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This I believe about Ellen G. White

By Neal C. Wilson

Special Emphasis on Spirit of Prophecy . . . See page 2

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Interesting study and research has been going on in our church in the past several years. Among the areas being examined is the role of Ellen White in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In this area, as in all others, we want to know all that can be known, because truth has a way of invigorating the believer.

For some time there have been reports circulating that in her special writing ministry Ellen White drew an "alarming" amount of material from noninspired books. Most, if not all, such books are known to have been in Ellen White's library, and some of them have been mentioned in her books and letters. Those who have been investigating this matter include Walter Rea, one of our pastors in the Southern California Conference. Over the past few years he has spent a great deal of time and effort in researching this subject. On January 28 and 29, G. Ralph Thompson, a General Conference general vice-president, chaired a 19-member committee composed of Biblical and other scholars, Seventh-day Adventist professionals, and administrative leaders. The committee met in the conference room of the Glendale Adventist Hospital in California to review not only the quantity but the quality of the work done by Elder Rea.

The initial report from this very competent committee indicates that in her writing Ellen White used sources more extensively than we have heretofore been aware of or recognized. The committee, however, cautions against the loose use of such terms as "literary dependency," and "extensive borrowing and paraphrasing." When such phrases are not clearly and precisely defined their use can result in irresponsible and misleading conclusions.

Even though I have carefully read the report and listened to the

proceedings of this committee, it is not my purpose in this communication to evaluate the helpful comments of the members of the committee. That will follow, in due time, along with certain positive recommendations. Instead, I write in order to give my personal reaction to this and other developments that must be faced honestly and openly. I can identify with the members of the special committee and with the apostle Peter when he affirmed, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables" (2 Peter 1:16).

**"I have heard
the ring of truth in
the Bible
and the writings
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Ellen White. . . .
I believe
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Ellen White
was an
inspired messenger
of God."**

In spite of what some would have you believe, there is no internal upheaval or major crisis in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This is God's church, and He has made Himself responsible for its success. There is no reason to become alarmed, unnerved, or panicky. On the other hand, I do not want to lull you into false and comfortable spiritual security. There are still lessons of truth and faith that we will be called upon to learn and exercise. It is evident that the individual

members of the church need to understand more clearly the doctrine of inspiration and just how God reveals Himself to His people, so that their confidence in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy will remain unshaken.

The articles by Arthur L. White in the *Adventist Review* (January, February, 1978; July and August, 1979, now available in reprint) were especially helpful. In the 1978 articles Elder White reviewed the doctrine of inspiration as generally understood by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The second (1979) series reviewed Ellen White's method of preparing her publications. How she used her editorial assistants and other people in her effort to present her materials to the public, free from literary and factual inadequacies, is a fascinating story. In observing the methodology of a modern prophet, we are able to understand better how God used men and women in the past when He revealed His gracious will to the lost, needy world.

Other Adventist researchers have made their studies available to us in various periodicals. Several viewpoints have been expressed, but all seem to be contributing to our storehouse of understanding. In fact, my heart rejoices with every new study that gives us a fresh look at how God used Ellen White as His last-day messenger. I would like to share with you what these studies are saying to me. No doubt my understanding will continue to broaden and deepen, but several points seem clear:

1. *Originality is not a test of inspiration.* A prophet's use of sources other than visions does not invalidate or diminish the prophet's teaching authority. Ellen White's comment that the Holy Spirit "guided the mind (of the Bible writer) in the selection of what to speak and what to write" (*The Great Controversy*, p. vi) explains also how she

was assisted in selecting or rejecting information from existing materials. In the marvelous operation of revelation God gives the thought "in many and various ways" (Heb. 1:1, R.S.V.), and then inspires the human messenger with perceptions whereby he or she fills out the "message" with the information available. This assisting function of the Holy Spirit guards the messenger from using materials that would misrepresent the intent of the message given directly to the messenger.

The Bible writers have also given us an insight into how they wrote their works that eventually were recognized as inspired documents. In Luke's preface to his Gospel, he explains to Theophilus his burden. Apparently many reports were being written regarding the life and teachings of Jesus, and he felt the compulsion, after "having followed all things closely . . . , to write an orderly account . . . , that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed" (verses 3, 4, R. S. V.).

Luke was not an eyewitness. He used the materials available. One of his source materials, though he did not mention his indebtedness to it, was Mark's Gospel, much of which was directly copied, often word for word. Luke's final product was an extended, more complete life of Jesus, which included material not found in Matthew, Mark, or John. Luke's insight as a physician is reflected in the way he describes some events (Luke 4:38; 5:12; 8:43, etc.).

The compilers of the books of Kings and Chronicles note extra-Biblical sources for their work (1 Kings 11:41; 1 Chron. 9:1). Other Bible authors such as Jude and Isaiah give evidence of borrowing from either other inspired sources or non-Biblical sources.

In other words, Bible writers frequently used the materials of

others as the need arose. The Holy Spirit assisted them in the selection of appropriate materials. And that same principles of guarding and guiding by the Holy Spirit is seen in the experience of God's messenger in these last days.

"He (Satan) spares no pains to corrupt men in responsible positions and to persuade them to be unfaithful to their several trusts. He insinuates his suspicions and jealousies into the minds of those whose business it is to do God's work faithfully. While God is testing and proving these helpers, and fitting them for their posts. Satan is doing his utmost to deceive and allure them, that they may not only be destroyed themselves, but may influence others to do wrong and to injure the great work. He seeks by all the means in his power to shake the confidence of God's people in the voice of warning and reproof through which God designs to purify the church and prosper His cause.

"It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the *Testimonies*. Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the *Testimonies*, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction."—E. G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 210, 211.

2. *God inspires people, not words.* Seventh-day Adventists are not verbal inspirationists. They have

never believed that the Holy Spirit, in some way, has dictated to the prophet the actual words that appeared in the autographs. They identify with those who believe that God inspires thoughts through visions, dreams, or direct address, but, except in rare instances, not the forms of expression by which those thoughts are to be conveyed to others. The messenger operates within his or her mental and spiritual capacity, and uses his or her style of expression, skilled or common, guarded always by the Holy Spirit from misrepresenting the revealed message.

This principle, of course, relieves all anxiety when it is learned that a messenger of the Lord has used existing materials, even another's phrases. We are not alarmed when we discover that a prophet uses editors to improve style, or specialists in certain areas to review pertinent information.

This principle of thoughts inspiration is one example of the fact that God does not do for people what they can do for themselves. God made men and women who could respond to Him in love and appreciate Him for the freedom implicit in love. He could have created us so that we could not sin, but then we could not love. After sin, He could have overpowered our rebellious will to prove His sovereign power, but that would not have left us as responsible beings. He simply appeals to us to respond to His gracious offer of love and pardon, to accept His power to do what He asks. The responding is up to us. God makes it possible for us to breathe, but we must do the breathing. God makes it possible for us to have faith, but we must do the trusting and submitting.

In much the same way, God gives His messenger the message, but not

MASEHI ADVENT HARI KETUJUH SABAH SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST MISSION OF SABAH



TARGET
GOOD NEWS
85



Members are actively involved in:

Malangang and Rumindako District

We have strong action teams in these two districts and have seen 60 people being baptized into the church as a result of the house-to-house visitation. Let us pray that "By His Spirit" many more villagers may come to accept Jesus soon.— *Tommy Golotoh*

Sungai Manila District

Sixteen precious people were baptized by Pastor Tommy Golotoh as a result of the visitation program in this village. Two families who had backslidden for many years have now joined the church again. "The Bible Says" in our tool as we visit the villagers.

Please remember us in your prayers.— *Anton Tobi*



Sungai Manila's 16 newest members.



The joy of being an literature evangelist—the winning of this family.

A Very Important Work

I consider the work of a literature evangelist important in the Target 85 program. I believe we can spread the Good News through the printed pages. Before becoming a literature evangelist, I was a farmer and a teacher, but now I find great satisfaction in my work.

Praise the Lord, I have become a small instrument in God's hand in leading three precious people to the church.— *Willie Simbaku*

Rugading Village

In this small village of ten houses, we have an Adventist church with a membership of 74. After the introduction of Target 85 in February this year, we were anxious to try it out. We have divided ourselves into twelve groups with two people in each group. We ask your prayers as we visit the homes each Sabbath, bringing the Good News to the people living in the outskirts of this village.— *Padir Juman*

Goshen District

As a result of the Target 85 witnessing class in May last year, our members have been active in giving Bible studies from house to house. We have now 22 new members in the Lotong Kota Marudu Church. We praise the Lord for an opportunity to witness!— *Gundoh Bendah*

Keningau District

Target 85 was introduced in Late February in our church of thirty members. Even with such a small membership, we were able to divide into action teams, and were soon on our way each Sabbath afternoon proclaiming the Good News.

After a period of time we had several families interested in the "Bible Speaks" course and in the second coming of Jesus. Among them was an old lady of 84 who lived in a small dilapidated bamboo house. She was weak and had severe attacks of malaria.

She told us she did not believe in any gods but that her children and grandchildren were all Christians. When we explained our visit she was interested as we mentioned the name "Jesus". She had visited the other Christian church to seek help but was told that she was beyond help because of her age.

We are glad we found her and brought the sweet news of salvation to her. She is preparing now for baptism.

We know many more people are in need of Jesus and may be instruments in His hand to bring the Good News to them.— *Ginantar Balud*

TERRITORY:
West Malaysia & Singapore



*Seventh-day Adventist Church
of
West Malaysia & Singapore*

"Better Living Lectures" Fulfills Target 85's Aim In Penang

The Better Living Lectures, an evangelistic out-reach was conducted by the Penang Chinese Church from April 10-24 in the community hall at Rifle's Range in Ayer Itam. The speaker was Pastor Issac Foo, the church pastor.

Since the introduction of the "house-to-house" evangelistic plan by Pastor Calvin Smith, SAUM Lay Activities Director in 1979, our church members have been knocking on doors and handing out VOP cards. We have visited most of the residents in that area and many are studying the VOP lessons systematically.

From November last year we started having regular meetings in the community hall every Friday night and they have been well attended. With the success of these Friday night meetings, we decided to hold an effort so that our interests may have a chance to make their decisions for Christ.

The devil was not happy with our success and just before the effort, the printing press which handled all the hand-bills was burned down and we lost all the hand-bills. They were quickly reprinted and in the short time we had left, we distributed the hand-bills during the day and night.

We were thrilled to see the hall packed nightly with adults and youth. There was an average attendance of 100 people every night excluding church members. The children division too had a full attendance of 150 nightly.

An appeal was made by Pastor Foo on the last night of the meeting and 75 people responded to the call. Thirty-two joined the baptismal Bible class and 33 decided to continue to attend the meetings. Indeed we praise the Lord for the success!

The people were attracted to our meetings by the health talks given by Penang Hospital personnel, religious and health films, special music and songs by our choir members. The children enjoyed their program and one of them remarked, "You people teach better than our teachers in



Pastor Issac Foo, the crusade speaker.

school!"

The Better Living Lectures were followed-up by an evangelistic camp meeting in Penang Hill. Eleven of the group who responded to the appeal experienced the joy of Christian fellowship with the church members. All the campers were drawn nearer to God and each other during this camp meeting.

We solicit your prayers as these people who have taken their stand prepare for baptism in July, and also for the formation of a church in Rifle's Range. — *Vincent Choo*



Penang Chinese Church Choir presented special music during crusade.



"This is better than school!"—the Children's Division.

Native "Seventh-day Adventists" Discovered Among Karen In Thailand

Some very intriguing news came from Pastor Robin Bwint. In this mountain district was a group of Karen people who were longing for the imminent return of the "Great One". This was exciting, though not so unusual, because "Messianic Movements" are a phenomenon occurring in recent times the world over. But what made this movement so unique was that they also worshipped on the seventh day. I determined to investigate this movement as soon as possible.

A few weeks ago Pastor Robin and I hiked seven hours from the main road up a narrow winding trail to the top of a high mountain range to reach the village of this Yii Paw Movement. As we climbed on and on I wondered what was the source of inspiration of this movement. Was their leader, Yii Paw, a true prophet? Had he received the Spirit of God according to the promise in Joel 2:28? Had he had previous contact with Christians, specifically Seventh-day Adventists?

Darkness was settling in as we reached the village. We were just in time for supper. We didn't need to worry about being served unclean meat, or even meat at all, for we were amazed to discover that these people were vegetarian! The similarity of their beliefs to ours was striking.

After supper we were invited to go to the place of worship for their evening worship service. For over an hour Robin and I sat on the floor watching and listening as they chanted and sang poetry from memory. The chanting reminded us of Buddhist chanting. Their songs were similar to traditional Karen *hta* poetic singing. We didn't understand everything they said, but much of it was praise to the Creator for creating the world, animals, etc. Yii



A Guard Of The Great One Religious Art by Yii Paw.

Paw led in the service while they all sat on the floor with folded hands facing sheets of paper tacked to the wall on which were drawn religious pictures, symbols and poetry.

Afterwards Yii Paw told us the history of his movement. He is now 28 years old. Five years ago a young man came to his home. The striking thing about this man was that he looked exactly like Yii Paw himself in every detail. This man, Yii Paw said, is the source of his truth. He told Yii Paw that the "Great One" is coming and to get ready. He also told him that they should worship on Sabbath. This man has come to Yii Paw several times since to give further instruction. He helped Yii Paw to perfect a writing system so that he could write down the teachings for others to read and remember.

I asked Yii Paw what the name of this man was. He didn't know, but he knew where he came from. He named a legendary Karen holy place. Several times in our questioning we

noted that this movement is attempting to restore belief in traditional Karen thought. This good, because Karen traditions are full of references to God, Creation, Adam and Eve, Satan, etc.

We probed them with questions for a long time. We asked who the "Great One" is. They said he is the same one who created the world. We asked why the "Great One" was coming soon. They didn't know why. After a pause they asked us if we knew why. Immediately Robin gave them a short summary of the purpose of the Second Coming of Jesus. We also discovered they didn't know *why* they keep the seventh day holy. They do so because they were told to.

The next day was Friday. At breakfast they told us it was their preparation day. We wanted to know how they prepared. They said they had to gather enough food for the next day so they wouldn't have to work on the seventh day.

As we looked around the village by daylight we noticed that they raise many chickens and cows. We asked why, since they don't eat them or any animal products. Their answer was logical enough. They need the chickens to clean up leftover rice and to wake them up in the morning!

They also showed us their "animal lodge", a house where they keep carvings of various vicious looking animals. One animal resembled a helicopter! We thought these were fetishes for their worship, but they assured us that they did not worship these carvings. They were only for the purpose of reminding them of the "Great One's" creative power.

These Yii Paw people were obviously delighted that we showed an interest in them. Perhaps they felt our coming lended prestige to their religious beliefs. It certainly



Phi And Phu On The Cutting Edge

Most people their age are making serious plans for their retirement homes, but Phu Tamu (Grandpa Life) and Phi Say (Grandma Silver) have little time for such thoughts as they replace their leaky, creaky bamboo and grass thatch shack with a new bamboo and grass thatch shack. It may be newer, but it is no more permanent than the last one. Called one year ago to help pioneer work among the Karen people in northern Thailand's Chiang Mai Province, Phu and Phi have taken on this responsibility with all the energy and enthusiasm of a young couple fresh out of seminary.

This first year was a year of laying a foundation for a strong work in the future. Making friends and winning the confidence of the villagers has been their priority. Phu has travelled to several surrounding Karen villages to get acquainted. His quick wit and friendly manner has earned him invitations to still more villages which he hasn't had time to visit yet.

He has no medical training, but his education and years of experience in the jungle has given Phu a practical knowledge of tropical diseases and

their treatment. One of the first things he did after moving to this new area was to put together a medicine kit for dressing wounds. He patiently taught the young people in the village how to clean and dress wounds. They are now welcome to come any time and treat themselves or others. It is not uncommon to see young people come to his home in the evening to chat while they paint with mercurochrome the cuts and scratches they sustained that day while working in the jungle.

During my last visit I observed Phi Say faithfully feeding powdered milk and vitamin drops to a very malnourished three-year-old. Without Phi's attention the child's condition would probably not have improved.

Phi Say's talents as a seamstress have also been effective in winning them a place in the hearts of the villagers. Using just a pair of scissors and a needle and thread, like Dorcas of old she has transformed donated dresses, curtains, sheets, etc. into cute little frocks and shirts for the children. She always wishes she could do more for the children. What couldn't she do if she had a sewing machine!

In the evenings these children, many no longer in rags but wearing new clean clothes, love to gather at Phi and Phu's for worship. Without intending to, Phi and Phu have been training a children's choir each

evening at worship. The children sing clearly and even sing some songs in parts. It is sometimes difficult to get them to stop singing!

Already Phu has gathered a nucleus of believers around him. His gospel work is greatly strengthened by Yeh Paw Pa, one of his new members. Yeh Paw Pa is uneducated, but he has taught himself to read the Karen Bible. He frequently leaves his fields to travel with Phu Tamu, helping out in worship services and also in giving simple Bible studies.

Recently I asked Phu Tamu what his strategy is for evangelizing this new area. He explained to me that the Karen often turn to Christ at a time of personal crisis. Often the burden of spirit sacrifice and ritual becomes too great, or else they feel the spirits have deceived them or let them down. It's at times like these that the power of the Gospel impresses animist Karen and Jesus becomes a very viable alternative to the way of the spirits. Phu's strategy is "to be there". He wants to be in continual association with them so that when the crisis comes he will be there to point to the Way, should they show an interest in Christ. Please remember to pray for Phi and Phu, Yeh Paw Pa and the Karen of Chiang Mai Province.—*Dennis Tidwell*



FASHION BY PHI SAY: Happy Karen Children Model Their New Outfits.

SOUTHEAST ASIA UNION COLLEGE

Week of Prayer

Dr. Roger W. Coon, an Associate Secretary of the White Estate, conducted a week of prayer at Southeast Asia Union College from April 13 to 17, 1981. The topic was on Ellen G. White, the Modern Day Prophetess. Throughout the second quarter of the school year, the theme for college chapel exercises was "Women of the Bible." In conjunction with this theme, it was most appropriate for Dr. Coon to speak about Ellen White. He also spoke every night in the college auditorium on the same theme for all church members of Singapore. The topics in these series were:

1. How Do We Get Ellen G. White Out of the Bible?
2. The Gift of Prophecy restored in the 1840's
3. The Man who Became Ellen White's Cook
4. Questions and Answers—Part I
5. What Does It Really Mean to be a Seventh-day Adventist?
6. Revelation, Inerrancy, Infallibility—I
7. Revelation, Inerrancy, Infallibility—II
8. Ellen White as Others Saw Her
9. Questions and Answers—Part II
10. The Man who 'Hung Loose'
11. What is God Like?

These talks are available on tapes and those who are interested can contact Mrs. Lucy Ho, Southeast Asia Union Mission, 251 Upper Serangoon Road, Singapore 1334. They are priced at \$3 or \$4 each and the entire set of eight tapes sells for \$27.

The facts presented have established beyond the shadow of a doubt that Ellen White's role as a prophetess is no different from that of the Biblical prophet. Her inspiration is from the one same Source. She

holds a distinctive authority in the modern day Church since her prophetic role is given particularly to the Church of today. She is, however, the "lesser light leading to the greater light" which is the Bible. This point was again emphasized. Hence, her books were not to take the place of deep Bible study, but were to act as an aid and illumination leading to serious Bible study.

Dr. Coon spent some time in the classrooms with some college students who were impressed by his objectivity and non-dogmatism. Many were indeed brought to a closer look at the Bible for themselves. This Week of Prayer was worthwhile, stimulating and refreshing.—*Phoon Chet Yat*

Kuantan for Christ



One lady was baptized in the South China Sea as a result of the Crusade.

During the first quarter, twelve SAUC students with sponsor, Pastor Phoon Chet Yat journeyed to Kuantan to canvass and conduct an evangelistic crusade as part of the Modern Witnessing Scholarship program.

In the three months, these talented boys who attracted the crowd with their banners and sign boards, music, and efficiency, were able to hold a health exhibition, a Five Day Plan to Stop Smoking, and the "21st Century Better Living Seminar" with success.

Second Union-Wide Pathfinder



A garland to welcome the Governor of Phuket at the Pathfinder Camporee.

His Excellency, the Governor of Phuket, Mr. Manit Walyapet declared open the Second Union-wide Pathfinder Camporee in Phuket, Thailand from April 14 to 19, 1981 with about 300 pathfinders in attendance. In his speech, the Governor praised the Adventist youth for organizing this camporee where campers from different countries of Southeast Asia can fellowship together and further encouraged them to actively involve in community services for the betterment of society.

During an Investiture Service held at the camp; 10 pathfinder officers received service stars for their services in the local clubs, three were invested Master Guides with 30 others who received their AJY pins.

SAUM Personnel Robert Heisler, Marshall Chase, Peter Wong, Roy Ryan, and Thailand Mission President Sunti Sorajakool graced the camporee with their presence.

Camporee In Phuket

During the Sabbath morning service, local mission youth directors presented their plans on pathfinders' involvement in Target '85 Evangelism after which SAUM President Robert Heisler challenged the campers to remain faithful to the Lord in witnessing for Him through pathfinding activities. Eight persons were baptized in the sea following the divine service.



Most Outstanding Pathfinder Watson Ho is seen with his pathfinders from Sarawak.

At the closing ceremony, SAUM President Robert Heisler presented Outstanding Pathfinder Club trophies to: Ekamai Pathfinders, Sarawak Pathfinders, Balestier Pathfinders and Sabah Pathfinders. Outstanding pathfinders at the Camporee who received medals as tokens of encouragement include: Watson Ho, Horace Laing, John Lim, Benna Susie, Danai, Victor Yuen, Pastor Keow, Teresa Ng, Leong Lai Kuan, Andy Bartolome, Simon Siew, George Lee and Daniel Weir.—*Jonathan Ng, SAUM Youth Director*



GC Associate Sabbath School Director Gilbert Bertochini (right) with Thailand Mission President Sunti Sorajakool translating.

G. C. Sabbath School Director Visits Thailand

GC Associate Sabbath School Director Gilbert Bertochini and FED Associate Sabbath School Director Paulene Barnett accompanied by SAUM Sabbath Director Jonathan Ng and his Associate Anita Heisler visited Chiangmai, Thailand where a Sabbath School Workshop was held from May 15 to 17, 1981 for district pastors and sabbath school officers in Northern Thailand.

Topics discussed at the workshop include: the importance of Child Evangelism; how to conduct Branch Sabbath School; how to conduct Vacation Bible School; how to use the available visual aids and materials and other aspects of Sabbath School evangelism in relation to Target '85.

Thailand Mission Sabbath School Director Somsak Songput and his associate Mrs. Sunti did a wonderful job in organizing the workshop. A total of 50 pastors, their wives and sabbath school officers attended this workshop in Chiangmai. Similar workshops were also held in Bangkok for the benefit of our churches in that city.—*Jonathan Ng, SAUM Sabbath School Director*



Child Evangelism Directors: (left to right) FED Paulene Barnett, Thailand Mission Mrs. Sunti & SAUM Anita Heisler.



Camporee Directors (left to right) Joseph Thia, R. E. Bartolome, Jonathan Ng, Bernie Donato, Joshua Mok and Lawrence Banyei.

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as a heavenly telex; He gives the thought, but not the encyclopedia to check out all the historical dates, or the dictionary on how to spell words. God does not necessarily provide that which men and women can provide for themselves. But He does guide and guard His messenger by the Holy Spirit, who will protect the integrity of the message intended.

3. *The Holy Spirit Helps the messenger to select his material carefully.* Frequently, while tracing Ellen White's use of such men as William Hanna or John Harris in writing *The Desire of Ages*, we find that she would not only not use much of what they wrote, but that at times, after using a part of a paragraph, would go on to take positions contrary to their writings. This selective skill is another instance of the guiding, guarding role of the Holy Spirit. There is no question about it—prophets, ancient or modern, selected their material well. Ellen White used authors of recognized quality such as Geikie, Farrar, Hanna, Clarke, and Edersheim. This says to me that where they helped to fill out what she had been shown to be true, she wisely used them; when they gave evidence that they did not see the whole truth, she plainly stated the facts as they had been revealed to her by the Holy Spirit.

4. *The prophet's use of existing materials does not necessarily mean that the prophet is dependent upon these sources.* No; the prophet begins with the message received; the messenger knows what must be said; in general his or her thought structure has been given by God. But the responsibility for finding historical background, descriptive amplification, and thought clarification is left up to the messenger. The employment of other authors to make the message attractive and convincing should not imply that the

prophet is dependent upon others for his or her message.

5. *Whenever we recognize similarities we must also see the dissimilarities.* This is probably the most important discovery that I have made, over the years, when I think about how Ellen White has made use of existing sources. The principle also applies to Biblical writers.

Biblical writers, as well as Ellen White, set forth a theological contribution that is more expansive, more complete, and more integrated than the authors they used for descriptive amplification. The dissimilarities between Ellen White and the authors she at times used are of kind and not degree.

**"I must
conclude that she
is a
reliable
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part of
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and corroboration
of
doctrine
and truth."**

She did more than merely gather together those gems of thought that had lain rather disconnected through the centuries. Ellen White's theological system, her organizing principle—the great controversy theme—is unique in the continuum of historical theology. Her concept of truth regarding how sin developed; why

Jesus came to earth; the integral role of the Holy Spirit in His life and in the believer's; the sanctuary doctrine, illustrating how the plan of redemption operates—all this gives special character to her prophetic, teaching authority in these last days.

Our responsibility is to listen to truth from wherever God speaks. And we are not left to wonder whether we are listening to the Word of God. John wrote, "He who receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true" (John 3:33, R. S. V.). The psalmist spoke out of experience: "The unfolding of thy words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple" (Ps. 119:130, R. S. V.). God has made us with the ability to hear Him, either through the inner word of His Holy Spirit (1 John 3:24, 4:13) or the exterior word of the Bible (2 Tim. 3:15, 16).

After 25 years of translating the New Testament into modern English, J. B. Phillips wrote a remarkable testimony to his experience as a translator, called *Ring of Truth*. He pitied the modern generation, which knows so little about genuine Christianity, primarily because they have never given the Bible a fair hearing.

I agree with Dr. Phillips "that we have in the New Testament, words that bear the hallmark of reality and the ring of truth" (page 125). Such has been my experience and the experience of many people I have known. The same experience applies to those who have heard "the ring of truth" in the writings of Ellen White. No one can take that "ring" from the soul. No "new" information can shake that self-authenticating experience.

But if one's knowledge of the Bible or of Ellen White is only theoretical, as it would be with an anatomy book or the evening newspaper, then most any allegation against the Bible or Ellen White would be either alarming or just another reason to doubt.

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It may be that certain things I have written in this article will sound new to some. I recognize that we are not all at the same place on the road of information or even experience. But I assure you, the confidence we may have in these agencies God has used to reveal truth to men and women will be in proportion to how much we learn and except from the Bible and Ellen White.

I have heard the ring of truth in the Bible and the writings of Ellen White. Our mandate is to preach from the Bible, enriching our sermons by insights on the gospel found in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. I believe with all my heart that Ellen White was an inspired messenger of God. Based on my understanding of revelation and inspiration as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I must conclude that she is a reliable teaching authority and that she is a part of God's continuing revelation and corroboration of doctrine and truth.

As the psalmist said, "O taste and see" (Ps. 34:8, R. S. V.). As Samuel responded, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant hears" (1 Sam. 3:9, R. S. V.). As Jehoshaphat challenged Israel, "Believe in the Lord your God, and you will be established; believe his prophets, and you will succeed" (2 Chron. 20:20, R. S. V.).

Neal C. Wilson is president of the General Conference. Condensed from Elder Wilson's message in the "Ministry" April, 1980.

**COPY DEADLINE
FOR NEXT
MESSENGER
JULY 24**

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bolstered their belief that before the "Great One" comes that many others, from various religions, will join together with them.

We agreed with them that there is a special "brotherhood" between the Yii Paw Movement and Seventh-day Adventists due to our both keeping the seventh day holy as well as our mutual hope in the soon coming "Great One" Jesus Christ. We agreed to visit them again to more clearly understand their beliefs and to share with them our understanding of the purpose for the Sabbath and Jesus' Second Coming. May God's Holy Spirit be poured out on Yii Paw and his followers that they may be guided into all truth.—*Adapted—Dennis Tidwell, "Elephant Express*

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The health exhibition was held in the basement of the Terunium shopping complex which drew a crowd of about 10,000 people. Pastor David Leoh, mission temperance director and Mr. Chay Fook Wing, mission publishing director helped with the exhibition.

Pastor Jonathan Ng, union temperance director and Dr. Wong Kai Cheng, a graduate of Christian Medical College, conducted the Five-Day Plan. Of the thirty people who attended, nine gave up smoking.

The crusade had a nightly attendance of 40 which resulted in one baptism and eleven people requesting for Bible studies. The twelve students who successfully fulfilled the requirements of the program are—Ng Yong Chye, Tony Chew, James Yoong, Andrew Ajol, Jonathan Joseph, Yong Chee Kiong, Simon Chua, Gan Ping Koon, Vijayan, Emmanuel, Steven Ong, and Wilson Wong.

Let us pray that God will richly bless the new found church in Kuantan and its pastor, Tan Kok Chin.—*Wilson Wong*

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Love Is Caring

"But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God dwell in him?"

1 John 3:17 NKJV



God is Love
We're His little children

God is Love!
We would be like Him.

So goes the song that children sing. If we really would be like Him we would become more loving. We would learn to feel the way God feels about other human beings.

The Far Eastern Division invites you to share their concern for the youth in Indonesia and central Philippines who desperately need new facilities at Mt. Klabat and Central Philippine Union colleges. Won't you share their burden also for the village chapels in the Philippines?

Twenty-five percent of the Sabbath School offering **June 27** will assist these projects. Plan now your response to their need.