

Bible Conference of 1919: Part 1

The Use of the Spirit of Prophecy In Our Teaching of Bible and History

July 30, 1919

W.E. Howell: Our topic for this hour, as arranged in the program, is "The Use of the Spirit of Prophecy in our Teaching of Bible and History." Elder Daniells is here with us this morning to fulfill his promise to our teachers that he would give us a talk along this line, and I am sure the opportunity of considering this question further will be greatly appreciated.

A. G. Daniells: I have been a little uncertain in my own mind as to just what line it would be best to follow. There is so much in this that it can not be fully presented in one talk, and I would regret missing the mark and taking up that which would not be of most interest to you; and so I finally decided that I would prefer to have a round-table talk. I would prefer to have you question me and then I would try to answer such points as are of most interest to you. I may not be able to give another talk here, and you probably would not have the time, and so I would like to make this hour most profitable. I will present one or two points as briefly as I can to start with, and then I will just open the way for questions.

First of all I want to reiterate what I stated in the talk I gave some evenings ago on this subject, - that I do not want to say one word that will destroy confidence in this gift to this people. I do not want to create doubts. I do not want to in any way depreciate the value of the writings of the spirit of prophecy. I have no doubt in my own mind. I do not know whether every man can say that or not, but I can say it with all honesty. I have had perplexities through the forty years I have been in the ministry. I have found things similar to that to which Peter referred in Paul's writings, - hard to be understood. You know Peter said that, and I have had personal testimonies come to me that I could not understand. That is a remarkable thing, isn't it, for a man to get such a message as that? But that is what nearly all doubters hark back to when they get away from us, - they got a testimony they could not understand and believe. I could not understand then, but time has helped me to understand; and I have concluded that we do not see from the Lord's standpoint, and we do not know as much as the Lord knows about ourselves and so when He reveals things to us that we do not understand, it is because He knows more about us and our tendency and dangers than we do,

ourselves.

The first one I got that threw me into confusion charged me very strongly with sort of - well, I will put it in the worst form - a tendency to domineer over my brethren in administrative matters, not giving them the freedom of mind and thought that they were entitled to. I did not understand that. It did not seem so. I asked some of my good friends, and they said they never had felt it, and that threw me into worse trouble. Even some members of the Committee had never seen that. What was I to do? They were not the right men for me to get my information from. I soon found that there were some men who believed that the message was right. Inside of a year or so I found a very strong tendency, under a bit of nervousness and weariness, to do that very thing; so I got the message out and reread it prayerfully, and acknowledged it to the Lord, and I am trying all the time to guard against any domineering spirit, for I think it is a most abominable thing for a man in office to begin to lord it over people who are not in office; but it is in human nature. You have heard the story of the Irishman who was promoted to the position of foreman of a section gang. The next morning he went out and said to one of the men:

"Timothy O'Brien, come here."

When the man came, he said to him: "I discharge ye this morning, not because I have anything agin ye, but to show me authority." [Laughter]

He had been put in office, and the very first thing he wanted to do was to show his authority. That is human nature, but it is not Christianity; and it is to be abominated and avoided by every one who gets office, whether president of the General Conference, or principal of a school, or head of a department in a school. All should avoid that and give every man his rights and freedom and liberty.

As I said, I have met things that were hard to be understood, but time has helped me to understand them, and I can honestly say this morning that I go along in this movement without any doubts in my mind. When I take positions differing from other men, that is not proof that I am a doubter. I may be a doubter of their views or their interpretation, but that does not make me a doubter of the spirit of prophecy. I may differ with a man about his interpretation of the Bible, but that does not make me a doubter of the Bible. But there are men who just hold me right up as a doubter of the Testimonies because I take the position that the Testimonies are not verbally inspired, and that they have been worked up by the secretaries and put in proper grammatical shape. A few years ago a man came onto the nominating committee and wanted me kept out of the presidency because I did not believe the Testimonies were verbally inspired. That was because I differed with him on theory and

interpretation; but I am the one to say whether I doubt the Testimonies, am I not? [Voices: Yes, yes!] And so are you. I want to leave the impression that I am not trying in any way to put any doubts in your mind. And O, I would feel terribly to have this denomination lose its true, genuine, proper faith in this gift that God gave to this church in these messages that have come to us. I want that we shall stay by this clear through to the end. [Amens]

Now with reference to the evidences: I differ with some of the brethren who have put together proofs or evidences of the genuineness of this gift, in this respect, - I believe that the strongest proof is found in the fruits of this gift to the church, not in physical and outward demonstrations. For instance, I have heard some ministers preach, and have seen it in writing, that Sister White once carried a heavy Bible - I believe they said it weighed forty pounds - on her out-stretched hand, and looking up toward the heavens quoted texts and turned the leaves over and pointed to the texts, with her eyes toward the heavens. I do not know whether that was ever done or not. I am not sure. I did not see it, and I do not know that I ever talked with anybody that did see it. But, brethren, I do not count that sort of thing as a very great proof. I do not think that is the best kind of evidence. If I were a stranger in an audience, and heard a preacher enlarging on that, I would have my doubts. That is, I would want to know if he saw it. He would have to say, No, he never did. Then I would ask, "Did you ever see the man that did see it?" And he would have to answer, "No, I never did."

Well, just how much of that is genuine, and how much has crawled into the story? - I do not know. But I do not think that is the kind of proof we want to use. It has been a long time since I have brought forward this sort of thing, - no breath in the body, and the eyes wide open. That may have accompanied the exercise of this gift in the early days, but it surely did not in the latter days, and yet I believe this gift was just as genuine and exercised just the same through these later years as in the early years.

C. P. Bollman: Isn't the same thing true of the Bible? Can't you size it up and believe it because of its fruit, what it does, and not because of the supernatural things related in it?

A. G. Daniells: Yes. For instance, I would not take the story of David killing a lion and a bear, or of Samson killing a lion, and herald that to unbelievers or strangers as proof that the Bible was inspired, especially about Samson. Here is the way I would want to teach the boys and girls: I would want to begin with the beginning of this movement. At that time here was a gift given to this person; and with that gift to that individual, at the same time, came this movement of the three-fold message. They came right together in the same year. That gift was

exercised steadily and powerfully in the development of this movement. The two were inseparably connected, and there was instruction given regarding this movement in all its phases through this gift, clear through for seventy years.

Then, in my own mind, I look the phases over. We will take one on the Bible. What shall be the attitude of the people in this movement toward the Bible? We know that that should be our authority without a creed and without the higher criticism. This is the Book. The position we hold today is the right position, we believe, - to magnify this Book, to get our instruction from this Book, and to preach this Book. The whole plan of redemption, everything that is necessary to salvation, is in this Book, and we do not have to go to anything outside of the Book to be saved. That has been the attitude of the spirit of prophecy toward this book from the beginning, hasn't it? [Voices: Yes.] And I suppose we can give credit to that gift for our attitude toward the Book as much as to any influence that anybody has exercised.

Now take the doctrines of the Bible: In all the other reformations that came up, the leaders were unable to rightly distinguish between all error and truth, - the Sabbath day, Baptism, the nature of man, etc., - and so they openly taught errors from this book. But now, when we come to this movement, we find the wonderful power of discrimination on the part of the spirit of prophecy, and I do not know of a single truth in this Book that is sat aside by the spirit of prophecy, nor a single biblical or theological error that came down through the dark ages that has been fostered by the spirit of prophecy and pressed upon the people that we have to discredit when we come to this Book. The doctrines of baptism, the law, the place and value and dignity of the Holy Spirit in the church, and all the other teachings that we have, have been magnified by this gift among us.

Take another line, - the activities of the church. Here is our attitude toward foreign missions or world evangelism. Who among us has ever exercised greater influence than this gift in behalf of world evangelism?

Take the question of liberal, unselfish support of the work. When you go to those writings, you find them full of exhortations, and if we would live them out better than we do our gifts would be greater, and our progress would be more rapid.

Then take our attitude on our service that we are to render to our fellowmen, Christian help work, - all those activities where a Christian should be a real blessing, an unselfish individual in the community to help people in their sorrows and misfortunes, their poverty and sickness, and every way that they need help. We find that the writings of the spirit of prophecy abound with exhortations to an unselfish life in

living among our fellowmen.

Take the question of health and the medical missionary work, and all these activities, and take the service that should be put forth in behalf of the young. Where do you find in any movement that we read about where better instruction has been given as to the attention that should be given to the young people. Take the question of education: Why, brethren, none of our teachers ever have stood in advance of the counsel, that good wholesome instruction, that we find in the spirit of prophecy.

Those things I point to as really the convincing evidence of the origin of this gift, and the genuineness of it, - not to some ocular demonstrations that a few people have seen. I have no objections to persons speaking of those; but in close work with students I certainly would take the time to note down all these actual facts and hold them before the students, and show that from the beginning of this movement there has been inseparably and intimately and forcefully and aggressively connected with it this gift that has magnified everything good and has discounted, I think, everything bad. And if that is not evidence of the source of this gift among us, then I do not know what would be evidence.

W. E. Howell: I am sure the teachers would like to have some suggestions on the use of the spirit of prophecy and its writings in their teaching work.

A. G. Daniells: Well, give me a question that will be definite, in a particular way.

C. L. Taylor: I would like to ask you to discuss for us the exegetical value of the Testimonies. Of course I think it is generally understood by us that there are many texts to which she makes no reference. There are many texts that she explains, and there may be other explanations that are equally true that she does not touch. But my question is really this: May we accept the explanations of scripture that she gives? Are those dependable?

A. G. Daniells: I have always felt that they were. It may be that in some very critical matters there may be some difficulties; but I have used the writings for years in a way to clarify or elucidate the thought in the texts of scripture. Take "Desire of Ages" and "Patriarchs and Prophets." In reading them through I have found many instances of good illumination.

Does that answer your question? Do you mean whether students should resort to the writings for their interpretation of the Bible, or to get additional light? That is to say, is it necessary to have these writings in order to understand the Bible? Must we go to her explanations to get our meaning of the Bible? Is that the question or is that involved in it?

C. L. Taylor: Not directly, but possibly indirectly. But I will give a more concrete example. We will suppose that a student comes for help on a certain scripture, and wants to know what it means. Is it proper for the teacher to explain that scripture, with perhaps other scriptures illuminating the text, and then bring in the spirit of prophecy also as additional light on the text? Or suppose two students differ on the meaning of a text, and they come to the teacher to find out what it means: Should the teacher explain the text and then use the Testimonies to support the position he takes? Or take still a third case: Suppose that two brethren, both of them believers in the Testimonies, and of course believers in the Bible primarily, have a difference of opinion on a certain text: Is it right for them in their study of that text to bring in the spirit of prophecy to aid in their understanding of it, or should they leave that out of the question entirely?

A. G. Daniells: On that first point, I think this, that we are to get our interpretation from this Book, primarily. I think that the Book explains itself, and I think we can understand the Book, fundamentally, through the Book, without resorting to the Testimonies to prove up on it.

W. E. Howell: The Spirit of prophecy says the Bible is its own expositor.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, but I have heard ministers say that the spirit of prophecy is the interpreter of the Bible. I heard it preached at the General Conference some years ago, when it was said that the only way we could understand the Bible was through the writings of the spirit of prophecy.

J. M. Anderson: And he also said "infallible interpreter."

C. M. Sorenson: That expression has been canceled. That is not our position.

A. G. Daniells: It is not our position, and it is not right that the spirit of prophecy is the only safe interpreter of the Bible. That is a false doctrine, a false view. It will not stand. Why, my friends what would all the people have done from John's day down to the present if there were no way to understand the Bible except through the writings of the spirit of prophecy! It is a terrible position to take! That is false, it is error. It is positively dangerous! What do those people do over in Roumania? We have hundreds of Sabbath-keepers there who have not seen a book on the spirit of prophecy? What do those people in China do? Can't they understand this Book only as we get the interpretation through the spirit of prophecy and then take it to them? That is heathenish!

L. L. Caviness: Do you understand that the early believers got their understanding from the Bible, or did it come through the spirit of prophecy?

A. G. Daniells: They got their knowledge of the Scriptures as they went along through the Scriptures themselves. It pains me to hear the way some people talk, that the spirit of prophecy led out and gave all the instruction, all the doctrines, to the pioneers, and they accepted them right along. That is not according to the writings themselves, "Early Writings." We are told how they did; they searched these scriptures together and studied and prayed over them until they got together on them. Sister White says in her works that for a long time she could not understand, that her mind was locked over these things, and the brethren worked their way along. She did not bring to this movement the Sabbath truth. She opposed the Sabbath truth. It did not seem right to her when Brother Bates presented it to her. But she had help from the Lord and when that clear knowledge was given her in that way, she was a weak child, and could not understand theology, but she had a clear outline given to her, and from that day to her death she never wavered a minute. But the Lord did not by revelation give to another all that He had given in this Book. He gave this Book, and He gave men brains and thinking power to study the Book.

I would not, in my class work, give out the idea at all to students that they can not understand this book only through the writings of Sister White. I would hold out to students, as I do to preachers, and in ministerial meetings, the necessity of getting our understanding of the Bible from the Bible itself, and using the spirit of prophecy to enlarge our view. I tell them not to be lazy about studying the Book, and not to rummage around first for something that has been written on a point that they can just swallow without study. I think that would be a very dangerous thing for our ministers to get into that habit. And there are some, I must confess, who will hunt around to find a statement in the Testimonies and spend no time in deep study of the Book. They do not have a taste for it, and if they can look around and find something that is already made out, they are glad to pick that up and go along without studying the Bible. The earnest study of the Bible is the security, the safety of a man. He must come to the book itself and get it by careful study, and then whatever he finds in the spirit of prophecy or any other writings that will help him and throw light and clarify his vision on it, - that is alright. Does that cover your point?

C. L. Taylor: It does to a certain extent; and yet when you take the case of those two brethren who accept the Bible and the Testimonies, but still have a difference of interpretation that they want help on, - is it right for them to use the Testimonies in their study of that text, as well as the Bible?

A. G. Daniells: I think it is right to take the whole trend of teaching and thought that is put through the Testimonies on that subject. If I am

perplexed about a text, and in my study of the spirit of prophecy I find something that makes it clear, I take that. I think Brother Prescott illustrates that in this matter of Matthew 24, of which there is a clear outline in the spirit of prophecy.

W. W. Prescott: For two or three years I spent a lot of time in the study of the 8th chapter of Daniel, to get what I thought to be the proper interpretation of that chapter. I got up to the point one time where I felt that I must get that clearer, where I could use it, and I made it the special subject of prayer. I was over in England, stopping at the home of a brother there. It came to me just like a voice, "Read what it says in 'Patriarchs and Prophets' on that subject." I turned right around to a book case back of me, and took up "Patriarchs and Prophets" and began to look through it. I came right to the chapter that dealt with the subject, and I found exactly the thing I wanted to clarify my mind on that subject. It greatly helped me. That, Brother Daniells, is my own personal experience over this matter that Brother Taylor raises.

In connection with what Brother Taylor has asked, I would like to suggest this, Whether a comment on the spirit of prophecy upon the Authorized Version establishes that version as the correct version against the Revised Version, where the reading is changed; and if one accepted the Revised Version, it would throw out the comment made in the spirit of prophecy. I have a definite case in mind.

A. G. Daniells: Just in addition to that other point: I had a similar experience when I was in Europe the last time, when I was greatly exercised about the finishing of this work. I felt so anxious about it, and I said, "Lord, what is the vital, important thing necessary to get this work finished?" I was at Friedensau, and in my room praying earnestly over that matter. And on my knees I took this little book, "Christ's Object Lessons," and began to read. I had really got weary with prayer, and stopped to read a little, and the first thing I found was this: [Not verified with the book] " _____ receive the Spirit of Christ, you will grow and bring forth fruit. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, etc. This fruit can never perish. When the fruit is brought forth, immediately He putteth in the sickle because the harvest is ripe. That is the finish of the work. Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim His own. It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel! Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain."

I just stayed there on my knees and praised God for that gleam of light that came to me. It took that text in Mark, "When the fruit is brought forth, immediately He putteth in the sickle because the harvest is come." It shows just the steps to take. I have felt from that day to this that this denomination should be on its knees praying for the infilling of the Holy Spirit, that we might quickly finish the work.

So, Brother Taylor, I would feel that the view that would be made clear by the notes in the spirit of prophecy would be the safe view to take.

W. F. Howell: I had a little experience on that same point that came to me during this Conference, and it made an impression on my mind. I have always claimed a part of the fifth chapter of Hebrews for the teacher. I have resorted to it many times for help from a teacher's viewpoint. Last week we were studying here the divine call to teach, and I resorted to this chapter for some thought, and in connection with it I read a comment in the spirit of prophecy. I think the Spirit of the Lord led me to it. It says this is for the teacher:

"He who seeks to transform humanity must himself understand humanity." I thought that was good for the teacher. "Only through sympathy, faith and love can men be reached and uplifted. Here Christ stands revealed as the Master-Teacher. Of all that ever dwelt on the earth, He alone has perfect understanding of the human soul." Then comes this scripture from the fifth of Hebrews: "We have not a high priest - Master-Teacher, for the priests were teachers - that can not be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, one that hath not been in all points tempted like as we are." That brought a flash of light on the fifth chapter of Hebrews I had never received before. Then I took that idea of the high-priest being a master-teacher, and I found the best outline of the qualifications of a teacher I could find in any one place in the Bible; and now I claim the whole of the fifth chapter for the teacher.

F. M. Wilcox: I have a paragraph here I would like to read. This is so completely in harmony with what Brother Daniells has expressed that I thought I would like to read it. James White, in the Review of 1851, wrote this and it was republished again four years later, as expressing what he considered the denominational view with respect to the Testimonies back there:

"GIFTS OF THE GOSPEL CHURCH"

"The gifts of the Spirit should all have their proper places. The Bible is an everlasting rock. It is our rule of faith and practice. In it the man of God is 'thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' If every member of the church of Christ was holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, and searched the Holy Scriptures diligently and with much prayer for

duty, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, we think, they would be able to learn their whole duty in 'all good works.' Thus 'the man of God may be perfect.' But as the reverse exists, and ever has existed, God in much mercy has pitied the weakness of his people, and has set the gifts in the gospel church to correct our errors, and to lead us to his living Word. Paul says that they are for the 'perfecting of the saints,' 'till we all come in the unity of the faith.' The extreme necessity of the church in its imperfect state is God's opportunity to manifest the Spirit.

"Every Christian is therefore in duty bound to take the Bible as a perfect rule of faith and duty. He should pray fervently to be aided by the Holy Spirit in searching the Scriptures for the whole truth, and for his whole duty. He is not at liberty to turn from them to learn his duty through any of the gifts. We say that the very moment he does, he places the gifts in a wrong place, and takes an extremely dangerous position. The Word should be in front, the eye of the church should be placed upon it, as the rule to walk by, and the fountain of wisdom, from which to learn duty in 'all good works.' But if a portion of the church err from the truths of the Bible, and become weak and sickly, and the flock become scattered, so that it seems necessary for God to employ the gifts of the Spirit to correct, revive, and heal the erring, we should let him work. Yea, more, we should pray for him to work, and plead earnestly that he would work by the Spirit's power, and bring the scattered sheep to his fold. Praise the Lord, he will work. Amen." - Review and Herald of April 21, 1851.

We wrote the above article on the gifts of the gospel church four years since. It was published in the first volume of the Review. One object in republishing it is that our readers may see for themselves what our position has ever been on this subject, that they may be better prepared to dispose of the statements of those who seek to injure us.

The position that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is the rule of faith and duty, does not shut out the gifts which God set in the church. To reject them is shutting out that part of the Bible which presents them. We say, Let us have a whole Bible, and let that, and that alone, be our rule of faith and duty. Place the gifts where they belong, and all is harmony. - Review and Herald of October 3, 1854.

W. W. Prescott: How should we use the writings of the spirit of prophecy as an authority by which to settle historical questions?

A. G. Daniells: Well, now, as I understand it, Sister White never claimed to be an authority on history, and never claimed to be a dogmatic teacher on theology. She never outlined a course of theology, like Mrs. Eddy's book on teaching. She just gave out fragmentary statements, but left the pastors and evangelists and preachers to work out all these problems of

scripture and of theology and of history. She never claimed to be an authority on history; and as I have understood it, where the history that related to the interpretation of prophecy was clear and expressive, she wove it into her writings; but I have always understood that, as far as she was concerned, she was ready to correct in revision such statements as she thought should be corrected. I have never gone to her writings, and taken the history that I found in her writings, as the positive statement of history regarding the fulfillment of prophecy. I do not know how others may view that, but I have felt that I should deal with history in the same way that I am exhorted to deal with the Bible, - prove it all carefully and thoroughly, and then let her go on and make such revisions from time to time as seem best.

Just one more thought: Now you know something about that little book, "The Life of Paul." You know the difficulty we got into about that. We could never claim inspiration in the whole thought and makeup of the book, because it has been thrown aside because it was badly put together. Credits were not given to the proper authorities, and some of that crept into "The Great Controversy," - the lack of credits; and in the revision of that book those things were carefully run down and made right. Personally that has never shaken my faith, but there are men who have been greatly hurt by it, and I think it is because they claimed too much for these writings. Just as Brother White says, there is a danger in going away from the Book, and claiming too much. Let it have its full weight, just as God has fixed it, and then I think we will stand without being shaken when some of these things do appear that we can not harmonize with our theory.

W. W. Prescott: There is another experience that you know of that applies to what Brother Taylor has brought up. Some of the brethren here remember very well a serious controversy over the interpretation of the 8th chapter of Daniel, and there were some of the brethren who ranged themselves against what was called the new view, and they took her writings to uphold their position. She wrote to those brethren and instructed them not to use her writings to settle that controversy. I think that ought to be remembered as being her own counsel when brethren that did claim to believe the Bible and the spirit of prophecy were divided over an interpretation, and it was a matter of public controversy.

J. N. Anderson: How far would you take that word from Sister White to be a general statement about her writings?

A. G. Daniells: I think it was especially on the case then, but I think we have to use the same judgment about using her writings in other cases.

C. A. Shull: Just how shall we use the Testimonies in the class room?

What shall be our attitude toward them in the line of history, especially? Before I knew that there was any statement in the spirit of prophecy regarding the experience of John, I stated to the class that there was a tradition that John had been thrown into a caldron of boiling oil, and a student immediately produced that statement in the Testimonies that John was thrown into the boiling oil. Now, I want to know, was she given a divine revelation that John was thrown into a vat of boiling oil?

Now another question, on the taking of Babylon. Mrs. White in the spirit of prophecy mentions that Babylon was taken according to the historian, by the turning aside of the waters. Modern scholarship says it was not taken that way. What should be our attitude in regard to such things?

Mrs. Williams: We have that question to meet every year.

E F. Albertsworth: I have been confronted in my classes by students who come with the Testimonies and endeavor to settle a question by quoting where she says, "I have been shown." They said that of all things that must settle the matter. I have wanted to know what attitude we should take on a question of that kind.

C. P. Bollman: Wouldn't that latter question require a concrete example?

A. G. Daniells: Yes, I think it would.

E. F. Albertsworth: I do not recall the example; but some of the students would say that meant she had a direct revelation, and others would say that meant that she was shown by people around her.

A. G. Daniells: I do not think that is what she means when she says that. When she was shown, it was by the angel or the revelation that was made to her. I feel sure that was her meaning.

E. F. Albertsworth: I have found students who had doubts about that.

W. G. Wirth: Suppose we do have a conflict between the authorized and revised versions?

A. G. Daniells: That question was up before. You must not count me an authority for I am just like you in the matter. I have to form my own opinions. I do not think Sister White meant at all to establish the certainty of a translation. I do not think she had that in mind, or had anything to do with putting her seal of approval on the authorized version or on the revised version when she quoted that. She uses whichever version helps to bring out the thought she has most clearly.

With reference to this historical matter, I cannot say anything more than

I have said, that I never have understood that Sister White undertook to settle historical questions. I visited her once over this matter of the "daily," and I took along with me that old chart, - as early a chart as we have access to, -

C. P. Bollman: The same chart that Elder Haskell sells?

A. G. Daniells: Yes, it was that same chart. I took that and laid it on her lap, and I took "Early Writings" and read it to her, and then I told her of the controversy. I spent a long time with her. It was one of her days when she was feeling cheery and rested, and so I explained it to her quite fully. I said, "Now here you say that you were shown that the view of the 'daily' that the brethren held was correct. Now," I said, "there are two parts here in this 'daily' that you quote. One is this period of time, the 2300 years, and the other is what the 'daily' itself was."

I went over that with her, and every time, as quick as I would come to that time, she would say, "Why, I know what was shown me, that that period of 2300 days was fixed, and that there would be no definite time after that. The brethren were right when they reached that 1844 date."

Then I would leave that, and I would go on about this "Daily." "Why," she said, "Brother Daniells, I do not know what that 'daily' is, whether it is paganism or Christ's ministry. That was not the thing that was shown me." And she would go into that twilight zone right away. Then when I would come back to the 2300 years, she would straighten. right up and say, "That is the thing we never can move away from. I tell you, you never can move away from that 2300 year period. It was shown to me that that was fixed." And I believe it was, brethren. You might just as well try to move me out of the world as to try to move me on that question, - not because she says it, but I believe it was clearly shown to her by the Lord. But on this other, when she says she was not shown what the "daily" was, I believe that, and I take "Early Writings" 100% on that question of the "daily," fixing that period. That is the thing she talks about, and I take the Bible with it, and I take the Bible as to what the "daily" itself is.

So when it comes to those historical questions about the taking of Babylon, I think this, brethren, we ought not to let every little statement in history that we find lead us away from the spirit of prophecy. You know historians contradict each other, don't you? Of course your work is to get back, get back, get back to the fountain head, the original thing; and when you get back there, and get it perfectly clear, I do not believe that if Sister White were here to speak to you today, she would authorize you to take a historical fact, supposed to be a fact, that she had incorporated in the book, and put it up against an actual thing in history. We talked with her about that when "Great Controversy"

was being revised, and I have letters in my file in the vault there where we were warned against using Sister White as a historian. She never claimed to be that. We were warned against setting up statements found in her writings against the various history that there is on a fact. That is where I stand. I do not have to meet it with students, and I do not have to explain myself in a congregation. I suppose I have it easier than you teachers do.

W. W. Prescott: On that very point you mention as to the capture of Babylon, one of the most recent editions of the Bible (?) takes the position of Herodotus against the, and he says: "Why should we discount the writings on parchment in favor of the writings on clay?"

A. G. Daniells: That is what I mean, that we should not allow every historical statement that we find that contradicts the Testimonies to set us wild. If there are two authorities of equal value on that point, bring up the authority that is in harmony with what we have.

C. A. Shull: We teachers have a great responsibility on us to take the right attitude. If we say that a certain thing in the Testimonies is not correct, students are likely to carry away the impression that we do not have faith in the Testimonies.

A. G. Daniells: There are two ways to hurt students in this matter. One way is to discount the Testimonies and cast a little bit of question and doubt on them. I would never do that, brethren, in the school room.

No matter how much I was perplexed, I would never cast a doubt in the mind of a student. I would take hours to explain matters to ground the student in it. Casting doubts and reflections is one way to hurt a student. Another way is to take an extreme and unwarranted position. You can do that and pass it over; but when that student gets out and gets in contact with things, he may be shaken, and perhaps shaken clear out and away. I think we should be candid and honest and never put a claim forth that is not well founded simply to appear to believe. You will have to be careful in giving this instruction, because many of the students have heard from their parents things that are not so, and they hear from preachers things that are not so, and so their foundation is false.

I must refer again to the attitude of A. T. Jones. In his heyday you know he just drank the whole thing in, and he would hang a man on a word. I have seen him take just a word in the Testimonies and hang to it, and that would settle everything, - just a word. I was with him when he made a discovery, - or, if he didn't make it, he appeared to make it, - and that was that there were words in the Testimonies and writings of Sister White that God did not order her to put in there, that there were words which she did not put in by divine inspiration, the Lord picking the words, but

that somebody had helped to fix that up. And so he took two testimonies and compared them, and he got into great trouble. He went on with Dr. Kellogg, where he could just pick things to pieces.

F. M. Wilcox: Back in the 60's or 70's a General Conference in session passed this resolution, - they said, we recognize that the Testimonies have been prepared under great pressure and stress of circumstances, and that the wording is not always the happiest, and we recommend their republication with such changes as will bring them to a standard.

A. G. Daniells: I would like to get hold of that resolution. Now, brethren, I want to ask you honestly if there is a man here who has had doubt created in your mind from my attitude and the positions I have taken? [VOICES: No! No!] Or is there one of you that thinks I am shaky on the Testimonies? - I will not say that [. . .] thinks my position is not just right, for you might not agree with me, but from what I have said, is there a tendency to lead you to believe that I am shaky, and that some time I will help to get you away from the Testimonies? [Several decided no's were heard.]

C. L. Taylor: In your talk a few evenings ago I agreed 100% in everything you said. Today there is just one question in my mind.

A. G. Daniells: Let us have it.

C. L. Taylor: That is regarding those outward manifestations, those things of perhaps a miraculous nature. I do not know whether you intend to carry the impression that you discredit those or that you simply would not teach them. If it is that you would not hold them up as proof that the work is inspired, I am heartily in agreement with that. On the other hand, if you take the position that those things are not to be relied on, that Elder Loughborough and others are mistaken about these things, I should have to disagree with you.

A. G. Daniells: No, I do not discount them nor disbelieve them; but they are not the kind of evidence I would use with students or with unbelievers.

C. L. Taylor: I agree with that.

A. G. Daniells: I do not question them, but I do not think they are the best kind of evidence to produce. For instance, I do not think the best kind of proof for me to give an audience on the Sabbath question or the nature of man or baptism, is to go and read Sister White's writings to them. I believe the best proof I can give is the Bible. Perhaps you will remember that it fell to me to preach Sister White's funeral sermon; and if you will remember, I took that occasion to give evidence of her high calling. I did not give a long list of fruits and miraculous evidences.

I knew the matter would be published to the world in hundreds of papers, and I wanted to give them something that would be a high authority, and this is what I gave:

First, that she stood with the word of God from Genesis to Revelation in all its teaching.

Then, she stood with mankind in his highest endeavors to help mankind, - elaborating on those points.

That is what I mean, Brother Taylor; but I do not discount those other things.

What I want to know is this, brethren: Does my position appear to be of such a character that you would be led to think I am shaky? [VOICES: No!] If you think it, just say it right out! I do not want to do that, but I have to be honest, - I can not camouflage in a thing like this. I have stood through it about forty years unshaken, and I think it is a safe position; but if I were driven to take the position that some do on the Testimonies, I would be shaken. [VOICE: That's right!] I would not know where to stand, for I can not say that white is black and black is white.

H. C. Lacey: To us there is no doubt that you believe the Testimonies, but will you mind my adding another personal note to it?

A. G. Daniells: No.

H. C. Lacey: It is this: Those who have not heard you, as we have here, and are taking the other side of the question, - some of them are deliberately saying that neither you nor Professor Prescott believe the Testimonies. For instance, I went out to Mt. Vernon and I met the graduating class there, and when the exercises were over, I had a private talk with three or four of those young people, and they told me that they certainly understood that our General Conference men down here - they did not mean me or Brother Sorenson - did not believe the Testimonies.

W. W. Prescott: You are not telling us news.

H. C. Lacey: We as teachers are in a terribly hard position. We have got nearly down to bed-rock in the questions that have been asked here; but the students do get right down to bed-rock on some of these things, and we need to get a little deeper here. There are people here at these meetings who do not dare to ask certain questions that have come up in their minds or in private talks. But you know that the teacher is in a very difficult position.

On that matter of the capture of Babylon, I have felt free to say that I

thought the evidence was that Cyrus did not capture it that way, but we would hold the matter in abeyance and simply study it. Suppose now that further tablets would come to light, and other evidence would be brought in to prove indisputably that Cyrus did not capture Babylon that way, would it be right to say that if there is a revision of that book, "Patriarchs and Prophets," which endorses, in one casual sentence, that old view, - the revision would be brought into harmony with recently discovered facts?

A. G. Daniells: I think that is the position Sister White occupies. I think that is what she has done. I never understood that she put infallibility into the historical quotations.

H. C. Lacey: But there are some who do understand it.

W. W. Prescott: It is interesting to know that even a higher critic like George Adams Smith agrees with Herodotus (?) on that.

Brother Daniells was speaking about this question of physical outward evidences. One of those evidences has been that the eyes were open, as you will remember, and this scripture in the 24th chapter of Numbers is always referred to, showing that it is in harmony with that. But you read the Revised Version, and you find it reads, "And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor saith, And the man whose eye was closed saith:" In this text it puts it just the other way. Then I would not want to use that as an argument, that the prophet's eyes were open.

A. G. Daniells: That is what I mean by referring to secondary matters.

H. C. Lacey: In our estimate of the spirit of prophecy, isn't its value to us more in the spiritual light it throws into our own hearts and lives than in the intellectual accuracy in historical and theological matters. Ought we not to take those writings as the voice of the Spirit of our hearts, instead of as the voice of the teacher to our heads? And isn't the final proof of the spirit of prophecy its spiritual value rather than its historical accuracy?

A. G. Daniells: Yes, I think so.

J. N. Anderson: Would you set about to explain things as you have this morning? Would you explain that you do not think the Testimonies are to be taken as final in the matter of historical data, etc., so as to justify a position?

A. G. Daniells: Who gives the teaching in the school on the spirit of prophecy? Is it the Bible teacher? How do you get that question before the students?

C. L. Taylor: Both Bible and history teachers catch it.

W. H. Wakeham: It comes up in every Bible class.

H.C. Lacey: Wouldn't it be a splendid thing if a little pamphlet were written setting forth in plain, simple, straight-forward style the facts as we have them, - simple, sacred facts, - so that we could put them into the hands of inquiring students?

Voice: Our enemies would publish it everywhere.

C. L. Benson: I think it would be a splendid thing if our brethren were a little conservative on these things. We had a man come to our Union and spend an hour and a half on the evidences of the spirit of prophecy through Sister White. The impression was conveyed that practically every word that she spoke, and every letter she wrote, whether personal or otherwise, was a divine inspiration. Those things make it awfully hard for our teachers and ministers.

W. G. Wirth: I want to second what Professor Lacey has brought out. I wish you general men would get out something for us, because we are the ones that suffer.

W. W. Prescott: To my certain knowledge, a most earnest appeal was made for that from her office to issue such a statement, and they would not do it.

C. P. Bollman: It wasn't made to her, though.

W. W. Prescott: No, but it was made to those who were handling her manuscripts.

A. G. Daniells: Some of those statements like what Brother Wilcox read here this morning have been up a number of times, and Brother White always took a good sensible position.

W. W. Prescott: Brother Wilcox had a letter from Sister White herself that he read.

A. G. Daniells: When these things were under pretty sharp controversy, W. C. White, for his mother, sent out things that we had in our vaults here that greatly modified this, and helped to smooth out these wrinkles and get a reasonable ground on which to stand. I do not know but what perhaps the General Conference Committee might appoint a committee to do this, and have reliable, responsible men that the people do not question at all take hold of that and bring out these facts. It does seem to me that in our schools there ought to be an agreement among the teachers. The

history and Bible teachers and others that have to do with these things should get together and have their stories and their teaching alike, if possible. The truth should be given to those students, and when you give the truth to them you will have them founded and established on this without trouble. But when these erroneous views are given them, they get a false idea and then there is danger when an honest man takes the true side and states his position.

W. E. Howell: It seems to me that the point is of very great importance. I have been somewhat perplexed on this matter. We have talked over things very freely and frankly here at the other meeting and at this, and I think the teachers here at [sic] all satisfied as to the place that is to be given to the spirit of prophecy in its relation to their work. But these teachers, when they get back to their places of work, will have all kinds of questions put to them, and it has been a question with me as to how far a teacher ought to go with a class of young people or with an indiscriminate body to deal with and attempt to bring out the things that they have heard here and have received and believed for themselves. I think there is where the difficulty is going to be. We have only two teachers here out of an entire faculty. Some other member of the faculty might not be cleared up on these things. There may be teachers who are endeavoring to teach science out of the spirit of prophecy; or another teacher who has not had the benefit of this discussion, may have some other viewpoint. And it really puts these teachers in a very hard situation. If there is anything that can be done by way of putting something in the hands of the teachers so that they could give the true representation in the matter, I think it would be a very great help.

W. W. Prescott: Can you explain how it is that two brethren can disagree on the inspiration of the Bible, one holding to the verbal inspiration and the other opposed to it, and yet no disturbance be created in the denomination whatever. That situation is right here before us. But if two brethren take the same attitude on the spirit of prophecy, one holding to verbal inspiration and the other discrediting it, he that does not hold to the verbal inspiration is discredited.

F.M. Wilcox: Do you believe that a man who doesn't believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible believes the Bible?

W. W. Prescott: I do not have any trouble over it at all. I have a different view myself. If a man does not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, he is still in good standing; but if he says he does not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies, he is discounted right away. I think it is an unhealthful situation. It puts the spirit of prophecy above the Bible.

W. G. Wirth: Really, that is my biggest problem. I shall certainly be

discredited if I go back and give this view. I would like to see some published statement given out by those who lead this work so that if that thing should come up there would be some authority back of it, because I am in for a lot of trouble on that thing. I would like to see something done, because that education is going right on, and our students are being sent out with the idea that the Testimonies are verbally inspired, and woe be to the man out where I am that does not line up to that.

Now as to health reform: Frequently a student will come to me and quote what Sister White says about butter. But we serve butter on our tables right along. And they will bring up about meat, how under no consideration is that to be eaten. And I know that that is unreasonable, and there are times when it is necessary to eat meat. What shall we do about that? I would like a little light on some of those details, as to whether we ought to take them at full value.

A. G. Daniells: I am willing to answer part of that, for I have had it about a thousand times. Take this question of health reform. It is well known from the writings themselves and from personal contact with Sister White, and from common sense, that in traveling and in knowledge of different parts of the world, that the instruction set forth in the Testimonies was never intended to be one great wholesale blanket regulation for peoples' eating and drinking, and it applies to various individuals according to their physical condition and according to the situation in which they find themselves. I have always explained it that way to our ministers in ministers' meetings. We had a ministers' meeting over in Scandinavia, and we had one man there from the "land of the midnight sun," up in Hammerfest where you never grow a banana or an apple or a peach, and hardly even a green thing. It is snow and cold there nearly all the time, and the people live to a large extent on fish and various animal foods that they get there. We had sent a nurse from Christiania up there as a missionary. He had the strict idea of the diet according to the Testimonies, and he would not touch a fish or a bit of reindeer, nor any kind of animal food, and he was getting poor; because missionaries that are sent out do not have much money, and they cannot import fresh fruits; and it was in the days when even canned goods were not shipped much. The fellow nearly starved to death. He came down to attend that meeting, and he was nearly as white as your dress [speaking to Sister Williams]. He had hardly any blood in his body. I talked to him, and I said, "Brother Olson, what is the matter with you? We will have to bring you away from up there if you do not get better. You have no red blood corpuscles in your blood." I talked with him a while, and finally asked him, "What do you live on?"

"Well," he said, "I live a good deal on the north wind."

I said, "You look like it, sure enough."

We went on talking, and I found out that the man wasn't eating much but potatoes and starchy foods, - just a limited dietary. I went at him with all the terror I could inspire for such foolishness.

Voice: Did you make any impression?

A. G. Daniells: Yes, I did. And I got other brethren to join me. We told that man he would be buried up there if he tried to live that way. We talked with him straight about it.

When I got back to this country I talked with Sister White about it, and she said, "Why don't the people use common sense? Why don't they know that we are to be governed by the places we are located?" You will find in a little testimony a caution thrown out, modifying the extreme statements that were made.

F. M. Wilcox: Sister White says in a copy of the Instructor that there are some classes that she would not say should not eat some meat.

A. G. Daniells: There are very conscientious men and ministers who are very much afraid they will eat something they ought not to. On that very point Paul says that the kingdom of God is not meat or drink, but righteousness and peace; and we are working and trying to get through to the kingdom just as much on the ground of works by eating or not eating as by any other thing in this world. You never can put down vegetarianism as the way to heaven. I have been over in India where they are mighty strict about their eating, but they do not get righteousness that way.

C. L. Taylor: It is true of all works, isn't it?

A. G. Daniells: Certainly. You take men who have never allowed a piece of animal food to pass their lips, and some of them are the most tyrannical, brutal men; and when we try to reach them with the gospel, we have to tell them that is not the way to God, that they will have to come and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and have His righteousness imputed to them on confession, forgiveness, and all of that. We have people among us that are just as much in danger of trying to establish this righteousness by works in the matter of the dietary as the world has seen in any thing. You know from what Sister White brought out on the matter of righteousness that it was not her purpose to put down eating and drinking as the way to heaven. It has its place. It is important, and I would not want to see this denomination swing away over to the position of other denominations; but I do not like to hear of teaching that would lead this people to fall back on eating and drinking for righteousness, for Paul said that is not the way. I do not think proper caution was used in putting out some of these things, and I have told Sister White so.

Mrs. Williams: You mean in publishing them?

A .G. Daniells: Yes, when they were written. I told Sister White that it seems to me that if conditions in the arctic regions and in the heart of China and other places had been taken into account, some of those things would have been modified. "Why," she said, "yes, if the people are not going to use their judgment, then of course we will have to fix it for them." It seemed so sensible to me. Sister White was never a fanatic, she was never an extremist. She was a level-headed woman. She was well-balanced. I found that so during a period of 40 years of association with her. When we were down in Texas, and old Brother White was breaking down, that woman just got the most beautiful venison every day to eat, and my wife cooked it; and he would sit down and eat some of that and say, "O, Ellen, that is just the thing!" She did not hold him up and make him live on a diet of starch! I always found her well-balanced. There are some people who are extremists, who are fanatical; but I do not think we should allow those people to fix the platform and guide this denomination. I do not propose to do it, for one. And yet I believe that we should use all the caution and all the care that is set out for the maintenance of health. And brethren, I have tried to do it, but I have not lived all my life on the strictest dietary set down there. I have had to go all over this world, and as you know, I have had to be exposed to all the disease germs. I have had to live on a very spare dietary in places in my travel, and I have. lived on wheels, and under great pressure, and it was prophesied when I went into this in 1901 that a decade would finish me, and I would either be a broken-down old man on the shelf or in the grave. That is the way my friends talked, and they sympathized with me, and regretted that I ever took this position; but I said to myself, "By the grace of God, I will live in every possible way just right as far as I know it, to conserve my strength." This is my 19th year, and I am not broken down, and I am not on the shelf or in the grave. I am strong and well. I am weary, but I can get rested. I have tried to be honest and to be true to my sense of what was the right thing to do, and it has kept me well and strong. That is the basis on which I propose to work. I do not propose to have any extremist lay down the law to me as to what I shall eat up in the heart of China. I propose to use my sense as to what I ought to eat in those places where you can not get a green thing, hardly.

Mrs. Williams: In the interior of Africa, we had to cook everything we ate, so as to kill the germs.

A. G. Daniells: Why, yes, in China you must sterilize your hands and your knife, and if you eat an apple, it must be sterilized after it is peeled, and even then it is not always safe. I do not think we have to take an extreme position on the question of the diet for all classes. We are not

all alike. What is good for one man is not good for another. I have seen Elder Irwin sit down and eat two or three raw apples at night just before going to bed; but one apple at night would upset me so that my tongue would be covered with fur and my head all swelled up. I would not eat one if you would give me five dollars. I count that health reform, to reject that which I know injures me and take that which I know strengthens me and maintains me in the strongest physical trim for service and hard work. That is my health reform. Raw apples are good for people that have the right digestion for them; but if a person hasn't that sort of digestion, he must lay down the law, No raw apples for him.

That is the way a lot of things got into the Testimonies. They were many of them written for individuals in various states of health, and then they were hurried into the Testimonies without proper modification. That is not to say that they are false things, but it is to say that they do not apply to every individual the world over alike. And you can not put a health-reform regime or rule down for the whole world alike, because of the different physical conditions that maintain. That is what I tell in ministers' meetings and I do not think I destroy the force of the message at all, only to the extremist.

Brother Waldorf: I have had no trouble for over twenty years with the spirit of prophecy or with the Bible. The more I have studied both the more firmly I have become convinced on this platform. I have read the whole of higher criticism right through, and the other side of it. There are 50,000 different readings in the Bible. There are many mistakes that were made in transcribing. Now in the matter of historical complication, I take the Bible and the spirit of prophecy exactly alike.

A. G. Daniells: Here is one illustration of a mistake in the Bible: In Samuel it says a man lifted up his hand against 800 men whom he slew; then in Chronicles this same thing is spoken of, and it says that he lifted up his hand against 300 men, whom he slew.

Waldorf: I have never held up the spirit of prophecy as being infallible. But students come to me from different teachers, having different views. One comes and says Professor Lacey taught me this way, and another comes from Professor Johnson who taught him some other way. There are lots of them coming to the medical college that way from different teachers. They do not know whether every word of the spirit of prophecy is inspired or not. I teach them this way: That when this message was first started, God brought this gift of prophecy into the church, and through this gift God has approved of the major doctrines that we hold right down from 1844. I for one hold that the gift of the spirit of prophecy was given to us in order to get the mold, lest we should trust human reasoning and modern scholarship, for I believe that modern scholarship has gone bankrupt when it comes to Greek and Hebrew.

As for meat eating, I haven't touched meat for twenty-one years; but I buy meat for my wife. I often go into a butcher shop and get the very best they have in order to keep her in life. I never will use the Testimonies as a sledge hammer on my brother.

A. G. Daniells: I will tell you one thing, a great victory will be gained if we get a liberal spirit so that we will treat brethren who differ with us on the interpretation of the Testimonies in the same Christian way we treat them when they differ on the interpretation of the Bible. That will be a good deal gained, and it is worth gaining, I want to tell you, for I have been under criticism ever since the controversy started in Battle Creek. Isn't it a strange thing that when I and some of my associates fought that heresy year after year, and we got message after message from the spirit of prophecy - some of them very comforting and uplifting messages - and all that time we were counted as heretics on the spirit of prophecy? How do you account for that? Why didn't the spirit of prophecy get after us? I claim that I know as well as any man whether I believe in the spirit of prophecy or not. I do not ask people to accept my views, but I would like the confidence of brothers where we differ in interpretation. If we can engender that spirit, it will be a great help; and I believe we have to teach it right in our schools.

Suppose students come to you with questions about the Bible that you do not know what to do with, - or do you always know? I would like to go to a teacher for a year that would tell me everything in here that puzzles me! What do you do when students come to you with such questions?

W. H. Wakeham: I tell them I do not know, and I do not lose their confidence, either.

A. G. Daniells: Well, when they come to you with something in the spirit of prophecy that is puzzling, why not say, as Peter did, that there are some things hard to be understood. I do not think that destroys the confidence of the people. But we have got the idea that we have got to just assume full and complete knowledge of everything about the spirit of prophecy and take an extreme position in order to be loyal and to be true to it.

W. E. Howell: I just want to remark two things. One is on the question Professor Prescott raised on our previous meeting as to why people take these different attitudes toward a man on the Bible and on the Testimonies. I am not philosopher enough to explain an attitude of that sort, but I do think that the cause of it lies primarily in the making of extreme and radical positions. I think that is where the root of the difficulty lies, especially with reference to the spirit of prophecy.

Brother Daniells and Brother Prescott and others have come in here with us and have talked very frankly with us, and I am sure every man here will say that they have not covered up anything. They have not withheld from you anything that you have asked for that they could give you in reference to this matter. I do not doubt that it is your experience as it is mine, when I go out from Washington, to hear it said that Brother Daniells or Brother Prescott does not believe the spirit of prophecy.

A. G. Daniells: Brother Spicer, too.

W. E. Howell: Yes, and Brother Spicer. I feel confident of this, that as you go out from this council you can be a great help in setting people straight on these things, and I believe it is our privilege to do it, brethren, to help the people on these points. Many of them are sincere and honest in that position, from what they have heard. I think it is our duty to help such persons all we can as we meet them.

C. L. Benson: Is this subject going to be dropped here? From what Brother Daniells has said, I know what it is going to mean to some of our schools and to our General Conference men. I feel it would be unfair to us as teachers to go back and make any statement. Letters have already come in, asking about the general men with reference to interpreting the spirit of prophecy. I do not think it is fair for us to go out and try to state the position of our General Conference men. On the other hand, I know the feeling and doctrine as taught in our conferences, and they are the Bible teachers of the people; and if our Bible and history teachers take these liberal position on the spirit of prophecy, our schools are going to be at variance entirely with the field. Our people are beginning to wonder about the condition our schools are in. They say they read in the Review of this spirit of paganism, and they say those articles surely would not have been published in the Review if these conditions did not exist in our own schools? Why, what would they be putting it in the Review for if that were not the case? That is a fact, many of our people take the position that those articles were written because of conditions existing in our own schools. I think we ought to get down to a solution of this thing if we can, and start some kind of a campaign of education. Out in the field we have stressed the importance of the spirit of prophecy more than the Bible, and many of our men are doing it right along. They tell of the wonderful phenomena, and many times they get their entire sermon from the spirit of prophecy instead of the Bible. If a break comes between our schools and the field we are in a serious place.

T. M. French: I believe it would help us a great deal if some general statement were issued, and if some of this matter that has been brought up could be given, showing that we are not shifting our position, that we are viewing the spirit of prophecy as it has been viewed all along. I believe it would help to settle the situation in our conferences, and

would be a great help both to the conferences and to the schools. I am sure from what has been read here of letters and resolutions of the past that we have not shifted our position, but the matter is just up again; and if we could get out statements as to our attitude all along, and restate the matter, I believe it would do much good.

W. E. Howell: The next topic we have is a consideration of how to teach the spirit of prophecy in our schools. In our recent general educational convention we provided for a semester's work in the curriculum in this subject. I think we ought to take ten minutes' intermission, and then take up this topic, which will give opportunity for further questions along this line.

RELH 457 - History of Adventism

Bible Conference of 1919: Part II

Inspiration of the Spirit of Prophecy As Related to The Inspiration of the Bible August 1, 1919

W. E. Howell, Chairman: The topic for this hour, as arranged for on Wednesday, is a continuation, in a measure, of our consideration of the spirit of prophecy, and the subject of inspiration connected with that, as related to the inspiration of the Bible. This hour is not intended to be a formal discourse, occupying the whole period, but Brother Daniells' will lead in the topic, and then he has expressed a wish that it might be a kind of round-table in which we will study things together.

A. G. Daniells: Brother Chairman, I think there has been a misunderstanding among us. I protested against taking such a heavy topic the other day, under the circumstances, and I dismissed it from my mind, and have been thinking along another line, that of pastoral training, and a further discussion of the question we had before us. I would not feel free, under the circumstances, to give a talk on the subject that I understand was looked for.

As you know, there are two views held by eminent men regarding the verbal inspiration of the Bible. You read their views in the books they have put out. One man, - scholarly, devout, earnest, a full believer in the Bible

in every sense of the word, - believes that it was a revelation of truth to the writers, and they were allowed to state that truth as best they could. Another man - equally scholarly and pious and earnest in his faith - believes that it was a word-for-word inspiration or revelation, that the actual words were given, - that every word in the original, as it was written by the prophets down from Moses to Malachi, was given to them by the Lord. These men differ, and differ honestly and sincerely; and they have their followers among us, right here at the conference, both of them; and I see nothing to be gained by a man in my position, with my knowledge of these things, attempting to prove up on this. I do not wish to do it. We would all remain of the same opinion, I think, as we are now; so I want to beg you to allow me to dismiss that part of it, and either go directly into the other question of pastoral training or open the way for further questions and discussions of the matter we had before us. I feel more at home in that, for all these years since the Battle Creek controversy began I have been face to face with this question of the Testimonies. I have met all the doubters, the chief ones, and have dealt with it in ministerial institutes, and have talked it over and over until I am thoroughly familiar with it, whether I am straight or not. I do not know that there is a crook or a kink in it that I have not heard brought up by these men that have fallen away from us. I would be willing to hear further questions and further discussion, if it is the wish of the convention.

W. E. Howell: I am sure I do not want Brother Daniells to feel that he is disappointing us in any real sense this morning; and if I understand the wishes of the teachers, it has not been that he should discuss so much the rather technical question of the verbal or truth - revealed inspiration of the Bible, but rather that he will give us some further instruction along the line of the inspiration of the spirit of prophecy and its relation to that of the Bible. I have nothing further to press along that line, but as teachers have expressed themselves to me, I have felt that it might be well to consider some aspects of that question a little further, particularly the use of unpublished writings, letters, talks, etc, in the light of what was referred to here the other day. Sister White herself said that if we wanted to know what the spirit of prophecy said on a thing, we should read her published writings. That is one question I think the teachers have in mind, Brother Daniells.

F. M. Wilcox: I have enjoyed these discussions very much. I enjoyed the evening of last week when the question of the spirit of prophecy was considered. I enjoyed very much the talk Elder Daniells gave on the question, and I think the view he took of the question very fully agrees with my own view. I have known for long years the way in which Sister White's works were brought together and her books compiled. I have never believed in the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies. I must say, however, that last Wednesday evening and also since then, some remarks

have been made without proper safeguarding, and I should question the effect of those statements and positions out in the field. I know that there is considerable talk around Takoma Park over positions that have been taken here, and there will be that same situation out in the field. As Brother Wakeham suggested the other day, I think we have to deal with a very delicate question, and I would hate terribly to see an influence sweep over the field and into any of our schools that the Testimonies were discounted. There is great danger of a reaction, and I do feel concerned.

I have heard questions raised here that have left the impression on my mind that if the same questions are raised in our classes when we get back to our schools, we are going to have serious difficulty. I believe there are a great many questions that we should hold back, and not discuss. I am not a teacher in a school, although I did teach the Bible 13 years in a nurses' training school, where I had a large number of young people; but I can not conceive that it is necessary for us to answer every question that is put to us by students or others, or be driven into a place where we will take a position that will lessen faith. I think the Testimonies of the Spirit of God are a great asset to this denomination, and I think if we destroy faith in them, we are going to destroy faith in the very foundation of our work. I must say that I do view with a great deal of concern the influence that will go out from this meeting, and from questions that I have seen raised here. And unless these questions can be dealt with most diplomatically, I think we are going to have serious trouble. I surely hope the Lord will give us wisdom so that we shall know what to say and do in meeting these things in the future.

C. L. Benson: I have felt very much concerned along the same line; and the question that has raised itself in my own mind goes a little further than has been brought up here; but it seems to me it is almost a logical step. That is this: If there are such uncertainties with reference to our historical position, and if the Testimonies are not to be relied on to throw a great deal of light upon our historical positions, and if the same is true with reference to our theological interpretation of texts, then how can we consistently place implicit confidence in the direction that is given with reference to our educational problems, and our medical school, and even our denominational organization? If there is a definite spiritual leadership in these things, then how can we consistently lay aside the Testimonies or partially lay them aside when it comes to the prophetic and historic side of the message? and place these things on the basis of research work? That question is in my mind, and I am confident that it is in the minds of others.

Waldorf: That is in my mind. That is why I brought out that illustration on the blackboard this morning, - those three rivers, history, spirit of

prophecy, and the Bible.

J. N. Anderson: I thought when we dismissed the subject the other day the main question was how we as teachers should deal with this question when we stand before our students. I think we have come to quite a unanimous opinion about this matter among ourselves here, and we stand pretty well together, I should say, as to what position the Testimonies occupy, - their authority and their relation to the Bible, and so on, - but the question in my mind, and in the mind of some others, too, I think, is, What shall we as teachers do when we stand before our classes and some historical question comes up, such as we have spoken of here, where we have decided that Sister White's writings are not final? We say there are many historical facts that we believe scholarship must decide, that Sister White never claimed to be final on the historical matters that appear in her writings. Are we safe to tell that to our students? Or shall we hold it in abeyance? And can we hold something in the back of our head that we are absolutely sure about, and that most of the brethren stand with us on? - can we hold those things back and be true to ourselves? And furthermore, are we safe in doing it? Is it well to let our people in general go on holding to the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies? When we do that, aren't we preparing for a crisis that will be very serious some day? It seems to me that the best thing for us to do is to cautiously and very carefully educate our people to see just where we really should stand to be consistent protestants, to be consistent with the Testimonies themselves, and to be consistent with what we know we must do, as intelligent men, as we have decided in these meetings.

Of course these are not such big questions, because I do not teach along this line. Still, they do sometimes arise in my classes. But personally I am not concerned about it. I am concerned about the faith of the young men and women that come into our schools. They are to be our leaders, and I think these are the days when they should be given the very best foundation we can give them. We should give them the most sincere and honest beliefs that we have in our own hearts.

I speak with some feeling because it does come close to my convictions that something should be done here in this place, - here is where it can be done - to safeguard our people, to educate them and to bring them back and cause them to stand upon the only foundation that can ever be secure as we advance and progress.

C. L. Taylor: With regard to the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies, I would say that I have heard more about it here in one day than ever before in my life. I think we have made a great big mountain of difficulty to go out and fight against. I do not believe that our people generally believe in the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies. I think that the general idea of our people is that the Testimonies are the

writings of a sister who received light from God. As to verbal inspiration, I think they have a very ill-defined idea. I think they believe that in some way God gave her light, and she wrote it down, and they do not know what verbal inspiration means.

But I do see a great deal in the question Professor Benson raised, and that is if we must lay aside what Sister White has said interpreting history, or what we might call the philosophy of history, as unreliable, and also lay aside as unreliable expositions of scripture, the only natural conclusion for me, and probably for a great many others, would be that the same authorship is unreliable regarding organization, regarding pantheism, and every other subject that she ever treated on; - that she may have told the truth, but we had better get all the historical data we can to see whether she told the truth or not. That is something I would like to hear discussed. I do not believe we shall get to the foundation of the question unless we answer Professor Benson's question.

A. G. Daniells: Shall we consider some points as settled, and pass on? Take the matter of verbal inspiration. I think it is very much as Brother Taylor says, that among the most of our people there is no question. It is not agitated. They do not understand it, and they do not understand the technical features of the inspiration of the Bible, either. And the power of the Bible and its grip on the human race does not depend on a technical point as to their belief in it, whether it is verbally inspired or truth-inspired. The men who hold directly opposite positions have the same faith in the Bible. I will not allow a man who believes in the verbal inspiration of the Bible to depreciate my faith in the Bible because I do not hold with him, - I will not consent to that a moment. I know my own faith in it, I know that I have enough faith in it to get forgiveness of my sins and companionship with my Lord and the hope of heaven. I know that, and a man that holds a different view need not try to depreciate my faith because I do not hold the same view that he does. I do not depreciate another man's faith or standing with God at all because he holds a different view. I think we could argue about the inspiration of the Bible - I was going to say till doomsday - till the end, and not come to the same view, but all have the same confidence in it, and have the same experience, and all get to the same place at last.

But now with reference to the Testimonies: I think more mischief can be done with the Testimonies by claiming their verbal inspiration than can with the Bible. If you ask for the logic of it, it might take some time to bring it out, and I might not be able to satisfy every mind; but if you ask for practical experience, I can give it to you, plenty of it.

F.M. Wilcox: Because we know how the Testimonies were brought together, and we do not know anything about the Bible.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, that is one point. We do know, and it is no kind of use for anybody to stand up and talk about the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies, because everybody who has ever seen the work done knows better, and we might as well dismiss it.

M. E. Kern: I am not so sure that some of the brethren are right in saying that we are all agreed on this question. I came in here the other day for the first time to attend the Conference, and I would hear the same man in the same talk say that we could not depend on this historical data that was given in the spirit of prophecy, and then assert his absolute confidence in the spirit of prophecy and in the Testimonies. And then a little further along there would be something else that he would not agree with. For instance, the positive testimony against butter was mentioned, and he explained that there are exceptions to that. Later he would again say, "I have absolute confidence in the inspiration of the spirit of prophecy." The question is, What is the nature of inspiration? How can we feel, and believe and know that there is an inconsistency there, - something that is not right, - and yet believe that the spirit of prophecy is inspired? Do you get the question?

A. G. Daniells: Yes, I get your question alright!

M. E. Kern: That is the difficulty we have in explaining this to young people. We may have confidence ourselves, but it is hard to make others believe it if we express this more liberal view. I can see how some might take advantage of this liberal view and go out and eat meat every meal, and say that part of the Testimonies is not reliable.

Question: Can't he do the same thing if he believes in the verbal inspiration?

M. E. Kern: Not quite so consistently. If he believed every word was inspired, he could not consistently sit down and eat meat.

A. G. Daniells: But I have seen them do it.

M. E. Kern: But not conscientiously. But now take a man who delves into the Scriptures, and he reads the Hebrew and the Greek, and he goes out and tells the people, If you understood the Greek, you would not get that meaning from the Bible, or If Sister White had understood the Greek, she would not have said that. Such a man can take a lot of license from this liberal view. Now, the question is running in my mind this way: In the very nature of the case, isn't there a human element in inspiration, because God had to speak through human instruments? And can we, either in the Bible or the Testimonies play upon a word and lay down the law and bind a man's conscience on a word instead of the general view of the whole scope of interpretation? I do not believe a man can believe in the

general inspiration of the spirit of prophecy and still not believe that vegetarianism is the thing for mankind. I can understand how that testimony was written for individuals, and there are exceptions to it, and how Sister White in her human weakness could make a mistake in stating a truth, and still not destroy the inspiration of the spirit of prophecy; but the question is how to present these matters to the people. Brother Taylor may see no difficulty, but I see a lot of difficulty, not only in dealing with our students, but with our people in general.

A. G. Daniells: On the question of verbal inspiration?

M. E. Kern: Brother Benson's question is to the point. We had a council here a few weeks ago, and we laid down pretty straight some principles of education, and also some technicalities of education, and we based our conclusions on the authority of the spirit of prophecy, as it was written. Now we come to those historical questions, and we say, "Well, Sister White was mistaken about that, and that needs to be revised." The individual who did not quite see the points that we made at the educational council may say, "Well, possibly Sister White is wrong about the influence of universities," and it is hard to convince him that she was right, perhaps. I want, somehow, to get on a consistent basis myself.

Many years ago I was in a meeting where Dr. Kellogg and others were considering a business matter. Dr. Kellogg there took a position exactly contrary to something Sister White had said. When asked how he explained what she had said, he replied that she had been influenced to say it. He was running down the Testimonies there. A short time after that I read one of his articles in the paper, in which he was laying down the law on the basis of the Testimonies. That made me lose my confidence in Dr. Kellogg. On one point that he did not agree with, he said she had been influenced. Then he took this other thing that pleased him and he said it was from the Lord. Perhaps he thought one was from the Lord and the other was not. But we certainly do have difficulty in showing the people which is human and which is divinely inspired.

G. B. Thompson: Wouldn't that be true of the Bible?

M. E. Kern: That is why I propose that we discuss the nature of inspiration. I have a sort of feeling that Sister White was a prophet just as Jeremiah was, and that in time her work will show up like Jeremiah's. I wonder if Jeremiah, in his day, did not do a lot of talking and perhaps some writing which was, as Paul said, on his own authority. I wonder if, in those days, the people did not have difficulty in differentiating between what was from the Lord and what was not. But the people make it more difficult now because all of Sister White's articles and books are with us, and her letters, too, and many think that every word she has ever said or written is from the Lord. We have had

sanitariums built on account of letters she has written from a depot somewhere. And undertakings involving great financial investments have been started because of a letter from her. There is no question but what many young people, and also ministers, have that idea, and it is a real problem with me. I wish we could get down to bedrock. I do not think we are there yet.

W. W. Prescott: I would like to ask if you think that, after his writings had been published a series of years, Jeremiah changed them because he was convinced that there were historical errors in them?

M. E. Kern: I can not answer that.

W. H. Wakeham: There is a real difficulty, and we will have it to meet. We may say that the people do not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies. Perhaps technically they do not know what it mean's. But that is not the question at all. They have accepted the Testimonies all over the country, and believe that every identical word that Sister White has written was to be received as infallible truth. We have that thing to meet when we get back, and it will be brought up in our classes just as sure as we stand here, because it has come to me over and over again in every class I have taught. It not only comes out in classes, but in the churches. I know we have a very delicate task before us if we meet the situation and do it in the way the Lord wants it done. I am praying very earnestly for help as I go back to meet some of the things I know I am going to meet.

W. B. Howell: Surely we are getting our difficulties aired well this morning, and that is perfectly proper; but we have only ten minutes left of the period in which to give some attention to the solution of those difficulties. We have invited men of much larger experience than we are to come in and help us and give us their counsel. It seems to me we ought to give them some time.

G. B. Thompson: It seems to me that if we are going to preach the Testimonies and establish confidence in them, it does not depend on whether they are verbally inspired or not. I think we are in this fix because of a wrong education that our people have had. [Voice: That is true.] If we had always taught the truth on this question, we would not have any trouble or shock in the denomination now. But the shock is because we have not taught the truth, and have put the Testimonies on a plane where she says they do not stand. We have claimed more for them than she did. My thought is this, that the evidence of the inspiration of the Testimonies is not in their verbal inspiration, but in their influence and power in the denomination. Now to illustrate: Brother Daniells and I were in Battle Creek at a special crisis, and word came to us that some special testimonies were on the way to us from Sister White,

and for us to stay there until they came. When they came we found they were to be read to the people. They were of a very serious character. They had been written a year before and filed away. Brother Daniells and I prayed about it, and then we sent out the word to the people that a meeting was to be held at a certain time. When the time came, about 3,000 people came into the Tabernacle, and they filled it up, even away back up into the "peanut gallery." There were unbelievers and skeptics there, and all classes. Brother Daniells stood up there and read that matter to them, and I tell you there was a power went with it that gripped that whole congregation. And after the meeting was over, people came to us and told us that the Testimony described a meeting they had held the night before. I was convinced that there was more than ordinary power in that document. It was not whether it was verbally inspired or not, but it carried the power of the Spirit of God with it.

I think if we could get at it from that line, we would get along better. They are not verbally inspired, - we know that, - and what is the use of teaching that they are?

M. E. Kern: I would like to suggest that this question of verbal inspiration does not settle the difficulty.

C. M. Sorenson: Does Sister White use the word "inspiration" concerning her own writings, or is that merely a theory we have worked up ourselves? I ask for information? I have never seen that in her writings.

A. G. Daniells: I hardly know where to begin or what to say. I think I must repeat this, that our difficulty lies in two points, especially. One is on infallibility and the other is on verbal inspiration. I think Brother James White foresaw difficulties along this line away back at the beginning. He knew that he took Sister White's testimonies and helped to write them out and make them clear and grammatical and plain. He knew that he was doing that right along. And he knew that the secretaries they employed took them and put them into grammatical condition, transposed sentences, completed sentences, and used words that Sister White did not herself write in her original copy. He saw that, and yet he saw some brethren who did not know this, and who had great confidence in the Testimonies, just believing and teaching that these words were given to Sister White as well as the thought. And he tried to correct that idea. You will find those statements in the Review and Herald, like the one Brother Wilcox read the other day. If that explanation had been accepted and passed on down, we would have been free from a great many perplexities that we have now.

F.M. Wilcox: Articles were published in those early Reviews disclaiming that.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, but you know there are some brethren who go in all

over. We could mention some old and some young who think they cannot believe the Testimonies without just putting them up as absolutely infallible and word-inspired, taking the whole thing as given verbally by the Lord. They do not see how to believe them and how to get good out of them except in that way; and I suppose some people would feel that if they did not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, they could not have confidence in it, and take it as the great Book that they now see it to be. Some men are technical, and can hardly understand it in any other way. Some other men are not so technical in logic, but they have great faith and great confidence, and so they can go through on another line of thought. I am sure there has been advocated an idea of infallibility in Sister White and verbal inspiration in the Testimonies that has led people to expect too much and to make too great claims, and so we have gotten into difficulty.

Now, as I have studied it these years since I was thrown into the controversy at Battle Creek, I have endeavored to ascertain the truth and then be true to the truth. I do not know how to do except that way. It will never help me, or help the people, to make a false claim to evade some trouble. I know we have difficulties here, but let us dispose of some of the main things first. Brethren, are we going to evade difficulties or help out the difficulties by taking a false position? [Voices: No!] Well, then let us take an honest, true position, and reach our end somehow, because I never will put up a false claim to evade something that will come up a little later on. That is not honest and it is not Christian, and so I take my stand there.

In Australia I saw "The Desire of Ages" being made up, and I saw the rewriting of chapters, some of them written over and over and over again. I saw that, and when I talked with Sister Davis about it, I tell you I had to square up to this thing and begin to settle things about the spirit of prophecy. If these false positions had never been taken, the thing would be much plainer than it is today. What was charged as plagiarism would all have been simplified, and I believe men would have been saved to the cause if from the start we had understood this thing as it should have been. With those false views held, we face difficulties in straightening up. We will not meet those difficulties by resorting to a false claim. We could meet them just for today by saying, "Brethren, I believe in the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies; I believe in the infallibility of the one through whom they came, and everything that is written there I will take and I will stand on that against all comers."

If we did that, I would just take everything from A to Z, exactly as it was written, without making any explanations to any one; and I would not eat butter or salt or eggs if I believed that the Lord gave the words in those Testimonies to Sister White for the whole body of people in this world. But I do not believe it.

M. E. Kern: You couldn't and keep your conscience clear.

A. G. Daniells: No, I couldn't; but I do not believe that; and I can enter upon an explanation of health reform that I think is consistent, and that she endeavored to bring in in later years when she saw people making a bad use of that. I have eaten pounds of butter at her table myself, and dozens of eggs. I could not explain that in her own family if I believed that she believed those were the Lord's own words to the world. But there are people who believe that and do not eat eggs or butter. I do not know that they use salt. I know plenty of people in the early days did not use salt, and it was in our church. I am sure that many children suffered from it.

There is no use of our claiming anything more on the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies, because she never claimed it, and James White never claimed it, and W. C. White never claimed it; and all the persons who helped to prepare those Testimonies knew they were not verbally inspired. I will say no more along that line.

D. A. Parsons: She not only did not claim it, but she denied it.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, she tried to correct the people.

Now on infallibility. I suppose Sister White used Paul's text, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," as much as any other scripture. She used to repeat that often, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," with the idea that she was a poor, feeble woman, a messenger of the Lord trying to do her duty and meet the mind of God in this work. When you take the position that she was not infallible, and that her writings were not verbally inspired, isn't there a chance for the manifestation of the human? If there isn't, then what is infallibility? And should we be surprised when we know that the instrument was fallible, and that the general truths, as she says, were revealed, then aren't we prepared to see mistakes?

M. E. Kern: She was an author and not merely a pen.

A. G. Daniells: Yes; and now take that "Life of Paul," - I suppose you all know about it and knew what claims were put up against her, charges made of plagiarism, even by the authors of the book, Conybeare and Howson, and were liable to make the denomination trouble because there was so much of their book put into "The Life of Paul" without any credit or quotation marks. Some people of strict logic might fly the track on that ground, but I am not built that way. I found it out, and I read it with Brother Palmer when he found it, and we got Conybeare and Howson, and we got Wylie's "History of the

Reformation," and we read word for word, page after page, and no quotations, no credit, and really I did not know the difference until I began to compare them. I supposed it was Sister White's own work. The poor sister said, "Why, I didn't know about quotations and credits. My secretary should have looked after that, and the publishing house should have looked after it."

She did not claim that that was all revealed to her and written word for word under the inspiration of the Lord. There I saw the manifestation of the human in these writings. Of course I could have said this, and I did say it, that I wished a different course had been taken in the compilation of the books. If proper care had been exercised, it would have saved a lot of people from being thrown off the track.

Mrs. Williams: The secretary would know that she ought not to quote a thing without using quotation marks.

A. G. Daniells: You would think so. I do not know who the secretary was. The book was set aside, and I have never learned who had a hand in fixing that up. It may be that some do know.

B. L. House: May I ask one question about that book? Did Sister White write any of it?

A. G. Daniells: O, yes!

E. L. House: But there are some things that are not in Conybeare and Howson that are not in the new book, either. Why are those striking statements not embodied in the new book?

A. G. Daniells: I cannot tell you. But if her writings were verbally inspired, why should she revise them?

B. L. House: My difficulty is not with the verbal inspiration. My difficulty is here: You take the nine volumes of the Testimonies, and as I understand it, Sister White wrote the original matter from which they were made up, except that they were corrected so far as grammar, capitalization and punctuation are concerned. But such books as "Sketches of the Life of Paul," "Desire of Ages," and "Great Controversy, were composed differently, it seems to me, even by her secretaries than the nine volumes of the Testimonies. Is there not a difference? I have felt that the Testimonies were not produced like those other books.

A. G. Daniells: I do not know how much revision she might have made in those personal Testimonies before she put them out.

B. L. House: Did any one else ever write anything that is found in the

nine volumes of the Testimonies?

A. G. Daniells: No, I do not know that there are any quotations in the Testimonies.

B. L. House: Isn't there a difference, then, between the nine volumes of the Testimonies and those other books for which her secretaries were authorized to collect valuable quotations from other books?

A. G. Daniells: You admit that she had the right to revise her work?

B. L. House: O, Yes.

A. G. Daniells: Then your question is, Why did she leave out of the revision some striking things that she wrote that it seems should have been put in?

B. L. House: Yes.

M. E. Kern: In the first volume of the spirit of prophecy there are some details given, if I am not mistaken, as to the height of Adam. It seems to me that when she went to prepare "Patriarchs and Prophets" for the public, even though that had been shown her, it did not seem wise to put that before the public.

A. G. Daniells: And she also left out of our books for the public that scene of Satan playing the game of life.

B. L. House: In that old edition of "Sketches of the Life of Paul," she is very clear about the ceremonial law. That is not in the new book, and I wondered why that was left out.

D. A. Parsons: I have an answer to that. I was in California when the book was compiled, and I took the old edition and talked with Brother Will White about this very question. He said the whole book, with the exception of that chapter, had been compiled for some time, and they had held it up until they could arrange that chapter in such a way as to prevent controversy arising. They did not desire the book to be used to settle any controversy, and therefore they eliminated most of these statements on the ceremonial law just to prevent a renewal of the great controversy over the ceremonial law in Galatians.

B. L. House: It is not a repudiation of what was written by her in the first volume, is it?

D. A. Parsons: No, not at all; but they just put enough in to satisfy the inquiring mind, but eliminated those striking statements to prevent a

renewal of the controversy.

F. M. Wilcox: I would like to ask, Brother Daniells, if it could be accepted as a sort of rule that Sister White might be mistaken in details, but in the general policy and instruction she was an authority. For instance, I hear a man saying, I can not accept Sister White on this, when perhaps she has devoted pages to the discussion of it. A man said he could not accept what Sister White said about royalties on books, and yet she devotes pages to that subject, and emphasizes it again and again; and it is the same with policies for our schools and publishing houses and sanitariums. It seems to me I would have to accept what she says on some of those general policies or I would have to sweep away the whole thing. Either the Lord has spoken through her or He has not spoken through her; and if it is a matter of deciding in my own judgment whether He has or has not, then I regard her books the same as every other book published. I think it is one thing for a man to stultify his conscience, and it is another thing to stultify his judgment. It is one thing for me to lay aside my conscience, and it is another thing for me to change my judgment over some views that I hold.

A. G. Daniells: I think Brother Benson's question on historical and theological matters has not been dealt with yet, and I do not know that I am able to give any light. Perhaps some of you may know to what extent Sister White has revised some of her statements and references or quotations from historical writings. Have you ever gone through and made a list of them?

W. W. Prescott: I gave nearly an hour to that the other day, taking the old edition of "Great Controversy" and reading it and then reading the revised edition. But that did not cover all the ground.

A. G. Daniells: We did not create that difficulty, did we? We General Conference men did not create it, for we did not make the revision. We did not take any part in it. We had nothing whatever to do with it. It was all done under her supervision. If there is a difficulty there, she created it, did she not?

F. M. Wilcox: She assumed the whole responsibility for it.

M. F. Kern. But we have to meet it.

A. G. Daniells: Well, now, which statement shall we take, the original or the revised?

B. L. House: My real difficulty is just here: Sister White did not write either the old edition or the revised, as I understand it.

A. G. Daniells: What do you mean by saying that she did not write either edition?

B. L. House: As I understand it, Elder J. N. Anderson prepared those historical quotations for the old edition, and Brother Robinson and Brother Crisler, Professor Prescott and others furnished the quotations for the new edition. Did she write the historical quotations in there?

A. G. Daniells: No.

B. L. House: Then there is a difference between the Testimonies and those books.

W. W. Prescott: Changes have been made in what was not historical extract at all.

A. G. Daniells: Shall we not confine ourselves just now to this question of Brother Benson's and lead our way up to the real difficulty, and then deal with it? Do you have a clear conception of the way the difficulty arose? - that in making the first edition of "Great Controversy" those who helped her prepare the copy were allowed to bring forward historical quotations that seemed to fit the case. She may have asked, "Now, what good history do you have for that?" I do not know just how she brought it in, but she never would allow us to claim anything for her as a historian. She did not put herself up as a corrector of history, - not only did not do that, but protested against it. Just how they dealt in bringing the history along, I could not say, but I suspect that she referred to this as she went along, and then allowed them to gather the very best historical statements they could and submit them to her, and she approved of them.

C. L. Benson: This is my query, and it underlies all of her writings: How did she determine upon the philosophy of history? If she endorsed our interpretation of history, without any details, do we dare to set that aside? I understand she never studied medical science; but she has laid down certain fundamental principles; and that she has done the same with education and organization.

A. G. Daniells: Sister White never has written anything on the philosophy of history.

C. L. Benson: No, but she has endorsed our 2300 day proposition, from 538 to 1798.

A. G. Daniells: You understand she did that by placing that in her writings?

C. L. Benson: Yes.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, I suppose she did.

C. A. Shull: I think the book "Education" contains something along the line of the philosophy of history.

W. E. Howell: Yes, she outlines general principles.

C. M. Sorenson: Nobody has ever questioned Sister White's philosophy of history, so far as I know, - and I presume I have heard most of the questions raised about it, - along the line of the hand of God in human affairs and the way the hand of God has been manifested. The only question anybody has raised has been about minor details. Take this question as to whether 533 has some significance taken in connection with 538. She never set 533, but if there is a significance attached to it in human affairs, it certainly would not shut us out from using it, and that would not affect the 1260 years. Some people say antichrist is yet to come, and is to last for three and one-half literal years. If you change those positions, you will change the philosophy.

W. W. Prescott: Do I understand Brother Benson's view is that such a statement as that in "Great Controversy," that the 1260 years began in 538 and ended in 1798, settles the matter infallibly?

C. L. Benson: No, only on the preaching of doctrines in general. If she endorses the prophetic part of our interpretation, irrespective of details, then she endorses it.

W. W. Prescott: Then that settles it as being a part of that philosophy.

C. L. Benson: Yes, in this way: I do not see how we can do anything else but set up our individual judgment if we say we will discount that, because we have something else that we think is better evidence. It is the same with education and the medical science.

W. W. Prescott: You are touching exactly the experience through which I went, personally, because you all know that I contributed something toward the revision of "Great Controversy." I furnished considerable material bearing upon that question.

A. G. Daniells: By request.

W. W. Prescott: Yes, I was asked to do it, and at first I said, "No, I will not do it. I know what it means." But I was urged into it. When I had gone over it with W. C. White, then I said, "Here is my difficulty. I have gone over this and suggested changes that ought to be made in order to correct statements. These changes have been accepted. My personal

difficulty will be to retain faith on those things that I can not deal with on that basis." But I did not throw up the spirit of prophecy, and have not yet; but I have had to adjust my view of things. I will say to you, as a matter of fact, that the relation of those writings to this movement and to our work, is clearer and more consistent in my mind than it was then. But still you know what I am charged with. I have gone through the personal experience myself over that very thing that you speak of. If we correct it here and correct it there, how are we going to stand with it in the other places?

F. M. Wilcox: Those things do not involve the general philosophy of the book.

W. W. Prescott: No, but they did involve quite large details. For instance, before "Great Controversy" was revised, I was unorthodox on a certain point, but after it was revised, I was perfectly orthodox.

C. M. Sorenson: On what point?

W. W. Prescott: My interpretation was, (and I taught it for years in The Protestant Magazine) that Babylon stood for the great apostasy against God, which headed up in the papacy, but which included all minor forms, and that before we come to the end, they would all come under one. That was not the teaching of "Great Controversy." "Great Controversy" said that Babylon could not mean the romish church, and I had made it mean that largely and primarily. After the book was revised, although the whole argument remained the same, it said that it could not mean the Roman Church alone, just that one word added.

F.M. Wilcox: That helped you out.

W. W. Prescott: Yes, but I told W. C. White I did not think anybody had any right to do that. And I did not believe anybody had any right to use it against me before or afterward. I simply went right on with my teaching.

J. W. Anderson: Would you not claim other portions of the book as on the same basis?

W. W. Prescott: No, I would refuse to do that. I had to deal with A. R. Henry over that question. He was determined to crush those men that took a wrong course concerning him. I spent hours with that man trying to help him. We were intimate in our work, and I used to go to his house and spend hours with him. He brought up this question about the authority of the spirit of prophecy and wanted me to draw the line between what was authoritative and what was not. I said, "Brother Henry, I will not attempt to do it, and I advise you not to do it. There is an authority in that gift here, and we must recognize it."

I have tried to maintain personal confidence in this gift in the church, and I use it and use it. I have gotten great help from those books, but I will tell you frankly that I held to that position on the question of Babylon for years when I knew it was exactly contrary to "Great Controversy," but I went on, and in due time I became orthodox. I did not enjoy that experience at all, and I hope you will not have to go through it. It means something.

C. L. Benson: That is the pivotal point. You had something that enabled you to take that position. What was it?

W. W. Prescott: I can not lay down any rule for anybody. What settled me to take that position was the Bible, not any secular authority.

J. N. Anderson: Your own findings must be your authority for believing and not believing.

W. W. Prescott: You can upset everything by applying that as a general principle.

C. P. Bollman: Could you tell, in just a few words, how the Bible helped you?

W. W. Prescott: That would involve the whole question of the beast.

Voice: To your knowledge, has Sister White ever made a difference between her nine volumes and her other books?

W. W. Prescott: I have never talked with her about it. In my mind, there is a difference between the works she largely prepared herself and what was prepared by others for sale to the public.

A. G. Daniells: You might as well state that a little fuller, the difference in the way they were produced.

W. W. Prescott: If I should speak my mind frankly, I should say that I have felt for years that great mistakes were made in handling her writings for commercial purposes.

C. M. Sorenson: By whom?

W. W. Prescott: I do not want to charge anybody. But I do think great mistakes were made in that way. That is why I have made a distinction as I have. When I talked with W. C. White about it (and I do not know that he is an infallible authority), he told me frankly that when they got out "Great Controversy," if they did not find in her writings anything on certain chapters to make the historical connections, they took other books, like "Daniel and the Revelation," and used portions of them; and

sometimes her secretaries, and sometimes she herself, would prepare a chapter that would fill the gap.

C. A. Shull: I would like to ask if Brother Prescott wishes to be understood that his attitude is that wherever his own judgment comes in conflict with any statement in the spirit of prophecy, he will follow his judgment rather than the spirit of prophecy?

W. W. Prescott: No, I do not want anybody to get that understanding. That is the very understanding that I do not want anybody to get.

C. A. Shull: Then that was an exceptional case?

W. W. Prescott: Yes, I was forced to that from my study of the Bible. When I made up my mind to that, I did not parade it before the people and say, "Here is a mistake in 'Great Controversy,' and if you study the Bible you will find it to be so." I did not attack the spirit of prophecy. My attitude has been to avoid anything like opposition to the gift in this church, but I avoid such a misuse of it as to set aside the Bible. I do not want anybody to think for a moment that I set up my judgment against the spirit of prophecy.

A. G. Daniells: Let us remember that, brethren, and not say a word that will misrepresent Brother Prescott.

B. L. House: Did Sister White herself write that statement that the term Babylon could not apply to the Catholic Church, or was that copied from some other author?

W. W. Prescott: That was in the written statement.

B. L. House: Has she ever changed any of the nine volumes of the Testimonies?

W. W. Prescott: "Great Controversy" is the only book I know of that has been revised.

C. M. Sorenson: Hasn't "Early Writings" been revised? I understand some omissions have been made in the later editions.

W. W. Prescott: Perhaps some things have been left out, but I do not think the writing itself has been revised.

A. G. Daniells: You know there is a statement that the pope changed the Sabbath, and another one, that the papacy was abolished. What do you do with those?

B. L. House: There is no trouble with that.

A. G. Daniells: Why not? The pope did not change the Sabbath?

B. L. House: But the pope stands for the papacy.

A. G. Daniells: There are people that just believe there was a certain pope that changed the Sabbath, because of the way they follow the words. She never meant to say that a certain pope changed the Sabbath; but do you know, I have had that brought up to me a hundred times in ministers' meetings.

B. L. House: I have never had any trouble on that.

A. G. Daniells: But you are only one. There are about 2,000 others. I have had to work with men just gradually and carefully and all the time keep from giving out the idea that I was a doubter of the Testimonies.

I know it is reported around that some of us men here at Washington, in charge of the general administrative work, are very shaky and unbelieving, but I want to tell you that I know better. I know that my associates have confidence right down on the solid platform of this whole question; and I know that if many of you had gone at this thing and experienced what we have, you would have passed through an experience that would have given you solid ground. You would have shaken a bit, and you are beginning to shake now, and some of you do not know where you are going to land. These questions show it. But that is not to say there is not a foundation. It is to say that you have not gone through the toils yet and got your feet on solid ground.

I want to make this suggestion, because with all these questions we can not follow one line of thought logically: We must use good sense in dealing with this whole question, brethren. Do not be careless with your words. Do not be careless in reporting or representing men's views. I have had this thing to deal with for years and years, as you know, in every ministers' meeting; and I have been called into college classes over and over again, and have had to say things that those ministers and students never heard before about this; and I have prayed for wisdom and for the Spirit of the Lord to direct them and to give faith and to cover up those things that would leave doubt. And I have never had it come back on me that a careful, cautious statement made in the fear of God has upset a single person. It may have done it, but it has never come back to me. You take our ministers: This brother [meaning Brother Waldorf] knows how much this was brought up in our ministers' meetings over in Australia, and we dealt with it plainly. We did not try to pull the wool over the people's eyes, and I believe you will find the Australian preachers and churches as firm believers in the spirit of prophecy and in Sister White's call by the Lord as you will find any place on the face of

the earth. Take New Zealand: I brought them up there, and I think it is well known that there is not a place in the world where the people stand truer to this gift than they do there.

I do not believe it is necessary to dissemble a bit, but I do believe, brethren, that we have got to use wisdom that God alone can give us in dealing with this until matters gradually work over. We have made a wonderful change in nineteen years, Brother Prescott. Fifteen years ago we could not have talked what we are talking here today. It would not have been safe. This matter has come along gradually, and yet people are not losing their confidence in the gift. Last year we sold 5,000 sets of the Testimonies, and they cost eight or nine dollars a set. In one year our brethren and sisters, under the influence of the General Conference, and the union conference and local conference men and our preachers, - under their influence, without any compulsion, our brethren came along and spent forty or fifty thousand dollars for the Testimonies. What would you consider that an indication of?

Voice: Confidence.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, confidence, and a friendly attitude. They did not buy them as critics to tear them to pieces. We must be judged by our fruits. I want to tell you that the clearer view we get on the exact facts in the case, the stronger the position of our people will be in the whole thing.

Now, Brother Benson, I see the whole line running through there that you referred to. We can not correct that in a day. We must use great judgment and caution. I hope you Bible teachers will be exceedingly careful. I was called up here twice to speak on the spirit of prophecy to the Bible and pastoral training classes. They brought up this question of history. I simply said, "Now, boys, Sister White never claimed to be a historian nor a corrector of history. She used the best she knew for the matter she was writing on." I have never heard from a teacher that those boys buzzed around them and said, "Brother Daniells does not believe Sister White's writings are reliable." I believe the Lord will help us to take care of this if we will be careful and use good sense. I think that is all I can say in this sort of discussion.

Participants in the 1919 Bible Conference

Arthur G. Daniells, President of the General Conference and Moderator of

the round-table discussion

W. E. Howell, editor of the *Christian Educator* magazine, Chairman of the Bible Conference

E. F. Albertsworth, position unknown

Jacob N. Anderson, Bible teacher at the Washington Foreign Mission Seminary (now Columbia Union College)

C. L. Benson, position unknown

Calvin P. Bollman, associate editor of *Liberty* magazine

Leon L. Caviness, associate editor of the *Review & Herald* magazine

Thomas M. French, head of the school of theology at Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University)

B. L. House, position unknown

Milton E. Kern, former president of the Washington Foreign Mission Seminary

Herbert C. Lacey, religion teacher at the Washington Foreign Mission Seminary

Charles S. Longacre, secretary of the Religious Liberty Association and editor of *Liberty* magazine

D. A. Parsons, position unknown

William W. Prescott, former editor of the *Review & Herald* magazine and the *Protestant* magazine, then serving as a field secretary of the General Conference (Prescott had a major part in the 1911 revision of Ellen White's book, *The Great Controversy*)

C. A. Shull, position unknown

Christian M. Sorenson, history teacher at Washington Foreign Mission Seminary

Asa O. Tait, editor of the *Signs of the Times* magazine

Clifton L. Taylor, head of the Bible department at Canadian Junior College (now Canadian Union College)

George B. Thompson, field secretary of the General Conference

W. H. Wakeham, Bible teacher at Emmanuel Missionary College

Brother Waldorf, position unknown

Francis M. Wilcox, editor of the *Review & Herald* magazine

Milton C. Wilcox, book editor at the Pacific Press, past interim dean of theology at College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University)

Mrs. Williams, (Flora Williams, educational superintendent of the East Michigan Conference?)

William G. Wirth, religion teacher at Pacific Union College