The Gift of Prophecy
The Creator Speaks

Lesson #1 for October 3, 2026

Scriptures: Genesis 1:27-28; 3:1-8,14-24; Luke 15:11-32; Exodus 19:16-22; John 10:27-30; Hebrews 1:1-2.

1. What is implied by the idea that God the Creator "speaks" to human beings?

> [From the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=BSG:] Digital technology allows many of us to see friends and relatives in faraway places. This is fine. But, still, how much better to meet in person! There is something special that happens when we get together, exchange hugs, and talk face-to-face.
>
> [In this lesson,] … we will be reminded that **human beings were created for a face-to-face relationship with their Creator.** Sin, however, destroyed this intimate connection long ago. To restore that communication with His beloved creatures, God has provided ways to speak to us. His most recognized form of divine interaction with humankind is **carefully chosen spokespersons, known as prophets**, who reveal His messages to us. These prophets often have writings in the Bible, but not always.
>
> God's ultimate plan is to restore His image in us, the image that sin has shattered. This is what the plan of salvation is about: **restoration**, a restoration that will be complete when God creates "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" *(2 Pet. 3:13, NKJV).—BSG** for Sabbath Afternoon, September 26.†‡§

2. Second Peter 3:13 tells us that the day is coming when we will, once again, live with God and speak to Him face-to-face. Meanwhile, He speaks to us through various means, but especially through prophets, typically **as we read the Holy Scriptures**.

Rebellion in Heaven—Sin Originated in Heaven

> [From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] **Evil originated with Lucifer, who rebelled against the government of God. Before his fall he was a covering cherub, distinguished by his excellence. God made him good and beautiful, <u>as near as possible like himself</u>.** Of him it is written, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." **But self-exaltation entered his heart.** Inspiration records the charge[s] against him. [Then, Ezekiel 28:12-19 and Isaiah 14:12-15 are quoted.]—Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*,* September 24, 1901, par. 4.†‡ [Underlining of text is added for emphasis.]‡ [Lucifer wanted to be God!]‡ [https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p821.20853&index=0]‡

3. ***Why did God think it was necessary to give Satan access to Adam and Eve?***

God Spoke with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden

4. The story of the Garden of Eden is familiar to us. Review **Genesis 1-3**. Adam and Eve were created "in the image of God." They were the crowning act of creation on this earth. It was **God's plan for them to be in open communication, face-to-face, with God and the angels for the rest of eternity.**

5. God recognizes that **love is the cement that holds all true children of God together**. It is what cements the Trinity together. So, God waited for Adam to recognize that he needed a companion; and then, He created Eve. For social people, loneliness is a killer.

Genesis 2:18-23: 18Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to live alone. I will make a suitable companion to help him."… 20So **the man named all the birds and all the animals; but not one of them was a suitable companion to help him.**

21Then the LORD God made the man fall into a deep sleep, and while he was sleeping, he **took out one of the man's ribs** and closed up the flesh. **22He formed a woman out of the rib and brought her to him.** 23Then the man said, **"At last, here is one of my own kind**—

Bone taken from my bone, and flesh from my flesh.

'Woman' is her name because she was taken out of man."—American Bible Society. (©1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation®** [*GNT*] (*Today's English Version*) [*TEV*], Second Edition (Genesis 2:18-23). Philadelphia: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible-TEV** or *GNB-TEV**].†‡

6. In order to create Eve, why do you think it was necessary for God to take a rib out of Adam's body? Notice that He created Adam and all the other creatures "out of the earth."
7. **Some people try to claim that males should have control or domination over females because Eve was taken out of Adam. However, I would point out to such people that every male since that day has been taken out of a woman!**
8. What do you think God intended when He said that Adam and Eve would be in charge of the fish, the birds, and all the wild animals? (Genesis 1:28-30)

[BSG:] Adam and Eve enjoyed face-to-face communion with God. As intelligent beings, they were able to meet with God and to listen to His instructions…. Each day they also had special time with God "in the cool of the day" *(Gen. 3:8)*. The Sabbath day in particular, an essential part of God's creative act, was to be a specially dedicated time of communion between God and His children *(Gen. 2:2, 3; Exod. 20:8–11)*. On that day, our first parents experienced God's love and care for them in a special way.

It's hard for us today, thousands of years from Eden, to imagine what it must have been like before sin [on this earth]. Yet, even now, how does the natural world point back to God's original creation?—*BSG** for Sunday.‡§

[From the *Adult **Teachers** Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*=**T**-BSG:] In Genesis 2:4–25, Adam and Eve enjoyed intimate fellowship with God, walking and talking with Him face-to-face. However, after Adam and Eve's tragic fall into sin disrupted this communion, humanity's original parents **lost their direct line of communication with the Creator**. Yet, God did not abandon His pursuit of humanity. Instead, **He established new ways to communicate,** mediating His presence through **prophets**, the **Written Word**, and, ultimately, **His Son, Jesus Christ**…. Although God's mode of communication changed after the Fall, His desire to speak with humanity has never ceased. Today, God continues communicating through the

Scriptures, where the prophets and apostles bear unified witness to Christ. As a contemporary manifestation of this divine communication, Ellen G. White also points to Christ by affirming the biblical witness.—*T-BSG** 13.†‡

9. God obviously could have created Adam and Eve in some way that would make it impossible for them to sin. However, they would, in effect, be robots if He had done that.

   [BSG:] Because God is love *(1 John 4:8)*, He would not create human "robots." Love embraces choice. **To be able to love, Adam and Eve had to be created with free will;** otherwise, love, true love, would be impossible for them to give.—*BSG** for Monday, September 28.†‡§

10. See: https://www.theox.org/images/uploads/bbk/KHart_BTGG_PDF_Gnrl_Love_16.pdf.

11. It was God's plan that through intimate association and love, humans would continue to grow in knowledge and wisdom and love for the rest of eternity.

    [EGW:] **Our first parents, though created innocent and holy, were not placed beyond the possibility of wrongdoing. God made them free moral agents, capable of appreciating the wisdom and benevolence of His character and the justice of His requirements, and with full liberty to yield or to withhold obedience. They were to enjoy communion with God and with holy angels;** but before they could be rendered eternally secure, **their loyalty must be tested**. At the very beginning of man's existence a check was placed upon the desire for self-indulgence, the fatal passion that lay at the foundation of Satan's fall. The tree of knowledge, which stood near the tree of life in the midst of the garden, was to be **a test of the obedience,** [Or, was it protection? See below.] faith, and love of our parents. While permitted to eat freely of every other tree, they were forbidden to taste of this, on pain of death.—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 48.4.†‡ [https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p84.140&index=0]‡

    [EGW:] …. **Satan was not to follow them with continual temptations; he could have access to them only at the forbidden tree**. Should they attempt to investigate its nature, they would be exposed to his wiles.—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 53.3.†‡ [https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p84.162&index=0]‡

    [**Was the tree a protection** since Satan was confined to that one location and was not allowed to follow them all around the garden? See: www.theox.org/images/uploads/bot/KHart_BTGA_PDF_Law_Gen_Tree_of_Knowledge_06.pdf.]‡

12. **Read Genesis 2:15-17**. **All that Adam and Eve had to do to avoid temptation and sin was to stay away from that tree where Satan was lurking! God's warning them and confining Satan to that one tree was intended to be a protection for them!**

    [EGW:] God placed man under law, as an indispensable condition of his very existence. He was a subject of the divine government, and **there can be no government without law**. God might have created man without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; but in that case man would have been, not a free moral agent, but a mere automaton. **Without freedom of choice, his** [man's] **obedience would not have been voluntary, but forced. There**

could have been no development of character. Such a course would have been contrary to God's plan in dealing with the inhabitants of other worlds. It would have been unworthy of man as an intelligent being, and would have sustained Satan's charge of God's arbitrary rule.—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 49.1.†‡ [Underlining of text is added for emphasis.]‡ [https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p84.140&index=0]‡

13. Unfortunately, we know what happened in the Garden of Eden!

Genesis 3:1-7: 1Now the snake was the most cunning animal that the LORD God had made. The snake asked the woman, "Did God really tell you not to eat fruit from any tree in the garden?"

2 **"We may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden," the woman answered,** 3 **"except the tree in the middle of it. God told us not to eat the fruit of that tree or even touch it; if we do, we will die."** [Stay away!]

4The snake replied, **"That's not true [That is, the "snake" said, "God is a liar!"]**; you will not die. 5God said that, because he knows that when you eat it you will be like God and know what is good and what is bad."

6The woman saw how beautiful the tree was and how good its fruit would be to eat, and she thought how wonderful it would be to become wise. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, and he also ate it. 7As soon as they had eaten it, they were given understanding and realized that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and covered themselves.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*†‡

14. Try to imagine the reaction in heaven when they saw Eve take that fruit and then give some to Adam! Did the angels try to rush to God and plead with Him to prevent that in some way? What we know is that **God allowed it to happen!**

15. Try to put yourself in the scene with Eve by the tree of knowledge of good and evil. There are many ways in which God could have prevented that disaster from happening. Didn't God know exactly what Satan would do? Couldn't God have sent an angel to warn Eve as she approached that tree? Couldn't God have prevented Satan from using the serpent? Did God intentionally make that tree "good for food," "pleasant to the eyes" and "desirable to make one wise." (Genesis 3:6, *NKJV*). Was it wrong for Eve to want to be like God? That was exactly the sin of Satan/Lucifer! Don't we want to be like God?

[BSG:] In reality, Satan's discourse was riddled with error. Satan hid from them the consequences of their disobedience. After they disobeyed God, their eyes were immediately "opened," and they saw that they were "naked." God's "garment" of light and glory *(Ps. 104:1, 2)*, which reflected the divine "image," was gone. They were no longer covered by that which God had provided for them. No wonder Adam and Eve hid themselves from their Creator (as if it were really possible to hide from God). **They attempted to hide because sin makes us feel guilty** and, in our guilt, we want to flee from the presence of God.

What has been your own experience with shame and seeking to hide from God after you have sinned?—*BSG** for Monday, September 28.†‡§

16. ***One can be sure that Satan made an immediate attempt to go from the tree of***

knowledge of good and evil to the nearby tree of life. But, his way was blocked!

> [EGW:] Angels were commissioned to immediately guard the way of the tree of life. **It was Satan's studied plan that Adam and Eve should disobey God, receive his frown, and then partake of the tree of life, that they might perpetuate a life of sin. But holy angels were sent to debar their way to the tree of life. Around these angels flashed beams of light on every side, which had the appearance of glittering swords.**—Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*,* vol. 1, 44.2.†‡ [https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p141.173&index=0]‡

Hebrews 4:13: There is nothing that can be hid from God; everything in all creation is exposed and lies open before his eyes. And it is to him that we must all give an account of ourselves.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*

God Tried to Win Back the Loyalty of Humans After Their Fall

Gensis 3:8: That evening they heard the LORD God walking in the garden, and they hid from him among the trees.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*†

> [BSG:] We can see from Genesis 3:9, 10 that God took the initiative to seek His fallen children. The question "Where are you?" was rhetorical, because God knew what Adam and Eve had done and where they were. Sin, nevertheless, cut off the usual communication that existed between Him and the first human couple. **God's immediate concern was to restore communication with His children, to meet with them, and to give them hope in their despair.**—*BSG** for Tuesday, September 29.†‡

17. What do you think was the first thing that Adam and Eve noticed after they took the fruit of the tree? They discovered that they were naked! They must have panicked!

> [T-BSG:] **As soon as sin entered the world, God took the initiative to restore His relationship with lost humanity.**
>
> Adam and Eve were devastated. Their world had changed for the worse in an instant. As the guilty pair listened to God pronounce curses and judgments, they heard a promise of hope. At the very heart of these judgments, the gospel of grace appeared. **A promised Seed would come and defeat the serpent and accomplish salvation for human beings. Genesis 3:15** is the literary center of Genesis 3 and is considered **the first announcement of the gospel.**
>
> Immediately after Adam and Eve's fall into sin, God announced that all future divine revelations would center on the person and mission of the coming Redeemer. The rest of Scripture flows out of this promise. "This astounding proclamation of God's determination to send the Seed and defeat the serpent (Satan) in order to secure humanity's redemption is the foundation and key for the recognition of the prophetic voice in the Old Testament."—Jiří Moskala, "The Prophetic Voice in the Old Testament: An Overview," in Alberto R. Timm and Dwain N. Esmond, eds., *The Gift of Prophecy in Scripture and History* (Silver Spring, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2015), p. 11.—*T-BSG** 14-15.†‡§

Genesis 3:11-13: 11 "Who told you that you were naked?" God asked. "Did you eat

the fruit that I told you not to eat?"

12The man answered, **"The woman you put here with me gave me the fruit, and I ate it."**

13The LORD God asked the woman, "Why did you do this?"

She replied, **"The snake tricked me into eating it."**—*GNB-TEV*.*†

[BSG:] Notice, in Genesis 3:11–13, how sin suddenly changed Adam's and Eve's relationship. Instead of confessing their individual sin, **they began to blame others**. Adam blamed Eve and, indirectly, God, because He gave him Eve. " 'The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate,' " he said *(Gen. 3:12, NKJV)*. Eve, meanwhile, blamed the serpent for her disobedience. " 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate' " *(Gen. 3:13)* was her excuse. **Neither one of them, at least when first confronted for their sin, would own up to their own guilt. How little has changed in six thousand years.**—*BSG** for Tuesday, September 29.†‡§

[BSG:] The reality is that sin has affected all human beings. The apostle Paul describes our condition well in Romans 7:15–24, when he detailed the pain of desiring to do what is right, only to find himself doing the opposite: "For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do" *(Rom. 7:15, NKJV)*.

Who cannot relate?—*BSG** for Tuesday, September 29.‡§

18. Read **Luke 15:11-32** which records the story of the **prodigal son and the loving father**. That passage is perhaps **one of the most clear pictures of God's love for us**. He never abandons us. He is **always searching** for better ways to communicate with us.

    [BSG:] God's seeking Adam and Eve reveals His unconditional love for His children. God never gives up on us *(see Luke 15)*. He goes to great lengths to reestablish His communion with us, even when we go into hiding. Before Jesus' crucifixion, when Peter denied Jesus three times, Christ "turned and looked" *(Luke 22:61, NKJV)* at him. Even without words, He "spoke" to Peter and sought to reach His erring friend.—*BSG** for Tuesday, September 29.‡§

    [EGW:] When the crowing of the cock reminded him [Peter] of the words of Christ, surprised and shocked at what he had just done, he turned and looked at his Master. At this moment, Christ looked upon Peter; and beneath that grieved look, in which compassion and love were blended, Peter understood himself. He went out, and wept bitterly.—Ellen G. White, *The Youth's Instructor*,* June 5, 1902, par. 7.‡ [https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p469.4833&index=0]‡

19. ***Read Romans 7:15-24. How do you relate? It is certainly true that sin has affected every one of us. Why do we keep doing things that we know we should not do? Why is there such a gap between knowing what is right and doing what is right? How does God intend for us to overcome sin?***

Expelled From the Garden!

[BSG:] One of the most devastating consequences of Adam's and Eve's sin was separation from God. They were expelled from the Garden and **could no longer speak with God face-to-face**. The prophet Isaiah memorably

wrote about this challenging human condition: “Your iniquities have separated you from your God; and **your sins have hidden His face from you”** *(Isa. 59:2, NKJV)*.—*BSG** for Wednesday, September 30.†‡§

Isaiah 59:2: **It is because of your sins that he doesn’t hear you. It is your sins that separate you from God when you try to worship him.**—*GNB-TEV*.*†

20. Adam and Eve were still God’s children. Think of the ways in which sin has changed us. What ways has God used to communicate with us differently than He did in the garden?

Genesis 3:14-24: 14Then the LORD God said to the snake, “You will be punished for this; you alone of all the animals must bear this curse: From now on you will crawl on your belly, and you will have to eat dust as long as you live. **15I will make you and the woman hate each other; her offspring and yours will always be enemies. Her offspring will crush your head, and you will bite her offspring’s heel.”**

16And he said to the woman, “I will increase your trouble in pregnancy and your pain in giving birth. In spite of this, you will still have desire for your husband, yet you will be subject to him.”

17And he said to the man, “You listened to your wife and ate the fruit which I told you not to eat. Because of what you have done, the ground will be under a curse. You will have to work hard all your life to make it produce enough food for you. 18It will produce weeds and thorns, and you will have to eat wild plants. 19You will have to work hard and sweat to make the soil produce anything, until you go back to the soil from which you were formed. You were made from soil, and you will become soil again.”…

24Then at the east side of the garden he put living creatures and a flaming sword which turned in all directions. **This was to keep anyone from coming near the tree that gives life**.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*†

21. ***Is it possible for us even to imagine what it was like to live in the Garden of Eden? Or, are we so accustomed to sin that it is hard for us to imagine it?***

[BSG:] Sin entirely changed human life in ways we cannot imagine, and that is because all we know is a world of sin. Because of sin, the land was “cursed” and was to produce “thorns and thistles.” Humans would now experience pain, and they would have to “sweat” in order to provide food for themselves, only finally to die and return to the ground. Of all the reminders of sin, death remains the most powerful. At the same time, too, we lost our face-to-face communication with God because of sin.

However, Adam and Eve were promised a solution to counteract the ravages of sin. Although our first parents were not to see and talk to God directly, they left Eden with hope for the present and future. God took the initiative and explained to them His rescue plan.

Genesis 3:15, what has been called “the first gospel promise,” was filled with hope for them (and us), despite what had happened. The promise of a coming Redeemer would provide present enmity against sin and hope for the future salvation of humanity. In fact, God’s provision of clothing for Adam and Eve before they left the Garden was a symbolic act depicting their future

redemption. Through the future death and resurrection of Jesus, communion with God was to be restored *(John 14:1–3).—BSG** for Wednesday.‡§ [Did God create animal skins out of nothing? Or, out of soil?]‡

22. ***Could God have made us hate sin instead of just hating serpents?***

    [BSG:] **That is, right there in Eden, right after the entrance of sin, humanity was given the hope and promise that the sin problem ultimately would be solved. As soon as there was sin, there was the promise of a Savior**.

    How have you felt after doing something that was not right? Guilt? Shame? Self-loathing? What were the consequences? How did your faith in God, and the promise of the gospel, keep you from giving up on faith entirely?*—BSG** for Wednesday, September 30.†‡

God's Communication with Man After the Garden of Eden

23. Consider some of the ways in which God has communicated with human beings.

    [T-BSG:] After the Fall, by speaking in various ways, ultimately in the person of Jesus Christ, God opened the lines of communication with sinful humanity. [God continued to communicate with Adam and Eve.]

    No longer able to see God with mortal sight or hear His voice audibly, human beings received divine communication through human intermediaries. Hebrews 1:1 says that God "spoke to our fathers by the prophets" *(ESV)*. For centuries, God communicated with His people through such **spokespersons** as Noah, Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, David, and the **canonical prophets**. He gave revelations to these individuals "at many times and in many ways," such as **theophanies**, **dreams** and **visions**, **divine speech**, and **angels**. He also spoke through the **Urim and Thummim**, **miracles**, and **signs**. These are the ways in which God spoke in the past during the Old Testament era.

    [Willliam G. Johnsson:] "But in these last days he has spoken to us **by his Son"** *(Heb. 1:2, ESV)*. The words of the Old Testament are still authoritative as the Word of God, but they must be read through the fulfillment realized in Jesus Christ. He is the ultimate and definitive revelation of God.—William G. Johnsson, "Hebrews," in Ángel M. Rodriguez, ed., *Andrews Bible Commentary* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2022), pp. 1824, 1825.—*T-BSG** 15.†‡§

    [BSG:] What do the following texts reveal about how God has spoken to humanity after the entrance of sin? *(Read Heb. 1:1, 2; Rom. 1:19, 20; Num. 12:6; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; John 14:7–9; John 10:27–30.)—BSG** for Thursday.‡§

Hebrews 1:1-2: [1]In the past, God spoke to our ancestors many times and in many ways **through the prophets**, [2]but **in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son**. He is the one through whom God created the universe, the one whom God has chosen to possess all things at the end.—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*†

24. **Read Romans 1:18-20; Numbers 12:6; and 2 Timothy 3:16-17**.

John 14:7-9: [7] "Now that you have known me," he said to them, "you will know my

Father also, and from now on you do know him and you have seen him."

[8]Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father; that is all we need."

[9]Jesus answered, "For a long time I have been with you all; yet you do not know me, Philip? **Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.** Why, then, do you say, 'Show us the Father'?"—*Good News Bible-TEV*.*†

John 10:29-31: [29] "What my Father has given me is greater than everything, and no one can snatch them away from the Father's care. [30]**The Father and I are one**."

[31] Then the people again picked up stones to throw at him.—*GNB -TEV*.*†

[BSG:] In spite of sin, God found many ways to communicate with fallen human beings. One way God reveals Himself to us is through creation. **Nature is a powerful revelation of His wonderful acts.** Scientists are amazed by the wonders of our universe and at the complexity of even the "simplest" life. Yet, nature also displays the consequences of the Fall, with the death of every living thing the most powerful example.

Another way in which God has spoken to humanity is **through the prophets**—individuals whom He has chosen as His spokespersons. For example, God spoke to Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Daniel, revealing His will for His people…. And though some of the prophets wrote what has come to us as Scripture, others never wrote any books of the Bible.

However, many of the prophets' words were communicated through Scripture *(2 Tim. 3:16, 17)*. **The Bible is a revelation of God Himself.** It is through His words that we learn who He is, see His relentless love, and discover His guidance for how we are to live.

Moreover, it is through the Bible that we understand who we are, where we came from, and where we are going. There we find God's purpose for our lives.

But **the most effective way in which God has spoken to us is through Jesus Christ, who, of course, is revealed to us in the Bible.** As God sought Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, so Christ came to "seek and to save that which was lost" *(Luke 19:10)*. " 'He who has seen Me has seen the Father,' " Jesus declared *(John 14:9, NKJV)*. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Christ fulfilled the promise given to Adam and Eve in Eden. He came and died in our place so that we may have eternal life through Him.

After Jesus' ascension to heaven, the Holy Spirit has continued to guide us " 'into all the truth' " and to speak to us of " 'what is yet to come' " *(John 16:13, NIV)*.

How much comfort do you get from knowing that Jesus, His love, His character, and His self-sacrifice reveal to us what God the Father is really like?—*BSG** for Thursday, October 1.†‡§ [Underlining of text is added for emphasis.]‡

[EGW:] All the paternal love which has come down from generation to generation through the channel of human hearts, all the springs of

tenderness which have opened in the souls of men, are but as a tiny rill [stream] to the boundless ocean when compared with the infinite, exhaustless love of God. Tongue cannot utter it; pen cannot portray it. You may meditate upon it every day of your life; you may search the Scriptures diligently in order to understand it; you may summon every power and capability that God has given you, in the endeavor to comprehend the love and compassion of the heavenly Father; and yet there is an infinity beyond.—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*,* vol. 5, 740.1.‡ [https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p113.3599&index=0]‡

God's Modern Prophet: Ellen G. White

[BSG:] God's communication is not limited to biblical times. As we will see in coming … [lessons], God speaks to human beings in perpetuity, and His words will be manifested in modern ways until Christ returns.

Ellen Gould Harmon (White) and her twin sister, Elizabeth, were born on November 26, 1827, in Gorham, Maine…. At age nine, **Ellen suffered an injury that affected her physically, emotionally, and socially.** While she was in a park near her home, an angry classmate threw a stone that struck her in the face, leaving Ellen in a semiconscious state for several weeks. This accident abruptly ended her formal education and left her with lifelong health challenges. The facial injuries also left Ellen self-conscious about her appearance, limiting her social interactions.

It is in this context of uncertainty that the young Ellen Harmon began to think about her spiritual destiny. **She was afraid of God** and **felt unworthy** of heaven. Such fearful feelings intensified when **the Harmon family accepted the Millerite doctrine of the soon second coming of Jesus.** Even after her baptism by immersion into the Methodist Church in 1842, Ellen did not feel worthy of God's love. She believed she was "forever lost" (*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 29; also see pp. 20–31).

Amid these agonizing thoughts, **young Ellen had two dreams that began to change her mind about God**. But it was not until she met Levi Stockman, a Methodist preacher, that she understood and felt God's love and grace. It was as if God spoke to her in her despair. "Faith now took possession of my heart," she wrote later. "I felt an inexpressible love for God and had the witness of His Spirit that my sins were pardoned. **My views of the Father were changed. I now looked upon Him as a kind and tender parent, rather than a stern tyrant compelling men to a blind obedience.** My heart went out toward Him in a deep and fervent love."—*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 39. At the same time, Ellen White also **understood the doctrine of the "state of the dead" and gradually grasped the idea that there was no forever-burning hell.** Her new understanding of God and His love completely changed her attitude. As we will learn …, Ellen White fell deeply in love with Jesus and served Him for the rest of her life.

To discover more, visit https://whiteestate.org/absg/1.—*BSG** for Friday.†‡§

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