

Profound Statements about the Spirit of Prophecy

Observations of Carsten Johnsen

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[Bold supplied; italics in original]

Of course, I need not tell you the old story about the "small light", which, from the beginning, used to lead our pioneers to the Great One. My confession may here take this plain form: I ascribe to the **Spirit of Prophecy** every bit of any insights I have been privileged to gather in professional fields of human knowledge I have specialized in. Again and again have I been forced to shrink back in amazement as the writings of a 17-year-old girl, without any formal education to speak of, came to my knowledge. Through document after document, this humble servant of the Lord provided me with the groundwork; that is, the pillars, the basic principles of philosophy which my teachers in academic institutions of the world had never been able to give me the slightest idea about.

Crucial Events in SDA Theology Today, p. 35.1

How could I gain safe and accurate knowledge about spiritualism as well as the Sabbath? Fortunately to a Seventh-day Adventist researcher of meaningfulness in the drama-filled field of the history of ideas, there is a rare source of scholarly knowledge available: the **Spirit of Prophecy**. That Source is marvelously fitted to provide expert answers to the deepest questions of conventional thought.

Crucial Events in SDA Theology Today, p. 38.2

In the hope of shedding some relevant light on this problem, I shall relate something happening to me at the time when my first manuscript on the Sabbath, some decades ago, had been accepted for publication. It was, of course, important for R & H Publishing Association to find a competent editor for the task of making it ready to go into print. That special editor complained to me that he had difficulty in understanding certain parts of my introduction. I seemed to be operating with concepts of spiritualism rather unknown to him. By way of answer I explained to him the concepts the **Spirit of Prophecy** had placed at the disposal of our pioneers, regarding the basic nature of spiritualism. It then looked as if my editor had grasped the matter. He asked me, however, to rewrite certain passages making those new insights understandable to all my readers, who might also be assumed to be unfamiliar with certain aspects of the term "spiritualism", particularly so in an English-speaking environment. I supplied **Spirit of Prophecy** references, making these important facts about spiritualist thought-forms clear to us, as far as they relate themselves to the Sabbath question. But, evidently, my editor did not have any appreciation all that enthusiastic for this additional knowledge coming to us through that source of enlightenment. At least, at the moment when the Editor-in-Chief suggested unexpectedly that the manuscript be dropped, due to its "unpopular nature", my man supported this vote of blunt dismissal!

My own opinion about this is still the same. Without those insights miraculously made available to us, we could hardly discern our way toward a full understanding of the true battle against the Sabbath happening to our modern Western world.

Crucial Events in SDA Theology Today, p. 46.1&2

Let me then stress this thing which has aroused my sincere admiration. Again and again I am overwhelmed by a feeling of thankfulness to God for the blessings our SDA heritage has had in store for us as students of Biblical philosophy. I do not ascribe that heritage of genuine realism so much to the ingenuity of our pioneers, but rather to God's miraculous intervention through the divine revelation coming to us graciously and gratuitously, directly from the **Spirit of Prophecy**.

Day of Destiny, p. 131.2

It has been a fascinating experience to me, as a student of the inroads of spiritualistic trends in our Western culture, to become better acquainted with the incredible broadness, as well as the boundless depth, of the conception some of our outstanding Adventist pioneers had of the many-headed monster: SPIRITUALISM. I must admit the great surprise that came to me when, as a historian of ideas, I had opportunity to compare Ellen White's knowledge about spiritualism as a basic philosophy, to the common knowledge about it possessed by Americans in general, and by Seventh-day Adventists in particular. Her insight was seen to stand out in an admirable way in this field, as compared to the conceptions of spiritualism we ordinary SDA members have espoused. She would even put to shame, in this respect, the great majority of scholars among us, and scholars in the world as a whole. I partly ascribe this to the deeper knowledge our students of the Bible, during our pioneer days, generally possessed in the field of Biblical thought, as compared to an increasing number of would-be philosophers of the present day. And one might in that number include an increasing number of theologians and other scholars within our own ranks, graduating from universities of the world around us. It must have meant a wonderful asset to our pioneers to have in their midst, the live reality of the **Spirit of Prophecy**, which is, of course, the Spirit of boundless wisdom and boundless goodness.

The Mystic "Omega" of End-Time Crisis, p. 4.1

However, in order to make it clear to you how the **Spirit of Prophecy** restored my faith in the Word of God as a source of realism I could depend on 100 percent, I must first give you some brief information about the diametrically opposite, the irrealism of the leading philosophical trend of our Western civilization. That is, the age-old tradition of a humanism which is pagan through and through, and which has given itself the beautiful name of idealism. I am dumfounded now to discover how thoroughly that type of idealism, which is just a synonym for spiritualism, has penetrated the basic thinking of every one of us. Our minds are so sick as a result of the pattern of thought pervading this philosophy, that we are hardly able to understand, offhand, anymore, the philosophy the Bible teaches on every page. The first Christians could understand it easily. But you and I have been so heavily imbued with the thought forms of pagan dualism that our thinking has to be reconditioned or geared back to a pattern of thought in harmony once more with Biblical realism. The **Spirit of Prophecy** messages, so marvelously geared to the outward form of expression peculiar to twentieth century people, and yet remaining perfectly in accordance with the realistic substance of Biblical thinking evidently accomplish the wonder of making it possible for twentieth century people, and yet remaining perfectly in accordance with the realistic substance of Biblical thinking, evidently accomplish the wonder of making it possible for twentieth century man to appropriate that realism of old.

The Mystic "Omega" of End-Time Crisis, p. 6.2

Today I tell my students without hesitation that if I have made any contribution whatsoever to the philosophical enlightenment of our day, I owe it all to my study of the Bible and the **Spirit of Prophecy**. The way that Spirit dealt with the "new philosophy" of the "Alpha" at the time when some of our most learned men insisted on introducing downright spiritualism into our historic movement of Seventh-day Adventism, was to me an overwhelming evidence that the supreme Master of realistic thought is, all the time, and in all fields, our omnipotent and omniscient Leader: Jesus Christ.

The Mystic "Omega" of End-Time Crisis, p. 7.2

Let me ask you one pertinent question: Do you think that blessedly unsophisticated teenage girl, giving expression to serious thoughts about heaven and hell, about good and evil in a tremendous world of reality, did possess, in herself, a greater stock of professional background knowledge about philosophy, Oriental as well Occidental, than the average found in her natural peers? If not, then why did book *Early Writing* every time she ventured upon subjects of deep philosophy or the history of that philosophy? Her ventures of that kind happen ever so often here, as well as in other writings of hers, but never does she come out with a single statement that would expose her as an ignoramus. On the contrary, I am going to show you cases that can hardly fail to fill a sincere and honest historian of ideas with admiration. Where the God of heaven is permitted to lead a writer in charge of an important message, there is no reason to fear that a major revision will be needed for the main points of that writing.

But why, then, do those heavy doubts about the reliability of the **Spirit of Prophecy** writings on points as significant for a clear understanding as God's perfect historic plan of man's redemption, assail some of our most well-known theologians at a time like this?

This is nothing to wonder at so greatly. It is a characteristic of eschatology that it never appears more unbelievable than in the very day of the eschaton itself. Our time is the time immediately prior to the most realistic unfolding of events which Seventh-day Adventists for more than one and a quarter centuries have heralded as the supreme highlight of Christian end-time history; that is, the literal coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven and the first large-scale "space journey" deemed worthy of prediction in Holy Writ.

The Mystic "Omega" of End-Time Crisis, p. 56.3 - 57.2

In fact, hardly in any other cultural environment has the grip of vain intellectualism been more merciless and total than in the present civilizations of the Western World. Never has man been more infatuated with a downright cult of disruptive abstractions than today. Just take a critical look at our much lauded Western education. Take the IQ tests as an eloquent example. You know those "infallible" inquiries which are supposed to measure a child's potential for "success" in a harsh world. The great question for each one of us seems to have become: Where do I find my place on that fateful scale between imbecility and genius? Well, what *kind* of intelligence is it that those tests consider really worthwhile? The answer is not difficult: A purely abstract type of intelligence is the great cry. Who asks about your practical intelligence, your religious intelligence, or any other type of everyday human qualifications? For those who have made up their minds to reach the top, one thing is in demand: the ability to tackle abstractions. Do you know where we have got that fantastic prestige held by "pure reason"?

It is part and parcel of our "precious" heritage from pagan Greece. Do we realize, however, that this paganism is on the verge of extirpating the last vestiges of Christianity in Western lands? Are we aware of the cruel war waged by pagan idealism against the philosophy of God

Himself, the one He insisted on teaching His own people, and still teaches through every page of the Bible and the **Spirit of Prophecy** literature? Beware of catastrophe, dear fellow believers: The war I am speaking about is threatening to annihilate us as a people and as individual Seventh-day Adventists. Only God can deliver us.

The Mystic "Omega" of End-Time Crisis, pp. 65.2 - 66.1

The **Spirit of Prophecy** did not need to wait until the Swedish theologian Anders Nygren, with his famous book, *Agape and Eros*, had introduced into modern Protestant theology an important inquiry into the essence of those two types of love as fundamental motifs at constant war with each other down through the ages. That inquiry, which certainly has not yet reached its culmination, did not begin until a couple of decades after Ellen White's death. But she had better sources of information than any human theologian, either in the past or in the present. Nowhere in purely human writings will you ever find the marvelous insights that hit the core of the matter with dumfounding precision,, and with a common sense understandability which is a blessed relief.

The Mystic "Omega" of End-Time Crisis, p. 111.3

In my "Omega I" I started giving the evidence I have come across in my own studies of the history of ideas, for an implicit faith in the irreproachable "scholarliness" of the **Spirit of Prophecy** writings, even in fields of knowledge in which one might hesitate to look for it. There is something here which I am almost inclined to call the "miraculous scholarliness" of our pioneers, over against a certain would-be scholarliness of some of our theologians today. I am speaking about academically high-ranking persons within as well as without the precincts of our movement today.

Omega II, p. 5.4

I am afraid I even tried to ease my guilty conscience as a Bible scholar, intimating that I did not particularly see how we could be "responsible" for always finding clear passages in the Bible, substantiating all statements made by the **Spirit of Prophecy** writings. And I wondered "if it was not unfair", on the part of the enemies of Seventh-day Adventism, to attack us with the "sola scriptura" principle on these grounds.

Today I know this kind of circumventions constitutes a poor sign of Biblical realism. On the contrary, it is our sacred duty to dig, and keep on digging, deep down into the treasure chest of Biblical philosophy, just in order to arrive at realistic substantiations which are here indispensable. We must never give up before we know for sure exactly where the smaller light leads directly up to the greater One.

What reason did I have for any nagging doubts regarding the triumphant goal to be envisaged and our ability to reach it in Christ's name, with Christ's help? For decades already it had been my unflinching experience during all inquiries into the strange avenues of the history of philosophy, that precisely the humblest ones among our pioneers -- including Ellen White of course -- had distinguished themselves through a factual grasp of essential truths which still seemed to remain almost a total secret to the famous experts in theology in the contemporary world. I had, on so many occasions already, been tremendously impressed every time when I discovered what marvelous light of historical knowledge had come to our pioneers through the inscrutable instrumentality of the **Spirit of Prophecy** writings.

This applied in a remarkable way to the spectacular case of platonic spiritualism, which I was bound to get particularly acquainted with as the one paramount trend penetrating the whole philosophy of our Greek-inspired Occidental culture. In my book, *The Mystic Omega of Endtime Crisis*, I am giving a brief analysis of precisely some weird and little heeded facts connected with the pantheist movement as a special feature in our Church's history, bent on destroying, in our peculiar environment, the effects of sanctification, making its penetration simply impossible.

I have become increasingly impressed over the years by the profound knowledge available to you and me about this main-stream phenomenon of all Western philosophy. It is a unique enlightenment for which we are endlessly indebted to the **Spirit of Prophecy**.

Omega II, pp. 7.6 - 8.5

Today, more than ever before, it becomes evident that the **Spirit of Prophecy** was absolutely necessary for you and me in order to protect us from a spurious and disruptive philosophy, such as that of Nygren. How deeply he has drunk from the sources of modern philosophers, such as Kierkegaard and Kant, becomes evident when we consider one of his most persistent ideas, namely that of Agape being first and foremost a fundamental motif of the most extreme *irrationality!* (See my book: *The Part of the Story You Were Never Told About Agape and Eros*, pp. 52 to 59: What is the Essence of Nygren's thesis about Agape as the Great Unreasonable One?) To Ethics maybe the most dubious thing is that Nygren's concept of Agape virtually explodes all known barriers of law and justice.

Omega II, p. 90.1

Personally I know for sure that I have nothing to brag about. The **Spirit of Prophecy** was my only chance to be led into a living knowledge of Biblical realism. If you think otherwise about your own abilities, I think I have experience enough with SDA students, to entertain highly justified doubts about your special abilities in this respect. Not once have I come across an Adventist Bible student who managed to grasp fully the far-reaching facts of Biblical realism in this endtime era, without a humble faith in the great God-given science of the **Spirit of Prophecy**.

Omega II, p. 91.1

The **Spirit of Prophecy** messages form an indispensable part of the totality making up life itself in the particular case of your destiny and mine at a time like this. Leave it out of your life, and you may be lost. Could you really content yourself with what any main-stream Protestant denomination has acquired in terms of sound Biblical anthropology and advanced theology? Then how could you expect God, the Lord of the endtime, to deem you worthy of the name of a Seventh-day Adventist? With such a faithless attitude you are heaping shame on that peculiar God's glorious name.

Omega II, p. 92.3

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