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I Saw the Lovely Jesus

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Discovering the Spirit of Prophecy

“I Saw the Lovely Jesus”

Those who are called to prophetic ministry most often receive direct divine revelation through visions and dreams. Prophetic visions and dreams are something like a virtual reality, in which God communicates to the mind of His messenger more directly, as described in Daniel 10:7-9, Isaiah 1:1, and Habbakuk 2:1, 2.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry. Though not a Scripture author, she received divinely initiated communications through prophetic visions and dreams. A very precious part of these revelations was the privilege of seeing, hearing, and even being touched by Jesus. This had a profound impact on her life and writings. Her lifelong effort, as a messenger of the Lord, was to point people to the Bible and connect them to Jesus.

JESUS SAID, “FEAR NOT”

Ellen White first saw Jesus in a personal supernatural dream when she was about 15 years old. Though she had been baptized, she still struggled with an intense

sense of her sinfulness and unworthiness to be saved. In her dream she was led into a room and saw Jesus.

She related, “There was no mistaking that beautiful countenance. That expression of benevolence and majesty could belong to no other.” When He looked at her, she saw in His eyes that He knew “every circumstance” of her life and all her “inner thoughts and feelings.” Feeling overwhelmed, she tried to hide from His “searching eyes.” Then the most amazing thing happened.

She wrote: “He drew near with a smile, and, laying His hand upon my head, said, ‘Fear not.’” This expression of pity and loving acceptance overwhelmed her. She remembered: “The sound of His sweet voice thrilled my heart with a happiness it had never before experienced. I was too joyful to utter a word, but, overcome with emotion, sank prostrate at His feet.”

After a time, while she was still in the dream, her strength returned, and she arose. As she left the place, she recollected: “The loving eyes of Jesus were still upon me, and His smile filled my soul with gladness. His presence filled me with a holy reverence and an inexpressible love.”¹

This inaugural dream of Jesus was followed by many others after she was called to prophetic ministry in December 1844. During her early years she wrote of her visions and dreams: “I have often seen the lovely Jesus, that He is a person.”² Again and again she referred to the “lovely Jesus.” His facial expressions, particularly His eyes and the sound of His voice, had a profound impact on her.

THE PLAN OF SALVATION

The views and messages she received in vision portrayed past, current, and future events. Ellen White was taken back to the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate from the forbidden tree. She was shown a visual representation of the meeting of God the Father and God the Son as they confirmed their plan for the redemption of humanity.

She wrote, “I then saw the lovely Jesus and beheld an expression of sympathy and sorrow upon His countenance. Soon I saw Him approach the exceeding bright light which enshrouded the Father. Said my accompanying angel, ‘He is in close converse with His Father.’ The anxiety of the angels seemed to be intense while Jesus was communing with His Father. Three times He was shut in by the glorious light about the Father, and the third time He came from the Father we could see His person. His countenance was calm, free from all perplexity and trouble, and shone with a loveliness which words cannot describe. He then made known to the angelic choir that a way of escape had been made” for lost humanity.

Then she described Jesus’ message. “He had been pleading with His Father, and had obtained permission to give His own life as a ransom for the race, to bear their sins, and take the sentence of death upon Himself, thus opening a way whereby they might, through the merits of His blood, find pardon for past transgressions, and by obedience be brought back to the garden from which they were driven.”³

THE DESIRE OF AGES

Ellen White gave particular emphasis to the earthly life of Christ in her writings. As she was shown scene after scene, some were “pleasant to contemplate,” but others “pained” her heart.⁴ She exclaimed in a letter, “Oh, how inefficient, how incapable I am of expressing the things which burn in my soul in reference to the mission of Christ! . . . I know not how to present subjects in the living power in which they stand before me.”⁵

Her magnificent book on the life of Christ, *The Desire of Ages*, has helped many millions of people to know and fall in love with Jesus as Savior and Friend. Ellen White saw Jesus and His current ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. “I was taken off in vision to the most holy place, where I saw Jesus still interceding for Israel. . . .

Ellen White’s writings draw us to Jesus as our living Savior and Friend.

Jesus was clothed with priestly garments. He gazed in pity on the remnant, then raised His hands, and with a voice of deep pity cried, ‘*My blood, Father, My blood, My blood, My blood!*’⁶ She saw the “tender love that God has for His people, and it is very great.”⁷

In vision Ellen White was also taken to the future, when the redeemed enter the New Jerusalem. “The pearly gates of the New Jerusalem are thrown open and swing back on their glittering hinges, and the glad and joyful voice of the lovely Jesus is heard, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, bidding us to enter.”⁸

THE LOVE OF GOD

The personal and powerful way that her visions affected her is described in this personal account that she wrote to a friend: “Yesterday . . . we had a sweet, glorious time. . . . The love of God was shed abroad in my heart, my whole being was ravished with the glory of God and I was taken off in vision. I saw the exceeding loveliness and glory of Jesus. His countenance was brighter than the sun at noonday. His robe was whiter than the whitest white. How can I, dear sister, describe to you the glories of heaven? . . . Dear sister, is not heaven cheap enough?”⁹

Ellen White’s writings draw us to Jesus as our living Savior and Friend. We are called to experience His love and care day by day. We can look forward to His second coming, when we will all see Him with glorified eyes and hear His beautiful voice welcoming us home. Until that day, we can read Ellen White’s writings and be drawn to the Bible and our marvelous and loving God. In Jesus “dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9), and it is He “who fills all in all” (Eph. 1:23).

He is our joy, our hope, and our salvation. Soon we will see Him “face to face” (1 Cor. 13:12). ©

¹ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 1, pp. 28, 29.

² Ellen G. White, *Early Writings* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1882, 1945), p. 77.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 126; in *Review and Herald*, Feb. 17, 1853.

⁴ Ellen G. White, manuscript 93, 1900.

⁵ Ellen G. White, letter 40, 1892; see also Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958, 1980), book 3, p. 115.

⁶ E. G. White, *Early Writings*, pp. 36-38.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁸ Ellen G. White, letter 3, 1851.

⁹ *Ibid.*

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