



# DRAMATIC PROPHECIES OF ELLEN WHITE

STORIES OF  
WORLD EVENTS  
DIVINELY  
FORETOLD

HERBERT EDGAR DOUGLASS



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# FOREWORD

This book should carry a warning: “Do not open unless you have time to read it from cover to cover!”

I speak from experience. I opened it with the thought that I would sample a few chapters. But when I finished chapter 1, I was “hooked.” I read on and on, until suddenly (or so it seemed) I was into chapter 8. And, as the saying goes, “The rest is history.”

What makes this book of special value during these bewildering times? Through concrete examples, it demonstrates that God is indeed in charge of world affairs. He declares “the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done” (Isaiah 46:10). He is never caught by surprise. And in His love for His people He often reveals the future through His inspired messengers (see Amos 3:7). This is wonderfully reassuring—especially in times like these.

With consummate skill Dr. Douglass tells of future events that were revealed to Ellen White in vision. He also puts these forecasts in context. In some cases he shows how strange they must have sounded at the time they were given, but how up-to-the-minute they

sound in this end time. Two striking examples are the rise of the United States to superpower status and the rise of the papacy to eminent international influence. The United States was but a fledgling nation when its world leadership role was forecast, and the Roman Catholic Church was in a weakened state, crippled by France, and a virtual fugitive.

Most readers will find chapter 2 a real eye-opener. They will be startled to learn that spiritualism in various forms—all designed to deceive—has become a major player in world affairs. Heads of state often seek counsel from the spirit world before making major decisions. And Christian churches—both Catholic and Protestant—are unwitting partners with spiritualism because of their shared belief that the soul is immortal. The groundwork is being laid for Satan’s final deception that will unite the entire world against the people of God—Satan impersonating Christ. As the author of this book states, “It will be a time when one’s future absolutely will hang on believing the Word of the Lord and the counsel of His last-day messenger, Ellen White.”

Chapter 6 features the visions that embedded the great controversy theme in Mrs. White’s writings. It is one of the most important chapters in the book, for it helps place in context not only the events in the other chapters of this book but the counsels Ellen White offers in her writings regarding education, health, theology, and business. The great controversy between Christ and Satan began in heaven but has affected all aspects of life in our world ever since Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. It involves every nation, every church, every community, every individual. God is winsomely telling His side of the story, offering salvation, while Satan is deceiving and demonstrating the results of following his principles. This chapter is worth the price of the book.

Few writers can match Dr. Douglass’s literary skill in selecting historical events of prophetic significance and packaging them so that

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readers will feel their relevance to one's personal faith. As with his other writings, this volume strengthens faith, builds confidence in God's last-day messenger, and leads one to borrow the language of the apostle Peter when he exclaimed, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables" (2 Peter 1:16).

Kenneth H. Wood  
Silver Spring, Maryland  
November 21, 2006

# A MOST STUNNING PREDICTION—THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Ellen White's Civil War visions were perhaps the most stunning of her many predictions. In the sense that horrific calamities so quickly validated her forecasts—made many months before anyone else foresaw what she saw in vision—these visions were certainly among the most dramatic and impressive insights into the future that God gave her.

Her first Civil War vision, lasting twenty minutes, occurred during an afternoon church service in Parkville, Michigan, about thirty miles south of Battle Creek, on January 12, 1861. Ellen was thirty-three years old. The summer before, J. N. Loughborough and J. N. Andrews had held an evangelistic meeting in Parkville and erected a church building.

Following the morning sermon by J. H. Waggoner, Ellen gave what was reported as a "very powerful exhortation." After returning to her seat, she had a vision that lasted for at least twenty minutes. When breathing returned, she spoke briefly about the terrors of the coming war. At that time very few in the United States were anticipating a long or bloody affair. Some of what she reported when she came out of vision related directly to several individuals and families in the audience.

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Her words made a lasting impression on the young conference evangelist J. N. Loughborough, who recorded Ellen’s words: “There is not a person in this house who has even dreamed of the trouble that is coming upon this land. People are making sport of the secession ordinance of South Carolina, but I have just been shown that a large number of States are going to join that State, and there will be a most terrible war.”<sup>1</sup>

**First vision three months before war began**

Remember, this vision was given on January 12, 1861, three months before war began on April 12, 1861. In mid-February, Thomas Cobb from Georgia, while preparing the Confederate constitution, said, “The almost universal belief here is that we shall not have war.”<sup>2</sup> Two days before his inaugural address on March 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln declared in Philadelphia, “I have felt all the while justified in concluding that the crisis, the panic, the anxiety of the country at this time is artificial.”

Alexander H. Stephens, vice-president of the Confederacy, told a Savannah, Georgia, audience on March 21, 1861, that the southern revolution had thus far been accomplished “without shedding a drop of blood” and that the fear of a deadly collision with the Union was “nearly dispelled.”

Now, back to Ellen’s description of her vision:

In this vision I have seen large armies of both sides gathered on the field of battle. I heard the booming of the cannon, and saw the dead and dying on every hand. Then I saw them rushing up engaged in hand-to-hand fighting [bayoneting one another]. Then I saw the field after the battle, all covered with the dead and dying. Then I was carried to prisons, and saw the sufferings of those in want, who were wasting away. Then I was taken to the homes of those who had lost husbands, sons, or brothers in the war. I saw there distress and anguish.<sup>3</sup>

Then, looking over the congregation, Ellen White added, "There are those in this house who will lose sons in that war."

There is an interesting sidelight to this vision: A physician, who was also a spiritualist medium, was in the congregation that day. He had heard of Mrs. White and her visions and boasted that if ever he were present when she was in vision, he could bring her out of it in a minute. While she was in vision that day, James White explained her condition and gave an opportunity for those who wished to examine her to do so.

Someone near the back of the room was heard to say, "Doctor, go ahead and do what you said you would." James White, knowing nothing of the physician's boast, invited him to come forward and examine Mrs. White.

The doctor moved forward boldly, then stopped suddenly. James White stepped down, went to the man, and put his hand on his shoulder, urging him to come closer to Ellen. The physician carefully checked her pulse, her heartbeat, and what should have been her breathing. In startled tones, he declared, "Elder, her heart and pulse are all right, but there is not any breath in her body!"

Pulling away rather quickly, he made a beeline for the church door. Those near the door blocked his exit and said to him, "Go back, and bring her out of vision as you said you would." James White, taking the whole thing in, called upon the physician to report to the whole audience the result of his examination. Those close to him asked, "Doctor, what is it?"

"God only knows," he replied. "Let me out of this house." And he fled.<sup>4</sup>

Judge Osborne, the local judge, was also at the meeting. His wife was a seventh-day Sabbath keeper. The judge told Loughborough, "It was evident to all of us that the spirit that controlled the doctor as a medium and the Spirit that controlled Mrs. White in vision had no sympathy with each other." By the judge's side sat Mr. Shelhouse,



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owner of a large woolen mill. His father was elder of the Adventist church in Colon, about six miles away. These two men looked at Loughborough and shook their heads when Mrs. White told them what was coming. Little did they realize what she meant when she said that some “in this house will lose sons in that war.”

### **Second Civil War vision**

The next vision concerning the Civil War occurred at Roosevelt, New York, on the weekend of August 3 and 4. After James White gave a short talk, Ellen also spoke briefly, and then she was taken off into a vision that lasted about ten to fifteen minutes. Of this vision Ellen White wrote,

At the Conference at Roosevelt, New York, August 3, 1861 . . . I was taken off in vision and shown the sin of slavery, which has so long been a curse to this nation. . . . God’s scourge is now upon the North, because they have so long submitted to the advances of the slave power. The sin of Northern proslavery men is great. They have strengthened the South in their sin by sanctioning the extension of slavery; they have acted a prominent part in bringing the nation into its present distressed condition.

I was shown that many do not realize the extent of the evil which has come upon us. They have flattered themselves that the national difficulties would soon be settled and confusion and war end; but all will be convinced that there is more reality in the matter than was anticipated. Many have looked for the North to strike a blow and end the controversy. . . .

All the abuse and cruelty exercised toward the slave is justly chargeable to the upholders of the slave system, whether they be Southern or Northern men.

The North and the South were presented before me. The North have been deceived in regard to the South. They [the

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South] are better prepared for war than has been represented. Most of their men are well skilled in the use of arms, some of them from experience in battle, others from habitual sporting. . . .

I had a view of the disastrous battle at Manassas, Virginia. It was a most exciting, distressing scene. The Southern army had everything in their favor and were prepared for a dreadful contest. The Northern army was moving on with triumph, not doubting but that they would be victorious. Many were reckless and marched forward boastingly, as though victory were already theirs. As they neared the battlefield, many were almost fainting through weariness and want of refreshment. They did not expect so fierce an encounter. They rushed into battle and fought bravely, desperately. The dead and dying were on every side. Both the North and the South suffered severely. The Southern men felt the battle, and in a little while would have been driven back still further. The Northern men were rushing on, although their destruction was very great. Just then an angel descended and waved his hand backward. Instantly there was confusion in the ranks. It appeared to the Northern men that their troops were retreating, when it was not so in reality, and a precipitate retreat commenced. This seemed wonderful to me.

Then it was explained that God had this nation in His own hand, and would not suffer victories to be gained faster than He ordained, and would permit no more losses to the Northern men than in His wisdom He saw fit, to punish them for their sins. And had the Northern army at this time pushed the battle still further in their fainting, exhausted condition, the far greater struggle and destruction which awaited them would have caused great triumph in the South. God would not permit this, and sent an angel to interfere. The sudden falling back of the Northern troops is a mystery to all. They know not that God's hand was in the matter.

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The destruction of the Southern army was so great that they had no heart to boast. The sight of the dead, the dying, and the wounded gave them but little courage to triumph. This destruction, occurring when they had every advantage, and the North great disadvantage, caused them much perplexity. They know that if the North have an equal chance with them, victory is certain for the North. Their only hope is to occupy positions difficult of approach, and then have formidable arrangements to hurl destruction on every hand.

The South have strengthened themselves greatly since their rebellion first commenced. If active measures had then been taken by the North, this rebellion would have been speedily crushed out. But that which was small at first has increased in strength and numbers until it has become most powerful. Other nations are intently watching this nation, for what purpose I was not informed, and are making great preparations for some event. The greatest perplexity and anxiety now exists among our national men. Proslavery men and traitors are in the very midst of them; and while these are professedly in favor of the Union, they have an influence in making decisions, some of which even favor the South.<sup>5</sup>

When I think of Mrs. White's dire warnings and vivid descriptions of horrible casualties in forthcoming Civil War battles, I am immediately drawn to her validation by eyewitnesses. General U. S. Grant's *Memoirs* includes this account of the large numbers of casualties:

This [building] had been taken as a hospital, and all night wounded men were brought in, their wounds dressed, a leg or an arm amputated as the case might require, and everything being done to save life or alleviate suffering. The sight was

more unendurable than encountering the enemy's fire, and I returned to my tree in the rain.

I saw an open field, in our possession on the second day, over which the Confederates had made repeated charges the day before, so covered with dead that it would have been possible to walk across the clearing, in any direction stepping on dead bodies, without a foot touching the ground.<sup>6</sup>

### **What the rest of the country was saying**

From all accounts, no one in the world in the early part of 1861 had such a preview of the Civil War as Ellen White. *The existing record of newspapers and speeches from the first half of 1861 were saying just the opposite of what was being shown to her in vision.*

For example, note these quotations from contemporary sources:

Let us make quick work. . . . A strong, active "pull together" will do our work effectually in thirty days.<sup>7</sup>

If Abraham Lincoln is equal to the position he fills, this war will be over by January, 1862.<sup>8</sup>

It is now recommended that you give legal means for making this contest a short and decisive one.<sup>9</sup>

Whatever war there is, may easily be made a war at sea,—a war of blockades,—a war having for its sole object the protection of American property and preservation of American commerce.<sup>10</sup>

Like everyone, [Lincoln] cherished a hope that powerful advances in Virginia and down the Mississippi would end the fighting in 1862.<sup>11</sup>

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But the war went on, and on. The cost? The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* estimates that the Civil War cost “a total of some \$11,450,500,000 for the North alone. But the cost to the South was enormous; \$4,000,000,000 cannot be an exaggeration. It follows that, up to 1909, the cost of the war to the nation had approximated the tremendous total of \$15,500,000,000 . . . and the death of probably 300,000 men on each side.”<sup>12</sup>

In the fall of 1861, General William Sherman pressed Simon Cameron, U. S. Secretary of War, for 60,000 troops immediately and an additional 200,000 to meet future demands. Although this came nine months after Ellen White’s Parkville vision, Sherman was criticized by the press as mentally unbalanced. One month after this request, General Henry Halleck relieved Sherman of his command. But in the next four years, both Ellen White and General Sherman were proved to be realists.<sup>13</sup>

### **That Parkville vision**

You may be wondering about that prediction of sons being lost that Ellen White gave at the Parkville, Michigan, church before hostilities began. About a year later, Elder Loughborough returned to Parkville to speak. Judge Osborne and Mr. Shelhouse again sat together in the same seats as earlier. Elder Loughborough spoke on spiritual gifts and used Ellen White as his illustration. He referred to the vision of January 12, 1861. But there was no shaking of heads by these two men this time. Instead, their faces were in their handkerchiefs, sobbing bitter tears. One had lost his only son in the war; the other had lost a son on a different battlefield and had another son who was at that time a prisoner of war in the South.

The local elder was able to recall immediately the names of five families in the Parkville church who had lost sons in the fighting and said that, if given a little time, he could probably list five more families whose sons had been killed. This story we tell today in the restored

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Parkville church that was moved forty miles to the Historic Adventist Village in Battle Creek. To sit today in that church and reflect on how God worked through His messenger is a sobering and faith-building experience. Can there be any doubt that we have a sure word of prophecy in the ministry of Ellen White?

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1. J. N. Loughborough, *The Rise and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (Battle Creek, Mich.: General Conference Association of the Seventh-day Adventists, 1892), 236.

2. I am indebted to Lee Ellsworth Eusey and his master of arts thesis, "The American Civil War: An Interpretation," Andrews University, April 1965, for these quotations concerning attitudes toward the impending clash between the North and South. A more complete listing will be found in Appendix O in my book *Messenger of the Lord*.

3. Loughborough, *Rise and Progress*, 236, 237.

4. Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Early Years* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald® Publishing Assn., 1985), 464.

5. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press® Publishing Association, 1948), 1:264–268.

6. *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant* (New York: Charles L. Webster Co., 1885–1886), 1:349, 356.

7. *New York Times* editorial, around May 1, 1861, quoted in Robert L. Dabney, *Life and Campaigns of Thomas J. Jackson* (New York: Blelock and Co., 1866), 210 n.

8. *Harper's Weekly*, May 4, 1861.

9. Abraham Lincoln, in a letter to Congress, July 4, 1861, cited in Carl Sandberg, *Abraham Lincoln, The War Years* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939), 3:290.

10. Editorial, *New York Times*, January 10, 1861.

11. Allan Nevins, *War for the Union* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), 2: 5.

12. "Civil War" *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed.

13. See William T. Sherman, *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman* (New York: Appleton and Co., 1876), 1:203–205, 217.