

Ellen G. White 1866 Manuscripts

Ms 5, 1866

Vision Regarding "Our Home"—Dansville, New York

Battle Creek, Michigan

[First part missing] ... It was necessary for us to see and more fully understand that it was impossible for His people who obey the truth and keep His commandments to live up to their convictions of duty and unite with the leaders at "Our Home." So far as serving God is concerned, our faith and their principles cannot unite any better than oil and water. It is only those of the firmest principles and of the greatest independence of mind, who think and act for themselves, having the fear of God before them and trusting in Him, who can remain safely any length of time in Dansville. Those who are not thus qualified should not be recommended to that institution, for their minds will become bewildered by their smooth words, and poisoned by their sophistry, which originates with Satan.

Their influence and teachings in regard to the service of God and a religious life stand in direct opposition to the teachings of our Saviour and His disciples. By precept and example they lower the standard of piety and say that Christians need not sorrow for their sins, and need not separate from the world in order to be followers of Christ, but can mingle with the world and participate in its pleasures. These leaders would not encourage their adherents to imitate the life of Christ in prayerfulness and sobriety and dependence upon God.

Persons of conscientious minds and firm trust in God cannot receive one half the benefit at "Our Home" that those can who have confidence in the religious principles of the leaders in that institution. Such have to stand braced against much of their teachings as far as religious principles are concerned, sifting everything they hear, lest they should be deceived and Satan obtain advantages over them.

I saw that as far as disease and its treatment is concerned, "Our Home" is the best institution in the United States. Yet the leaders there are but men, and their judgment is not always correct. Dr. Jackson would have his patients believe his judgment perfect, even as the judgment of God. Yet he often fails. He exalts himself as God before his patients and fails to exalt the Lord as their only dependence. Those who have no trust or confidence in God, who can see no beauty in holiness or in the cross-bearing life of the Christian, with the common religionist of the day, can receive the most benefit at "Our Home" of any health institution in the United States. The great secret of their success is the control they have over the minds of their patients.

I saw that my husband and myself could not receive the benefit at "Our Home" that many of different experience and of different faith could receive. Said the angel, "God has not designed that the mind of His servant whom He has chosen for a special purpose, to do a special work, should be controlled by any living man, for that is His prerogative alone."

I saw that angels of God kept us while we were at Dansville. They were round about us, sustaining us every hour. But the time came when we could not benefit or be benefitted, and then the cloud of light which had rested with us at Dansville moved away, and we could find rest only in leaving Dansville and going among the brethren in Rochester where the cloud of light rested.

I saw that God would have us go to Dansville for several reasons. Our position while there, the earnest prayers offered, the manifest trust we had in God, the cheerfulness, courage, hope and faith He inspired us with amid our afflictions, had its influence and was a testimony to all that the Christian has a Source of strength and happiness that the lovers of pleasure are strangers to. God gave us a place in the hearts of all of influence at "Our Home"; and in the future, as the patients now there should be scattered to their different homes, our labors will bring us again to their notice, and when we are assailed, some at least will be our defenders.

Again, in going to Dansville, the Lord would have us benefitted by an experience which we would not obtain while at Battle Creek, surrounded with sympathizing brethren and sisters. We must be separated from them, lest we should lean upon them instead of leaning upon and trusting in the Lord alone. Separated almost entirely from God's people, we were shaken from every earthly help and led to look to God alone. In thus doing we obtained an experience we could not have had if we were not at Dansville. When my husband's courage and hope began to waver, then we could not benefit anyone at Dansville, and we could not be benefitted by a further experience in that place. God would not have my husband remain there shorn of his strength, but it was His will that in his state of weakness he should go among his brethren who could help him bear his affliction.

In our affliction, while separated from God's people, we had an opportunity to reflect and to carefully review our past life, to see the mistakes and wrongs, and to humble ourselves before God and to seek His face by confession, humility, and frequent earnest prayer. While engaged in active labor, bearing the burdens of others, pressed with many cares, it was impossible for us to find time to reflect and carefully review the past and learn the lessons God saw it was necessary we should learn.

I was then shown that God could not glorify His name by answering the supplications of His people and raising my husband to health in answer to their prayers while we were at Dansville. It would be like uniting His power with the powers of darkness. Had God been pleased to

manifest His power in restoring my husband, the physicians at "Our Home" would have taken the glory which should be given to God.

Said the angel, "God will be glorified in the restoration of His servant to health. God has heard the prayers of His servants. His arms are beneath His afflicted servant. God has the case, and he must, although afflicted, dismiss his fears, his anxiety, his doubts and unbelief, and calmly trust in the great, yet merciful God who pities, loves, and cares for him. He will have conflicts with the enemy, but should ever be comforted with the remembrance that a stronger than his enemy has charge of him, and he need not fear. By faith rely on the evidences God has been pleased to give, and he will gloriously triumph in God."

I saw that God was giving us an experience which would be of the highest value to us in the future in connection with His work. We are living in a solemn time, amid the closing scenes of this earth's history, and God's people are not awake. They must arouse and make greater progress in reforming their habits of living, in eating, in dressing, in laboring and resting. In all these they should glorify God and be prepared to battle our great foe and to enjoy the precious victories God has in reserve for those who are exercising temperance in all things while striving for an incorruptible crown.

I saw that God was fitting up my husband to engage in the solemn, sacred work of reform which He designs shall progress among His people. It is important that instructions should be given by ministers in regard to living temperately. They should show the relation that eating, working, resting, and dressing sustain to health.

All who really believe the truth for these last days have something to do in this matter. This reform concerns them and God requires them to arouse and interest themselves in this matter. He will not be pleased with their course if they regard this question with indifference.

The abuse of the stomach and gratification of appetite is the fruitful source of most church trials. Those who eat and work intemperately and irrationally talk and act irrationally. An intemperate man cannot be a patient man. It is not necessary to drink alcoholic liquors in order to be intemperate. The sin of intemperate eating, eating too frequently, too much and of rich, unhealthful food, destroys the healthy action of the digestive organs, affects the brain, and perverts the judgment, destroying rational, calm, healthy thinking and acting. And this is the fruitful source of church trials. Therefore in order for the people of God to be in an acceptable state with Him, where they can glorify God in their bodies and spirits which are His, they must with interest and zeal deny themselves, deny the gratification of their appetites, and exercise temperance in all things. Then may they comprehend the truth in its beauty and clearness, and carry it out in their lives, and by their judicious, wise, straightforward course, give the enemies of our faith no occasion to reproach the cause of truth.

God requires all who believe the truth to make special, persevering efforts to place themselves in the best possible conditions of bodily health, for a solemn and important work is before us. Health of body and mind is required for this work, and is as necessary for a healthy religious experience and for advancement in the Christian life and progress in holiness, as the hand or foot is necessary to the human body. The great work God requires of His people is to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. All those who are indifferent and excuse themselves from engaging in this work, and leave this work which God requires them to do for the Lord to do for them, will be found wanting when the meek of the earth, who have wrought His judgments, are hid in the day of the Lord's anger.

I was shown that if God's people, without making efforts on their part, wait for the refreshing to come upon them and remove their wrongs and correct their errors, and depend upon that to cleanse them from filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and fit them to engage in the loud cry of the third angel, they will be found wanting. The refreshing or power of God comes only upon those who have prepared themselves for it by doing the work which God bids them—cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.

In some respects I was shown that my husband's case is similar to that of those waiting for the refreshing. If he should wait for the power of God to come upon his body and to feel that he was made whole before he made efforts or acted in accordance with his faith, saying, "When the Lord heals me I will believe and do this or that," he might continue to wait and would realize no change, for the fulfillment of God's promise is only realized by those who believe and work in accordance with their faith. I saw that he must believe God's word, that His promises are for him to claim, and they will never, no, never, fail. He should walk out by faith, relying upon the evidences that God has been pleased to give, and act towards the point of being a well man as much as possible. Said the angel, "God will sustain him. His faith must be made perfect by works, for faith alone is dead. It must be sustained by works. A living faith is always manifested by works."

I saw that my husband would be inclined to shrink from making efforts in accordance with his faith. Fear and anxiety in regard to his own case has made him timid. He looks at appearances, at disagreeable feelings of the body. Said the angel, "Feeling is not faith. Faith is simply to take God at His word." I saw that in the name and strength of God my husband must resist disease, and by the power of his will rise above his poor feelings. He must assert his liberty in the name and strength of Israel's God. He must cease thinking of and talking about himself as much as possible. He should be cheerful and happy.

Ms 6, 1866

Surmisings at Battle Creek (Based on a Vision Given in 1865)

Some have felt at liberty, through envious feelings, to speak out lightly of Battle Creek. Some look suspiciously on all that is going on there, and seem to exult if they can get hold of anything to take advantage of what comes from Battle Creek. But God is displeased with such a spirit, such a course of action. From what source do churches abroad obtain their light and knowledge concerning the truth? It has been from the means which God has ordained, which centers at Battle Creek. Who have the burdens of the cause? It is those who are zealously laboring at Battle Creek. And while churches that are scattered abroad are relieved from the burdens and heavy trials which necessarily come upon those who stand in the forefront of the battle, and while they are excused from the perplexities and wearing thought attendant upon those who engage in making important decisions in connection with the work to be accomplished for the remnant people of God, they should feel thankful and praise God that they are thus favored, and should be the last to be envious, jealous, faultfinding, occupying a position, "Report, and we will report it."

The church at Battle Creek has borne the burdens of the conferences which have been, upon many, or nearly all, a severe tax. Many, in consequence of the extra labors borne, have brought upon themselves debility which has lasted for many months. They have borne the burden cheerfully, but have felt saddened and disheartened by the heartless indifference of some, and the cruel jealousy of others, after they have returned to the several churches from whence they came. Speeches are thoughtlessly made by some, designedly by others, concerning the burden-bearers there, and concerning those who stand at the head of the work. God has marked all these speeches, all these jealousies, all these envious feelings, and a faithful record is kept of it all.

Men and women thank God for the truth and then turn around and question and find fault with the very means Heaven has ordained to make them what they are, or what they ought to be. How much more pleasing to God for them to act the part of Aaron and Hur and hold up the hands of those who are bearing the great and heavy burdens of this work in connection with the cause of God. Murmurers and complainers should remain at home where they will be out of the way of temptation, where they cannot find food for their jealousies, evil surmisings, and faultfinding, for the presence of such is only a burden to the meetings—clouds without water.

All who feel at liberty to censure and find fault with those whom God has chosen to act an important part in this last great work had better be converted and obtain the mind of Christ. Let them remember those of the children of Israel who were ready to find fault with Moses, whom God had ordained to lead His people to Canaan, and to murmur against even God Himself. They should remember that all these murmurers fell in the wilderness. It is so easy to rebel, so easy to give battle before considering matters rationally, calmly, and settling whether there is

anything to war against. The children of Israel are our ensamples upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Brethren and sisters who have removed from Rome to this church are too excitable, too ready to decide, too ready to give battle when there is nothing to war against. They need to encourage a calm, reflective mind, reason from cause to effect, and not be in haste to make decisions. They must learn much in order to be a benefit to the church in Wright.

In regard to Battle Creek, it is easier with many to question and find fault than to tell what should be done. This responsibility some would even venture to take, but they would soon find themselves deficient in experience, for they would run the work into the ground. If these talkers, faultfinders, would themselves become burden-bearers and pray for the laborers they would be blessed themselves and bless others with their godly example, with their holy influence and example. It is easier for many to talk than to pray, and they lack spirituality and holiness, and their influence is an injury to the cause of God.

Instead of all feeling that the work at Battle Creek is their work, that they have an interest in its prosperity, they stand aside more as spectators to question and find fault. Those who do this are the very ones who lack experience in this work, and who have suffered but little for the truth's sake.

Ms 7, 1866

Testimony Concerning Brother and Sister Wicks

Sister Wicks has habits which are steadily undermining her constitution and which will eventually leave her a wreck. She can now do something towards placing herself in a better condition of health. She cannot glorify God in her body and her spirit, which are God's, while she is indulging the use of poisonous stimulants. She flatters herself that these are strengthening her, that she cannot live without them, but it is a mistake. They are taking from the strength of the nerves and using up her future resources of strength. She may have everlasting life if she will deny herself, take up the cross and follow Christ. She has a work to do which no one can do for her—cleanse herself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Tea and snuff and coffee and swine's flesh are not the nourishing substances God would have us introduce into the system. None of these can build up the system, but they tear down. Sister Wicks, while you use these hurtful things you are benumbing the fine, sensitive nerves of the brain, making it utterly impossible to discern sacred things, to value the atonement, and to see the necessity of purity and holiness of life in order to meet the measurement of God. It is for you to decide whether you will have life or death. [A portion is missing here.]

Brother Wicks made a sad mistake of shifting the responsibility of his stewardship upon his wife, and she made a sad mistake in urging him to do so. The Searcher of hearts, to whom the intents and purposes of every heart stand faithfully revealed, was acquainted with the motives and purposes, and this transfer of property was not from motives which would stand the test of the judgment. Sister Wicks' peculiar traits of character are penurious, selfish, acquisitive. In order for her to be benefited by the mediation of Christ and inherit eternal life, she must be an overcomer and imitate the character of her divine Lord, doing good to others, living for the benefit of others, loving others as Christ has loved us. The precious gift of love, possessed so largely by our Saviour, she is a stranger to. His life was characterized by noble, disinterested benevolence. His whole life was not marred by one selfish act. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:6. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: Because as he is, so are we in this world." 1 John 4:17. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:4.

The work of overcoming Sister Wicks knows but very little about, and when Brother Wicks transferred his stewardship to his wife, he took a similar course to the man to whom was committed the one talent [and] who hid it in the earth. When God called him to account [he] excused himself with saying, "Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine." Matthew 25:24, 25. What the man with the talent was afraid of was that all the improvement of his talent would be required of God. This led him to pronounce God a hard man. And in order to keep from God that improvement which God required of him, he hid his talent lest God should be benefited with it.

Both Brother and Sister Wicks are at fault, and will be no better able to stand the test of the judgment than the man could with the one hidden talent. Brother Wicks' shifting the responsibility upon his wife does not ease or lessen his accountability one whit. When he made the transfer, he pleased the enemy and his wife and himself. Satan generated the matter and exulted because both were ensnared. This property transferred to Sister Wicks was a stumbling block to her and she has made no advancement in the Christian graces since. She had a great work to do before to overcome intemperate, hurtful habits which were warring against the soul, beclouding her intellect, and benumbing her sensibilities to that degree that it was impossible for her to discern sacred things, and blunting her perceptive faculties, making it impossible for her rightly to estimate or value the atonement or the worth of the soul and everlasting life.

God calls upon these two to overcome while they have an Advocate with the Father, to make thorough work for eternity, to have their sins go beforehand to judgment, that when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord their sins may be blotted out. Unless they are both thoroughly converted and are partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption of the world through lust, they will never possess the heavenly treasure, never dwell with the self-sacrificing, self-denying Son of God, but will through their earnest efforts to save their lives here lose their lives eternally.

“For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” Matthew 16:25-27.

Brother Wicks possesses a different spirit from his wife, but unless he shall act upon the light God has given and see the snare of Satan, he will be drawn under the cloud of unbelief and yield the conflict. He has loved to listen to the truth but he has been too much of a forgetful hearer, not a doer of the work. He should be a doer of the work. His wife’s spirit cannot harmonize at all with the spirit of truth and holiness. He has thought to save himself trials by yielding to his wife. From what I saw, darkness has so long enveloped her, and the Spirit of God has had so little to do with her, that she will fail to make the efforts that are absolutely necessary for her to break through the snare of Satan. If so, Satan will use her as his agent to ruin her husband and be a stumbling block to others.

I saw that a great work is to be done for Sabbathkeepers and they must do this work for themselves. One cannot do the work of another. Each must do his and her own work. Many will fail to come up to the standard, and sell eternal life for their present enjoyment and for the sake of gain.

I was shown that the subject of usury should engage the attention of Sabbathkeepers. Wealthy men have no right to take usury from their poor brethren, but from unbelievers they may exact usury. “And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him. ... Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.” Leviticus 25:35-37.

“Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury: unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy

brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it." Deuteronomy 23:19, 20.

God has been displeased with Sabbathkeepers for their avaricious spirit. Their desire to get gain is so strong upon them, that they have taken advantage of their poor, unfortunate brethren in their distress and have added to their already abundant means when their poorer brethren have been distressed and necessitated for the same means. "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9) is the language of their heart.

A few years since some of the poorer brethren were in danger of losing their souls through wrong impressions. Everywhere Satan was tempting the poorer brethren in regard to the wealthy. The poorer were looking to be favored, and expecting to be favored, when it was their duty to rely upon their own energies, and had they been favored it would have been the worst thing that could be done for them. All through the ranks of Sabbathkeepers, among the poorer class, Satan opened the door of temptation before some that he might overthrow them. Some have lacked judgment and wisdom in their poverty, have taken their own course, have not been willing to ask advice or to follow advice, and have had to suffer through the fruits of their miserable calculation; and yet these same ones would feel that they should be advantaged by their brethren who had property.

These things needed to be corrected. This first-mentioned class did not realize the responsibilities resting upon the wealthy or the perplexity and cares they were compelled to have because of their means. All that they could realize was that these men had means when they wished to handle it, while they were cramped for the same. But the wealthy have, as a general thing, regarded all the poor in the same light, when there is a class of poor who are doing the best in their power to glorify God, to do good, to live for the truth, and such were of solid worth. Their judgment was good, their spirit precious in the sight of God, and the amount of good that they accomplished in their unpretending way was tenfold greater than that accomplished by the wealthy, although they might give large sums on some occasions. Yet they fail to see and realize the necessity of doing good, of being rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.

Ms 8, 1866

Proper Observance of the Sabbath

Rochester, New York

December 25, 1866

(Portion of Vision Given December 25, 1865, at Rochester, New York)

In regard to the observance of the Sabbath, there has been too much slackness. There has not been promptness to fulfill the duties within the six working days which God has given to man, and carefulness not to infringe upon one hour of the holy, sacred time God has reserved for Himself. I saw that there was no business of man's that should be considered of sufficient importance to transgress the fourth precept of Jehovah. There are cases that Christ has given us where we may labor even upon the Sabbath in saving the life of man or of animals. But, if for our own advantage from a pecuniary point of view we violate the letter of the fourth commandment, we are Sabbathbreakers and become guilty of transgressing the whole of the commandments, for if we offend in one point we are guilty of all.

If, in order to save, we break over the express commands of Jehovah, where is the stopping place? Where set the bounds? Transgress in a small matter, and look upon it as a matter of no particular sin on our part, and the conscience becomes hardened, the sensibilities blunted, and we can go still further until labor to quite an extent may be performed and we still flatter ourselves that we are Sabbathkeepers, when, according to Christ's standard, we are breaking every one of God's holy precepts. There is a fault with many Sabbathkeepers in this respect, but God is very particular, and all who think that they are saving a little time or advantaging themselves by infringing a little on the Lord's time, will meet with loss sooner or later. God cannot bless them as it would be His pleasure to do, for His name is dishonored by them, His precepts lightly esteemed, and instead of obtaining gain, God's curse will visit them and they will lose ten or twenty fold more than they gain. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me, ... even this whole nation." [Malachi 3:8, 9.]

God has given to man six days in which he may work for himself, and has reserved to Himself only one day in which He is to be honored. He is to be glorified, His authority respected. And yet man will steal a little of the time God has reserved for Himself and thus rob God. God reserved the seventh day as a period of rest for man, for the good of man, as well as for His own glory. He saw that the wants of man required a day of rest from toil and care, that his health and life would be endangered without a period of rest and relaxation from the care and taxation upon him through labor and anxiety upon the six days.

The Sabbath was made for man, for the benefit of man, and to knowingly transgress the holy commandment forbidding labor upon the seventh day is a crime in the sight of Heaven which was of such magnitude under the Mosaic law as to require the death of the offender. But this was not all. The offender that was not deemed worthy to live was to suffer, for God would not take a transgressor of His law to heaven. He must suffer the second death, which was full and final penalty of the transgressor.

Ms 10, 1866

Vision of Sister Orton's Affliction

Battle Creek, Michigan

April 9, 1866

I saw that trials and conflicts were before the people of that praying circle such as they had never dreamed of.

I was shown that those who were especially interested in praying for my husband would receive as much benefit as himself.

That God accepted their efforts in drawing nigh to Him; that according to His promise He was drawing nigh unto them.

I saw that they must keep the armor on, not lay it off for a moment, for they would need every piece of the armor, for their faith would be tried in every way, in the most trying, severe, and testing manner.

I saw the angels of God hovering near, and [they] seemed to be ministering unto those whose earnest supplications were ascending to heaven. I heard a voice say, "Can ye drink of the cup, can ye be baptized with the baptism?" [Mark 10:38.] Several responded, "We can, Lord. Let us be partakers of Christ with His sufferings."

I saw a dense cloud passing over a portion of the company who were drawing nigh to God, and they were hid from my sight. Although I could not see them yet, I heard agonizing prayers mingled with groans and bitter weeping. The cloud partially removed and I saw the face of Sister Orton expressing agony and despair beyond description. Her hands were uplifted and she was saying, "Anything but this I could have borne. Thou hast broken my hold from Thee. I cannot see Thee! I turn to the right hand, Thou art not there, and to the left, but I cannot find Thee. Thou comfortest me not. Thy dealings I cannot comprehend."

Angels looked pityingly upon her and repeated these words, "What He doest thou knowest not now but shalt know hereafter. God has chosen His people in the furnace of affliction. God is thy tower of strength. He invited thee in thy distress and helplessness to lean upon His arm. The smoking flax will He not quench or break the bruised reed."

There seemed to be a severe struggle going on with Sister Orton, then a peaceful expression sat upon her countenance and she said, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt, O, God! Though Thou slay me yet will I trust in Thee. Thou art too wise to err, and too good to do us wrong."

From what I saw, I thought Sister Orton might be brought very near death and endure perhaps severe bodily and mental suffering, and be brought quite to despair. I had no intimation of the death of Brother Orton. But I have not a doubt of his acceptance with God.

Let the hope of the resurrection restrain in a measure thy grief. Murmur not, murmur not, murmur not! You have duties yet resting upon you for the living.

[P.S.] You can retain this for I have kept a copy.