

The Teachings of Vern Bates

A Life Dedicated to Destroying Confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy

PART ONE OF THREE

THIS STUDY IS OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE. Men and women are going to many camp meetings this year, including every independent camp meeting, in order to convert believers to Bates' theory, that the great majority of Spirit of Prophecy writings are contaminated, uninspired, and need to be thrown away. Bates'

message is also gradually circulating through many local church groups. It is extremely urgent that you carefully read this three-part study and share it near and afar off with other believers. Defend the Spirit of Prophecy! God will reward you. Be prepared to resist this evil teaching when it comes to your area.

This is an extremely important study. There are people who are being misled into rejecting nine-tenths of the Spirit of Prophecy books because of false teachings circulated by Vern Bates. I urge you to share copies of this tract set widely! Order them from us or make Xerox copies.

If you are going to a camp meeting this year, obtain copies ahead of time and share them. Also consider securing copies of our several booklets defending the Spirit of Prophecy. They are listed at the bottom of this page.

Vern Bates, located in the Pacific Northwest, declares that nearly all the Spirit of Prophecy writings are "corrupt" and cannot be relied on. At the close of his booklet, *Revival of the True Spirit of Prophecy Writings* (RTSPW), Bates confidently declares of those who have read his attacks on Ellen White's books:

"The following reaction is typical of those who are honestly searching for the truth, who have been confronted with . . . this booklet, for the first time: 'What can I now really believe in? I feel like throw-

ing my books away!'"—RTSPW, p. 26.

His solution is to do just that, and only read a few early Spirit of Prophecy books.

Vern Bates wants to decide for you which Scriptures you can study and which you are forbidden to read. The only other person who dares do that is the pope of Rome.

People who have phoned Bates, with questions, find that he tends to evade them by changing the subject to one of his pet claims. So you would do well to read this, so you can learn the truth. If you reject nine-tenths of the Spirit of Prophecy, as Bates wants you to do, then you will be stripped of much of your latter-day protection against further deceptions by the devil.

How would you like to spend your life turning people away from the abundance of treasure, the precious words of God, which have been given us in the Spirit of Prophecy? I would not want to be in Vern Bates' shoes in the day when the Judgment meets and the books are opened. I have spoken with a number of people who, having accepted his ideas, no

BOOKS DEFENDING ELLEN WHITE

BOOK Prophet of the End 1988 224 pp., pprbk, single: \$5.00 / Box: 80 per case, \$26.40 + \$12.00 p&h = \$38.40 [.33 in box]. Most complete, simply written introduction to EGW and the Spirit of Prophecy available. Excellent to share with anyone.

BOOK Defending the Spirit of Prophecy 272 pp., pprbk, single copy: \$5.00 / Small boxfuls. 30 cents in the box, 24 to the case, \$7.20 + \$7.00 = \$14.20. *Part One:* Defends against the false Plagiarism Charge. Fully refuting the theory that she plagiarized. *Part Two:* Eliminates the Secret Writer Charge. A thorough reply to the charge that other people wrote, modified, changed, or added to her writings.

BOOK Do Not Reject the Spirit of Prophecy 32 pp., pprbk, \$3.00 + 2.50. A large number of Spirit of Prophecy quotations on the importance of the Spirit of Prophecy writings, and the danger of belittling or reject-

ing them.

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longer read the Spirit of Prophecy. **They tell me they have been told there is something wrong with them; but, upon questioning, they are not really sure what it is.**

What people do not realize is that **Bates' peculiar theories have implications which he does not dare mention. His imagination, if true, would place the Word of God in a strait jacket. As an English-speaking person, you would not even be able to find an inspired Bible worth reading!**

— SECTION ONE —

BATES' EIGHT BASIC ERRORS

Bates has at least eight primary errors, on which he constructs his entire fabric of conjecture:

- **His first error is the theory that all inspired writings, both in the Bible and in the Spirit of Prophecy, are produced by verbal dictation.** It is not visions but voices that are important. A voice dictates one word after the next; and, like a robot, the prophet writes each word down. Bates has a strict form of *the error of verbal inspiration*. Only that written down by verbal dictation is inspired. Yet a prophet says and does a variety of things, recorded in the Written Word. According to this theory, God does not impart knowledge to the prophet by what he sees in visions. It is only dictated words that are inspired, as the prophet holds a pen in his hand. Most of his correspondence, the letters he writes, are not worth reading. (See quotations on pp. 6-7.)

- **But there is more. The second error of Bates is his idea that only the original wording is inspired—only those first dictated sentences.** Therefore, no translation of the Spirit of Prophecy into other languages can be inspired! If you cannot read English, the Spirit of Prophecy contains no message to you from Heaven. Indeed, unless you can read Greek and Hebrew, the Bible is also useless; since, according to Bates, only the original wording is inspired. —Yet Bates, himself, sells a Spanish translation of one Spirit of Prophecy book!

Such theories are foolishness!

The truth is that God inspires the writer, who then writes the concept down in his own words. These concepts are then translated into other languages. The King James Version, for example, is inspired of God! You believe it, don't you? Yet it was translated, by men, into other languages. It does not contain the original words the prophet wrote down.

Sometimes in vision the prophet is shown pictures of past history or future events which have not yet occurred. Bates' theory requires that such views are un-inspired; only the dictated words are inspired.

- **Bates' third error is the theory that once a prophet writes something, it is set in concrete. That point can never be mentioned again in a later in-**

spired statement by the prophet. It cannot be enlarged upon or added to in a later writing. The first mention of a topic is alone inspired of God. While encouraging people to stop reading Ellen White's *later* books, Bates is telling them to purchase *his* reprints of her *earliest* books. By doing this, he is making a tidy income on the sale of those early reprints. For example, he charges \$94.00 for the first four books of the *Testimonies* (containing testimonies 1-30); whereas you can buy them in the ABC for \$14.99 each.

According to his theory, the prophet can never later enlarge on something earlier written; therefore *Desire of Ages* is not inspired. Since it is an immense enlargement of a few very brief chapters written in earlier years about Christ's life on earth! All her later books are in the same category.

If you will pause and think a minute, you will recall many examples in both the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy in which a point or concept was later adapted, changed, or enlarged. Deuteronomy includes an enlargement of events and details in Leviticus. 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles enlarge on 1 and 2 Samuel and duplicate one another. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John continually retell what the others have said. In Acts, Paul repeatedly recounts the story of his conversion.

In Jeremiah 36, a sizeable amount of the book of Jeremiah is written down,—but Jeremiah dictates it to Baruch; God does not do the dictating to Jeremiah. Then, after King Jehoiakim burns it, Jeremiah *adds to it* still more words—thus enlarging the book! “There were added besides unto them many like words” (Jeremiah 36:32). Yet, according to Bates' theory, the second writing of it could not be inspired.

In the Gospels, one inspired writer describes an event one way and another does it another way. According to the implications of Bates' theory, only one is inspired. Bates says his theory is right because we should not add to the Bible (*Revelation 22:18-19*). It is true that we should not write into Scripture what we think to be inspired comments. But God can add to it all He wants! He can enlarge it, He can add the Spirit of Prophecy writings to it. Bates tries to limit what God can do, and dares to say which parts of the Inspired Word we are permitted to read.

If Bates' theory was correct, then Ellen White could not write anything about any Bible topic, event, or prophecy—since Bible writers already earlier wrote about those concepts and events. Actually, John the Revelator could not write part of his book which provides additional information to the data given in Daniel. Indeed, Daniel Seven is an enlargement of future information given in Daniel Two; and Daniel Eight and Daniel Eleven are further enlargements. So only Daniel Two can be inspired!

- **Bates' fourth error is that if one book provides variant information of another book, the second one written is worthless and should be discarded.** For example, he quotes one Spirit of Prophecy passage which says that an event occurred at night and another which says it occurred in the day. Therefore the entire second

book is not inspired.

But we would then need to toss out Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; for they all provide different details about the same incidents.

• **Bates' fifth error is that if a sentence or paragraph is moved from its original location, its inspiration ceases.** He uses error to help defend his position, that later restructuring or rewriting of earlier material by Ellen White is not inspired. As you may know, she followed Jesus' command, to "gather up the fragments that nothing be lost" (*John 6:12*). She would take paragraphs, here and there from her earlier writings, and use them in later writings.

• **Bates also uses the above error to defend his sixth error, that Spirit of Prophecy compilations are worthless.** Because paragraphs on similar topics have been placed together from earlier writings, they no longer contain valid information.

As you can see, strange errors lead to strange conclusions. All the *Testimonies* are compiled from letters! Part of the material in even her earliest books was drawn from articles and letters she had written.

Bates does not want his followers to recognize all the implications of his teachings. But if a person is going to buy the package, he should be consistent and accept all that it involves.

Bates says you should not read Spirit of Prophecy compilations; yet he prints and sells Spirit of Prophecy compilations he has put together! One example is his book, *Revival of the True Spirit of Prophecy Writings* (analyzed later in this study), which contains Bible and Spirit of Prophecy passages he has brought together. He has also published other books which consist of compiled materials from various sources.

If compilations are useless, then all Bible studies are also! They consist of compilations!

In fact, if you adopt his theory, you should not quote the Bible or Spirit of Prophecy in your conversations or sermons; for, in doing so, you have lifted it out of context!

Liberal Adventists have a similar teaching. Because Bible verses disprove their errors, they claim that it is wrong to quote Bible verses in support of anything; only single Bible passages are to be used. That claim was part of their defense of women's ordination at the 1995 Utrecht Session.

• **Bates' seventh error, on which he builds his house of cards, is the theory that God does not protect His inspired writings.**

In the case of Ellen White's writings, Bates claims that they were only safe as long as James White was alive. Bates is very adamant about that. Those writings were only safe as long as James lived. As soon as James died, enemies would have a free hand to ruin them. According to Bates, the idea that God protects His Word is fiction. Of course, if you believe Bates, then you cannot trust the Bible either. Bates' idea is that only people protect God's Word; God never does.

Which person in Israel was protecting Moses' writings while he was alive? Who was protecting them after he died and "everyone did what is right in his own eyes"? The same would hold true for the other 45 Bible writers.

This present study totally disproves this terrible charge by Bates. God protects His Word, just as He protects His people. It is the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy that connects us to God. He has to protect His writings, or they would be totally obliterated by men. It is only through the Word that we can learn the truth and the way to heaven.

• **Bates' eighth error is the claim that God permitted wicked men to later change Ellen White's writings, and He—God—did nothing to stop it;** He did not warn Ellen, so she would stop it. This present study disproves that error also. His view is that Ellen could not stop the corruption of her writings, nor can we rely on God to protect them. He imagines that God is helpless to defend His Inspired Writings.

You ask, How could Ellen White have stopped it? First, she always had friends in top leadership on all levels; these loyal supporters would tell her things she needed to know. Second, she could have taken her case to the laity, as she did about righteousness by faith in 1889 and 1890. Third, she could have printed her books outside the church (as she did with *Steps to Christ*, because Smith stalled the printing of the *1888 Great Controversy* for two years). Ellen White had courage and tenacity; she was not the lazy wimp that Bates makes her out to be.

HOW DOES BATES PROVE IT?

How does Bates prove his theories? He supports his errors with a collection of insinuations based on hypothetical assumptions, irrelevant quotations, and supposed errors in the Spirit of Prophecy. For example, in one place Ellen White writes that there are those in the church who are not converted. Bates says that general statement proves that she knew church leaders were changing her writings. A Bible verse mentioning that men were evil at the time the Bible writer wrote is the basis for a Bates' conjecture that, therefore, Bible writings have also been changed by wicked men! Bates quotes a Spirit of Prophecy statement, that Uriah Smith was an "Eli" and not faithfully reproofing sin. Therefore, Bates conjectures, based on that statement, that Smith must have been changing her writings. Bates' charges are a collection of false assumptions based on hypothetical leaps of logic.

What is Bates' solution to the problem? Bates claims that he knows of a tiny number of early, small Spirit of Prophecy books which are "uncontaminated." Yet, examining them, you find that none of her major books are among them—not one! *Great Controversy* is gone, *Desire of Ages* is gone, and nine-tenths of all the rest.

Yet, even if you were to read in his little collection, you would find that concepts are repeated in them (some-

thing Bates says would make them uninspired). You will find a variety of statements by people. You will find comments on Bible verses and prophecies. Yet because they duplicate and enlarge on what the Bible says, according to Bates' theory, they must be uninspired also!

Bates' ideas are a house of cards that falls to pieces as soon as you closely examine them!

— SECTION TWO — WHAT THE CHANGES WOULD BE

What would be removed or added? Only wicked men would attempt to change the Spirit of Prophecy writings, but what objectives would they have in mind?

First, what would they remove? Unconverted church leaders are excellent politicians. They would remove everything that pointed out sin. Reproof of sin would inevitably weaken their position and control over the people. Yet you can hardly read a paragraph or page in a Spirit of Prophecy book which does not condemn wrongdoing. And this includes the later compilations of her writings, such as *Ministry of Healing*: against drug medication and for natural remedies; *Great Controversy*: against the sins of church leaders and warnings against letting them gain too much control in the church (yet the critics say corrupt church leaders wrote *Great Controversy*!); *Desire of Ages*: against the overarching sins of church leaders; *Counsels on Diet and Foods*: against coffee, tea, and meat eating. On and on the list goes. All nine volumes of the *Testimonies* are also full of condemnation of wrongdoing.

In stunning contrast, open a copy of the *Review* or a union paper, or look at the books advertised in the ABC catalog. You will find little or nothing that reproves sin. Why? Because men, not God, inspired those publications. It is the way of man to praise men and not mention wrongdoing. The Spirit of Prophecy writings—all of them—are totally different: They condemn sin!

Why then, we ask, does Bates want to get rid of those books? Perhaps the Spirit of Prophecy writings condemn his sins. It is a strange fact that Bates' objective is the same as that of the liberals in our church, who are so immersed in sin that they find it necessary to destroy confidence in the holy books. The Spirit of Prophecy writings are an amplification of the Ten Commandments. Why does Bates want to get rid of them?

Early leaders in our church would also have wanted to remove how they mistreated Ellen and James. (Read "Sketch of Experience" in Vol. 1 of the *Testimonies* (570-585). It was not taken out, when the *Testimonies* were reprinted after James' death.)

Church leaders would want everything tossed out that weakened their control over church members. Then why is "The Scriptures a Safeguard" in all three edi-

tions of *Great Controversy*? It is a most violent attack on the primacy of church authority. The first (historical) half of the book is also powerful. Why was *Testimonies to Ministers*, an equally strong book, published as a compilation nearly a decade after her death?

Second, what would they add? If the leaders wrote or heavily changed her books after 1881, as Bates charges, this is what they would have added: flattering comments about leaders, how good they are, how they never make mistakes, and how we need to trust and obey them. We would be told of the wise committee decisions they make. We would find recommendations concerning big buildings, big salaries, going into debt, consolidation, and centralized control by a few men. Because so many condemnations of sin would have been removed, lots of useless details of no consequence would be added to fill the missing pages.

What was actually changed when *Testimonies, Books 1-4*, were reprinted in the mid-1880s? Everything is primarily just as it originally was, with four main exceptions: *First*, a number of unimportant phrases were slightly rewritten or omitted (exactly what wicked leaders would want left in). *Second*, a few "I saw" and "I was shown" were left out. This was done in accordance with her later conviction that the *Testimonies* should be shared with non-Adventists. *Third*, some names of people were changed to letters of the alphabet. *Fourth*, there are a few instances in which she omitted, from the final printing, some specific paragraphs about individuals at Battle Creek. (See my tract, *Searching for Changes in the Testimonies [WM-1077]*.)

What about compilations prepared after her death? Read *Testimonies to Ministers, Counsels on Diet and Foods*, and her books on evangelism, teaching, schools, temperance, etc. All the compilations condemn sin and none encourage slavish submission to leadership—any more than the books written while she was alive. The compilations contain precious gems of truth gathered together on given topics. They are both inspirational and deeply instructive. Here is one example: Read "The Reason for the Delay" in the book, *Evangelism* (694-697). It is a most powerful collection of statements—which urges us to prepare our hearts to meet Jesus! It is a valuable compilation!

— SECTION THREE — REPLY TO BATES' BOOK

Bates' booklet, *Revival of the True Spirit of Prophecy Writings*, begins with a collection of Bible quotations under the heading, "The Inspiration of the Bible Writers." But, by printing this compilation of Bible quotes, Bates has himself made a compilation. And that, according to his theories, negates the inspiration of those quotations!

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PART TWO OF THREE

Continued from the preceding tract in this series

This first section in his book consists of a normal collection of quotations, that the Bible is safely inspired. This assures the reader that the booklet must be all right. Yet later in the booklet, Bates will insinuate, to the reader, that many of the Bible writings have been corrupted and are not inspired because men changed them—and therefore their inspiration is questionable.

Spirit dictation vs. thought inspiration—The next section is entitled “*Dictation of the Holy Spirit.*” Bates quotes a few Spirit of Prophecy sentences which say that the Holy Spirit dictated information to some Bible writers. This is the only proof he offers in support of his theory, that every inspired word of Scripture was given by direct dictation. Then, without quoting it, he mentions that, in *7 Bible Commentary, 945-946*, and *1 Selected Messages, 15-23*, Ellen White says something quite different. He dares not quote those passages. Bates confidently asserts that the few sentences about the Holy Spirit dictating some messages must occur in all cases, and the pages upon pages of contrary statements by Ellen White—must have been written by someone else! Very convenient. Beware of those people who are quick to tell you that “other people” wrote the Spirit of Prophecy passages they do not like!

I urge you to read the *7BC 945-946* and *1SM 15-23* statements for yourself! The *7BC* passage fills nearly an entire page! The *1SM* passage consists of five different letters, three of which are quite lengthy. Bates says to throw all that out and only accept his theory. Also read pp. 5-6 (v-vi) in the Introduction to *Great Controversy*. The entire Introduction is excellent. Bates says the entire book should be thrown in the trash can.

“God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His Word, selecting some things as inspired and discrediting others as uninspired. The testimonies have been treated in the same way; but God is not in this.”—*1 Selected Messages, 23*.

Bates next quotes several Bible texts which say that men should not add to or take away from God’s Word.—Yet this is exactly what Bates is trying to do!—to take away most of the Spirit of Prophecy writings from your heart and life!

His next section is “*How Dangerous is It to Change God’s Word?*” Bates quotes Eve’s misstatements, which got her in trouble. Yet it is Bates who is trying to change God’s Word! He is not merely trying to change pieces of it; he is determined to get rid of massive sections!

The Spirit of Prophecy protector: James White

or God?—Bates’ next section is “*Changing the Spirit of Prophecy Writings.*” He begins by declaring that James White was ordained as the one to protect the Spirit of Prophecy writings. Bates then quotes several passages in which Ellen states that God revealed that James was to be her helper. Bates concludes: “As long as James White was alive to protect the Spirit of Prophecy writings, the original messages were essentially uncorrupted and pure.” James died in 1881; so, according to Bates’ repeated claim, after that date the Spirit of Prophecy had absolutely no protection!

But Bates is careful to omit those passages in which she later said how Marian Davis (who began helping her in 1878) and her son, William C. White (who began when James died), were also given to be her helpers. Bates assumes that James was the only helper God ever gave her, ignoring her repeated statements that she was later given others. See my books, *The Secret Writers Charge* (96 pp., \$7.00 + \$2.50) and *How God Protected Ellen White’s Writings* (28 pp. \$2.00 + \$2.50), for much more on this.

The charge that Smith changed them—Bates’ next section is “*The Role of Uriah Smith in Rejecting the Testimonies of the Holy Spirit.*” Several Spirit of Prophecy quotations are cited which indicate that Uriah Smith did not properly care for his children and that he was not taking a bold stand for the Spirit of Prophecy. In one instance, he waited six months before publicly reading a *Testimony*.

We agree that such actions on Smith’s part are deplorable; but that does not support Bates’ blatant charge, in this section, that he changed the Spirit of Prophecy writings! As he does throughout his booklet, Bates will make a charge without providing anything solid in the way of evidence.

The charge that others changed them—Bates’ next section is “*The Death of Elder James White.*” In this section, he says that, because James died, other people began changing her writings. It is so because Bates thinks it is so!

The attack on Early Writings—Here is how Bates gets rid of the book, *Early Writings*: He quotes a single sentence by Haskell, which said, “The book, *Early Writings*, was largely a compilation of testimonies to prove positions taken after much fasting and prayer” (*Review, Vol. 5, p. 87*). Therefore, Bates says, because it is a “compilation,” the book is no good. If you will look in the table of contents of *Early Writings*, you will see it is composed of three large sections from earlier smaller booklets she wrote. Yet, because Haskell used the word,

— Continued on page eight

THOUGHT INSPIRATION, NOT ROBOT INSPIRATION

God delights in watching how the individuality of all His creatures is expressed. Each living creature has its own individuality. Not only bugs, dogs, and horses, but also people. Each one is uniquely different. The Lord guides His children, but He does not micromanage them like robots.

Every Bible author wrote with a distinct individuality, expressing his own personality and experience,—yet everything was inspired. That is the great truth witnessed in God's Word, the great truth verified by Ellen White.

“The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. **The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen.** Look at the different writers.

“It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the Word of God.”—*1 Selected Messages, 21; Manuscript 24, 1886 (written in Europe in 1886).*

“Those who think to make the supposed difficulties of Scripture plain, **in measuring by their finite rule that which is inspired and that which is not inspired,** had better cover their faces . . .

“And He has not, while presenting the perils clustering about the last days, qualified any finite man to unravel hidden mysteries, **or inspired one man or any class of men to pronounce judgment as to that which is inspired or is not.** When men, in their finite judgment, find it necessary to go into an examination of Scriptures to define that which is inspired and that which is not, they have stepped before Jesus to show Him a better way than He has led us.”—*7 Bible Commentary, 944.*

“Men arise who think they find something to criticize in God's Word. They lay it bare before others as evidence of superior wisdom. These men are, many of them, smart men, learned men. They have eloquence and talent, the whole lifework [of whom] is to unsettle minds in regard to the inspiration of the Scriptures. They influence many to see as they do. And the same work is passed on from one to another, just as Satan designed it should be, until we may see the full meaning of the words of Christ, ‘When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?’ (Luke 18:8).”—*1 Selected Messages, 17.*

“Those who take only a surface view of the Scriptures will, with their superficial knowledge, which they think is very deep, talk of the contradictions of the Bible and question the authority of the Scriptures. But those whose hearts are in harmony with truth and duty will search the Scriptures with a heart prepared to receive divine impressions.”—*7 Bible Commentary, 945.*

“Skepticism has been aroused in many minds by the theories presented as to the nature of inspiration. Finite beings, with their narrow, short-sighted views, feel themselves competent to criticize the Scriptures, saying: ‘This passage is needful, and that passage is not needful, and is not inspired.’

“Christ gave no such instruction in regard to the Old Testament Scriptures, the only part of the Bible which the people of His time possessed. His teachings were designed to direct their minds to the Old Testament and to bring into clearer light the great themes there presented.”—*5 Testimonies, 709.*

“Men should let God take care of His own Book, His living oracles, as He has done for ages. **They begin to question some parts of revelation, and pick flaws in the apparent inconsistencies of this statement and that statement.**

“Beginning at Genesis, they give up that which they deem questionable, and their minds lead on, for **Satan will lead to any length they may follow in their criticism, and they see something to doubt in the whole Scriptures.** Their faculties of criticism become sharpened by exercise, and they can rest on nothing with a certainty. You try to reason with these men, but your time is lost.”—*1 Selected Messages, 17-18.*

“The Ten Commandments were spoken by God Himself, and were written by His own hand. They are of divine, and not of human composition. But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that ‘the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.’ John 1:14.

“Written in different ages, **by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast** in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. **Different forms of expression are employed by different writers;** often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as **several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations,** there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the

underlying harmony.

“As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects. One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of the subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another seizes upon a different phase; and **each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind**—a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life.

“God has been pleased to communicate His truth to the world by human agencies, and He Himself, by His Holy Spirit, qualified men and enabled them to do this work.”—*Great Controversy, Introduction, vi (6)*.

“In our Bible, we might ask, Why need Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Gospels, why need the Acts of the Apostles, and the variety of writers in the Epistles, go over the same thing?

“The Lord gave His Word in just the way He wanted it to come. He gave it through different writers, each having his own individuality, though going over the same history. Their testimonies are brought together in one Book, and are like the testimonies in a social meeting. They do not represent things in just the same style. **Each has an experience of his own,** and this diversity broadens and deepens the knowledge that is brought out to meet the necessities of varied minds. The thoughts expressed have not a set uniformity, as if cast in an iron mold, making the very hearing monotonous. In such uniformity there would be a loss of grace and distinctive beauty . . .

“The Creator of all ideas may impress different minds with the same thought, but each may express it in a different way, yet without contradiction. The fact that this difference exists should not perplex or confuse us. **It is seldom that two persons will view and express truth in the very same way.** Each dwells on particular points which his constitution and education have fitted him to appreciate. The sunlight falling upon the different objects gives those objects a different hue.

“Through the inspiration of His Spirit the Lord gave His apostles truth, to be expressed according to the development of their minds by the Holy Spirit. But the mind is not cramped, as if forced into a certain mold.”—*1 Selected Messages, 21-22 (Letter 53, 1900)*.

“When men venture to criticize the Word of God, they venture on sacred, holy ground, and had better fear and tremble and hide their wisdom as foolishness. God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His Word, selecting some things as inspired and dis-

crediting others as uninspired. The testimonies have been treated in the same way; but God is not in this.”—*1 Selected Messages, 23 (Letter 22, 1889)*.

“He will misconstrue his words, play upon his imagination, wrest them from their true meaning, **and then entrench himself in unbelief, claiming that the sentiments are all wrong.**

“This is the way my writings are treated by those who wish to misunderstand and pervert them. They turn the truth of God into a lie. In the very same way that they treat the writings in my published articles and in my books, so do skeptics and infidels treat the Bible. **They read it according to their desire to pervert, to misapply,** to willfully wrest the utterances from their true meaning. They declare that the Bible can prove anything and everything, that every sect proves their doctrines right, and that the most diverse doctrines are proved from the Bible.

“The writers of the Bible had to express their ideas in human language. It was written by human men. These men were inspired of the Holy Spirit. Because of the imperfections of human understanding of language, or the perversity of the human mind, ingenious in evading truth, many read and understand the Bible to please themselves. It is not that the difficulty is in the Bible. Opposing politicians argue points of law in the statute book, and take opposite views in their application and in these laws . . .

“There is not always perfect order or apparent unity in the Scriptures. The miracles of Christ are not given in exact order, but are given just as the circumstances occurred, which called for this divine revealing of the power of Christ. The truths of the Bible are as pearls hidden. They must be searched, dug out by painstaking effort. Those who take only a surface view of the Scriptures will, with their superficial knowledge, which they think is very deep, talk of the contradictions of the Bible and question the authority of the Scriptures. But those whose hearts are in harmony with truth and duty will search the Scriptures with a heart prepared to receive divine impressions. The illuminated soul sees a spiritual unity, one grand golden thread running through the whole; but it requires patience, thought, and prayer to trace out the precious golden thread. Sharp contentions over the Bible have led to investigation and revealed the precious jewels of truth. Many tears have been shed, many prayers offered, that the Lord would open the understanding to His Word.

“The Bible is not given to us in grand superhuman language. Jesus, in order to reach man where he is, took humanity. **The Bible must be given in the language of men.** Everything that is human is imperfect. Different meanings are expressed by the same word; there is not one word for each distinct idea. The Bible was given for practical purposes.”—*1 Selected Messages, 19-20 (Manuscript 24, 1886)*.

“compilation,” *Early Writings* is a bad book and should not be read—not because the earlier booklets were bad, but because they were combined into a single book!—Yet Bates’ entire booklet is itself a compilation of quotations! He is opposed to Spirit of Prophecy compilations as evil, while his (Bates’) are supposed to be all right!

Bates next quotes a couple of passages in which Ellen mentioned that some of the brethren were not good men. —But she does not say they changed her writings! She never said that anywhere! Bates assumes that it must be so.

How Testimonies, Vols. 1-4, were corrected—After this, Bates quotes the church resolution, to correct typographical mistakes in the initial small books of the *Testimonies* before they were reprinted as the larger *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1-4*.

He charges that a committee completely rewrote those testimonies! But Bates does not tell you the fact that it was Marian Davis and W.C. White who, with Ellen’s approval, asked that those corrections be made—and that it was Marian and W.C. White who made those corrections! I discuss this in detail in my book, *How God Protected Ellen White’s Writings* (28 pp. \$2.00 + \$2.50). Although a committee of five was appointed, they were church leaders who spent no time on the task.

Notice that Bates’ charges are consistently keyed to his theory, that God does not protect His Word!

What did Marian Davis do? She corrected the mistakes the typesetters made when setting the type for the earlier small testimony booklets. She also carefully checked the new typesetting for the printing of *Testimonies, Vols. 1-4*. There is nothing wrong with a trusted helper doing that! Bates ignores the fact that Ellen White had good helpers after James died. Marian started working with her in 1878, three years before James died, and continued working with her until her death in 1904. By that time, Ellen White also had several other helpers. My books, *How God Protected Ellen White’s Writings* and *The Secret Writers Charge* discusses all this.

Bates’ single objective is to get you to lose confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy writings.

The charge that Ellen White could only write once on a topic—Bates’ next section is “*Sr. White Was Not Authorized to Change Her Writings*.” At this juncture, Bates deepens the error: He now declares that Ellen White could not reword or enlarge on any concept she earlier wrote on. We earlier noted that such a position would eliminate a lot that is in the Bible. Bates’ objective is for you to get rid of all her later books.

Here are two of the quotations Bates uses to support his contention: “I have not been instructed to change that which I have sent out” (*Review, Vol. 5, p.*

110). “I am not to retract one word of the message I have borne” (*Review, Vol. 5, p. 231*). Her meaning is obvious; she is not talking about being forbidden to later write more on a given topic. Bates claims she was not permitted to later write again or enlarge on any concept.

The charge that only Ellen White’s earlier books are inspired—Bates’ next section is “*The Spirit of Prophecy Volumes vs. the Conflict of the Ages Series*.” Bates pits her very small earlier books against her later enlarged ones. He maintains that only the earlier ones are inspired. But all the “proof” he provides are some quotations in which Ellen said the *Testimonies* should be circulated! That does not prove that other books could not be written by her or circulated. He also quotes her statement that her small books, *Life of Christ* and *Life of Paul*, are ready for publication and should be circulated when printed. In such simple statements, Bates tries to find sinister forbiddings of later books by her! He carefully ignores her many later statements which stress the importance of circulating *Great Controversy, Patriarchs and Prophets, Desire of Ages, Christ Object Lessons*, etc.

The charge that others wrote the Conflict Series—Bates next boldly denounces the *Conflict Series* as having been written by other people. What is his proof for this? All Bates has to offer are some nebulous comments made at the 1919 Bible Conference. For a careful analysis of that conference, you will find it in the back of my book, *The Secret Writers Charge* (96 pp., \$7.00 + \$2.50). We know that, in 1909, W.W. Prescott wanted to make changes in *Great Controversy*. We also know that Ellen and her helpers totally rejected his extensive manuscript wherein he listed changes he wanted to see made. (They dealt almost entirely with historical details in the first half of the book.) I would not trust Prescott any further than I could throw him; but he, like the other leaders, could not penetrate the barrier of Ellen White and her helpers.

The charge that the 1888 Great Controversy is no good—Bates next dares to attack the 1888 *Great Controversy* as worthless. He sure has nerve. There is not one thing wrong with that, the second edition of her most important book.

I genuinely believe that, unless he repents, Bates will be a lost man. And if you get close to his tents, like those who stood with three rebels against an earlier prophet of God (*Numbers 16:26-34*), the earth will erelong swallow you when it takes him down.

You are very welcome to reject *Great Controversy*, as Bates does; but, if you do, in the judgment you will stand by his side, to face the same condemnation. Are those strong words? I think not. They ought to be stronger. Believers need to be warned away from this open pit, dug by the devil for Adventists willing to be deluded.

The Teachings of Vern Bates

A Life Dedicated to Destroying Confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy

PART THREE OF THREE

Continued from the preceding tract in this series

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What is the problem with the Spirit of Prophecy? I will tell you: On every page, it condemns sin. That is why men devise a thousand excuses to ignore and reject it. Throughout our denomination, it is the men who love their secret sins who preach against Ellen White's writings.

The charge that *Patriarchs and Prophets* is no good—Next, Bates turns his guns on *Patriarchs and Prophets*, and denounces that book as useless. His evidence is six quotations—three from the small *Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 1 (ISP)*, and three from *Patriarchs and Prophets (PP)*. He managed to find three places where the two were different.

LUCIFER HAD ENVY AND HATRED IN HEAVEN

In the first of the three comparative quotations, Lucifer in heaven bows with the other angels. "But his heart is filled with **envy and hatred**" (*ISP 18*) while, in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, "in his heart there was a strange, fierce conflict. Truth, justice, and loyalty were struggling against **envy and jealousy**" (*PP 36-37*). Keep in mind that envy and jealousy is hatred! There really is no problem here.

Why is there any difference at all? The answer is simple: The first chapter of *Patriarchs and Prophets* is an immense enlargement of what is in her earlier description on the Fall of Satan in heaven. The earlier book (*ISP*) is heavily compressed. A similar compressed portrayal is presented to us in *Early Writings, 14-16*, where, within three pages, we go from 1844 to beyond the Second Advent to heaven.

SATAN SAID HE AFTERWARD REPENTED

The second set of two quotations is actually about two different incidents: In *PP 39*, Lucifer nearly reaches the point of truly repenting, but pride forbade him. In *ISP 29*, after Satan is cast out of heaven, he is sorry that he has lost all the advantages he enjoyed in heaven and he requests an audience with Christ. "He related to the Son of God **that he repented** of his rebellion and wished, again, the favor of God" (*ISP 29*).

Bates is trying to show that, after Lucifer refuses to repent, he then does. This is supposed to show that *Patriarchs and Prophets* is a bad book.

But not so quickly: In *PP 39*, Lucifer almost repents, but does not do so. In the full light of heaven, he refuses to repent and is cast out. But in *ISP 29*, it does not say that Satan repented! It only says *that he said* he repented! There is an immense difference between genuine repentance and merely saying so.

Bates is careful not to quote the rest of the passage (*ISP 29:2-30:1*). "**He repented not of his rebellion**"

(*ISP 30:1*). The context clearly shows that all Satan was sorry about were the results of his rebellion. It does not say he was genuinely sorry for his sins. He just wanted to be in heaven again.

EGYPTIANS ENTER RED SEA AT NIGHT

The third set of quotations is about the Egyptian host crossing the Red Sea. Bates skillfully uses capital letters to heighten the impression that there is a great difference between *ISP 209* and *PP 287-288*. But, upon closer examination, we find the two descriptions are very similar:

In both books, as the darkness of night deepens, the Israelites are enlightened by the pillar of fire and begin going through the Red Sea. But the Egyptians do not see them enter it. Nothing different here.

In both books, the light is brilliant enough that the Egyptians see the Israelites off in the distance and chase after them. In *ISP 209*, it says their pursuit into the Red Sea began "*in the morning*"; but, in two later phrases in *ISP 209*, *we will learn that morning had not yet come!* So "*in the morning*" here must mean in the great light from the pillar which suddenly appeared to the Egyptians in the darkness. In later years, Ellen had a more detailed vision of the event before she wrote *Patriarchs and Prophets*.

In both books, the Lord began troubling the Egyptians, slowing them down. In both *ISP 209:1-2* and *PP 287:3*, we are told that this happened "**in the morning watch**." The "*morning watch*" occurs before sunrise. It is the last guard duty of the night, as the guard watches for sunrise. So sunrise was nearing, but had not yet arrived.

In both books, we are told that the Egyptians were suddenly afraid and tried to regain the shore they left.

In *both books (!)* we are told that, *just at the time of sunrise*, Moses raised his hand and the waters rushed over the Egyptians; their bodies were seen by the Israelites. Bates was careful not to quote this: *ISP 210:0* says, "And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength **when the morning appeared**; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea." *PP 287* says: "But Moses stretched out his rod, and the piled-up waters . . . rushed together . . . **As morning broke** it revealed . . . the . . . bodies." (Bates did not quote this *ISP 210:0* paragraph which includes "when the morning appeared," because it clearly undercuts his entire objection. Also note that, when the morning appeared, the Israelites saw the dead bodies; so the Egyptians must have been crossing in the night.)

The charge that *Desire of Ages* is no good—Next, Bates attacks *Desire of Ages*. He only managed to lo-

cate two unusual passages.

STANDING BESIDE THE ALTAR

An apparent oddity is the statement that Christ is today standing before the altar of incense, pleading our cases. That altar is located in the first apartment.

“Christ might commission the angels of heaven to pour out the vials of His wrath on our world, to destroy those who are filled with hatred of God. He might wipe this dark spot from His universe. But He does not do this. **He is today standing at the altar of incense**, presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help.

“The souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. Christ unites them to His own divine-human nature. They stand beside the great Sin Bearer, in the light proceeding from the throne of God.”—*Desire of Ages*, 568.

The context is speaking about Christ’s great love and care for His erring earthly children. Ellen is so filled with feeling that she waxes eloquent with powerful symbolic language to illustrate her meaning: **“pour out the vials** of His wrath,” “wipe this dark spot,” “standing at the altar of incense,” “turn to Him for refuge,” “strife of tongues,” “impeach these souls.” Notice the final sentence: “They stand beside their Sin Bearer, in the light proceeding from the throne of God.” That light is not now in the first apartment, which is blocked by a veil from God’s glory in the second. So, by faith, they are standing by Him in the second, not the first, apartment.

Metaphorical statements can be doctrinally inaccurate. A few lines down from “standing at the altar” is **“They stand by the Great Sin Bearer.”** Both are symbols; neither one is literally true. We are not now standing by our Great Sin Bearer in heaven. These are metaphors. Here is another example of a metaphor:

“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.

“And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord.

“And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”—*Isaiah 66:22-24*.

Verse 24 is obviously metaphorical and not a reality. After the wicked have been eliminated, the righteous will not go forth from the holy City and look at dead corpses all over the ground. The wicked were totally burned up in the fire which purified the earth. See Malachi 4:1-3. The metaphor means that the wicked are no longer able to trouble anyone. The effects of a fire which no creature can quench will have done its work

thoroughly. The wicked are gone.

“While the earth was wrapped in the fire of destruction, the righteous abode safely in the holy City. Upon those that had part in the first resurrection, the second death has no power. While God is to the wicked a consuming fire, He is to His people both a sun and a shield. Revelation 20:6; Psalm 84:11.

“‘I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.’ Revelation 21:1. **The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. Every trace of the curse is swept away. No eternally burning hell** will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin.

“One reminder alone remains: Our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, upon His side, His hands and feet, are **the only traces** of the cruel work that sin has wrought.”—*Great Controversy*, 673-674.

(A similar figure of speech is found in Malachi 4:3, to indicate that the total destruction of the wicked is described. Cf Malachi 4:1-3.)

“Standing by the altar,” in *DA 568*, is also a metaphor and not a reality. Christ is pleading for us today; that is what it means. Ellen has dozens of statements about Christ’s work for us in the second apartment after 1844 (*GC 409-432, 479-491*). So we have total clarity, as to her meaning,—and the fact that this one passage must be interpreted as a most beautiful metaphor.

Yet, even though it is a metaphor, *it nonetheless teaches a very real truth!* The type of intercessory ministry Christ was doing in the first apartment did not cease when He went into the second! If Christ did not figuratively stand today by the golden altar, offering up our prayers with His righteous merits and intercession, we could not be forgiven of our sins! Until the second apartment work of investigative judgment ends, Christ’s mediation must continue. Jesus is symbolically standing today by the altar of intercession.

STANDING ON THE SUMMIT

Desire of Ages is one of the most glorious books Ellen wrote. Why people would want to pick flaws in it is almost beyond comprehension. Another apparent (apparent) oddity, that Bates points to, is found near the end of the book.

“Its steep had echoed the triumphant shouts of the multitude that proclaimed Him king. On its sloping descent He had found a home with Lazarus at Bethany. In the garden of Gethsemane at its foot He had prayed and agonized alone. From this mountain He was to ascend to heaven. **Upon its summit His feet will rest when He shall come again.** Not as a man of sorrows, **but as a glorious and triumphant king He will stand upon Olivet, while Hebrew hallelujahs mingle with Gentile hosannas, and the voices of the redeemed as a mighty host shall swell the acclamation, ‘Crown**

Him Lord of all! ”—*Desire of Ages*, 830.

Frequently, in Bible prophecy, the prophet describes an incident and then skips entire centuries and mentions another. In other prophecies, missing portions are filled in. The Spirit of Prophecy does the same thing. Frequently an inspired source does not give the full picture all at once. Think about it. You do not find the complete picture in Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, or 10-12. You do not find it anywhere in Revelation. You have to carefully fit them together.

In the above passage, Ellen is very briefly mentioning a future event. Be aware that, in doing so, she may skip over intermediate predicted events, just as the Bible writers do.

The purpose of the above passage is quite obvious: It is solely to list those times when the Mount of Olives is important in history, from Christ's time on down to the end of sin.

(1) His stay at Lazarus' home. (2) His agony in Gethsemane. (3) His ascension. (4) His later return to the top of the mount. When does the fourth incident occur: at Christ's Second Coming or at His Third? Obviously, His third, for these reasons:

1 - Scripture explains Scripture, and Ellen elsewhere says Christ will not again touch Olivet till His Third Coming (*EW 17-18, 51-53, 291; GC 662-663*).

2 - As "its steepes had echoed the triumphant shouts of the multitude that proclaimed Him king" during His triumphal entry, so, the passage says, when He next touches the top of the mount, everyone—everyone—will praise Him, as He once again returns, and proclaim Him King. When does that occur? Not at Christ's Second Advent, for then the righteous are pale with fear and the wicked are crying out in horror (*Great Controversy, 641-642*). It occurs at His Third Advent. He descends from heaven with His people and the holy City; and He is praised by His redeemed, some of whom were Jews and some were Gentiles. Then the dead are raised to life and Jesus and the redeemed enter the holy City.

3 - At the coming described in DA 830, the trump of God does not sound nor are the dead in Christ resurrected from their graves. That is because it is Christ's Third, not His Second, Advent.

4 - Two pages after *Desire of Ages*, 830, there is a **parallel passage** (page 832). But this one is not speaking about Christ's Third Coming,—but about His Second Coming. He will descend from heaven in a cloud; the trump of God will sound; the dead in Christ will rise; and He receives His faithful ones to Himself, that where He is there they may be also.

The charge that *Acts of the Apostles* is no good—

Next, Bates attacks *Acts of the Apostles*.

WHEN CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD BEGAN

It is marvelous how hard Bates has to look in order to scrape together something bad about Ellen White's books. Here is the first of two "terrible" quotations that he found:

"As in the typical service the high priest laid aside his pontifical robes and officiated in the white linen

dress of an ordinary priest, so Christ laid aside His royal robes and garbed Himself with humanity and offered sacrifice, *Himself the priest*, Himself the victim. As the high priest, after performing his service in the Holy of Holies, came forth to the waiting congregation in his pontifical robes, so Christ will come the second time, clothed in garments of whitest white, 'so as no fuller on earth can white them.' Mark 9:3. He will come in His own glory, and in the glory of His Father, and all the angelic host will escort Him on His way."—*Acts of the Apostles*, 33.

Bates charges the above passage with teaching error, because it says Christ was a priest on earth before ascending to heaven. Bates says Christ could not be a priest until He entered the Sanctuary in heaven. What is the answer? Here it is:

Christ's ministry is the antitypical fulfillment of the tabernacle service. In the type, the earthly ministry, the priest offered the lamb on the altar. He then carried the blood into the tabernacle.

Although Bates does not believe it, Christ on earth offered Himself. He was the priest offering the sacrifice, and He was the sacrifice. If, in the antitype, Christ was not the priest offering the lamb, who was? Common people? Satan? Angels?

Then He arose from the dead and carried the blood into the heavenly Sanctuary, there to offer it on our behalf. So there is no problem here.

I should mention two points about Hebrews 8:4. ("For if He were on earth, He should not be a priest.") That is correct. In the antitype, Christ could not remain on earth after offering the sacrifice. He had to go to heaven. Why?—because that is where His Sanctuary is! He was a priest on earth when He offered the sacrifice, but not afterward. The altar was on earth, the first and second apartments in heaven.

The second point is this: A careful reading of the context preceding Hebrews 8:4 (chapters 5 and 7) reveals that Christ could not be a priest in the earthly tabernacle—because He was not a Levite! Paul explains that His ministry was after the order of Melchizedek.

Unlike the Levites, Christ's priestly work began at the cross, when He offered up Himself. He then went to heaven to continue it. Soon it will forever end.

WHEN CHRIST MADE ATONEMENT FOR SIN

Searching as hard as he could, Bates found one more problem passage in *Acts of the Apostles*.

"Listen as he [Paul] makes plain the work of the Redeemer as the great high priest of mankind—the One who through the sacrifice of His own life **was to make atonement for sin once for all**, and was then to take up His ministry in the heavenly Sanctuary. Paul's hearers were made to understand that the Messiah, for whose advent they had been longing, had already come; that His death was the antitype of all the sacrificial offerings, and that His ministry in the Sanctuary in heaven was the great object that cast its shadow backward and made

clear the ministry of the Jewish priesthood.”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 246.

Bates says the above paragraph teaches that “the atonement was finished on the cross,” and was “completed then.” That is what Bates charges. What is the answer?

The paragraph *does not say* the atonement was finished or completed at Calvary. What does it say? It says the truth and, in doing so, agrees with all her other statements on the atonement. On the cross, *Christ made atonement for sin once for all*. Who is “all”? Every sinner who would ever live on earth. The atonement was sufficient to cover every sin! Thank God! And the sacrifice for sin need only be made once.

But the atonement was not applied until later. Christ went to heaven and into the first apartment; there He pled His atoning blood, individually for men, for eighteen centuries. Yet even for those who accepted Him, the atonement was not yet completed when men accepted it. In 1844, He began the final phase of the atonement, as the books were opened and the cases of the dead who had ever professed faith in Christ were examined. Soon, none know how soon, the judgment will pass to the living. Then, when it is completed, the general close of probation will occur, and soon after Christ will return for His own.

The charge that *Prophets and Kings* is no good— Finally, Bates attacks *Prophets and Kings*. He could not let it stand alone as one safe book out of five. So he says it is full of error “scattered throughout,”—yet without naming any. You probably know that the last two or three chapters of this book were compiled from her earlier books immediately after her death. Ellen died before it was completed. She had looked over the data to go into them. Read those closing chapters for yourself. They are very nice—because they are all from her earlier writings. Which do you trust more: God’s protection of His Word or Bates’ charges?

God gives each of us freedom of choice and probationary time. You and I have a decision to make. We can hold tightly to God’s Word or we can reject it. If we choose to set aside the Spirit of Prophecy, God will not stop us. But the results, ere long, will be fearful.

“God will never remove every occasion for doubt. He gives sufficient evidence on which to base faith, and if this is not accepted, the mind is left in darkness.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 432.

Bates’ “solution”—The last heading in Bates’ booklet is entitled “*The Solution*.” As we quoted at the beginning of this study, he introduces it with these words:

“The following reaction is typical of those who are honestly searching for the truth, who have been confronted with . . . this booklet, for the first time: ‘What

can I now really believe in? I feel like throwing my books away!’ ”

And what is the “solution”? He wants you to only read safe books you buy from him. But it will cost you. For example, the equivalent of *Testimonies*, Vols. 1-4 (containing *Testimonies 1-30*), will cost you \$45.00 for the first one and \$49.00 for the second—a total of \$94.00! At the ABC, you can purchase them for \$14.99 each. What a way to make a living! Destroy people’s confidence in nearly all of the Spirit of Prophecy, so they will buy your version of the little that remains!

— SECTION FOUR — A TWO-PRONGED ATTACK

Satan’s attack on the Spirit of Prophecy is ceaseless. He knows that each believer that turns from those books is more likely to later drift off into sin.

The devil is masterminding a two-pronged attack through several different groups which do not recognize they are actually allies working toward a common objective.

One group is composed of influential liberals who, in our college classes, camp meetings, and churches, are subtly instilling the idea that “Ellen White’s writings were for her time. Things are different now.” Teachers at Walla Walla College, for example, are traveling through the churches and gradually destroying confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy. Among others, teachers at Andrews University are doing the same. Many church members are inclined to accept this—*because they trust what prominent men in the church say*.

However, Satan is also hurling darts at those *who do not trust what church leaders say!* According to this teaching, because there were unconverted church leaders in Ellen White’s day,—that proves they must have changed her writings to suit themselves.

This is a masterpiece of a deception!

There are believers who, over the years, have met with discouragement and rebuff at the hand of churchmen who refuse to stand true to our historic standards and beliefs. So when someone comes along and makes any kind of charge about something bad that earlier leaders were doing, it is readily believed by some.

That which makes this deception a masterpiece is that they earlier learned to distrust leadership because of its attempts to set aside the Spirit of Prophecy. But now they are willing to, themselves, set aside the Spirit of Prophecy because of their distrust of leadership! — Opposition to leadership has become more important than God’s Word! —*vf*

ALSO READ 5 TESTIMONIES, PAGES 63 TO 66
