

THE DANGERS OF TIME SETTING

On September 5, 1891, Ellen White delivered a sermon in Lansing, Michigan titled, "It is not for You to Know the Times and the Seasons." I bring this to your attention this morning because there are voices here and there today that are speculating about when the Lord will come. Perhaps you've heard them. Maybe you yourself have been thinking about this, and if you have been, it wouldn't be anything unusual with all the craziness happening in the world today, because most Christians realize that the end of all things is at hand. The closer we get to the second coming we can expect to hear more and more voices claiming that they know something that God has not revealed. Whether instigated by Satan or just out of curiosity and a desire to know something they think others don't know, people are beginning to talk of these things to their own hurt and to that of others. I've noticed over the years that from time to time there seems to be a resurgence of certain teachings, and this is what I see happening right now regarding time setting, and so I think we should talk about it just so we know for certain what God's word says.

Over the past several months I have talked about subjects that, without a doubt, show conclusively that the end of all things is at hand and that the coming of Jesus is "even at the doors." However, that being said, we have been warned over and over and over again about the dangers of time setting, and what would result should we push the idea that Christ will come at a certain time in the very near future, or within certain parameters, like somewhere between, let's say 2025-2027, for example.

The reason I mention the year 2025 are for two reasons. Number 1, because of "Project 2025" where the hope is that a conservative Republican President will be elected to straighten out our country, which it certainly needs, but at the same time includes embracing Sunday sacredness, and number 2, because of the pope's special year of jubilee called "Pilgrims of Hope." If you want to know what this is all about just get on the Internet and key in "pilgrims of hope" and you can research it for yourself. This is something that has already been in the works for six years, and the seventh, which is beginning right about now, is when the pope will throw open the doors of Saint Peter's Basilica, followed by several other of their more prominent churches, in a symbolic gesture of a special year of grace for its own members and the members of every other church to be forgiven and accepted back into their communion, with the idea of undoing all that Protestantism has done. And all this is being wrapped up with their climate change agenda to save the planet, which again will have something to do with closing things down on Sunday. Will all this soon be fulfilled? Possibly, but it may not! These are certainly interesting developments we should keep our eye on, but we're only going to

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know for sure after they come to pass, if they do, and not before.

Notice what Jesus said about His coming in **Mark 13:28, 29**, "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass (**once they happen**), know that it is nigh, even at the doors." And so, Bible prophecy is given, not so we can know exactly when a certain thing is going to happen before it happens, but that when it does happen our faith will be established.

Now, I hope Jesus does come, because I want to see the face of the one who sacrificed His life for me, and the One I love, and I'm sick and tired of the way this world is going, and any thinking Christian would desire the same, but I'm beginning to see a trend that's going beyond what God says, which is the definition of what? Fanaticism. And that's something we should avoid at all costs, because fanaticism causes problems and confusion all its own. And so, it's not my desire or my purpose to throw cold water on the nearness of Christ's coming; I don't want to be like the evil servant Jesus spoke of that said, "my Lord delayeth His coming." But to try to pinpoint a date, or even a year, or say that Jesus will be here within two years or ten years is to say something that is contrary to God's word.

I'd like to read a passage of Scripture so we will know exactly what Jesus said about this subject so we can become grounded and settled "upon a thus saith the Lord", and not a thus saith man.

Three of the gospels record what Jesus said about this; Matthew, Mark, which we already read a little bit from, and Luke, and all three give a little different account of what Jesus said, but they all bring out the same fact, that we are not going to know exactly when Jesus will come. And some people say, "yes, I know, but", but there are no buts about it, and the sooner we realize that the better.

I'd like to read the account in **Matthew 24**. We're not going to go into great detail as we read, because these are things we should already be familiar with. Beginning with **verse 29** Jesus said, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days (**speaking of the dark ages**) shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light (**both of these signs took place when? May 19, 1780. This is an historical fact that anyone who has Internet access can verify**), and the stars shall fall from heaven (**this also happened on November 13,**

1833, and this can be verified in recorded history as well. Just enter the dates and you'll find them), and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken (*Early Writing page 41 says this is yet future*): verse 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven (do you remember what the sign is? It's a small black cloud about half the size of a man's hand that becomes lighter and more glorious as it draws near. *The Great Controversy, page 640*): and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Which, by the way, wouldn't be necessary if people go straight to heaven when they die, right? Now Jesus is going to explain Himself beginning with verse 32) Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves (this would be in the spring time. When this happens, Jesus said), ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it (the coming of the Lord) is near, even (where?) even at the doors. (what happens when someone is at your door? The next step is to come in, isn't it? Friends, Jesus has been at the door for a long time, the signs in the sun moon and stars have been fulfilled long ago. And so, we don't have to wonder if Jesus is coming soon, because He's already at the door! So who's holding things up? His people are not yet ready to open the door and let Him in, are they? We still have a work to do in character preparation and in taking the gospel to the world) Verily I say unto you, this generation (the generation that witnessed the signs in the sun, moon, and falling of the stars) shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled (and that happened. There was a generation living that saw all these signs fulfilled, because these signs were only separated by 53 years). Verse 35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (In other words, everything has and will happen exactly as Jesus described. Now listen) But of that day and hour (when the Lord shall come) knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away (in the waters of the flood that is, and the ones left behind were left alive in the ark, just the opposite of the popular teaching); so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken (They shall perish just like those who were taken away in the flood), and the other left (to live). Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he

would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Three times in these verses Jesus said we are not going to know when He's coming, and He wasn't just talking about the wicked! He said we can know when He is near, but that's the limit of our knowledge. We can try to calculate and figure and put together time charts and speculate and all that, but we are not going to be able to know a definite time; period!

In the *Review and Herald, December 27, 1898*, inspiration says the following, "Christ told his disciples that the time of his coming was involved in secrecy (**involved in what? Secrecy**); yet notwithstanding this, there have been and will be those who claim to know when this great event will take place. Very earnest they are in trying to map out the future, which the Lord has placed in a thick cloud (**placed where? In a thick cloud**); and notwithstanding their failures, they continue their work. But their reasoning is false (their reasoning is what? False, no matter what they come up with), and the Lord has warned them off the ground they occupy; for the coming of the Son of man is God's mystery (**is what? God's mystery**)." "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed (**which His coming is not**) belong unto us and to our children forever."
Deuteronomy 29:29

And so again, by the things that "are revealed" we can know when it is near, but we are not going to know the day, or the hour, or the year for that matter. How do we know that? Because that's what Jesus said, and He can't lie, and neither did He make a mistake!

Let me read it to you from the meeting I referenced at the beginning from the sermon Ellen preached in Lansing, Michigan on September 5, 1891. You can find this in the *1888 Materials, page 959*. She says, "I was searching through my writings before coming to this meeting, to see what I should take with me to Australia, and I found an envelope on which was written. "Testimony given in regard to time-setting. June 21, 1851. Preserve carefully." I opened it, and this is what I found. It reads, "A copy of a vision the Lord gave sister White June 21, 1851, at Camden, N. Y. The Lord showed me that the message must go, and that it must not be hung on time: for time will never be a test again. (**What does never mean? It means, don't hold your breath, because it's not going to happen**) I saw that some were getting a false excitement, arising from preaching time, that the third

angel's message can stand on its own foundation, and that it needs not time to strengthen it, and that it will go with mighty power, and do its work, and will be cut short in righteousness.

"I saw some were making everything bend to this next fall (remember, this was written in 1851. I don't know what was happening back then, but that was only seven years after 1844. So evidently there were some who just couldn't get over the fact that Jesus didn't come when they expected Him to and kept trying to do their calculations) "I saw some were making everything bend to this next fall; that is, making their calculations, and disposing of their property in reference to that time. I saw that this was wrong for this reason (now listen), instead of going to God daily, and earnestly desiring to know their present duty, they looked ahead, and made their calculations as though they knew that the work would end this fall, without inquiring their duty of God daily. (You get the idea that daily communion with God is more important than speculating about a future time, right?) This was the document I came upon last Monday in searching over my writings, and here is another which was written in regard to a man who was setting time in 1884 (so here we're talking about, not seven years, but 40 years after the great disappointment), and sending broadcast his arguments to prove his theories. The report of what he was doing was brought to me at the Jackson, Mich., camp-meeting, and I told the people they need not take heed to this man's theory; for the event he predicted would not take place. The times and the seasons God has put in his own power, and why has not God given us this knowledge? (now listen) Because we would not make a right use of it if he did. A condition of things would result from this knowledge among our people that would greatly retard the work of God in preparing a people to stand in the great day that is to come. We are not to live upon time excitement. We are not to be engrossed with speculations in regard to the times and the seasons which God has not revealed. Jesus has told his disciples to 'watch,' but not for definite time. His followers are to be in the position of those who are listening for the orders of their Captain: they are to watch, wait, pray, and work, as they approach the time for the coming of the Lord: but no one will be able to predict just when that time will come: for 'of that day and hour knoweth no man.' You will not be able to say that he will come in one, two, or five years, neither are you to put off his coming by stating that it may not be for ten or twenty years."

Is that clear friends? We're not going to know! Time after time after time through the years people have set dates for the Lord's coming, and do you know when this line of reasoning started? It was over 2000 years ago with the 12 disciples when Jesus was here.

Notice what it says in **Acts 1:3-7**. It says, Jesus “showed himself alive after his passion (**or His suffering on the cross**) by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: and, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him (**even though He had already told them to just wait in Jerusalem**), they asked of him saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? (**you see, they were all concerned and wondering about time, even back then**) And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.”

The disciples were anxious to know the exact time for the revelation of the kingdom of God, weren't they? And I don't blame them. It would have been strange if they didn't. But Jesus tells them that they are not going to know the times and the seasons; for the Father has not revealed it to them. In other words, to understand when the kingdom of God should be restored, was not the most importance thing for them to know. They were to be followers of Jesus, and be found praying, waiting, watching, and working for perishing souls, just like we're supposed to do. They were to be representatives to the world of the character of Christ, and isn't that our work as well? Yes! What do you suppose would have happened had Jesus told them He wasn't coming for over 2000 years? What would that have done? It would have discouraged them, no doubt. So in mercy God withheld that information, and He also withholds it from us. I have been a Christian for over 50 years, and 50 years ago I would not have thought that we would still be hear, but here we are.

Jesus said, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power, but that they would soon receive the kind of power they most needed, which was the power of the Holy Ghost! And after the Holy Ghost came upon them, they were to do what? Go about calculating the time and telling people when Jesus would be coming back? No! They were to “Be witnesses”, they were to reflect the character of Christ to those “in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth”, and this is the same work that we are to be engaged in over 2000 years later.

Not that we can't watch current events and compare that with Bible prophecy so we can know that time is short and warn people of the coming crisis, but we must do that without

living in expectation of some special time of excitement. Instead of speculations in regard to the times and seasons which God has placed in His own power, and withheld from us, we are to yield ourselves to the control of the Holy Spirit. There's plenty of work we can do to fulfill present duties without spinning our wheels to come up with something new and startling to gain attention, or to get people all jazzed up only to be, what? disappointed when it doesn't come to pass. And we can be absolutely certain that it will not come to pass, because our Creator said we're not going to know.

In **John 17:3** Jesus, when praying for His followers said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." All that Jesus said and did had this one object in view, to cement the truth in the minds of the people that they might know God and have the assurance of eternal life, and that's to be our main focus.

In the sermon Ellen White preached; the one I mentioned earlier in the **1888 Materials, page 958** it says, "Jesus did not come to astonish men with some great announcement of some special time when some great event would occur, but he came to instruct and save the lost. He did not come to arouse and gratify curiosity; for he knew that this would but increase the appetite for the curious and the marvelous."

You see, this is one of the problems with following time excitement, it increases the appetite for more of the same, and to some people it's like a drug habit that takes a stronger and stronger dose to bring the same high. They just have to have more and more of it, and as a result, the more simple and essential truths that reach the heart and require obedience don't hold much interest any more.

The quote from the **1888 Materials** continues by saying, "We are in continual danger (**what kind of danger? Continual danger!**) of getting above the simplicity of the gospel. There is an intense desire on the part of many to startle the world with something original, that shall lift the people into a state of spiritual ecstasy, and change the present order of experience. There is certainly great need of a change in the present order of experience; for the sacredness of present truth is not realized as it should be, but the change we need is a change of heart, and can only be obtained by seeking God individually for his blessing, by pleading with him for his power, by fervently praying that his grace may come upon us, and that our characters may be transformed. Should we advance in spiritual knowledge, we would see the truth developing and expanding in lines of which we have little dreamed, but it will never develop in any line that will lead us to imagine

that we may know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power. Again and again have I been warned in regard to time-setting. There will never again be a message for the people of God that will be based on time. We are not to know the definite time either for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or for the coming of Christ. . . Christ has told us to watch; 'for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.' 'Watch and pray' is the charge that is given us by our Redeemer. Day by day we are to seek the enlightenment of the Spirit of God, that it may do its office work upon the soul and character. O, how much time has been wasted through giving attention to trifling things. . . The times and the seasons are known only to God, but we are each to know that it is well with our souls, that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory."

Now, I titled this sermon "The Dangers of Time Setting" for a reason, and I can think of several reasons why it's dangerous. Do you remember the story about the little boy who cried wolf? Well, let me refresh your memory. This is from The Fables of Aesop who was a Greek storyteller about 500 years before Christ, but it teaches an important lesson. I don't know if there are any children listening, but we'll make this the children's story this morning.

"A Shepherd Boy was tended his master's Sheep near a dark forest not far from the village. Soon he found life in the pasture very dull. All he could do to amuse himself was to talk to his dog or play on his shepherd's pipe. One day as he sat watching the Sheep and the quiet forest, and thinking what he would do should he see a wolf, he thought of a plan to amuse himself. His Master had told him to call for help should a Wolf attack the flock, and the Villagers would drive it away. So now, though he had not seen anything that even looked like a Wolf, he ran toward the village shouting at the top of his voice, 'Wolf! Wolf!' As he expected, the villagers who heard the cry dropped their work and ran in great excitement to the pasture. But when they got there they found the Boy doubled up with laughter at the trick he had played on them. A few days later the Shepherd Boy again shouted, 'Wolf! Wolf!' Again the Villagers ran to help him, only to be laughed at again. Then one evening as the sun was setting behind the forest and the shadows were creeping out over the pasture, a wolf really did spring from the underbrush and fall upon the Sheep. In terror the Boy ran toward the village shouting 'Wolf! Wolf!' But though the Villagers heard the cry, they did not run to help him as they had before. 'He cannot fool us again,' they said. The Wolf killed a great many of the Boy's sheep and then slipped away into the forest."

So, what can we learn from this story. Number one, the boy had lied, hadn't he? Which means, liars may not be believed, even when they tell the truth. And can't we see how this applies to time setting? When we set dates of any kind, and things don't come to pass, and they won't, because Jesus said they won't, then our credibility will be lessened and people won't believe us when we have other more important truths to share.

I remember some years ago of an elderly couple, and I'm elderly myself now, and I never thought I would get this old before the Lord comes, but here I am. But this couple got acquainted with a man who was just sure he knew when Jesus would come, and evidently he was pretty convincing. So the lady called me one day and wanted to know what I thought about it, and I said, "I don't know what this man is teaching, and I don't need to know, because it's not going to happen, so don't worry about it." And she said, "How can you be so sure" and I said, "can God lie?" She said, "No." And you know what? Jesus didn't come, and that man, if he's still alive, is probably still trying to calculate when it will happen, and more than likely the people that know him are no longer looking with anticipation to anything else he has to say.

Number two, most people are great procrastinators, aren't they? If we think Jesus is coming in 2025 for example, or some other more specific date, people may tend to put off till tomorrow what they should do today. For instance, what if I have a particular sin that so easily besets me and I think I have time to continue to indulge that sin a little longer because I know I have a certain amount of time before the Lord comes? Well, there are a couple things wrong with that kind of thinking. First of all, when we continue in sin when we know better, it only strengthens the more we indulge, and we are in danger of committing the unpardonable sin. Secondly, none of us knows when we will breath our last, do we? Our life might end today in a hundred different ways. We may get in our cars on our way home from church and get into a fatal accident. We may have a heart attack at any moment, especially if we're elderly, and those chances increase the older we get. We may go shopping at Walmart the day a mass shooter decides to shoot everyone in sight. It happens more and more frequently these days, doesn't it? Life is very uncertain, and even if you are a young person who thinks they're going to live forever, there are no guarantees.

Number three, we are responsible for what others take away from what we teach. We are our brother's keeper in this sense. In *Testimonies for the Church, volume 1, pages 114* it says, "There is too much of an independence of spirit indulged. . . This must be laid

aside, and there must be a drawing together of the servants of God. There has been too much of a spirit to ask, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' Said the angel, Yea, thou art thy brother's keeper. Thou shouldest have a watchful care for thy brother, be interested for his welfare, and cherish a kind, loving spirit towards him. Press together, press together." And so, we should keep in mind that others may be affected negatively by what we say and do, especially in regards to the coming of the Lord.

Number four, if we get involved in time setting we will be disappointed and discouraged and will be disappointing and discouraging others when the prediction does not come to pass, and it won't, because we've already been told in plain language that it's "involved in secrecy", that "the Lord has placed it in a thick cloud", that it's "false reasoning", and it's "God's mystery."

And number five, if we get all involved with time setting we'll be in danger of getting above the simplicity of the gospel. Instead of going to God daily, as we should be doing, and earnestly desiring to know our present duty, we'll be looking ahead to some future time when we think the Lord will come and miss out on the daily preparation that's necessary to be ready for the time when the Lord actually does come.

So, when Jesus said to His inquiring disciples, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power", what did He mean? The word "Times" in Greek indicates "a space of time", or time in general, and "seasons" indicates "a set time", or a specific time. When it comes to the Lord's return we are not to believe or teach either one. When the disciples asked, He could have said, "it's none of your business", but He was much too kind to say it that way. In the kindest way possible He was telling them, "just forget about it, because that's not going to be beneficial for you to know that right now." And that's exactly what He would say today if we were to ask Him.

Notice what the apostle Paul said in **1Thessalonians 5:1-8**, "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh (**how?**) as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then (**what's going to happen?**) sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail (**or labor pains**) upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. (**When a thief is in the process of breaking into your home, it's too late to start taking security measures, isn't it? And it's the same way with character preparation. When the thief has broken in, it's too late to install a security system, or a burglar alarm or get a watchdog**

that will bark and chase the thief away. If you live in a neighborhood that has a crime problem you have to be prepared before the thief comes. Now, the Lord is not a thief, but the analogy holds true, nonetheless. And since we live in a world that has a crime problem everywhere and well experienced thieves, we better be ready at all times) Verse 4, But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. (See there brother Jones, we can know when the Lord is coming, because Jesus said only those in darkness will not know. No, Jesus did not say we can know when the thief is coming, but just the opposite. His warning is to be ready, because we cannot know when the thief will come. The point is, we should be ready at all times just in case) Verse 5, Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep (like the 10 virgins), as do others; but let us watch and be sober. (You see, if we, as children of the light could know when Jesus would come, then there would have been no point for Him to say "watch and be sober") For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober (be alert and don't drink the wine of Babylon), putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."

I want the hope of salvation, how about you? That is much more important than trying to figure out the day and the hour and the times and seasons which the Father has put in His own power.

Now, I don't want to close without touching upon another point many people wonder about. I am well aware that Ellen White expected to see the Lord come during her life time, and she made statements that said as much, but He didn't come, did He? You can find the statements I'm about to read in *Last Day Events, pages 36-38*. For instance, in 1856 she said in a particular Conference meeting she attended that an angel told her that some of the people then present would "be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus." She said time was so short that "our children may never enter college." She said, "the fewer the marriages contracted the better for all, both men and women." She said "it is really not wise to have children now. Time is short, the perils of the last days are upon us." She said, "The hour will come; it is not far distant, and some of us who now believe will be alive upon the earth, and shall see the prediction verified, and hear the voice of the archangel and the trump of God echo from mountain and plain and sea to the uttermost parts of the earth."

So, how do we reconcile these kinds of statements with what she herself said we should not do? She tells us not to say such things, but she herself said such things. Does that

mean she's a false prophet? There have been some who have thought so.

In 1883 she explains her earlier statements as follows. "Had Adventists after the great disappointment in 1844 held fast their faith and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward.... It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be thus delayed. . . The angels of God in their messages to men represent time as very short. Thus it has always been presented to me. It is true that time has continued longer than we expected in the early days of this message. Our Saviour did not appear as soon as we hoped. But has the Word of the Lord failed? Never! It should be remembered that the promises and threatenings of God are alike conditional."

Again in 1898 she said, "Had the church of Christ done her appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would before this have been warned and the Lord Jesus would have come to our earth in power and great glory."

And finally in 1901 she said, "We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel, but for Christ's sake His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action."

Well, some might say, she had to cover up for herself somehow for making those earlier predictions that didn't come to pass to try to convince people she wasn't a false prophet. And so, again I ask, do these statement make her a false prophet since **Jeremiah 28:9** says the predictions of true prophets will come to pass?

First of all, it wasn't Ellen White's fault that Jesus didn't come in her lifetime. Secondly, other prophets in the Bible made predictions that didn't come to pass, because God Himself changed His mind after telling a prophet a certain thing. Jonah is a good example of this. God told Jonah to tell the inhabitants of Ninevah that their city was going to be destroyed in 40 days, but when the nation repented at the preaching of Jonah God relented, and Jonah got all upset that he would be viewed as a false prophet. And there are other examples in the Old Testament such as **1 Kings 21** where God told Elijah to tell

king Ahab, the worst of all the kings of Israel by the way, that calamity would befall him and his posterity, but when Ahab tore his clothes and repented in sackcloth and ashes God changed His mind and delayed the judgments He said he would bring right away, and I don't think anyone would call Elijah a false prophet, do you?

In **Isaiah 38** we have the story of King Hezekiah where it says he was sick unto death, and God told Isaiah to tell the king to set his house in order, because he was going to die and not live. Do you remember the story? In **Verses 2-5** it says, "Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, and said, remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying, Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years."

God changed His mind, didn't He? And again, I don't think anyone would call Isaiah a false prophet for telling the king he was going to die and then he didn't. Actually, as you read the story, it would have been better had Hezekiah died, because afterward he made a big blunder, and as a result the king of Babylon came and took away all his possessions and took captive his descendants and made them eunuchs in the palace of king of Babylon.

Notice also what it says in **Jeremiah 18:7-10**, because God's word explains these kinds of things that happen from time to time. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them."

Now, here's the good news about these various examples of God changing His mind. If we call upon the name of the Lord in confession and repentance He will change His mind toward us as well. Aren't you thankful? With God, it's not so much about what we've done in the past, but what we plan on doing from this day forward, and I say praise the Lord! How about you?

And so, these prophets we just read about weren't false prophets because what they said didn't come to pass. They simply said what God told them to say, and it was He who changed His mind because He's merciful. And it's no different with Ellen White. After a certain point when the time had passed for the church to do its appointed work but failed, she knew that the coming of Christ was going to be delayed and ever afterward her statements were that we should not hang our hopes on a definite time for the Lord to come.

I'd like to read just a few more statements before we close, because we want to have a very clear view of what God would have us to know and to do at this time in earth's history as we should be able to see clearly that the coming of Jesus is "even at the doors." The next several statements can be found in *Last Day Events, pages 34- 36*, so they'll be easy for you to find. "Because the times repeatedly set have passed, the world is in a more decided state of unbelief than before in regard to the near advent of Christ. They look upon the failures of the time-setters with disgust, and because men have been so deceived, they turn from the truth substantiated by the Word of God that the end of all things is at hand."

"I understand that Brother [E. P.] Daniels has, as it were, set time, stating that the Lord will come within five years. Now I hope the impression will not go abroad that we are time-setters. Let no such remarks be made. They do no good. **(They do what? "No good.")** Seek not to obtain a revival upon any such grounds, but let due caution be used in every word uttered, that fanatical ones will not seize anything they can get to create an excitement and the Spirit of the Lord be grieved."

"We want not to move the people's passions to get up a stir, where feelings are moved and principle does not control. I feel that we need to be guarded on every side, because Satan is at work to do his uttermost to insinuate his arts and devices that shall be a power to do harm. Anything that will make a stir, create an excitement on a wrong basis, is to be dreaded, for the reaction will surely come."

"There will always be false and fanatical movements made by persons in the church who claim to be led of God—those who will run before they are sent and will give day and date for the occurrence of unfulfilled prophecy. The enemy is pleased to have them do this, for their successive failures and leading into false lines cause confusion and unbelief."

“Our position has been one of waiting and watching, with no time-proclamation to intervene between the close of the prophetic periods in 1844 and the time of our Lord’s coming.”

These are plain words, are they not? They are, so let us follow this council and be among those who are praying, watching, waiting, and working and not get distracted by the times and the seasons which the Father has put in His own power.

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