

Children's Story, Spirit of Prophecy Sabbath, October 22, 2005

The Missing Money

Who knows what a prophet is? (Wait for responses.) A prophet is a person who helps us see Jesus! Sometimes God gives prophets special messages. Sometimes God tells prophets secrets that no other human being knows!

God called Ellen G. White to be His messenger, or prophet, when she was only 17 years old. For the next seventy years, she dedicated her life to revealing the truth about Jesus.

One winter many years ago, Ellen White and her husband James were living in Oswego, New York. Together Elder and Mrs. White held meetings and presented Bible studies, particularly giving the truth about the Sabbath. Our pioneers said they were preaching the third angel's message, and we still often call it that today. Elder White even published the first little Adventist paper that winter. He called the paper, *The Present Truth*.

Some of the people from another church in the town were disturbed about these Bible messages. So, with a very earnest business man leading out, these people held revival meetings, hoping to distract others from the Adventist meetings. The business man, whom we will call Mr. M, was the county treasurer. Most of the people were very impressed with Mr. M's meetings. But some were confused. They didn't know who was right—this man who upheld Sunday as God's sacred day, or Elder White, the poor young minister who had just moved to Oswego and who lived in a rented house with borrowed furniture. Mr. M was an important man in town. He said that the Sabbath was not important.

Mr. Hiram Patch and the fine young lady he was about to marry were especially troubled. How could they know which person was right? Who was telling the truth? Mr. M seemed very sincere. Yet the Whites had Bible proofs for the Sabbath truth and the third angel's message.

About this time, Ellen White was given a vision from God in which she was shown the true character of Mr. M and that he was not an honest man. And she was instructed by the angel to tell Mr. Patch, "Wait a month, and you will know for yourself the character of the persons who are conducting the revival, and who pretend to have such a great burden for sinners."

When Mrs. White told this to Mr. Patch, he said, "All right, I will wait."

About two weeks later, as Mr. M was praying loudly and earnestly for sinners in his revival meeting, a blood vessel in his stomach broke and he was carried home in great pain. As others took over his treasurer's work at the county court house, they discovered a shortage in the county funds. A lot of money was missing. The sheriff and his deputy were sent to the treasurer's home to ask about the missing money. The sheriff went to the front door while the deputy stayed out in the yard. The sheriff found Mr. M in bed. Mr. M told the sheriff that he did not know anything about the missing money.

Just then the sheriff's deputy came in the back door with Mrs. M. He had a bag of money in his hand. He got in the house just in time to hear the treasurer call on God to witness that he had not taken the money.

The deputy then held up the bag of money and asked, "What is this?"

As the deputy had stood outside while the sheriff went into the house, he had seen Mrs. M go out the back door carrying a bag, which she quickly hid in a snow bank. Then as she returned to the house, she met the deputy who had been watching her, and he took her back with him to get the bag. Just as he had suspected, it contained the missing money. The treasurer was put under arrest. The revival meetings collapsed. The people of the town were shocked.

Now Mr. Patch knew who was honest. He and the young lady he soon married fully accepted the third angel's message, joined the Sabbath-keeping Adventists, and became very faithful members. By revealing secrets about the future to Ellen White, God helped Mr. Patch believe that the Adventists really trusted God and were preaching His truth.

God's prophets will help you trust and obey Him, too!

Adapted from "The County Treasurer and the Missing Money," by Arthur L. White, in *Campfire Junior Stories from the Days of the S. D. A. Pioneers* (Silver Spring, Maryland: Ellen G. White Estate, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1963), pp. 43, 44.