

Dear Brother Gates:

A friend sent me your latest newsletter. Praise God for His wonderful watch-care over you!

I am writing specifically about Ernie Knoll because I have information most people do not know about; but I feel this is a serious enough issue that you need to have the information I have before you make a final decision as to whether or not Ernie Knoll's dreams are of God.

I first read his dreams in Feb./March of 2007. At the time, he'd had only three. I will say that initially I was leery. I wanted them to be from God – who wouldn't? But I did not want to get deceived so I studied them carefully. There were two problems I found within the first and third dreams:

- 1) A description that did not fit with EGW's;
- 2) An interpretation that contradicted Spirit of Prophecy.

#1 – In Ernie's dream of the table in heaven, he stated that he could not see the length of it, in clear contradiction to Ellen White's statement that the table was "many miles in length" yet they could see the length of it. While this discrepancy was of concern, I did not consider it to be a 'deal breaker.' Perhaps his position (sitting at the table) varied from hers (possibly standing at the end?) so that might explain the difference . . .?

Because that difference could possibly be explained away, I prayed for God to show me clearly whether or not Ernie's dreams were of God.

#2 – This was more serious. It was an interpretation of the 144,000 that clearly contradicted what little Spirit of Prophecy had to say about them. The dream is on his website, entitled "A View of Heaven and a Message for His People." However, the version that is now on there is not the same one I read a year ago – there has been quite a bit of editing done. I wanted to know more about his last conversation with "Jesus" in the third dream and so I called and spoke to him.

Ernie is a very friendly, charming and loquacious man. He put me on speaker phone so that his wife could hear, too, and the three of us had a very pleasant conversation. He was very willing to answer any and every question I had.

In speaking to Ernie, it was evident that he believed some of the 144,000 had already died. In his friendly, loquacious way, he was upfront with his belief that he was probably #143,998 . . . and he stopped really quickly, backed up, and said, "Well, there aren't that many more left to be made up. The number is almost made up and as soon as it is, it will be over."

He was clear in his belief that God started making up the 144,000 ever since 1844 and that at the Close of Probation, not all would be alive. However, at the special resurrection, they would all be raised to see Jesus come. When I asked where he got that belief, Becky quickly quoted from Early Writings, I believe it was, referring to where Ellen White had asked to eat of the fruit of the tree of life.

The angel told her something along the lines of: "All who eat of the fruit of this land, nevermore return to earth. However, if you are faithful, you with the 144,000 will have the pleasure of visiting all the worlds in God's creation."

This, Ernie and Becky believed, proved that Ellen White was one of the 144,000.

However, if I invite David Gates to come speak at my church and I stand **with** David Gates on the platform, that does not necessarily mean that I **am** David Gates. I am only standing **with** him.

I wasn't sure whether or not this was his own, personal interpretation of the 144,000 or whether or not he had expressly been told this in the dream.

I asked Ernie, point blank: "Is this what you believe about the 144,000, or was this told you by the Great Instructor in your dream – that the 144,000 have been being made up since 1844 and that some will be resurrected at the special resurrection?" (Initially, he never referred to Jesus in his dream. He only ever referred to the "Great Instructor." Referring to the Great Instructor as "Jesus" is part of later editing.)

Ernie promptly answered, "The Great Instructor explained it all to me in the dream."

"Just like that?" I pressed.

"Just like that," he insisted. Ernie went on to say that he wasn't a big Bible scholar and the Great Instructor knew that, so He'd had to tell Ernie everything He wanted him to know.

This was a deal breaker to me. Ellen White makes it clear that the 144,000 go through Jacob's Time of Trouble and none are killed after the close of probation, so none of the 144,000 are raised in the special resurrection, as they're all alive anyway.

Just one week after my last conversation with Ernie, he was due to be visiting some churches back in the Mid-West, one of which a friend of mine attends.

After attending, she was very troubled. She said, "There was no call to repentance. All it was, was him standing up there and talking about what everything looked like. But never was there any deep call to seek the Lord and obey Him and repent." The whole spirit, she said, was just wrong and she was very oppressed the entire following week.

Apparently, that Saturday night, two men visited with Ernie until late in the night. They, too, had picked up on the discrepancies with what Ernie was saying about the 144,000. They showed him from Spirit of Prophecy where what he was saying was in clear contradiction to what Ellen White said. At one point, the conversation got a little heated and Ernie stated that *he didn't care what Ellen White said, he would believe what was told him in his dreams*. The two men would not back down that he was wrong in his stance because Spirit of Prophecy said so clearly the exact opposite of what he was claiming the Great Instructor told him.

Finally, the lateness of the hour was such that Ernie backed down a little bit and said that he would have to go pray about it and it was dropped for the night. Next morning, Ernie was all smiling apologies, "Well, you were right. I was wrong. I guess I just put too much 'Ernie' into it. I put my own interpretation on it and I wasn't really told that."

One of the men, who later became his webmaster and is his staunch supporter, told him, "You can't do that, Ernie. You can't put any of yourself and your own interpretation on things. You MUST say only what was told you." This man has kind of taken Ernie under his wing and began coaching him. Anytime some little discrepancy would creep in, he would point to what is actually said in Spirit of Prophecy and ask, "Ernie, are you putting too much 'Ernie' in again?"

This is very troublesome to me. First of all, I know that, a week and a half before this man ever spoke to him, I asked him point blank whether or not what he was saying about the 144,000 was his own interpretation or not. When he answered that it was what the Great Instructor had explained to him in the dream, I pressed him, wanting to know if the Great Instructor had explained the 144,000 to him *just like that* and he confirmed that it was indeed, *just like that*.

Then, a week and a half later, he meets with two men who know their Spirit of Prophecy and won't back down and he sees that he may lose a following if he doesn't back down and all of a sudden it's because he put "too much Ernie" into it? Either he lied to me or he lied to them. Either way, he lied to one of us. There are other serious problems, too, such as his admission that the night before his "heaven" dream he was so angry at God over his health problems that he was yelling at God and telling Him that he hated Him.

What troubles me most, however, is that under the man's tutelage, discrepancies that would be and should be red flags are weeded out. Ernie repeatedly told me that he didn't know his Bible and Spirit of Prophecy all that well. Having someone "cover" for him, weeds out what would be warning signs – and that really concerns me. A few other little things that people were questioning in this dream, have since been edited out and the use of the term "Great Instructor" has largely been replaced with "Jesus" which was *never* used before.

I am not trying to bad-mouth Ernie. I am not going around after him and sharing with all and sundry my experience with him. Neither am I trying to convince you to believe as I do. That is not my job; that's the Holy Spirit's job to convince all as they study for themselves. However, because of your influential position and stating it as you did in your newsletter, I felt I needed to share with you what I know and encourage you to make it a matter of earnest prayer and a whole lot more study before deciding that he must be of God simply because he "tested the spirits."

I would like to remind you, Brother Gates, that in the late 1980s with the rise of the New Age Christs, demons (when thus "tested") would indeed admit that Jesus Christ came "in the flesh" – but they did it for purposes to deceive.

There is a difference between "spiritism" and "occultism." Spiritism is simply a belief in communicating with the dead. Occultism, on the other hand, is a belief in magic. "Testing" the spirits is not some magic mantra that will automatically reveal whether they are of God or Satan. The devil knows as well as you or I that Jesus certainly did come in the flesh of Adam after the fall and he's perfectly willing to admit that (as proven by various testimonies of those who later came out of the New Age movement) for purposes to deceive.

There is no magic mantra that shows what is of God and what is of Satan. It remains, as always, in the realm of here a little, there a little – which requires a lot of prayerful study. "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them." From what I have studied of his dreams, and I have read every single one of them, they do not stand up to the acid test of "to the law and to the testimony."

Please, Brother Gates, do some more prayerful, careful study before you throw the weight of your influence behind him. You and your pastor friends may not find anything wrong with his dreams as they appear on the website now, but please be aware that plenty of editing has been done and that not everything on there is indeed in accordance with scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy.

May God continue to bless you and yours in your work.

Sincerely,

L. J.