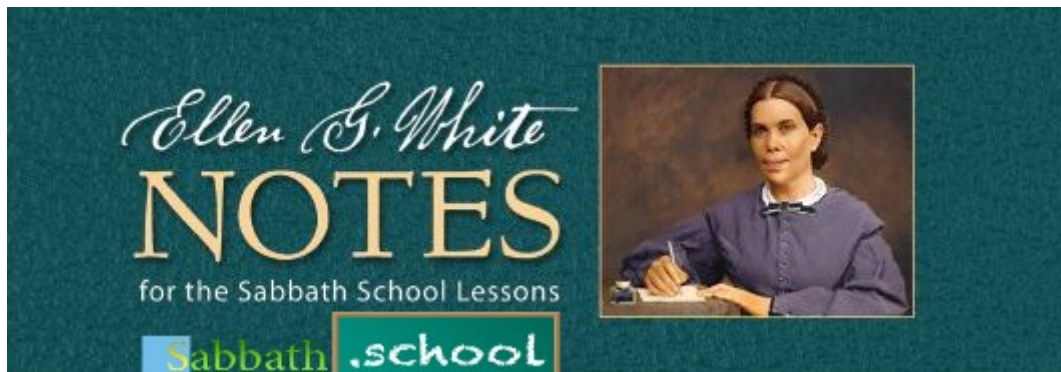


EGW Notes - Lesson 6

The Two Witnesses



Sabbath Afternoon, May 4

Like the builders of [the] houses on the rock, said Jesus, is he who shall receive the words that I have spoken to you, and make them the foundation of his character and life. Centuries before, the prophet Isaiah had written, “The word of our God shall stand forever” (Isaiah 40:8); and Peter, long after the Sermon on the Mount was given, quoting these words of Isaiah added, “This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (1 Peter 1:25). The word of God is the only steadfast thing our world knows. It is the sure foundation. “Heaven and earth shall pass away,” said Jesus, “but My words shall not pass away.” Matthew 24:35.

The great principles of the law, of the very nature of God, are embodied in the words of Christ on the mount. Whoever builds upon them is building upon Christ, the Rock of Ages. In receiving the word, we receive Christ.

And only those who thus receive His words are building upon Him. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 3:11. "There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. Christ, the Word, the revelation of God,—the manifestation of His character, His law, His love, His life,—is the only foundation upon which we can build a character that will endure.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 148.

We need to study the working out of God's purpose in the history of nations and in the revelation of things to come, that we may estimate at their true value things seen and things unseen; that we may learn what is the true aim of life; that, viewing the things of time in the light of eternity, we may put them to their truest and noblest use. . . .

The day is at hand. For the lessons to be learned, the work to be done, the transformation of character to be effected, the time remaining is but too brief a span.

"Behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off. Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; There shall none of My words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord God." Ezekiel 12:27, 28.—*Education*, p. 184.

Those who study the word of God with hearts open to the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, will not remain in

darkness as to the meaning of the word. “If any man willeth to do His will,” Christ said, “he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself.” John 7:17, R.V. All who come to Christ for a clearer knowledge of the truth will receive it. He will unfold to them the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and these mysteries will be understood by the heart that longs to know the truth.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 35.

Sunday, May 5

Two Witnesses

When Christ desired to open to His disciples the truth of His resurrection, He began “at Moses and all the prophets” and “expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.” Luke 24:27. But it is the light which shines in the fresh unfolding of truth that glorifies the old. He who rejects or neglects the new does not really possess the old. For him it loses its vital power and becomes but a lifeless form. . . .

[Many] set aside the Old Testament Scriptures, of which Christ declared, “They are they which testify of Me.” John 5:39. In rejecting the Old, they virtually reject the New; for both are parts of an inseparable whole. No man can rightly present the law of God without the gospel, or the gospel without the law. The law is the gospel embodied, and the gospel is the law unfolded. The law is the root, the gospel is the fragrant blossom and fruit which it bears.

The Old Testament sheds light upon the New, and the New upon the Old. Each is a revelation of the glory of

God in Christ. Both present truths that will continually reveal new depths of meaning to the earnest seeker.—
Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 127, 128.

“Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life.” Every position of truth taken by our people will bear the criticism of the greatest minds; the highest of the world's great men will be brought in contact with truth, and therefore every position we take should be critically examined and tested by the Scriptures. Now we seem to be unnoticed, but this will not always be. Movements are at work to bring us to the front, and if our theories of truth can be picked to pieces by historians or the world's greatest men, it will be done.

We must individually know for ourselves what is truth, and be prepared to give a reason of the hope that we have with meekness and fear, not in a proud, boasting, self-sufficiency, but with the spirit of Christ. We are nearing the time when we shall stand individually alone to answer for our belief. Religious errors are multiplying and entwining themselves with Satanic power about the people. There is scarcely a doctrine of the Bible that has not been denied.—
Evangelism, p. 69.

The Holy Spirit is beside every true searcher of God's Word, enabling him to discover the hidden gems of truth. Divine illumination comes to his mind, stamping the truth upon him with a new, fresh importance. He is filled with a joy never before felt. The peace of God rests upon him. The preciousness of truth is realized as never before. A heavenly light shines upon the Word, making it

appear as though every letter were tinged with gold. God Himself speaks to the heart, making His Word spirit and life.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 128.

Monday, May 6

Prophetic Time Periods

The history of nations speaks to us today. To every nation and to every individual God has assigned a place in His great plan. Today men and nations are being tested by the plummet in the hand of Him who makes no mistake. All are by their own choice deciding their destiny, and God is overruling all for the accomplishment of His purposes.

The prophecies which the great I AM has given in His word, uniting link after link in the chain of events, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tell us where we are today in the procession of the ages and what may be expected in the time to come. All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order. . . .

The Bible, and the Bible only, gives a correct view of these things. Here are revealed the great final scenes in the history of our world, events that already are casting their shadows before, the sound of their approach causing the earth to tremble and men's hearts to fail them for fear.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 536, 537.

The prophecies of Daniel and John are to be diligently studied.

There are those now living who, in studying the prophecies of Daniel and John, received great light from God as they passed over the ground where special prophecies were in process of fulfillment in their order. They bore the message of time to the people. The truth shone out clearly as the sun at noonday. Historical events, showing the direct fulfillment of prophecy, were set before the people, and the prophecy was seen to be a figurative delineation of events leading down to the close of this earth's history. The scenes connected with the working of the man of sin are the last features plainly revealed in this earth's history. The people now have a special message to give to the world, the third angel's message.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, pp. 101, 102.

The substitution of the precepts of men for the commandments of God has not ceased. . . . Men cling to their traditions, and revere their customs, and cherish hatred against those who seek to show them their error. In this day, when we are bidden to call attention to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, we see the same enmity as was manifested in the days of Christ. . . .

Let all who accept human authority, the customs of the church, or the traditions of the fathers, take heed to the warning conveyed in the words of Christ, "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 398.

Tuesday, May 7

The Two Witnesses Are Killed

The war against the Bible, carried forward for so many centuries in France, culminated in the scenes of the Revolution. That terrible outbreaking was but the legitimate result of Rome's suppression of the Scriptures. It presented the most striking illustration which the world has ever witnessed of the working out of the papal policy—an illustration of the results to which for more than a thousand years the teaching of the Roman Church had been tending.

The suppression of the Scriptures during the period of papal supremacy was foretold by the prophets; and the Revelator points also to the terrible results that were to accrue especially to France from the domination of the “man of sin.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 265, 266.

[This event took place during a visit by Ellen White to Nimes, France, where she assisted D. T. Bourdeau in speaking at evangelistic tent meetings.]

That afternoon [November 2] he [Elder Bourdeau] had us accompany him to the Cathedral [in Valence, France] and look upon the bust of Pius VI who was noted in prophecy, who was led into captivity and died in captivity. Here was the one marked in history who received the deadly wound. His heart is encased in the marble monument beneath where the bust is located. We felt rather solemn as we looked upon the monument of this man noted in prophecy.—*Manuscript Releases*,

vol. 8, p. 354.

The very same difficulties which were created to hinder the restoration and upbuilding of the work of God, the great mountains of difficulty which loomed in Zerubbabel's way, will be met by all who today are loyal to God and to His work. Many human inventions are used to carry out plans after the mind and will of men with whom God is not working. But it is not boastful words nor a multitude of ceremonies that show that the Lord is working with His people. The assumed power of the human agent does not decide this question. Those who place themselves in opposition to the Lord's work may hinder for a time, but the same Spirit that has guided the Lord's work all the way through will guide it today. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1179.

We are engaged in a mighty conflict, and it will become more close and determined, as we near the final struggle. We have a sleepless adversary, and he is constantly at work upon human minds that have not had a personal experience in the teachings of the people of God for the past fifty years. Some will take the truth applicable to their time, and place it in the future. Events in the train of prophecy that had their fulfillment away in the past are made future, and thus by these theories the faith of some is undermined.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 102.

Wednesday, May 8

The Two Witnesses Resurrected

Concerning the two witnesses the prophet declares further: "And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." Revelation 11:12. Since France made war upon God's two witnesses, they have been honored as never before. In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was organized. This was followed by similar organizations, with numerous branches, upon the continent of Europe. In 1816 the American Bible Society was founded. When the British Society was formed, the Bible had been printed and circulated in fifty tongues. It has since been translated into many hundreds of languages and dialects.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 287.

For the fifty years preceding 1792, little attention was given to the work of foreign missions. No new societies were formed, and there were but few churches that made any effort for the spread of Christianity in heathen lands. But toward the close of the eighteenth century a great change took place. Men became dissatisfied with the results of rationalism and realized the necessity of divine revelation and experimental religion. From this time the work of foreign missions attained an unprecedented growth.

The improvements in printing have given an impetus to the work of circulating the Bible. The increased facilities for communication between different countries,

the breaking down of ancient barriers of prejudice and national exclusiveness, and the loss of secular power by the pontiff of Rome have opened the way for the entrance of the word of God. For some years the Bible has been sold without restraint in the streets of Rome, and it has now been carried to every part of the habitable globe.—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 287, 288.

The great plan of redemption results in fully bringing back the world into God's favor. All that was lost by sin is restored. Not only man but the earth is redeemed, to be the eternal abode of the obedient. For six thousand years Satan has struggled to maintain possession of the earth. Now God's original purpose in its creation is accomplished. "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." Daniel 7:18.

"From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised." Psalm 113:3. "In that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one." "And Jehovah shall be king over all the earth." Zechariah 14:9. Says the Scripture, "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." "All His commandments are sure. They stand fast forever and ever." Psalm 119:89; 111:7, 8. The sacred statutes which Satan has hated and sought to destroy, will be honored throughout a sinless universe. And "as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations." Isaiah 61:11.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 342.

Thursday, May 9

Truth Triumphant

When the Saviour was about to be separated from His disciples, He comforted them in their sorrow with the assurance that He would come again: "Let not your heart be troubled. . . . In My Father's house are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." John 14:1-3. "The Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him." "Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations." Matthew 25:31, 32. . . .

Then the long-continued rule of evil shall be broken; "the kingdoms of this world" will become "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." Revelation 11:15. "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." "The Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." He shall be "for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of His people." Isaiah 40:5; 61:11; Isaiah 28:5.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 301.

Christ says, "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" (Revelation 3:8). How hard men work to close that door; but they are not able. John's testimony is, "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament" (Revelation

11:19). Beneath the mercy seat, within the ark, were the two tables of stone, containing the law of Jehovah. God's faithful ones saw the light that shone forth to them from the law, to be given to the world. And now Satan's intense activity is to close that door of light; but Jesus says that no man can shut it. Men will turn from the light, denounce it, and despise it, but it still shines forth in clear, distinct rays to cheer and bless all who will see it.

God's children will have a fierce conflict with the adversary of souls, and it will become more exceedingly bitter as we approach the close of the conflict. But the Lord will help those who stand in defense of His truth.—*Faith and Works*, p. 46.

We build on Christ by obeying His word. It is not he who merely enjoys righteousness, that is righteous, but he who does righteousness. Holiness is not rapture; it is the result of surrendering all to God; it is doing the will of our heavenly Father. When the children of Israel were encamped on the borders of the Promised Land, it was not enough for them to have a knowledge of Canaan, or to sing the songs of Canaan. This alone would not bring them into possession of the vineyards and olive groves of the goodly land. They could make it theirs in truth only by occupation, by complying with the conditions, by exercising living faith in God, by appropriating His promises to themselves, while they obeyed His instruction.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 149.

Friday, May 10

For Further Reading

Lift Him Up, “Our Only Safeguard in Trial and Temptation,” p. 130;

The Faith I Live By, “God’s Commandments Are True,” p. 80.