

A Bimonthly Publication of the Ellen G. White Seventh-day  
Adventist Research Centre, Northern Caribbean University

## *Spirit of Prophecy Newsletter*

# THE VOLUMINOUS LETTERS AND MANUSCRIPTS OF MRS. E. G. WHITE: A SAMPLE SELECTION

Gosnell Yorke

### The Spirit of Prophecy Newsletter

The *Spirit of Prophecy Newsletter* is a publication dedicated to the promotion of the truth concerning God's revelation through Jesus Christ and the Spirit of Prophecy. This Newsletter is published by the Ellen G. White SDA Research Centre, NCU, to encourage and equip readers to participate in the ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church especially throughout the English-speaking Caribbean.

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### INTRODUCTION

In commenting on Mrs. White's writings, George Knight, a prolific author himself in so far as it relates to his careful, informative and sometimes thought-provoking chronicling our own denominational history and traditions over the many years, put it best: "The amount of Ellen White's literary output is staggering." He further reminds us that in addition to her published works, "there are approximately 8,000 letters and manuscripts (mostly sermons, testimonies to various groups and individuals, and diary material)" (see Knight, G. *Meeting Ellen White* 1996: 104). According to Mrs. White's grandson, Arthur L. White, this staggering literary output is now captured in some 55,000 pages of typescript material (see White, A.L. *Ellen G. White: Messenger to the Remnant*, 1953: 79)—although Knight pushes the number up to some 60,000 pages.

Once mostly the preserve of the E.G. White Estate at the General Conference and its subsidiaries in the form of its Branch Offices and Research Centres around the world, these letters and manuscripts, spanning

some seventy years of Mrs. White's inspired and inspiring ministry (1845-1915), have been made more and more available to the general public. The multi-volume *Manuscript Releases* (beginning in 1981), her *Sermons and Talks* (beginning in 1990) and the various compilations such as the most recent, *Ministry to the Cities* (2012), are but three examples of attempts that have been made to render Mrs. White's voluminous letters and manuscripts far more accessible to the church and even wider readership. Currently, a CD-ROM, with all her letters and manuscripts, is available to those who are more digitally driven.

Since this bimonthly edition of our Newsletter seeks to cover the months of August and September of this year (2014), we have decided, in keeping with the times and by way of illustration only, to share with you, the reader, the gist of one letter and one manuscript which we have on file here at the Ellen G. White SDA Research Centre at

NCU—as is true of all of its counterparts around the world encompassing Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe and North America. Among other things, these two samples will help to shed some interesting light on Mrs. White as both person and prophetess as she sought to give Christian counsel and encouragement to others around her in her own time and, by extension, to us in our time.

The letter to which we have just alluded is the first letter on record which was ever written in the month of August. That takes us back to August 4, 1850, when Mrs. White was in her early twenties. And the last manuscript ever to have been written in the month of September is dated September, 8<sup>th</sup>, 1914, when she was just two months shy of her eighty-seventh birthday.

**(Continued on page 2)**

## THE VOLUMINOUS LETTERS AND MANUSCRIPTS OF MRS. E. G. WHITE: A SAMPLE SELECTION (cont'd from p. 1)

Incidentally, we discovered, in the highly informative, definitive and otherwise meticulously crafted *Encyclopedia of Ellen G. White* (2013), a slight error in that Appendix C ascribes an earlier August letter to Mrs. White. That letter is dated August 25, 1847 and filed as H-004. In checking our files, however, we discovered that that letter (a one-paragraph letter written from Gorham, Maine) was in fact written by James White, her husband, and was addressed to a Sister *Elvira* Hastings in stead of Sister *Arabella* Hastings to whom Mrs. White herself would write some three years later in August 1850 (for that slight error, see Appendix C, page 1303).

### MRS. WHITE'S FIRST AUGUST LETTER (AUGUST 4, 1850)

First published in *Manuscripts Releases* [MR], Volume 19 (1993:129-132) and catalogued as Letter 8, this letter was written from Center Port, New York, and is captioned, "How to be an Overcomer". Essentially, it is in two parts. First, Mrs. White informs Mrs. Arabella Hastings, whom she had visited some time ago, that she was busy travelling doing the Lord's work with her husband and others and that she had received a series of visions in which she was inspired to encourage the flock to remain faithful even amidst attempts by the devil to derail

them from the kingdom—especially knowing that his (the devil's) time is terribly short. In doing so, Mrs. White alludes to the story of the Exodus in which, among other things, the magicians of Egypt sought to mimic God's miracle-working wonders. Further, she saw in vision that some of the churches in her day were acting like the deceptive Egyptian magicians themselves as well and that, in dialoguing with an angel, she was instructed that we sometimes do not trust enough in, and pray fervently to, God to see us through our difficulties and challenges—opting, instead, to doubt and wound the "lovely Jesus by unbelief" (MR, Volume 19, page 130).

What stands out particularly poignantly in this letter is also Mrs. White's tender human, Christian and even maternal side. For example, in closing her letter, she wrote to Mrs. Hastings as follows: "Dear sister, I have not forgotten you... I have often thought and prayed for you and the rest of the children, that you and their faith fail not... Much love to your father and your sisters and brother. Tell them to be faithful to serve God. I have often prayed for them... Kiss the babe for me. Tell Charles to be a good little boy that he may meet his mother at the appearing of Jesus. My little one [referring to her own son] is with me; he knew me when I got home. I had been gone from him two

months. He first looked at me, then flung his little arms around my neck. He is very feeble, but we have prayed for him. He will be healed, I believe" (MR, Volume 19, pages 131-132).

### MRS. WHITE'S LAST SEPTEMBER MANUSCRIPT (SEPTEMBER 8, 1914)

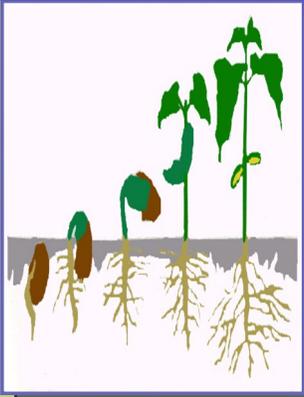
This manuscript was written in St. Helena, California, and is actually in the form of an interview which Mrs. White conducted with a Dr. Thompson who, at the time, was working at the Sanitarium. Word came to Mrs. White not via a vision but via Sara, one of her Editorial Assistants, that Dr. Thompson was leaving the Sanitarium for reasons which were not immediately apparent. Sara informed Mrs. White that Dr. Thompson had called to say goodbye to her (Mrs. White). When asked, Mrs. White readily admitted that she wasn't aware of this development or, at least, did not remember if an Elder Andross or a Brother White had mentioned it to her. Of course, this Brother White was not a reference to her husband, James, who had already died since 1881 and, coincidentally, whose birth, marriage and even death all occurred in the month of August—the 4th, 30th and the 6th respectively.

(Continued on page 6)

The Research Centre **congratulates** Caresa Nembhard, a committed student worker, who graduated from Northern Caribbean University in August, 2014. We hope that her experience at the Centre would have served as a stepping stone as she faces the challenges of the work world. God's blessing in all your endeavours, Caresa!



# Thought for the Month



**"We must be much in prayer if we would make progress in the divine life." *Prayer*, p. 121.**

## MENTAL HEALTH

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**"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.."**

**Prov. 17:22**

**Positive Virtues Promote Health and Long Life.**--Courage, hope, faith, sympathy, love, promote health and prolong life. A contented mind, a cheerful spirit, is health to the body and strength to the soul. "A merry [rejoicing] heart doeth good like a medicine" (Proverbs 17:22).--*Ministry of Healing*, p. 241 (1905).

A person whose mind is quiet and satisfied in God is in the pathway to health. *My Life Today*, p. 150.

### Sickness

#### **Originates in the Mind.**

--A great deal of the sickness which afflicts humanity has its origin in the mind and can only be cured by restoring the mind to health. There are very many more than we imagine who are sick mentally. Heart sickness makes many dyspeptics, for mental trouble has a paralyzing influence upon the digestive organs.-- *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3*, p.184 (1872).



# Youth Issues

## The Love of Worldly Pleasure



It is an alarming fact that the love of the world predominates in the minds of the young as a class. **Many are reckless in their conversation.** They choose to forget that by their words they are to be justified

or condemned. God is dishonored by the frivolity and the empty, vain talking and laughing that characterize the life of many of our youth. . . .

**Satan makes special efforts to lead them to find happiness in worldly amusements, and to justify themselves by endeavoring to show that these amusements are harmless, innocent, and even important for health. He presents the path of holiness as difficult, while the paths of worldly pleasure are strewn with flowers.**

**In false and flattering colors, he arrays the world with its pleasures before the youth. But the pleasures of earth will soon come to an end, and that which is sown must also be reaped. Are personal attractions, ability, or talents too valuable to devote to God, the author of our being, Him who watches over us every moment? Are our qualifications too precious to devote to God? (*Messages to Young People*, pg. 367)**

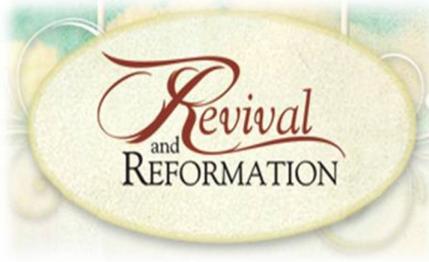


## “The Power of Prayer”

**PRAY FOR THE LATTER RAIN.**—We must pray that God will unseal the fountain of the water of life. And we must ourselves receive of the living water. Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us. At every meeting we attend our prayers should ascend, that at this very time God will impart warmth and moisture to our souls. As we seek God for the Holy Spirit, it will work in us meekness, humbleness of mind, a conscious dependence upon God for the perfecting latter rain. If we pray for the blessing in faith, we shall receive it as God has promised.—(*Testimonies to Ministers*, 508.)

**BE FERVENT IN PRAYER AND IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**—What we need is the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit of God. “Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” Pray without ceasing, and watch by working in accordance with your prayers. As you pray, believe, trust in God. It is the time of the latter rain, when the Lord will give largely of His Spirit. Be fervent in prayer, and watch in the Spirit.—(*Testimonies to Ministers*, 512.)

**SATAN FEARS GOD’S PEOPLE PRAYING FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT.**—There is nothing that Satan fears so much as that the people of God shall clear the way by removing every hindrance, so that the Lord can pour out His Spirit upon a languishing church and an impenitent congregation. If Satan had his way, there would never be another awakening, great or small, to the end of time. But we are not ignorant of his devices. It is possible to resist his power. When the way is prepared for the Spirit of God, the



blessing will come. Satan can no more hinder a shower of blessing from descending upon God’s people than he can close the windows of heaven that rain cannot come upon the earth. Wicked men and devils cannot hinder the work of God, or shut out His presence from the assemblies of His people, if they will, with subdued, contrite hearts, confess and put away their sins, and in faith claim His promises.—(*Selected Messages, Bk. 1*, 124.)

**THE SPIRIT ACCOMPANIES EVERY SINCERE PRAYER.**—The religion that comes from God is the only religion that will lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship. It is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit every sincere prayer is indited, and such prayer is acceptable to God. Wherever a soul reaches out after God, there the Spirit’s working is manifest, and God will reveal Himself to that soul. For such worshipers He is seeking. He waits to receive them, and to make them His sons and daughters.—(*The Desire of Ages*, 189.)

**PRAYER WITHOUT EARNEST ACTIVITY FOR OTHERS LEADS TO FORMALISM.**—God does not mean that any of us shall become hermits or monks, and retire from the world to devote ourselves to acts of worship. The life must be like Christ’s life—between the mountain and the

multitude. He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray, or his prayers will become a formal routine. When men take themselves out of social life, away from the sphere of Christian duty and cross-bearing; when they cease to work earnestly for the Master, who worked earnestly for them, they lose the subject matter of prayer, and have no incentive to devotion. Their prayers become personal and selfish. They cannot pray in regard to the wants of humanity or the upbuilding of Christ’s kingdom, pleading for strength wherewith to work.—(*Steps to Christ*, 101.)

**SPIRITUAL PROGRESS DEPENDS UPON PRAYER.**—We must be much in prayer if we would make progress in the divine life. When the message of truth was first proclaimed, how much we prayed. How often was the voice of intercession heard in the chamber, in the barn, in the orchard, or the grove.



Frequently we spent hours in earnest prayer, two or three together claiming the promise; often the sound of weeping was heard and then the voice of thanksgiving and the song of praise. Now the day of God is nearer than when we first believed, and we should be more earnest, more zealous, and fervent than in those early days. Our perils are greater now than then.—(*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, 161, 162.)

## THE VOLUMINOUS LETTERS AND MANUSCRIPTS OF MRS. E. G. WHITE: A SAMPLE SELECTION (cont'd from p. 2)

Mrs. White then proceeded to inquire of Dr. Thompson as to whether or not he was sure that such a move was the best for him at the time. Confirming that his move was being precipitated by some degree of disagreement over wages and that some members of the Sanitarium Board would wish to see him go—plus being enticed to return to South Africa based on a letter which he had received from his sister there and “one from [a] member of the conference committee, urging him to come back”—  
Dr. Thompson was advised by Mrs. White to give the whole matter some careful thought; to ensure that it was the Lord’s will in that “we must move with an eye single to the glory of God” and “to know that we are walking in the counsel of God”. She further reminded him that in this life “we will be brought through the straitest places”—including “severe trials” in her case (referring to the earlier loss of her own husband) and, given her own humility as a Messenger of the Lord, even admitting to Dr. Thompson that “if the Lord sees fit to place on some one the work I have been doing, I would say Amen and Amen”.

Among other things, Mrs. White also had this to say to him: “It is not for me to say just what you should do... Be sure every step is right... Do not move in an independent manner. I am sorry you are going away....Take it all to the Lord, and don’t make any move you will be sorry for. I cannot give you such advice and assurance as if the Lord opened up before me, but I do feel intensely that everyone should make right moves.... Thank you for speaking [to me] on this matter. Move soundly, with the best judgment. The Lord give you the light and knowledge that come from Himself.”

### CONCLUSION

For this our bimonthly Newsletter (encompassing August and September), I trust that you have been able to glean from the first recorded Letter ever written in the month of August by Mrs. White (1850) and the last recorded Manuscript ever written in the month of September which bears her name (1914) who Mrs. Ellen G. White really was—a prophetess, a practical

person, a caring Christian, a prudent counsellor and a loving mother; in short, an inspired messenger to the Remnant.

### REFERENCES

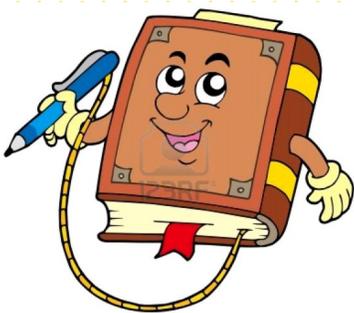
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*Manuscript (MS) 010*, September 8, 1914.

## Comments from our Visitors



*"My tour was inspiring and meaningful."* Basil Tabannor, Principal, Willodene Group of Schools, Jamaica.

*"An eye-opener. Praise God!"* Eunice Griffiths, Hagley Park SDA, Jamaica.

*"Don't want to leave."* Jai Hundett, Uchee Pines SDA, USA.

*"Lovely being here."* Betram Gayle, Bible Society of Jamaica.

[After receiving a copy of the *Great Controversy*] *"I'm actually going to read the Great Controversy this time!"* Roxanne Smith, Clear Park SDA, Jamaica.

*"This was a lovely welcome."* Dr Althea Spencer-Miller, speaking on behalf of a group of visiting postgraduate students from Drew University, USA.

## PIONEER OF THE MONTH James Springer White (1821-1881)



James White was born to Deacon John and Betsey White in Palmyra, Maine, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August 1821. He was the fifth of nine children and suffered as a boy from poor eyesight which prevented him from attending school until he was 19 years old. He studied for 18 hours a day, thus in twelve weeks he attained a certificate indicating his qualifications to teach common branches. The following winter he taught.

At 15 he was baptized in a denomination called Christian Connection to which his parents belonged. He later learnt about the Advent Message from his mother and joined the Millerites as they confidently awaited the return of the Lord. He suffered deep disappointment with the other

believers on October 22, 1844, but he continued to cling in confidence to the Word of God.

Early in 1845, James became acquainted with Ellen Harmon. A courtship developed and they married only after they assured themselves that for them to marry was God's providence. They were married on August 30, 1846. Shortly after the young couple read a pamphlet written by Joseph Bates and accepted the Seventh-day Sabbath. The couple had four sons, two of whom died at an early age.

During the first years of their marriage, James and Ellen travelled and preached over a wide area, having no permanent home of their own.

Elder White helped to lead "Sabbath Conferences" and worked out several key doctrines of the emerging church. He was also a firm believer in his wife's visions, and when she was shown that she should begin publishing a paper, he began to work on the first of several papers that he founded, namely, *The Present Truth*, in July 1849. Among other publications to his credit are the following: *The Second Advent Review*

and *Sabbath Herald* (now *Adventist Review*) in 1850; *The Youth Instructor* (now *Insight*) in 1852; and *Signs of the Times* in 1874. Both the Pacific Press and the Review and Herald Publishing Association trace their beginnings back to James White.

Although initially opposed to the idea of an organized church because of the fear of succumbing to a new form of Babylon, Elder White later agreed for the church to be organized—

even helping to establish the General Conference in May, 1863. In spite of illness, including a

series of strokes that affected his health and relationship with others, he served a total of ten years as General Conference President (1865-1867, 1869-1871, 1874-1880).

He died in Battle Creek on August 6, 1881, of pernicious malarial fever. He was buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in the White family plot where he now rests awaiting the upward call of Christ, the Life-Giver.

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*Her life of more than a century witnessed many development in the SDA church.*

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## Sabbath Programmes at the Research Centre

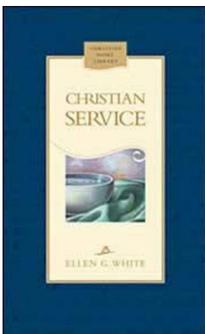


The Centre opens its doors to one church per month to worship on a Sabbath at our facilities. We also conduct seminars and AY programmes at local churches. For appointments call or e-mail us at the address on this page.



**We are on the Web:**  
<http://egw-sdaresearch.ncu.edu.jm/>

## BOOK OF THE MONTH



### Christian Service

God could have chosen unfallen angels as His representatives on earth, but instead He chose us. "Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life."

This volume is a call to consecrated service in the science of soul winning. Invaluable to ministers, teachers, and church leaders, it will be appreciated by all who, in fellowship with Christ, seek to fulfil the gospel commission. Topics include personal preparation, training, organizing, the health and publishing ministries, and evangelistic methodologies.

Every child of God reflects the light of the world to others. These pages explain how to polish the human mirror so that it may reveal truth more clearly, and thus attract others by its beauty.

*Do you have any questions or comments on Spirit of Prophecy matters?*

*If you do, please call us or send your questions to:*

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