

Ellen White 1856 Manuscripts

Ms 1, 1856

Vision given at Round Grove, Illinois

Round Grove, Illinois

December 9, 1856

I was shown in vision some things concerning the brethren and sisters at Round Grove. I saw that God had warned those that had moved from the East to the West. He had shown them their duty,—that it must not be their object to get rich; but to do good to souls, to live out their faith and tell to those around them that this world was not their home. The warning was sufficient if it had been heeded; but there was no considering of what God had shown, but rushed on and on, become drunk with the spirit of the world.

“Look back” said the angel, “and weigh all that God has shown in regard to those moving from the East to the West.” Have ye obeyed it? I saw that ye had gone entirely contrary to God’s teachings, purchased largely, and instead of your works saying to those around you that ye are seeking a better country, it has plainly declared that here was your home and treasure. Your works have denied your faith, nor is this all,—the love that should exist between brethren is gone. “Am I my brother’s keeper” [Genesis 4:9], has been manifest. A selfish, covetous spirit has been in the hearts of the brethren. Instead of looking out for the interest of thy brother, and caring for him, it has been entirely contrary. In deal there has been manifested a selfish spirit,—a close spirit that God despises. The people of God that make so high a profession and that number themselves among the peculiar people of God, saying by this profession [that] they are zealous of good works, should have a noble, generous disposition, and should ever manifest a disposition to favor their brethren instead of their own selves, and should give their brethren the best chance. Generosity begets generosity, selfishness begets selfishness.

I saw that through the past summer, the prevailing spirit has been to grasp as much of this world as they possibly could. I saw that the commandments of God have not been kept. With the mind we serve the law of God, and the mind has been serving the world; and while the mind was all occupied with things of earth, and serving themselves, they could not serve the law of God. The Sabbath has not been kept; the work of six days has been carried into the seventh. One hour, and even more, has often been taken off from the commandment—an hour of holy time from the holy Sabbath.

I saw that some of the Sabbath keepers who say to the world they are looking for Jesus’ coming, and that they believe we are having the last message of mercy, yet give way to the natural feelings and barter and trade, and are a proverb among unbelievers, for their keenness in trade,—sharp and always getting the best end of a bargain. Better lose a little and exert a holier, happier influence, and show that this world is not their god.

I saw that brethren should feel interested for each other, especially should those who are blessed with health have a kind regard and care for those that have not good health, and should favor them. They should remember the lesson taught by Jesus of the good Samaritan. Here has been one that has had a generous heart, but in the wise providence of God he has been cruelly torn in pieces, and unable to bear or surmount obstacles. His nerves have received a shock from which he will never recover. Yet ye erred in judgment, purchased too largely. Still his brethren should have especially looked to and pitied and sympathized, and lent him a helping hand. But no, and when he is crippled and afflicted, his brethren have oppressed, and have not favored him. If all had kindly looked to, and aided him a little, they would not have felt it and they would have supplied his lack, comforted and cheered his heart, and had a sweet satisfaction and reward of well doing in their own souls. [They would have] comforted and strengthened an afflicted brother, and would have done as they would have wished to be done by, were they crippled like he. God has noticed these things.

Said Jesus, Love one another as I have loved you. [John 13:34.] How much? Why His love cannot be told. He left the glory that He had with the Father before the world was, and was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. He bore every indignity and scorn patiently. Behold His agony in the garden when He prayed that the cup might pass from Him, His hands and feet wounded,—all this for guilty, lost man. And Jesus says, Love as I have loved you. How much? Well, enough to give your life for a brother. But has it come to this, that self must be gratified, the Word of God neglected? The world is their god—they serve it and the love of God has departed.

If ye love the world, the love of the Father is not in you. The Word of God has been neglected; in that are the warnings to God's people and in it are their dangers pointed out. But [they have had so many] cares and perplexities [that] they have hardly allowed themselves time to pray. There has been a mere empty form without the power of salvation. Jesus prayed, and O, how earnest I saw were His prayers, and yet He was the beloved Son of God. If Jesus manifested so much earnestness, so much energy, and agonizing, how much more need those whom He has called to be heirs of salvation, dependent upon God for all their strength, to have their whole souls stirred to wrestle with God, and cry, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." [Genesis 32:26.] But I saw hearts here had been overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life, and God and His Word have been neglected.

I saw that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom. Also says Jesus, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:19-21.

I saw it would have been better if there had been no attempts to preach the truth, for all their works denied their faith; and the last thing before attending the meeting was this world. It was carried even to the house of God, planning upon earthly things. It was world, world, until standing up to talk, and as soon as teaching the people was ended, it was world again. No time to meditate upon the truth,—no time to labor, wrestle and pray for salvation.

I saw that it would have been better if they had stayed at home, for minds have been waked up to the subject and no power and force is brought to bear upon them, and the interest dies down. Many cannot be reached again. When the truth is presented, it should be in the power and spirit; bring them to the point to decide—show them the importance—it is life or death. With becoming zeal, pull souls out of the fire. But, O, the withering, blighting influence that has been cast! Men waiting for their Lord, and yet possessing large and attractive lands. The farms have preached louder, yes, much louder than words can, that this world is their home. The evil day is put off; peace and safety reign. Oh, the withering, blighting influence! God hates such worldly-mindedness. “Cut loose, cut loose,” were the words of the angel.

I was shown that all should have an eye single to the glory of God, yet those who have possessions have been too willing to excuse themselves on account [of] their wives and children. But I saw God would not be trifled with. When He speaks He must be obeyed. If wives or children stand in the way and hold back, they should say as Jesus said to Peter, Get behind me Satan, why tempt ye me to withhold from God what justly belongs to Him? and ruin my own soul. Have an eye single to the glory of God—don't look to wives or children, yet treat them tenderly and then shape your course for God's glory.

I saw that many would have to learn what it is to be a Christian—that it is not in name; but it is having the mind of Christ, submitting to the will of God in all things. Especially [will] the young who have never known what privations or hardships are, who have a set will, and do not bend that will to the glory of God, [have a great work to do.] They go along very smoothly until that will is crossed, and then they have no control over themselves. They have not the will of God before them. They do not study how they can best glorify God, or advance His cause, or do good to others; but it is self, self, how can it be gratified? Such religion is not worth a straw. Those that possess it will be weighed in the balance and found wanting.

The true Christian will love to wait and watch for the teachings of God and the leadings of His Spirit. But religion with many is merely a form—vital godliness is gone. Many dare to say, I will do this, or that, or I will not do this, and so the fear of offending God is scarcely thought of. Those thus described, I saw, could not enter heaven. They may flatter themselves that they shall be saved, but God has no pleasure in them—their lives do not please Him. They are an annoyance to Him,—their prayers are an offense unto Him.

I saw that God now calls them to be zealous and repent; He kindly and faithfully admonishes them to buy gold, white raiment and eyesalve that they may be rich. They can choose either to

partake largely of salvation, be zealous, or be spued out of the mouth of God as disgusting, be rejected, and be thrust from Him.

I saw that God would not bear always. He is of tender pity, but His Spirit will be grieved away for the last time. Mercy's sweet voice will be no more heard—its last precious notes will have died away and the described will be left to their own ways to be filled with their own doings.

I saw that those who profess to be looking for the coming of the Lord, should not have a close, penurious spirit. I saw that some of those that have been called to talk the truth, to save souls as they that must give an account, have wasted much precious time for the sake of saving a little, when their time was worth a great deal more than that gained by them. It displeased God. This close dealing He hates. It is right that economy should be used, but it has been stretched into meanness without any goodly object, only to already add to their treasure which will shortly eat their flesh like fire, unless they as faithful stewards make a right disposition of their Lord's goods.

Ms 2, 1856

Testimony for Brethren Arnold and Ross

May 27, 1856

I saw in vision concerning Brethren [David] Arnold and [Alexander] Ross and others.

I saw that there was a wrong. There were difficulties in Oswego County. I saw that Brother Arnold had not understood what manner of spirit he was of, and he came to the conference with another spirit. It was not the Spirit of Jesus. I saw that since he was ordained, set apart by the brethren, he has taken an exalted position that God had never assigned him, a position that it was impossible for him to rightly fill to the glory of God. Exaltation and self-esteem has led astray and perverted his judgment, and a deathly influence, instead of a saving influence has been the consequence. I saw that this influence had injured Brother Ross.

I saw that Brother Arnold had reasoned away and made of none effect what God had shown in vision in regard to Brother Ross. Brother Arnold has not seen as God seeth in regard to Brother Ross. I saw that Brother Ross's dreams and impressions had not been from the true Source. He has been, and still is, exalted, and has a large share of self-esteem. This will too surely prove his ruin unless it is seen and there is a breaking down before God.

I saw that Brother Ross and Brother Arnold have built themselves up upon Brother Rhode's past errors or what they think are his wrongs. They have both pushed and crowded Brother Rhodes, when God had been healing the past wrongs and errors in judgment that he has made formerly, and God has been fitting him up to work for Him in His cause.

I saw that it was a weakness with Brother Arnold, his reasoning as much as he does. There is no religion or Jesus in it. It destroys the life of religion and encourages a formality that discourages and disheartens the people of God, and destroys the interest of meetings. This reasoning has

grieved away God's Spirit, for I saw that God hates this reasoning that he has indulged in. I saw that this reasoning has mystified and fogged up the plainest facts and made them to be another thing. It has affected others; souls have felt with cringing its influence.

I saw that the case of Brother Ross must be handled carefully, yet decidedly and with firmness. Possessing the Spirit of Jesus, show him his true state. I saw that humble confessions from him were due his brethren who have been oppressed by him.

I saw that in considering the wrongs of Brother Ross there had been feelings that were not free from self on his brethren's part. A feeling would rise in their hearts unlike the humble Pattern. However wrong Brother Ross may have been, his brethren could not be justified in having a single feeling or using a single word that was wrong.

Many of those in union with Brother Ross know but little of the things of God. I saw that a great work must be done for Brother Ross, and not only for him but for many in that section of country. Free and full salvation from God is scarcely felt; daily communion with God and consecration to Him is a rare thing. Said the angel, "Oh how far from the bleeding side of Jesus! When at His feet strife and contention cease."

I saw that Brother Arnold's course had affected many. Amanda has been drinking down the same spirit, the same feelings and ideas, and she is in danger of being led astray and discouraged and perplexed. I saw that Sister Arnold did not possess that feeling and spirit that God approbates; an humble spirit she does not possess. She has had too much of a complaining spirit. She talks more than is for her own spiritual good or the spiritual good of others or for the glory of God.

I saw that Brethren Hart and Arnold had been too exacting about the matter of the note James published in the paper. These two have made nearly all the difficulty about this matter. Others would have had but little trouble had not these brethren stirred it up. I saw that God had especially guided His servants in their judgment and counsel concerning Brother Arnold's case, and then in addition set to His seal that it was right by the descent of His Holy Spirit in answer to the united, earnest cries of His children. I saw that there were one or two that did not see or feel the case of Brother Arnold as it stood in the sight of God, but these had not the right judgment.