have read much of the Conflict of the Ages Series and you have a question concerning the historical facts which have been recorded, both as they relate to the Reformation and the Jewish economy.

The answer to your question is found primarily in Sister White's statement in her Introduction to Great Controversy on page 10 and 11. You will observe there that she indicates that what she has set forth in this book and the books of the Conflict Series is what was revealed to her in vision. You have probably observed in your reading of Great Controversy that Mrs. White has quoted some from historical writers. This she did when she found the accounts as given by historical writers to be in harmony with the light given to her. She has explained this and why she made such quotations in her Introduction, beginning at the bottom of page 11, starting with the words, "The great events which have marked the progress of reform in past ages," etc. I believe you will find the reading of the Preface to Great Controversy as prepared by Sister White a rewarding experience, and one which will answer at least partially some of the questions you have asked.

Coming back to your questions, you ask, Was it that she had studied previously from either secular, religious, or both sources such facts, or <sup>was</sup> she intellectually ignorant of these facts and penned them only by revelation? The answer to this question is found in an understanding of the manner in which the light came to her in regard to the Great Controversy story. The initial vision covering the whole story which led her to write was given in 1858, as I mentioned in connection with the pictures I showed a week ago Sunday. Within six months time of the vision, the little book, Spiritual Gifts, volume 1 (that which is now found in the last part of Early Writings) was published. It touched just the high points of the vision in setting forth that which had been revealed to Ellen White. Prior to this time, she had not read either secular or religious history, aside from <sup>what</sup> she would find in the Bible.

After she had written out what we find in Spiritual Gifts, volume 1, -- and not until after she had written it out, -- the White family read with interest the history of the Reformation as presented by D'Aubigne. Ellen White saw the events take place in vision. She saw the true significance in the great conflict story, and the family, with her, enjoyed reading the detailed historical account as presented by the historian, but the basic source of her information was the visions. You will find this set forth at some length in a little booklet I am sending you entitled, Ellen G. White, Messenger to the Remnant. I would refer you to pages 55 to 61 where you will find information which I think will be of service to you.

You ask if there is any book published which contains all or most of the things about her personally, her calling, her life ministry, and the visions. There is no one work that does that. The paper covered book, Ellen G. White, Messenger to the Remnant, may come closer to it, as it is packed full of information which is carefully documented. Actually, it is a grouping of articles which I prepared for the Ministry from time to time, and they have been drawn together in this brochure, and they have been widely distributed in this form.

A very fine work has been prepared by Elder T. H. Jemison entitled, A Prophet Among You. This was prepared in our office and serves as a textbook for the presentation of the Spirit of Prophecy in our colleges. Elder D. E. Rebock has written a fine book with a little different approach entitled, Believe His Prophets. Elder A. G. Daniells prepared a fine work, The Abiding Gift of Prophecy, which devotes a large part of its space to the backgrounds of the work of the prophets down through Bible times, and then treats rather briefly of his experiences in connection with Mrs. White's work.

Elder F. M. Wilcox has prepared a work, The Testimony of Jesus, which is invaluable in its approaches and its presentations. Elder L. H. Christian has written a work, The Fruitage of Spiritual Gifts. Each of these books approaches the question from a little different standpoint, and all of them together build a strong, accurate picture of the important place of the gift in the church and that which was accomplished through the exercise of that gift.

If I can help you further, please feel free to write to me again.

May the Lord continue to richly bless you, and with the best of wishes, I am

Sincerely your brother,

Arthur L. White, Secretary  
ELLEN G. WHITE PUBLICATIONS

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