Program: SS Panel 2026 4 Q
Quarterly title: The Gift of Prophecy
Quarterly author: The Ellen G. White Estate
Lesson Title: #08 Interpreting Prophetic Writings
Day Title: Friday - The Historical-Cultural Context
For Lesson Dates: Reading Ellen G. White
Record date: Monday August 25, 2026
Note: This **color** and **font** = quarterly text
Note: This color and font = John Dinzey notes

First and Last Name 2026 Q4 L# Title of your days lesson

John Dinzey.2026.Q4.L08. The Historical-Cultural Context

]]> Emphasize this
Question:
Answer
>[=] **Story:**
REF:>>
READ
NIL: Not in Lesson

Lesson 8 **November 14-20*

FRIDAY *November 20*

Reading Ellen G. White

How do we read Ellen G. White? Here are a few guidelines to correctly understand and apply to Ellen G. White's writings.

First, begin with a prayerful, positive attitude and an open mind, rather than a spirit of doubt. Our mindset is a lens that colors all we hear, read, and see. We need the Holy Spirit to guide our thinking. As Ellen G. White herself

noted: **"If you search the Scriptures to vindicate your own opinions, you will never reach the truth. Search in order to learn what the Lord says."**—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 112. The same is true regarding her writings.

Second, consider the context of what you read. People have often based their understanding of Ellen G. White's writings on an **isolated statement or paragraph fragment removed from its original historical or literary context.** Ellen G. White wrote that **"time and place must be considered."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 57**. This unfortunate practice of ignoring context has caused, and still continues to cause, no end of trouble for some church members.

Mat 27:5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and **went and hanged himself.**

Luk 10:37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, **Go, and do thou likewise.**

>>> Be careful do not remove statements from their context to state something that the author did not say.

READ

Third, focus on principles. What is the main point (or points) that Ellen G. White is emphasizing in a particular passage? For example, in 1894 Ellen White wrote to church members in Battle Creek, Michigan, **condemning the purchase of bicycles** (see *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 50-53). **The principle that Ellen White was seeking to encourage was proper stewardship of God-given resources, such as money (back then bicycles were very expensive).**

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bicycles could be quite expensive in the 1890s, especially compared with ordinary workers' wages. But prices varied enormously depending on the bicycle.

During the **1890s bicycle boom**, a good-quality "safety bicycle" (the familiar diamond-frame style with two similarly sized wheels) often cost roughly **$50–$100 in the United States**. Higher-end machines could cost more.

To put that in perspective:

- A typical industrial worker might earn around **$1.50–$3 per day**, depending on occupation and location.

Fourth, study everything Ellen G. White wrote on a particular topic. Examine obscure statements in the context of her general teaching on a subject. During her lifetime Ellen G. White lamented the misuse of her writings: "**Much that purports to be a message from Sister White, serves the purpose of misrepresenting Sister White, making her testify in favor of things that are not in accordance with her mind or judgment."**—Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 44.

Finally, make sure that Ellen G. White said it. There are numerous statements falsely attributed to Ellen G. White. The safest way to be sure that what we read is from Ellen White is to look for a reference to its source. Once we have verified where it is found, we can examine it using the correct principles.

We have been given a wonderful gift in the prophetic writings of Ellen G. White. It's so important that we properly read those writings, which can be—and are—such a blessing to millions. It is tragic when they are misused and misapplied.

To discover more, visit https://whiteestate.org/absg/8.