

The Scripture, the Feasts, EGW w/ Notes

First, why Ellen White of all people to write about? The woman certainly had visions, lived in the last two hundred years, and she is has written the most translated book in the world besides the Bible, called Steps to Christ. But there are many questions that need to be asked. And they SHOULD be asked by all who have an interest in the truth. Questions such as: Was she given a gift of prophecy; does it matter? And was there proof of the genuineness of her calling to the prophetic ministry? Was there a purpose if she was so called? Does the Bible teach that the prophetic gift would come after Jesus ascended into heaven? What does the Bible say about prophets and does she pass the test? Can women be prophets? Is she the leader of a cult? Or is she, contrary to those who oppose her, well-respected by those outside of her church? Was she, like so many "prophets", claiming her writings superior to the Bible? Does her writings replace the Bible? Did she say you need her to be saved? These things will be addressed in a soon upcoming article; if you are in her church, or if you aren't, the answer might surprise you. So if you are new here, read this to know what is the honest and genuine opinion is of close study by this ministry towards her. As such, this article is geared towards Adventists who claim to believe her writings, in part or in whole, to see the internal consistency of her writings, and see if they speak with the Scripture on this respect or not as we all are told to do in the prophetic test of Isaiah 8:20.

Contrary to popular opinion, Ellen White did not write against feastkeeping, but rather the ceremonies that attended them were done away as the sacrificial systems shadows met their intended object. Originally, all times of worship, daily evening and morning, weekly Sabbath, new moon, and yearly

feasts, all were enjoined to sacrifices that pointed to the various facets of Christ's redemption; Christ being the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, "foreordained before the foundation of the world, but manifested in these last times for you", the sacrifices attending the times of worship were no longer to be observed, as it is written in the Scripture, Christ "will cause the sacrifice and offering to cease."

Ellen White says to seek to reinstitute the sacrificial system would be an abomination to God; akin to the sin of Israel when they continued to sacrifice lambs after rejecting Christ; it would be a denial of Christ's sacrifice and ministry. Yet these sacrifices all pointed to faith in the redemptive work of Christ, as shadowed forth in these sacrifices and the priestly works attending them; when the shadows met the object, they no longer had the sacrifices, yet the same faith and times of worship in which that faith was to be exercised upon unseen and heavenly realities were still in effect; these worship times both contained a shadow of better things, and a reality which contained that perfect heavenly reality. The early Christian church understood this concept, and the manner of their observing the feast days God had given His people were to change forever: "The principles presented by Christ, THE MANNER OF OBSERVING FEASTS, of praying to God, could not be properly united to the forms and ceremonies of Phariseeism. Instead of closing up the breach that had been made by the teachings of John, the teachings of Christ would make the separation between the old system and the new more distinct, and to attempt to unite the two would only result in making the breach wider. " The Signs of the Times, September 19, 1892

The forms and ceremonies was once the manner of observing the feasts, but the change was to come.

The apostle Paul, speaking to the Hebrews about the shadowy sacrifices, admonished the people not to forsake their sacred assemblies, as some were already doing. "The law, having a

shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered make the comers thereunto perfect...for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins...Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day approaching." (Heb. 10:1,4,24-25)

Just as the writer to the Hebrews encouraged them to continue their sacred assemblies together, Ellen White speaks highly of the festal gatherings commanded by God, and writes under inspiration regarding their value:

*"Anciently the Lord instructed His people to assemble three times a year for His worship. To these holy convocations the children of Israel came, bringing to the house of God their tithes, their sin offerings, and their offerings of gratitude. They met to recount God's mercies, to make known His wonderful works, and to offer praise and thanksgiving to His name. And they were to unite in the sacrificial service which pointed to Christ as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Thus they were to be **preserved from the corrupting power of worldliness and idolatry**. Faith and love and gratitude were to be kept alive in their hearts, and through their association together in this sacred service they were to be bound closer to God and to one another.*

*In the days of Christ these feasts were attended by vast multitudes of people from all lands; and had they been kept as God intended, in the spirit of true worship, **the light of truth might through them have been given to all the nations of the world**. With those who lived at a distance from the tabernacle, more than a month of every year must have been occupied in attendance upon these holy convocations. The Lord saw that **these gatherings were necessary for the spiritual life of His people**. They needed to turn away from their worldly cares, to commune with God, and to contemplate unseen realities.*

*If the children of Israel **needed** the benefit of these holy convocations in their time, **how much more do we need them in these last days** of peril and conflict! And if the people of the world then needed the light which God had committed to His church, how much more do they need it now!" Testimonies to the Church, Vol. 6, pg. 39-40*

We're told by the apostle John that we are to keep ourselves from idols; he said further that "we know that we are of God, and that the world lieth in wickedness". The holy days of the world are not the holy days of God. When God would assemble His people, it was to fully separate them from the corrupting power of the world and their practices. The holy days of God reveal Christ to us, and in us by Him, the design for the holy times are to find their fulfillment. The corruption that was growing, "the Lord saw that these gatherings were necessary for the spiritual life of His people." And if He saw that "the children of Israel needed the benefit of these holy convocations in their time, how much more do we need them in these last days..." Ellen White further spoke on these times: (note: the **# means a note is made at the end of the article regarding that particular point being addressed)

"God gave direction to the Israelites to assemble before Him at set periods, in the place which He should choose, and observe special days wherein no unnecessary work was to be done, but the time was to be devoted to a consideration of the blessings which He had bestowed upon them. At these special seasons they were to bring gifts, freewill offerings, and thank offerings unto the Lord, according as He had blessed them. The manservant and maidservant, the stranger, the fatherless and widow, were directed to rejoice that God had by His own wonderful power brought them from servile bondage to the enjoyment of freedom. And they were commanded not to appear before the Lord empty. They were to bring tokens of their gratitude to God for His continual mercies and blessings bestowed upon them. These offerings were varied according to

the estimate which the donors placed upon the blessings they were privileged to enjoy. Thus the characters of the people were plainly developed. Those who placed a high value upon the blessings which God bestowed upon them brought offerings in accordance with their appreciation of these blessings. Those whose moral powers were stupefied and benumbed by selfishness and idolatrous love of the favors received, rather than inspired by fervent love for their bountiful Benefactor, brought meager offerings. Thus their hearts were revealed. Besides these special religious feast days of gladness and rejoicing, the yearly Passover was to be commemorated by the Jewish nation. **The Lord covenanted that if they were faithful in the observance of His requirements, He would bless them in all their increase and in all the work of their hands.**1**

God requires no less of His people in these last days, in sacrifices and offerings, than He did of the Jewish nation.2**

Those whom He has blessed with a competency, and even the widow and the fatherless, should not be unmindful of His blessings. Especially should those whom God has prospered render to Him the things that are His. They should appear before Him with a spirit of self-sacrifice and bring their offerings in accordance with the blessings which He has bestowed upon them. But many whom God prospers manifest base ingratitude to Him. If His blessings rest upon them, and He increases their substance, they make these bounties as cords to bind them to the love of their possessions; they allow worldly business to take possession of their affections and their entire being, and neglect devotion and religious privileges. **They cannot afford to leave their business cares and come before God even once a year.** They turn the blessings of God into a curse. They serve their own temporal interests **to the neglect of God's requirements.**

Men who possess thousands **remain at home year after year**, engrossed in their worldly cares and interests, and feeling that they **cannot afford to make the small sacrifice of attending the yearly gatherings** to worship God. He has **blessed them in basket and in store**3**, and surrounded them with His

benefits on the right hand and on the left, yet they withhold from Him the small **offerings He has required of them**. They love to serve themselves. **Their souls will be like the unrefreshed desert without the dew or rain of heaven.****4 The Lord has brought to them the precious blessing of His grace. He has delivered them from the slavery of sin and the bondage of error, and has opened to their darkened understandings the glorious light of present truth. And shall these evidences of God's love and mercy call forth no gratitude in return? Will those who profess to believe that the end of all things is at hand be blind to their own spiritual interest and live for this world and this life alone? Do they expect that their eternal interest will take care of itself? **Spiritual strength will not come without an effort on their part.** **5

Many who profess to be looking for the appearing of our Lord are anxious, burdened seekers for worldly gain. They are blind to their eternal interest. They labor for that which satisfieth not. **They spend their money for that which is not bread.** **7 They strive to content themselves with the treasures they have laid up on the earth, which must perish. And they neglect the preparation for eternity, which should be the first and only real work of life.

Let all who possibly can, **attend these yearly gatherings. All should feel that God requires this of them.** If they do not avail themselves of the privileges which He has provided **that they may become strong in Him and in the power of His grace, they will grow weaker and weaker, and have less and less desire to consecrate all to God.** Come, brethren and sisters, **to these sacred convocation meetings, to find Jesus. He will come up to the feast.** He will be present, and He will do for you that which you most need to have done. **Your farms should not be considered of greater value** than the higher interests of the soul.**6 All the treasures which you possess, be they ever so valuable, would not be rich enough to buy you peace and hope, which would be infinite gain, if it cost you all you have and the toils and sufferings of a lifetime. A strong, clear sense of eternal things, and a heart willing to yield

all to Christ, are blessings of more value than all the riches and pleasures and glories of this world.

These camp meetings are of importance. They cost something. The servants of God are wearing out their lives to help the people, while many of them appear as if they did not want help. For fear of losing a little of this world's gain, some let these precious privileges come and go **as though they were of but little importance.** Let all who profess to believe the truth respect every privilege that God offers them to **obtain clearer views of His truth, of His requirements, and of the necessary preparation for His coming.**8** A calm, cheerful, **obedient trust in God is what He requires. **9**

You need not weary yourselves with busy anxieties and needless cares. Work on for the day, faithfully doing the work which God's providence assigns you, and He will have a care for you. Jesus will deepen and widen your blessings. You must make efforts if you have salvation at last. Come to these meetings prepared to work. Leave your home cares, and come to find Jesus, and He will be found of you. Come with your offerings as God has blessed you. Show your gratitude to your Creator, the Giver of all your benefits, by a freewill offering. Let none who are able come empty-handed. **"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." **10**

Testimonies for the Church Volume Two, ch. 73, pg. 573-576

End notes:

1) This is a reference to the everlasting covenant made with His people. "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:" (Deut. 30:19) In this covenant, "beside the covenant made with the children of Israel in Horeb" [Deut. 29:1] (All that the Lord hath said, we will

do...”), there were conditions laid out for the blessings of the people. If they were obedient, as Abraham was, they would inherit and keep the land God would give them. These instructions were a revelation of the order and life He bound up with His people and their blessing. “And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

(Deut. 28:1-2) These are called requirements. -Bear this in mind, because it is repeated several times.

2) Here, she is saying that the same things are required of God regarding sacrifices and offerings. Did God require the ceremonial sacrifices and offerings? The Bible says Jesus caused “the sacrifice and offering to cease” (Dan. 9:27). But it also says, “Burnt offering and sin offerings, Thou hast not required.” (Ezekiel 40:6) when foretelling Jesus dying instead of ceremonial sacrifices. So what does the Bible require in sacrifices and offerings? The same spiritual sacrifices it always required. Faith, praise and thanksgiving, communication of God’s will and way, sacrifice for the cause of God in furthering His work as He outlines in the Scripture (Heb. 13:15-16, Psalm 69:30-31, 107:21-22, Php. 4:18, 1 Peter 2:5). The Bible calls these spiritual sacrifices and offerings, and these were always required (Hosea 14:2). So indeed, He requires just as much now in these offerings, as He did then. But to know what that comprehends is vital, such as confession of sin and faith in the Lamb of God which taketh away sin (John 1:29); this is infinitely better and more pricy than slaying a lamb of your flock, and confessing it over his head before slaying him. It’s the sacrifices of faith that God accepts, and has always accepted (Heb. 11:4).

3) According to the obedience of the covenant, He says “Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.” (Deut. 28:5) But these who God has kept His promise and increased will not so

much as attend one of the yearly feasts to return thanks and praise to God for what He has done, regardless of whether it is a requirement from God. He has said: "But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee." (Deut. 12:5-7)

4) The Bible reveals that these feasts were appointed times where God would shower out His blessing of the early and latter rain. "Ask ye the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain... And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem (the heavenly Jerusalem- the church- Heb. 12:22-23) to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain." (Zech. 10:1, 14:17) Even so, was this a promise in His covenant, The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow." (Deut. 28:1) In this manner, it was manifested on the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit came to them as promised, after Christ had confirmed the covenant in His own blood with them. As it is written: "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." (Hosea 6:3)

5) Spiritual strength, as noted above, comes from having the Spirit of Christ in us; who without which, "ye can do nothing" (John 15:5) But "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me," (Phil. 4:13). Indeed, if Christ comes to you in Spirit on these feasts, as a heavenly guest in the

Comforter, His Spirit, then in obedience to the blessing God has given to us, let us meet with Him to return thanks and praise for the blessings He has promised; and Christ has promised He will be at the feast to strengthen us.

6) Here is being quoted a verse regarding the everlasting covenant and the eternal blessings God would give His people: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." (Isa 55:1-3) Christ spoke this very thing on the feast: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" (John 7:37-39)

7) These are called sacred gatherings, and yearly gatherings. They speak of the feasts as year to year: "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles." (Zech. 14:16) The Scripture calls them "holy convocations" (Exo. 12:16-17). Only what God does can make something holy (Gen. 2:1-3, Lev. 23:3, 7, 8, 21); man cannot make a common day holy by his own devisings (Neh. 8:2, 9-12, Lev. 16:1-2, 10:1,2, 8-10).

8) It was customary to examine yourself to prepare for the appointed times of the feasts. Anciently, the priests would read the sacred writings, and the law would be read, with its blessings and curses. God's blessings, His guidance, His

purposes, and His promises were thus to be kept in the view of all, lest they should forget. These were times of special repentance, revival, and reformation. This is why they assembled (Num. 10:1,2, 9-10), and we, as the Hebrews were admonished in the epistle, are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but as we see the day of Christ approaching, to see all the more important the necessity of it (Heb. 10:25).

9) Many fear that in keeping these feasts, they would be Judaizers, and offend Jehovah for honoring a law they suppose was abolished. Such think it better to gather at any time they appoint outside of the sanctified times of Scripture, so they are not associated with the ceremonial law. But the ceremonial laws which shadowed Christ was not the body of Christ. The body of Christ was the church, and is to assemble in the manner outlined in the Scripture. The manner of the feasts being observed were different from there ceremonial counterpart; in fact, early Christians regarded the feast of the Passover as a new feast, calling it the Passover in Christ. But perfect love casts out all fear. Calm obedient trust, and not disobedient fearful caviling is the best policy; such a manner as God can bless.

10) To prepare for the coming of Christ, these assemblies shall be called into remembrance by the people through divine interposition. God says He will send men in the spirit of Elijah to call to remembrance His downtrodden law and covenant, declaring "Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded him in Horeb, with it's statutes and judgments..." (Mal. 4:4-6). The bringing in of the tithes was a special call by the spirit of Elijah to remember the law, and specifically, the tithes that are brought to the sacred feast (Mal. 3:10). Thus the Elijah message does indeed make a call to remember the feasts, observing them in the Spirit, and in truth.