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## BETRAYED WITH A KISS

### I. Introduction

#### a. Attacks from Without and Within (Ac. 20:29)

- i.) Far more to fear from within
  - (a) We have far more to fear from within than from without. The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world. (1SM 122)

#### b. Betrayed with a kiss (Mk. 14:43; Lk. 22:48)

- i.) Had you seen Judas kiss Jesus, you would have been moved at the love of Judas for his Master
- ii.) There are people today who are allegedly “defending” the Adventist faith who are in reality doing nothing less than betraying the Lord with a kiss.
  - (a) “The church sees that the questions about Ellen White’s prophetic veracity are creating a serious problem, but they also see that without Ellen White Adventism loses its distinctiveness. Instead of admitting that her legacy has separated Adventism from evangelical Christianity and has colored every doctrine, they are attempting to give her a figurative facelift and to introduce her to new members and young people as a warm, human, accessible role-model and biblical commentator.” – Dale Ratzlaff, “A Response to Jud Lake,” *Proclamation Magazine*, Vol. 7, Nov/Dec 2006, p. 13.

#### c. Satan’s very last deception

- i.) The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony. -- Letter 12, 1890. (1SM 48)
  - (a) Of none effect (Mk. 7:9-13)
    - (i) “I believe in the commandment about honoring father and mother; I just don’t believe it applies to me.”
- ii.) It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the Testimonies. Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the Testimonies, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction. (4T 211)

- iii.) My brethren have trifled and caviled and criticized and commented and demerited, and picked and chosen a little and refused much until the testimonies mean nothing to them. They put whatever interpretation upon them that they choose in their own finite judgment and are satisfied. (4MR 65)
- b. They are stripping the prophet of her authority and making the gift of prophecy “of none effect.”
  - i.) Ellen White is a prophet for the last days. Did God know what the last days would be like?

## II. “More Than a Prophet” or Less?

- a. The following statements are from a recently published book written by Australian theologian Graeme Bradford and published under Samuele Bacchiocchi’s *Biblical Perspectives* label. Bradford, who holds his Master’s Degree in Religion from Andrews University, claims to be committed to “reclaiming former Adventists.” He is currently retired from his work as professor in the theology department of Avondale College. His emphasis is on “the human side” of prophets. He claims that through his efforts and those of his colleagues, Adventism has come “full circle” to a “more biblical understanding of her gift.” His book, ironically entitled *More Than a Prophet*, is an alleged defense of Ellen White’s ministry, but in reality a betrayal of the most destructive kind.
- b. Old Testament vs. New Testament prophets
  - i.) Bradford believes that a change has taken place in the prophetic ministry, with the authoritative Old Testament prophet being replaced by a rather innocuous New Testament sort of spiritual advisor-type prophet.
    - (a) [Ac. 2:17-18 quoted] Peter is clearly saying that from now on God is going to pour out His Spirit upon all people regardless of race gender, age or social standing. The Holy Spirit will now abide in every believer. Ministries of ancient prophets, priest and kings have now passed into the lives of ordinary people... But there are also differences between NT prophecy and that of the OT and Judaism... Some NT prophets are given prominence... Fundamentally, however, prophecy is not restricted to a few men and women in primitive Christianity. All are filled with the prophetic spirit and according to Acts 2:16f it is a specific mark of the age of fulfillment that the Spirit does not only lay hold of individuals but that all members of the eschatological community without distinction are called to prophesy. – Bradford, *More Than a Prophet*, pp. 68-9.
  - ii.) In other words, we are all prophets!
  - iii.) Yet Ellen White spoke in regard to this very concept as follows:
    - (a) “A sister, in a letter to her friends, speaks with much enthusiasm of a statement by Brother [A. T.] Jones that Sister White has seen that the time has come when, if we hold the right relation to God, all can have the gift of prophecy to the same extent as do those who are now having visions. Where is the authority for this statement? I must believe that the sister failed to understand Brother Jones, for I cannot think that he made the statement. The

writer continues: ‘Brother Jones said last night that is the case, not that God will speak to all for the benefit of everyone else but to each for his own benefit, and this will fulfill the prophecy of Joel.’ He stated that this is already being developed in numerous instances. He spoke as if he thought none would hold such a leading position as Sister White had done and will still do. He referred to Moses as a parallel. He was a leader, but many others are referred to as prophesying, though their prophecies are not published. . . . These ideas in relation to prophesying, I do not hesitate to say, might better never have been expressed. Such statements prepare the way for a state of things that Satan will surely take advantage of to bring in spurious exercises. There is danger, not only that unbalanced minds will be led into fanaticism, but that designing persons will take advantage of this excitement to further their own selfish purposes.”—Letter 6a, 1894, (March 16, 1894). (3SM 340-41)

iv.) And to A.T. Jones she wrote the following words of caution:

- (a) “You cannot be too careful how you talk of the gift of prophesying, and state that I have said this and that in reference to this matter. Such statements, I well know, encourage men and women and children to imagine that they have special light in revelations from God, when they have not received such light. This, I have been shown, would be one of Satan's masterpieces of deception. You are giving to the work a mold which it will take precious time and wearing soul labor to correct, to save the cause of God from another spasm of fanaticism.”—E. G. White Letter 103, 1894, (March 15, 1894). (2SM 86)

c. Testing the prophets (1 Cor. 14:29; 1 Thes. 5:19-21)

- i.) Bradford *claims* that the Bible writers were clear that in evaluating the prophetic gift, we should realize that a true prophet may speak error mixed with truth:
- (a) In contrast to the authority given to the apostles in the New Testament, prophets are to have their prophecies evaluated... By contrast [with OT prophets], NT prophets are to have their oracles carefully weighed (1 Cor. 14:29; 1 Thes. 5:19-21). The word *diakrino* [the Greek word translated “judge” in 1 Cor. 14:29, nkjv] suggests that the prophecy be evaluated, not simply accepted as totally true or totally false. The presupposition is that any one New Testament prophetic oracle is expected to be mixed in quality, and the wheat must be separated from the chaff. (2SM 78)
- ii.) Ellen White, on the other hand, allowed for no such interpretation.
- (a) God is either teaching His church, reproofing their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work for the past thirty years bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil. (4T 229)

d. Prophets are human

- i.) This is really Bradford's underlying theme. Prophets are human, and as such we should expect no more from them than common human frailty.
  - (a) All of us are on a journey. We grow in our understanding... Ellen White was no different... We must allow Ellen White to be a normal human. She was no super-woman. (2SM 114)
  - (b) As a woman in her 80's, she acted as other elderly women and needed to rely on others more... the aging Mrs. White was not in good health... One does get the impression, from the letters of Prescott and Crisler, however, that there was an attempt by her helpers to assist and not give any impression of mental deterioration. (2SM 119)
  - (i) The claim is that Ellen White needs help being understood, and likely was mentally imbalanced. She always knew her limits, like Willie, A.G. Daniels, Prescott, etc.
  - (c) EGW changed after 1888
    - (i) I have had the question asked, what do you think of this light which these men [A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner] are presenting? Why, I have been presenting it to you for the last forty-five years – the matchless charms of Christ. This is what I have been trying to present before your minds. Ms 5, 1889, p. 10. (Sermon delivered at Rome, N. Y., June 17, 1889.) (1MR 142)
    - (ii) I understood that some were anxious to know if Mrs. White still held the same views that she did years ago when they had heard her speak in the sanitarium grove, in the Tabernacle, and at the camp meetings held in the suburbs of Battle Creek. ***I assured them that the message she bears today is the same that she has borne during the sixty years of her public ministry.*** She has the same service to do for the Master that was laid upon her in her girlhood. She receives lessons from the same Instructor. The directions given her are, "Make known to others what I have revealed to you. Write out the messages that I give you, that the people may have them." This is what she has endeavored to do. I have written many books, and they have been given a wide circulation. Of myself I could not have brought out the truth in these books, but the Lord has given me the help of His Holy Spirit. ***These books, giving the instruction that the Lord has given me during the past sixty years, contain light from heaven, and will bear the test of investigation.*** – From Letter 55, 1905. (RH 7/26/06)
    - (iii) One will find statements just as forceful on the place of the law and obedience post '88, and statements that uplift the merits of Christ's righteousness as our only hope and assurance just as strongly prior to '88. This is not to say that one won't find a greater emphasis in her writing and speaking on the life of Christ in the 1890's--due largely to the years she spent in Australia expanding her 2-volume *Life of Christ* series (1877/1878) into what would become *The Desire of Ages*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, and

*Mount of Blessing.* Additionally, we have probably 75% more literary output after 1888 (at least in terms of her published articles), so dividing her writing into pre/post 1888 will tend to give distorted results in terms of the total quantity of statements on these themes. In other words, if you take virtually any statement from Ellen White, the chances are much greater that it will date after 1888. – *Letter of response to Pastor Mark Howard from Tim Poirier with the E.G. White Estate in response to the question, “Did Ellen White change her theology after 1888?”*

e. Aren't we free?

- i.) Are Seventh-day Adventists truly protestant as they claim? If so, then we are to have no other authority in doctrine outside the Bible... The Church's first baptismal vow states: "Do you believe that the Bible is the full, sufficient and only basic rule of faith and practice for the Christian?" Do new converts have to give assent to this only to be told later that they must bow their judgment to Ellen White?... The question must be asked, Are we a free people? Free to grow in our understanding of the Bible? Free to disagree with what she has written in the areas of science, health, history, prophecy and education, etc.? What should a person do if they find they have come to some other conclusion than what she has written? Do they surrender their private judgment? – Bradford, *More Than a Prophet*, pp. 126-7.
  - (a) This seems to strike at the heart of the issue. The real "rub" with Ellen White is that her counsel restricts some from promoting their own varied opinions and viewpoints. It's as if some are crying, "We want our own way, and the prophet won't let us have it."
  - (b) "Are we a free people?" Free to do what? To promote our own opinions? To disagree with prophetic counsel? Certainly. And free to withdraw our memberships from a church that believes something that we don't believe anymore. Nobody forced any one of us to become a Seventh-day Adventist, and no one can force us to stay around if we no longer believe what the church teaches.

f. No trained scholars

- i.) Early Adventists were uninformed
  - (a) "F.M. Wilcox... during his Review & Herald editorship of thirty-three years... wrote... her writings '**constitute a spiritual commentary upon the scripture, a divine illumination of the word.**' Despite the protests against equating Mrs. White's writings with the Bible, many statements implied otherwise – or said otherwise straight out. Roscoe Porter wrote that 'the Testimonies sent are God's word.' Many published statements admonished church members '**to study the written word and the spirit of prophecy...**' Although these writers probably did not realize it, they implied by their arguments that the Bible alone is insufficient to guide the believer into all truth... Although they made the Testimonies theoretically subordinate to the Bible, they also considered

- them indispensable to Seventh-day Adventists...- *Ibid.*, pp. 166-7, emphasis Bradford's.
- (b) The inspiration of Ellen White is not so much under question as is the nature and function of her authority... Is Seventh-day Adventism truly a Protestant church that recognizes the Bible as their sole authority in matters of doctrine? Are church members free to hold some positions different to Ellen White in their understanding of the Scripture?... As it was in 1922 with the demise of Daniells and others so it was again in the early 1980s. Some who were well informed in regards to how her inspiration operated were perceived to be out of harmony with the teachings of Ellen White and suffered accordingly. The problem they faced was how they could explain their convictions regarding her inspiration in a few sentences and correctly inform those who had held incorrect views for most of their lives. – *Ibid.*, p. 201.
- (c) When I look at the founding of Adventism... They were mostly young people. There was not one professionally trained Bible scholar among them. ***About all that they had were their Bibles and a concordance. Sometimes they were naïve... We are better educated than they were. We have trained scholars...*** We do need to expect that some new thoughts will be arriving on the scene. But to have this is still to have the essential essence of what Adventist was always meant to be. – *Ibid.*, p. 223, 225.
- (i) Don't forget, there were trained scholars in Christ's day, but He couldn't use them because they were too self-confident and too "smart" for God.
- The boy scout, the President of the United States and the smartest man in the world
- ii.) Perhaps this statement from "ablest man in all our ranks," J. N. Andrews, says it best. It must be noted that Andrews was an accomplished Bible student and scholar, who read the Bible in seven different languages and claimed the ability to reproduce the entire New Testament from memory. If it could be said of anyone that he knew his Bible "well enough" to be exempt from prophetic direction, it could be said of Andrews. ***Notice, however, the difference in the level of humility.*** Speaking of the importance, yea, the absolute necessity, of the prophetic gift, he wrote:
- (a) "[The spiritual gifts] constitute the means whereby God preserves His people from confusion by pointing out errors, by correcting false interpretations of the Scriptures, and causing light to shine out upon that which is in danger of being wrongly understood and therefore of being the cause of evil and division to the people of God. In short, their work is to unite the people of God in the same mind and in the same judgment upon the meaning of the Scriptures. Mere human judgment, with no direct instruction from heaven, can never search out hidden iniquity, nor adjust dark and complicated church difficulties, nor prevent different and conflicting interpretations of the Scriptures. It would be sad indeed if God could not still converse with His people." -RH, 2/15/1870.

### III. Ellen White answers the objections

#### a. How our doctrines were formed

- i.) Many of our people do not realize how firmly the foundation of our faith has been laid... I met with [founders of the movement], and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that they might know *its* meaning, and *be prepared to teach* it with power. When they came to the point in their study where they said, "We can do nothing more," the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and ***a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying*** would be given me, with instruction as to how we were to labor and teach effectively. Thus ***light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures*** in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God was made plain to me, and ***I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me.*** (1SM 206)

#### b. You claim to believe the testimonies

- i.) You say that Anna's visions place the forming of the image of the beast after probation closes. This is not so. ***You claim to believe the testimonies; let them set you right on this point.*** The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. (2SM 80)

#### c. Enabled to define truth

- i.) We are to be established in the faith, in the light of the truth given us in our early experience. At that time one error after another pressed in upon us; ministers and doctors ["educated scholars"] brought in new doctrines. ***We would search the Scriptures with much prayer, and the Holy Spirit would bring the truth to our minds.*** Sometimes whole nights would be devoted to searching the Scriptures, and earnestly asking God for guidance. Companies of devoted men and women assembled for this purpose. The power of God would come upon me, and ***I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error.*** (GW 302)

d. Counsel from God or Ellen White's Opinion? (see Jer. 29:27)

- i.) After I wrote you the long letter which has been *belittled by Elder H as merely an expression of my own opinion*, while at the Southern California Camp Meeting, the Lord partially *removed the restriction*, and I write what I do. *I dare not say more now*, lest I **go beyond what the Spirit of the Lord has permitted me...** Had Elder H, and those united with him, been standing in the light, they would have recognized the voice of warning and reproof; but he calls it a human work, and casts it aside. The work he is doing he will wish undone ere long. He is weaving a net around himself that he cannot easily break. **This is not my opinion.** In the testimonies sent to Battle Creek, I have given you the light God has given to me. *In no case have I given my own judgment or opinion.* I have **enough to write** of what has been shown me, **without falling back on my own opinions.** You are doing as the children of Israel did again and again. Instead of repenting before God, you reject His words, and attribute all the warnings and reproof to the messenger whom the Lord sends.-- *Testimony for the Battle Creek Church, pp. 50-58 (1882).* (3SM 69, 70)

e. How to help the devil

- i.) I have my work to do, to meet the misconceptions of those who suppose themselves able to say what is testimony from God and what is human production. If those who have done this work continue in this course, *satanic agencies will choose for them...* Those who have helped souls to feel at liberty to specify what is of God in the Testimonies and what are the uninspired words of Sister White, will find that they were **helping the devil** in his **work of deception**. Please read Testimony No. 33, page 211 [Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 682], "How to Receive Reproof."--Letter 28, 1906. (3SM 70)
- (a) If Ellen white as a prophet of God can't clearly define truth and error, what makes Graeme Bradford or anyone else think that they have the ability? If God can't keep His own prophet from speaking error, how can we assume that He is able to enable scholars to discern the error?
- (b) The reality is that **everything is a matter of interpretation**. Since we didn't write the Bible, for example, we all are left with the necessity of interpreting it. We may choose to disagree with Ellen White's interpretation of the text, but whose interpretation are we then left with? **Our own.**

f. Whose message?

- i.) Permit me to express *my mind*, and **yet not my mind, but the word of the Lord.**-- Letter 89, 1899. (Quoted in *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 112). (3SM 70)
- (a) Even though the prophet speaks through plenary inspiration, that does not in any sense change the fact that the message is of God; the words are His.

g. Where there is no special light

- i.) I am **not at liberty to write** to our brethren concerning your future work.... I have **received no instruction** regarding the place where you should locate.... If the Lord



gives me definite instruction concerning you, I will give it you; but ***I cannot take upon myself responsibilities that the Lord does not give me to bear.***--Letter 96, 1909. (3SM 51)

h. As indelible as God's law

- i.) How many have read carefully *Patriarchs and Prophets, The Great Controversy, and The Desire of Ages*? I wish **all** to understand that my confidence in the light that God has given stands firm, because I know that the Holy Spirit's power magnified the truth, and made it honorable, saying: "This is the way, walk ye in it." ***In my books, the truth is stated, barricaded by a "Thus saith the Lord."*** The Holy Spirit traced these truths upon my heart and mind ***as indelibly as the law was traced by the finger of God, upon the tables of stone...***--Letter 90, 1906. (CM 126.2)

i. As inspired as the Scriptures

- i.) "The Holy Ghost is the author of the Scriptures and of the Spirit of Prophecy."—Letter 92, 1900. (3SM 30)

j. Not one heretical sentence

- i.) I am now looking over my diaries and copies of letters written for several years back... I have the most precious matter to reproduce and place before the people in testimony form. While I am able to do this work, the people must have things to revive past history, ***that they may see that there is one straight chain of truth, without one heretical sentence,*** in that which I have written. (3SM 52)

k. Common things

- i.) But there are times when common things must be stated, common thoughts must occupy the mind, common letters must be written and information given that has passed from one to another of the workers. Such words, such information, are not given under the special inspiration of the Spirit of God. Questions are asked at times that are not upon religious subjects at all, and these questions must be answered. --Manuscript 107, 1909. (1SM 39)

l. No need for confusion

- i.) NOTE: EXCEPT FOR THAT WHICH IS IN THE NATURE OF EVERYDAY MATTERS OR BIOGRAPHICAL, THAT WHICH MRS. WHITE SET BEFORE THE PEOPLE WAS BASED UPON THE VISIONS GIVEN TO HER, WHETHER OR NOT SHE USED THE TERM "I SAW." ***SHE, IN HER DAY, AND WE TODAY, DRAW THE LINE, NOT BETWEEN BOOKS AND LETTERS, ET CETERA, BUT BETWEEN THE SACRED AND THE COMMON. NO ONE NEED BE CONFUSED.*** (3SM 60)

m. The more self is exalted

- i.) The ***more self is exalted,*** the more will faith in the Testimonies of the Spirit of God be lessened. . . . ***Those who trust wholly in themselves will see less and less of God in the Testimonies of His Spirit.***" (5T 681).

ii.) “Are we not free...?”

(a) “I die daily.”

(i) On another occasion I spoke in reference to *genuine sanctification*, which is nothing less than a **daily dying to self** and **daily conformity to the will of God...** Paul's sanctification was *a constant conflict with self*. Said he: "I die daily." His will and his desires **every day** conflicted with duty and the will of God. Instead of following inclination, he did the will of God, **however unpleasant and crucifying to his nature**. (4T 299)

n. Prostrated in the dust

i.) I was shown that many had *so little spirituality* that they did not understand the value of the *Testimonies* or their real object. **They talked flippantly** of the Testimonies given by God for the benefit of His people, and **passed judgment upon them**, giving their opinion and **criticizing** this and that, when they would **better** have **placed their hands upon their lips, and prostrated themselves in the dust**; for they could not appreciate the spirit of the Testimonies, because **they knew so little of the Spirit of God**. (5T 672)

*Chapter 82 of Testimonies, Vol. 5, “Nature and Influence of the Testimonies” (pp. 642-691), is Ellen White’s own compilation explaining how to read, evaluate, understand and apply her counsels.*

o. Tearing away the barrier

i.) Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint – Prov. 29:18, nkjv.

ii.) The enemy has made his masterly efforts to unsettle the faith of our own people in the Testimonies, and when these errors come in **they claim to prove all the positions by the Bible**, but they **misinterpret** the Scriptures. They make bold assertions... and misapply the prophecies and the Scriptures to prove falsehood. And, after men have done their work in weakening the confidence of our churches in the Testimonies, they have **torn away the barrier**, that unbelief in the truth shall become widespread, and there is no voice to be lifted up to stay the force of error. (3SM 83)

p. When the testimonies are given up

i.) **One thing is certain:** Those Seventh-day Adventists who take their stand under Satan's banner will first give up their faith in the warnings and reproofs **contained in the Testimonies** of God's Spirit. (3SM 84)

q. If it were possible

i.) Men may get up scheme after scheme, and the enemy will seek to seduce souls from the truth, but **all** who believe that **the Lord** has spoken through Sister White, and has *given her a message*, will be **safe from the many delusions** that will come in these last days. – Letter 50, 1906. (3SM 83)

- r. When my ideas are crossed
- i.) Many times in my experience I have been called upon to meet the attitude of a certain class, who *acknowledged that the testimonies were from God*, but took the position that *this matter and that matter were **Sister White's opinion and judgment...*** If the *preconceived opinions or particular ideas* of some are **crossed** in being reproved by testimonies, they have a burden at once to make plain their position to *discriminate* between the testimonies, **defining what is Sister White's human judgment, and what is the word of the Lord**. Everything that sustains their cherished ideas is divine, and the testimonies to correct their errors are human-- Sister White's opinions. **They make of none effect the counsel of God by their tradition.** -- Manuscript 16, 1889. (3SM 68)

*It appears that Ellen White is not at all in agreement with Bradford & Company's conclusions. The "defense" offered by Bradford, like so many today, is more of a defense for him than for the prophet. It is a very supportive-sounding excuse for not receiving that which she has written as a true prophetic utterance.*

#### IV. Study the Testimonies

- a. The volumes of Spirit of Prophecy, and also the *Testimonies*, should be introduced into every Sabbathkeeping family, and the brethren should know their value and be urged to read them. It was not the wisest plan to place these books at a low figure and have only one set in a church. They should be in the library of every family and read again and again. Let them be kept where they can be *read by many*, and **let them be worn out in being read by all the neighbors.** (4T 390)
- b. I am *instructed* to say to our churches, **Study the Testimonies**. They are written for our admonition and encouragement, upon whom the ends of the world are come. If God's people will not study these messages that are sent to them from time to time, they are **guilty of rejecting light...** The Lord has a controversy with His people because in the past they have not heeded His instruction and followed His guidance. (3SM 358)
- c. *Many are going directly contrary* to the light which God has given to His people, **because they do not read the books** which contain the light and knowledge in cautions, reproofs, and warnings. The cares of the world, the love of fashion, and the lack of religion have turned the attention from the light God has so graciously given... **Light so precious, coming from the throne of God, is hid under a bushel. God will make His people responsible for this neglect.** An account must be rendered to Him for every ray of light He has let shine upon our pathway, whether it has been improved to our advancement in divine things or rejected because it was **more agreeable to follow inclination.** (5T 681)