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*Discovering Ellen G. White*

*Discovering Our Adventist Past*

*The Pocket Ellen G. White Dictionary*

POCKET  
**DICTIONARY**  
*for Understanding Adventism*  
MICHAEL W. CAMPBELL

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# Dedication

This book is dedicated to Norman L. Gulley,  
teacher, mentor, bibliophile, and friend.

# Table of Contents

Preface	9
The Development of Adventist Theology	12
The 28 Fundamental Beliefs	20
The Relationship of Ellen White's Writings to the Bible	33
The Development of Adventist Lifestyle	35
Tips for Understanding Adventist Social Traditions	38
Getting Ready for Baptism	40
How to Interpret a Tithe Envelope	43
Entries	45
A Select Guide of Helpful Resources	180
Time Line for Key Theological and Lifestyle Developments	183
Abbreviations	188

# Preface

This book came about as a follow-up to my earlier volume, coauthored with Jud Lake, titled *The Pocket Ellen G. White Dictionary*. That book's goal was to produce a basic resource that would challenge people to understand Ellen White's writings better, particularly now that a century has intervened since her death. The positive reception of that book led me to think that a companion resource about Adventist beliefs and lifestyle would be helpful.

At a recent academic conference that included both Seventh-day Adventist and non-Seventh-day Adventist scholars, I was particularly intrigued by one academic, not from our tradition, who wrote to me in advance about how excited he was to have this opportunity to learn about Adventism. After the conference was over, he expressed frustration and disappointment at being an outsider because most of the scholars used insider language; thus, he was more confused and understood less about what Adventists believe than he did before the conference. This tendency to use insider language, which makes sense for the initiated, can be a barrier to our witness at times, especially for those who are curious. More recently, I have had the privilege to assemble a team to work on the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Seventh-day Adventism*. Working with a variety of scholars, we were tasked with finding people who had a track record of being able to explain concepts to those who may not be familiar with Seventh-day Adventism.

Adventists are not the only ones who struggle with the challenge of using insider language. Linguistic specialists recognize the problem of insider language as a sociological phenomenon. But the

purpose of this book is to help break down those barriers. It is my desire to create a helpful resource for the new believer, yet have it contain enough depth so that the lifelong Adventist will also find value in it. This particular “pocket dictionary” serves a valuable purpose by focusing on both Adventist theology and lifestyle. Its list of words and expressions is not intended to be exhaustive, so I have limited the list to approximately five hundred words. They tend to focus on a North American context; however, I have tried to be sensitive to the fact that Seventh-day Adventism is a global family (only 6 percent of the membership of the world church resides in the North American Division). For this reason, I have also included a diversity of terms that represent a wide variety of cultures, paying particular attention to the African American and Latino communities.

Many thanks to my friends who have made suggestions from around the globe. Each person has enriched this project, although it is impossible to remember every person who has done so. Among those that stand out is Hyveth Williams, who, early on, gave me a smaller list of about fifty words that she shares when she studies with new believers. Special thanks to John W. Reeve, John C. Peckham, and A. Rahel Wells for their expertise that strengthened the manuscript. Others participated in several social media forums: Benjamin Baker, Keith Clouten, Bill Cork, Andrew Gradzikiewicz, Blake Jones, Adam Kis, Jud Lake, Matthew J. Lucio, Ethan J. Muse, Jay and Kendra Perry, Ovidiu Radulescu, Graeme Sharrock, Tom Shepherd, Arthur Shoemaker, Carmen Seibold, Mike Sims, Sheryl Stull, Mike Tucker, Efraín Velázquez, and Jim and Laura Wibberding. I am particularly thankful for the careful editorial eye and constructive comments of Daniela Pusic, who strengthened the manuscript. I am also grateful to my colleagues at Southwestern Adventist University, especially those who have been active in our faculty book club; between more introspective conversations about books, we have lingered to discuss Adventist lingo. I would like to particularly express appreciation to Tony Zbaraschuk, Elizabeth and Kip Bowser, Buster Swoopes Jr., and Ryan Loga. A word of thanks is due to those at Pacific Press®, especially Scott Cady, Miguel Valdivia, and Dan Ross, for their editorial support and guidance. Clifford Goldstein’s keen



editorial pen further strengthened the manuscript. While their expertise is deeply appreciated for improving this manuscript, any shortcomings are my responsibility. Last but certainly not least, I want to express a word of gratitude to my wife, Heidi, and to my children, Emma and David, who have provided encouragement along the journey. Without their love and support, this book would not have been possible.

## Entries

**abortion.** The intentional termination of an unborn child. Seventh-day Adventists have a strong stance that values life, but they also acknowledge that there are rare cases where abortion may be used as a last resort (e.g., to save the life of the mother). On October 16, 2019, the Executive Committee of the \*General Conference voted a statement affirming a pro-life stance for the denomination.

**academy.** Within Seventh-day Adventism, an *academy* is a denominational high school. Some academies are day schools; others, called boarding academies, offer food and lodging on campus.

**accreditation.** Seventh-day Adventist schools are required to be accredited by the Adventist Accrediting Association and may also be accredited by other independent or governmental accrediting associations.

**Advent.** Literally meaning “coming” or “arrival,” within Adventism, this term generally refers to the \*second advent of Christ to the earth.

**Advent movement.** A reference to the rise and development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, specifically as a distinct prophetic movement called by God with a specific purpose—to share the \*three angels’ messages.

***Advent Review.*** The *Advent Review* was a publication started by \*James White in 1850 to inspire confidence in God’s prophetic leading through the \*Millerite movement. This publication merged with the *Present Truth* to become the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (often shortened to \**Review and Herald*).

**Adventist Book Center (ABC).** A Christian bookstore containing primarily Seventh-day Adventist books as well as health foods, including \*vegetarian meat substitutes and other products.

**Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).** A humanitarian agency operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the purpose of providing development and disaster relief to individuals and communities throughout the world. The agency was founded in 1956 and is headquartered at the \*General Conference offices in Silver Spring, Maryland.

**Adventist Review.** The main publication of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Originally called the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (often shortened to \**Review and Herald*) and later to the *Adventist Review*, it remains the primary organ for disseminating news and inspiration within the denomination.

**Adventist Today.** An independent journal that was started in 1993 by Adventist scholars. It has an online presence and produces a quarterly print publication. It often takes controversial stances that do not necessarily reflect the official stance of the denomination.

**Adventist World.** Launched in 2005, this magazine is the official monthly publication of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It remains closely affiliated with the \**Adventist Review* (a weekly publication) and is managed by the same editorial staff.

**Adventist World Radio (AWR).** An international Christian broadcast ministry owned and operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. AWR first began to broadcast from a rented shortwave radio station in Portugal. As of 2019, AWR provides coverage across Europe, Asia, Africa, and parts of the Americas in more than one hundred languages via AWR's Guam broadcast station and leased transmitters in various locations. It also includes more than seven hundred local AM and FM stations that carry AWR programming and has podcast media in more than one hundred languages.

**Adventist Youth (AY).** A department of the local church that focuses on youth ministry, typically led by young people who engage with other young people. AY typically organizes activities within the local congregation, often on Sabbath, but at other times as well. The term is still used in some parts of the world, but in North America, it tends to be passé.

**Adventurer(s).** A denominational ministry that has club chapters in the local church. The Adventurer Club is open to children from four to nine years old (preschool through grade 4) who agree to keep the Adventurer pledge and law. In 2016, the Adventurer Club expanded from the original four levels (first through fourth grade) to six (including preschool and kindergarten).

**amillennialism.** The belief that the thousand-year period mentioned in Revelation 20 does not represent a literal period of time between Christ's first and second comings. *See also* millennium/millennialism.

**Anabaptist.** Arising out of the \*Protestant Reformation, this movement, which was radical in its time, advocated that \*baptism should be the immersion of adults after they have accepted Christ, as opposed to the sprinkling of infants. The Anabaptists were harshly persecuted and, in many cases, killed by other \*Protestants because of their views and lifestyle. They were known for their rejection of oath taking, refusing \*military service, and avoiding government involvement. They also held progressive-for-the-time views on the separation of church and state. Though not directly descended from the Anabaptists, Seventh-day Adventists can trace some of their teachings back to them.

**analogy of faith (*analogia fidei*).** A principle of interpretation asserting that clearer passages of \*Scripture should be used to interpret those texts deemed more obscure or difficult. This essential unity of Scripture is a concept that Adventists accept.

**anathema.** A formal declaration of the Roman \*Catholic Church, by either the pope or a church council, of \*heresy.

**Andrews, John Nevins** (1829–1883). An Adventist pioneer, \*minister, author, and missionary. As a young boy, he accepted the \*Millerite message in February 1843; in 1845, he accepted the seventh-day Sabbath. In 1850, he became an itinerant minister and was \*ordained in 1853. In 1856, he married Angeline Stevens (1824–1872), and they had two children: Charles (b. 1857) and Mary (b. 1861). Andrews wrote the first edition of *History of the Sabbath and the First Day of the Week*. In 1864, Andrews represented the denomination in an attempt to secure noncombatant status for church members during the American Civil War. He later was elected as the third president of the \*General Conference and became the editor of the \**Review and Herald* (1869–1870). After Angeline died of a stroke in 1872, the family accepted a call to Europe to become the first official missionaries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Here they began the French periodical *Les Signes des Temps* in 1876. Tragically, Andrews’s daughter Mary died of tuberculosis in 1878—a disease that later killed him too. Andrews is buried in Basel, Switzerland.

**Andrews Study Bible.** A study Bible prepared by Adventist thought leaders and scholars, which is available in either the New King James Version or New International Version. The Andrews Study Bible is published by Andrews University Press and includes twelve thousand study notes, as well as a reference system, maps, charts, and a basic concordance.

**Andrews University.** Founded as Battle Creek College in \*Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1874, the school was later relocated to Berrien Springs, Michigan, and renamed Emmanuel Missionary College. In 1960, it was combined with the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary and renamed after the scholar and pioneer \*J. N. Andrews. To this day, the Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary continues to train \*pastors and teachers.

**angel(s).** The term in both Hebrew and Greek indicates the idea of a messenger for God. Early Adventists regarded angelic beings as real and believed that it is possible to “entertain angels unawares” (Hebrews 13:2). Ellen G. White frequently recorded

encountering angels during her prophetic dreams and visions and pointed out the important roles that they have played throughout sacred history.

**anointing of the sick.** From the \*Advent movement's earliest beginnings, \*Sabbatarian Adventists have followed the biblical practice of anointing the sick with oil (James 5:14). This practice has, at times, resulted in remarkable healings; however, Seventh-day Adventists believe strongly in receiving professional medical help as needed.

**anthropology.** The scientific study of humans and their development and behavior. From a Christian theological context, it is the study of human nature and the relationship between humans and God. Adventists adhere to \*trichotomism, which emphasizes the connection between the body, \*soul, and \*spirit. For Adventists, a proper understanding of humanity's nature, especially its inherent sinfulness, is central to Adventism's theology of the \*cross and the \*atonement.

**anthropomorphism/anthropomorphic language.** The attribution of human characteristics to anything, from objects to God. Some examples include describing God as having hands or eyes or referring to God as "Father."

**antichrist.** The term *antichrist* only appears in 1 and 2 John in both singular and plural forms. Adventists equate this antichrist with the "man of sin . . . , who opposes and exalts himself above . . . God" (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, NKJV) and with the little horn of Daniel 7 and 8, which "shall intend to change times and law" (Daniel 7:25, NKJV). Though the term *antichrist* is often used broadly, Seventh-day Adventists apply it to the papacy, which sought to "change times and laws." This attempt was specifically made manifest in its "replacement" of Sunday for the biblical Sabbath—an act that represents one of the ways that it exalted itself above God.

**antinomianism.** Any view that rejects the need to adhere to the

law. In Christianity, antinomianism claims that Christians are no longer obligated to follow the Ten Commandments. Seventh-day Adventists reject antinomianism. Instead, they view God's \*law as a perpetual expression of His divine character, which means that it has and will exist throughout eternity and that God's people are obligated to follow it even now, not as a way to obtain \*salvation but as an expression of the salvation that they already have (Romans 8:1).

**Apocalypse.** A reference either to the \*book of Revelation or to the final events that take place near or at the time of the end of the world when Jesus Christ returns. Seventh-day Adventists hold the book of Revelation in high regard—as they do all \*Scripture—and believe it contains critical \*present truth for our times.

**apocalyptic literature.** Any literature that describes end-time events.

**Apocrypha.** Though the word *Apocrypha* originally meant “hidden” or “concealed,” it eventually came to refer to the religious books considered of inferior quality to the Old and New Testaments. Thus, the term *Apocrypha* was used in contrast to the word *canonical*. Most \*Protestants and Jews accept the fifteen apocryphal books as having some religious value, but they are not deemed canonical and, especially for Protestants, are *not* a source of authority in any way. At the \*Council of Trent (1545–1563), Roman \*Catholics made these books canonical. Early \*Sabbatarian Adventists, including Ellen G. White, referenced these apocryphal books.

**apologetics.** Any explanation given by those inside a group or organization to explain and promote a better understanding of the group to those outside it. In the Christian context, *apologetics* are well-reasoned arguments or writings used to justify the Christian \*faith. Within Seventh-day Adventism, Adventist apologetics indicates those arguments or reasons used to support Adventist beliefs and lifestyle practices.

**apostasy.** The abandonment or renunciation of one's \*faith. The term originally comes from the Greek word *apostasia*, meaning “defection,” “departure,” “revolt,” or “rebellion.” The Bible warns against apostasy (Hebrews 3:12–14), especially during the latter days (1 Timothy 4:1). The history of Christianity includes examples of those who have fallen into apostasy.

**apostate Protestantism.** A reference within Adventism to those \*Protestants who choose to ally with the apostate Roman \*Catholic Church to undermine God's \*law (GC 445, 446). Such forces are described collectively as \*Babylon.

**apostle/apostolicity.** *Apostle* is from a Greek word that means “sent forth” (verb) or “envoy” or “messenger” (noun). An apostle is typically identified as one of the twelve \*disciples of Jesus Christ or any important early Christian teacher, such as the apostle Paul, who described himself as being “called to be an apostle” (1 Corinthians 1:1), which meant that he believed he had been sent on a mission. The term *apostolicity* refers to a belief or practice that hearkens back to the early Christian church.

**appropriation.** Within theological contexts, *appropriation* is the idea that “a feature belonging to the nature of God, common to all three persons, is specially ascribed to one of the divine persons” (Gilles Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Francesca Aran Murphy [New York: Oxford University Press, 2010], 312). It consists of attributing certain names, qualities, or operations to One of the Persons (but not to the exclusion of the Others).

**Arianism.** A term linked to Arius (ca. AD 250–AD 336), who denied the eternal existence of Jesus Christ and, therefore, His full deity. Arius's views were deemed unorthodox. Though some early Adventist leaders assumed a form of Arianism, Ellen G. White and other Adventist thought leaders guided the church away from an Arian understanding during the 1890s, and the church embraced the full and eternal deity of Jesus Christ. This belief paved the way for the denomination to clarify its own understanding of the



\*Trinity during the twentieth century and incorporate the Trinity as a \*fundamental belief.

**Arminianism/Arminian.** A branch of \*Protestant belief based on the teachings of the Dutch Reformed theologian Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609). Arminianism recognizes the \*fall of Adam as the cause of human sinfulness. Human beings also have the ability to choose between good and evil. Seventh-day Adventists have adopted, basically, a view of Arminianism as interpreted and taught by \*John Wesley. This means that Adventists believe people must choose for themselves whether to follow Christ, whereas \*Calvinism teaches that God predestines those who are saved and those who are lost.

**ascension.** The ascension of Jesus Christ describes Christ's departure from this earth to the presence of God (Acts 1:9–11). Seventh-day Adventists point to this as the beginning of Christ's ministry in the first apartment of the heavenly \*sanctuary.

**asceticism.** This term refers to the denial of physical or psychological desires in the hope of attaining a spiritual ideal or goal. Within Christianity, *asceticism* refers to a lifestyle characterized by abstinence from sensual pleasures, often taken to radical extremes. Though Seventh-day Adventists believe in Paul's biblical admonition not to "let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts" (Romans 6:12, NKJV), they also understand that God created us as physical beings and has given us physical pleasures that can be enjoyed within the parameters that God has set within His Word.

**assurance of salvation.** The inward witness of the \*Holy Spirit that a person has present \*salvation in Christ (Romans 8:16; Galatians 4:6). Though it is possible to have salvation without assurance (Romans 2:11–16) or false assurance without salvation (Matthew 7:21–23), a genuine biblical assurance is essential to the Christian life (Romans 8:38, 39). An experience in salvation does not exclude the possibility of falling from \*grace, but Jesus also will do whatever is necessary to save us and will do so unless we

purposely turn away from Him (Romans 5:10, 19, 20).

**Athanasius** (ca. AD 296/298–AD 373). Athanasius served as a \*deacon and assistant to Alexander, the bishop of Alexandria, during the First \*Council of Nicaea (AD 325), which addressed the nature of Christ's divinity. Three years later, he succeeded Alexander as the bishop of Alexandria. Athanasius's thirty-ninth Festal Letter, which identified the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, was an important step in the recognition of the biblical \*canon. He is also considered one of the four doctors of the Eastern Church.

**atheism.** Disbelief or lack of belief in the existence of God or a deity of any kind.

**atonement.** *Atonement* (at-one-ment)—the central message of the Bible—is the process whereby God reconciles human beings, after \*the Fall and entrance of \*sin, into a right relationship with Him. There are three major theories about the atonement: (1) moral exemplar, (2) \*ransom theory, and (3) satisfaction/punishment. Though Adventist theologians (including Ellen G. White) have utilized the ideas and language from the first two positions to describe the process of \*salvation, the last one—satisfaction/punishment—forms the core of the Seventh-day Adventist theology of atonement. This belief teaches that Christ, as our Substitute, satisfied the claims of the \*law on our behalf, having been punished for our sins so that we do not have to face that punishment ourselves. Also central to the Adventist theology of atonement is the ministry of Jesus Christ in the heavenly \*sanctuary (Hebrews 8:1, 2), where He applies the merits of His completed work on the \*cross on our behalf as well.

**attribute(s) of God.** God is unlike human beings in ways that are so different that there is nothing to which we can compare Him (Isaiah 40:25), even though humans are encouraged to emulate some of His attributes, such as His \*love (1 John 3:16; 4:7). Theologians generally list at least three major incommunicable attributes that distinguish God from humans: (1) \**omnipotence*, meaning God is all powerful; (2) \**omniscience*, meaning God is all knowing; and (3) \**omnipresence*, meaning God is all present.

**authority of Scripture/authority of the Bible.** The Bible asserts its divine \*inspiration and authority as God's Word (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21). Though God speaks through nature (\*general revelation), Scripture is the result of \*special revelation. The Bible is authoritative because it is directly inspired by God and, consequently, must stand as the ultimate and final arbiter of belief and practice for Christians. It is therefore a guidebook for living in a right relationship with Him and with other human beings. During the \*Protestant Reformation, \*Martin Luther made the authority of \*Scripture over human \*tradition or even the authority of the church his rallying cry. He summarized this into the principle of \**sola scriptura* (Scripture alone). Seventh-day Adventists, including Ellen G. White, have consistently asserted the principle of *sola scriptura*. For Ellen White's part, she believed that her writings were a "lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light" of the Bible (3SM 30).

**Babylon.** The capital of the Babylonian Empire during the middle of the first millennium BC. Babylon played a large role in the Old Testament as the nation that destroyed the temple in Jerusalem in 586 BC and took many Jews captive. It has also become a metaphor for religious \*apostasy and appears in the \*book of Revelation as a symbol of corrupt powers that lead people astray.

**badventist.** A sarcastic expression for someone who self-identifies as Adventist but may deviate from generally accepted theological or lifestyle practices or may oppose decisions made by church leadership.

**baptism.** A visible demonstration of the inward acceptance of Jesus Christ as one's Lord and Savior. Seventh-day Adventists follow the practice of immersion by any person who has come of age (rather than infant baptism), citing the example of Christ's own baptism (Matthew 3:13–17). It is the first step of \*discipleship (Acts 8:26–39). As a person is submerged and then brought forth out of the water, this ritual symbolizes the \*death, burial, and \*resurrection of Jesus Christ. The cleansing through water serves as a reminder of the cleansing that takes place and is made