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THEOLOGICAL THEMES OF THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN WHITE

The Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20) has been a controversial topic in Christian theology, including in the 19th century, when the Seventh-day Adventist Church emerged. One of the founders of the Adventist Church was Ellen White, whose writings play an important role in both the practical life and theology of Adventists. Among the many studies of theological concepts in the writings of Ellen White, the topic of the Millennial Kingdom remains unexplored. This article is the first attempt to identify the theological themes of the millennium in the writings of Ellen White. Analysis shows that White accepted a literal interpretation of the millennium and took a premillennial approach. White adhered to a linear sequential chronology and considered the thousand years and the resurrection to be real events. Her unyielding devotion to premillennial views led her to reject alternative interpretations of this passage, even classifying some as false and potentially harmful to salvation. Ellen White showed three major theological themes in her interpretation of Revelation 20. The first major theological theme concerns the ultimate destiny of mankind. White argued that at the end of the age, there would be a double resurrection of the dead: first for the righteous and sec-

ond for the wicked. These resurrections differ in the composition of participants, timing, and the nature of the resurrected persons. The second major theological theme is the final judgment, in which God will judge both sinners and the forces of evil, including demons and Satan. For a thousand years, the resurrected righteous will take part in this judgment. The actions of sinners will be evaluated, and their punishment will be determined based on their deeds. Ellen White's third theological theme of Revelation 20 is the practical life of the Christian. White focused on the need for personal repentance, responsibility, and dedication to God.

Keywords: *Revelation 20, millennial kingdom, prophecy, book of Revelation, Apocalypse, Adventists, hermeneutics, eschatology, New Testament.*

The Millennial Kingdom is a popular topic in Christian theology, with debates about it dating back to early church history. The basis is the passage Rev. 20, which describes Satan's imprisonment, resurrection, and judgment of people. The main questions that troubled researchers were: 1) the nature of the thousand-year reign – literal or symbolic interpretation? and 2) chronology of events – will the second coming of Jesus Christ take place before the millennial kingdom or after it? Various interpretations and views have arisen in the history of Christianity and the debate among theologians is still ongoing.

The interpretation of the millennial kingdom related to the early historical stage of the formation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In the nineteenth century, postmillennialism became widespread among Christians in the United States. Postmillennialism states that the progress of mankind and the preaching of the Gospel will lead to an earthly millennium of prosperity, which will end with the second coming of Jesus Christ. Early Adventists rejected this view and took the position of premillennialism,

which states that the millennial kingdom would come after the second coming of Jesus Christ.

One of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was Ellen White, who left behind many works that play an important role in the practical life of Adventists. Although she was not a professional theologian, her writings contain theological themes and concepts that greatly influence Adventist theological thought. Adventist scholars have attempted to describe Ellen White's theology, but their writings are mostly overviews and cover basic topics. Among many studies of narrower topics, the theme of the millennial kingdom in the writings of Ellen White remains unexplored. The following questions need answers: How did Ellen White understand the millennium? And what theological themes did she explore when interpreting Rev. 20? Accordingly, the purpose of this article is to identify the theological themes of the millennial kingdom in the writings of Ellen White. This goal requires solving the following tasks: 1) to find and analyze all citations related to the interpretation of Rev. 20; and 2) to identify and systematize key theological themes.

Ellen White's Hermeneutic Approach to Revelation 20

Ellen White adhered to a literal interpretation of the Rev. 20. Usually, she interpreted many symbols in a figurative sense, but for the 1000 years she interpreted them as being literal. Also, the resurrection meant a real physical resurrection, and not a spiritual one or something else. White also took the chronology of events literally. The thousand years will begin with the imprisonment of the devil and the second coming of Jesus Christ, who will resurrect the righteous and take them with him to heaven. During the thousand years, the saints will reign with Jesus and execute judgment on sinners and evil angels. At the end of a thousand years, the Lord will visit the earth, resurrect sinners, and pronounce judgment on the devil, demons, and lawless people. El-

len White, speaking of one deceased man, wrote: “he is laid in his narrow earth home to rest until the morning of the resurrection when all that are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth, they that have done good, the righteous, in the first resurrection, and they that have done evil in the second resurrection, after the thousand years are finished” [19, p. 1].

Ellen White did not allow for a plurality of opinions regarding the interpretation of the Rev. 20 passage and consistently maintained a premillennialist view. In addition, she considered other points of view to be false and erroneous. In particular, describing the first general meeting in western New York, in Brother David Arnold’s barn, White recalled the following idea among erroneous thoughts: “One brother held that the one thousand years of the twentieth chapter of Revelation were in the past, and that the one hundred and forty-four thousand mentioned in the seventh and fourteenth chapters of Revelation, were those raised at Christ’s resurrection” [20, p. 110]. White wrote that her brother’s misconceptions about the millennium were especially depressing to her. She was so frustrated by the contradictions that she even fainted. Only the prayers of believers helped her come to her senses, and the meeting ended with the victory of truth [23, p. 98].

Ellen White even classified postmillennialism as one of the great false doctrines of Babylon. She wrote, “Prominent among these false doctrines is that of the temporal millennium, – a thousand years of spiritual peace and prosperity, in which the world is to be converted, before the coming of Christ. This siren song has lulled thousands of souls to sleep over the abyss of eternal ruin” [29, p. 235]. Thus, it was important for Ellen White to adhere to the correct interpretation of the Rev. 20, since false views could even lead to loss of salvation.

Ellen White interpreted the phrase “the bottomless pit” (Rev. 20:1) in light of Gen. 1:2 as the desolate and lifeless state of

the planet Earth before the creation of the Lord. She stated: "Prophecy teaches that it will be brought back, partially at least, to this condition" [27, p. 658]. White found confirmation of this interpretation in the words of the prophet Jeremiah, who wrote about the completely destroyed uninhabited land (Jer. 4:23-26). Accordingly, for Ellen White, Satan's imprisonment was a metaphor that conveyed the idea of Satan's inaction in connection with the death of all sinners. There will not be a single living creature left on planet Earth that the devil and his angels could tempt. Ellen White argued that the imprisonment of the devil would be great news for the Lord's people. She attributed the parable of the king of Babylon (Isa. 14:3-6) to Satan [27, p. 660].

Man's Destiny

One of the main theological themes in Rev. 20 is man's destiny. John describes the final reward that people receive at the end of time. The righteous will be resurrected in the first resurrection for eternal life, and sinners will be resurrected in the second resurrection for punishment. They will be judged and will suffer the consequences of their crimes.

Ellen White believed that the resurrection would be the general resurrection of the dead at the end of time. All people would be raised from their graves and would receive fair retribution. However, Ellen White clearly distinguished between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of sinners. She argued that there would be two general resurrections that would be different from each other. First, the difference lies in the participants. The first resurrection is for the saints, and the second resurrection is for the wicked. Second, the two resurrections are separated by a time period. The first resurrection will be before the millennial kingdom, and the second resurrection will occur after the thousand years. Third, the difference will be in the very nature of resurrected people. The righteous will come to life in glorified

and incorruptible bodies, and sinners will come to life in the same bodies in which they died. Accordingly, the righteous will come to life to receive their reward, and the sinners will come to life to receive their punishment.

First Resurrection

Ellen White believed that the first resurrection would take place at the beginning of the millennial kingdom and that only the righteous would take part in it. Ellen White explained the reason why the resurrection of the righteous is called the first. She wrote: “‘When Jesus comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels,’ ‘the dead believers shall rise first.’ 1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:23. This is what we Christians call the first resurrection” [26, p. 359].

Ellen White recalled the first resurrection in the context of a funeral or a visit to a cemetery. Ellen White asked, “‘When I travel through the country, and see in the distance the white tomb-stones gleaming among the evergreens and ornamental trees, I am led to inquire, How many of the silent sleepers will awake in the morning of the first resurrection? How many have lived and died without hope for the future?’” [1, p. 14]. One day, while contemplating the suddenly deceased funeral procession of a man, she thought about the first resurrection and expressed a desire to come to life before the thousand-year kingdom [19, p. 1]. Also walking through a cemetery with her son William, White, looking at the flowers and tombstones, wrote that she imagined future scenes of resurrection and hoped for the elimination of evil and death [13, p. 1]. She called the first resurrection “‘the resurrection to life,’” indicating the purpose of the revival – eternal life with Jesus Christ on the new earth.

One of the benefits of participating in the first resurrection is avoiding the second death. Ellen White wrote that when fire comes to the earth to destroy evil, the saints will be in a safe place

– the New Jerusalem. The second death will not be able to exercise its power over them, and for them, God will be their sun and shield [26, p. 673].

Ellen White believed that to participate in the first resurrection one must have the appropriate holy character: “Satan is watching his chance to destroy those souls who have not developed such characters as will fit them to rise in the first resurrection and be numbered with the redeemed, with those who have appreciated the great privilege of washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb” [5, p. 1]. Ellen White gave the example of Enoch reflecting the light of God. She wrote that all who walk in this light of God’s glory will be resurrected in the first resurrection [14, p. 1]. Ellen White was very worried about her children, and was not always sure of their salvation. She wrote, “O will the Lord save my children, my poor children? I have no evidence [that] if Henry or Edson should now die that they would come up in the first resurrection. I carry a burdened heart for them all the time. O that salvation may come to this home, and from the eldest to the youngest, may be heard the song of praise” [3, p. 1].

Sin must not live in the heart in order to come to life in the first resurrection. Ellen White called, “Who expects to have a part in the first resurrection? You who have been cherishing sin and iniquity in the heart? You will fail in that day” [16, p. 1]. All the dead saints will hear the voice of the Archangel and come to life, “We want that every one of you, if you lie in the grave, shall come up in the first resurrection, and that the mortal will put on immortality, and the corruption will put on incorruption, and the voices will be heard saying, ‘This is our God, we have waited for Him.’ (Isa. 25:9)” [11, p. 1]. The saints will have eternal glory and will be safe in the city of the Lord for a thousand years, after which evil will be destroyed forever [12, p. 1].

Second Resurrection

Ellen White wrote that at the end of the millennium, there would be a second resurrection when sinners would rise from the dead for God's judgment. She quoted three texts and linked them together – Ps. 149:9, Rev. 20:5, and Isa. 24:22. In her opinion, the prophet Isaiah wrote in this verse about the resurrection of sinners [25, p. 354]. In the second resurrection, sinners destined for burning will come to life. Ellen White wrote, "I saw, that all the righteous dead were raised by the voice of the Son of God, at the first resurrection; and all that were raised at the second resurrection, were burnt up, and ceased to exist" [2, p. 12].

The resurrected sinners will be very different from those who participated in the first resurrection. Ellen White stated that at the end of the millennium, Jesus "bids the wicked dead arise to receive their doom. They come forth, a mighty host, numberless as the sands of the sea. What a contrast to those who were raised at the first resurrection! The righteous were clothed with immortal youth and beauty. The wicked bear the traces of disease and death" [26, p. 662].

Ellen White wrote, "In that vast throng are multitudes of the long-lived race that existed before the Flood; men of lofty stature and giant intellect, who, yielding to the control of fallen angels, devoted all their skill and knowledge to the exaltation of themselves" [21, p. 338]. White argued that sinners were not deprived of talents and clever achievements. However, sinners used all their abilities to glorify their name, multiplied cruelty and disfigured the image of the Lord that was embedded in them. Among the resurrected wicked men, White listed men of authority who were kings, generals, and mighty warriors. Many military leaders achieved great achievements in campaigns of conquest and death did not change their ambitions. Ellen White wrote that, "As they come up from the grave, they resume the current of their thoughts

just where it ceased. They are actuated by the same desire to conquer that ruled them when they fell” [21, p. 338].

Ellen White wrote that when sinners are resurrected, they will recognize the glory of Jesus Christ: “Every eye is turned to behold the glory of the Son of God. With one voice the wicked hosts exclaim: ‘Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!’ Matt. 23:39” [28, p. 50]. However, passion for Jesus or love for him will not be the reason for this cry. The power of truth will force sinners to express these words, but they will not be a reflection of their beliefs. The same hostile attitude towards the Son of God that sinners had before death will be with them after the resurrection. According to Ellen White, the rebellious spirit will not disappear anywhere, and sinners will not be able to change anything with their shortcomings and mistakes. Ellen White wrote that after the resurrection of sinners, the devil again has the opportunity to tempt people: “While deprived of his power, and cut off from his work of deception, the prince of evil was miserable and dejected; but as the wicked dead are raised, and he sees the vast multitudes upon his side, his hopes revive, and he determines not to yield the great controversy” [26, p. 663].

Ellen White described in detail Satan’s tactics in his final deception of resurrected sinners. In her opinion, they will become a tool in the hands of Satan to achieve his plans to fight against the rule of God. Since the wicked are the lawful prey of Satan, they submit to him because they have chosen him as their superior and possessor. Even at that time, the devil will act cunningly, presenting himself as the rightful owner of the world, who has been robbed of his property. He will try to convince everyone that it was his power that resurrected them and therefore, together with him, they can get rid of the tyranny of God. Ellen White wrote that the devil will work miracles and inspire sinners with his power so that they will be confident that his plans are realistic. White wrote, “He proposes to lead them against the camp of the

saints, and to take possession of the city of God. With fiendish exultation he points to the unnumbered millions who have been raised from the dead, and declares that as their leader he is well able to overthrow the city, and regain his throne and his kingdom” [26, p. 663].

God's Judgment

The second important theological theme of the passage Rev. 20 is the judgment of God. The Lord, together with the saints, will bring judgment both on sinners, on demons, and Satan. Ellen White wrote that Rev. 20:11-15 presented “The great and solemn day when the judgment is to set and the books be opened, and the dead are to be judged according to the things that are written in the books” [22, p. 25, 26]. White called for the realization that God’s judgment is approaching and therefore one must prepare and live with the awareness of the solemn approach of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

According to Ellen White, the judgment of sinners, the devil, and his angels, will take place over a thousand years. All resurrected righteous people will be able to take part in this judgment. White connected the words of the Apostle Paul that saints will judge the world and angels (1 Cor. 6:2, 3). With the reign of the saints for a thousand years: “In union with Christ they judge the wicked, comparing their acts with the statute book, the Bible, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body” [27, p. 660, 661]. Based on this analysis of the actions of sinners, the degree of their punishment will be measured and the verdict will be written in the book of death. Ellen White also used other biblical texts for judgment during the millennium (Dan. 7:22; 1 Cor. 4:5; Jude 6) [26, p. 660, 661].

Ellen White compared the destruction of the earth by fire in Rev. 20 with the destruction of the earth by water during the great flood (Gen. 8:1; 2 Pet. 3:10). She wrote: “When the flood of wa-

ters was at its height upon the earth, it had the appearance of a boundless lake of water. When God finally purifies the earth, it will appear like a boundless lake of fire” [24, p. 87]. According to White, God will keep all the people safe in Jerusalem, just as eight people were saved during the flood. That is why “Although the whole earth, with the exception of that portion where the city rests, will be wrapped in a sea of liquid fire, yet the city is preserved as was the ark, by a miracle of Almighty power. It stands unharmed amid the devouring elements” [24, p. 87].

Ellen White explains that death is the penalty for committing sin. She refers to two biblical texts (Rom. 6:23; Deut. 30:15) and interprets the death mentioned there as the final second death. White stated, “The death referred to in these scriptures is not that pronounced upon Adam, for all mankind suffer the penalty of his transgression. It is ‘the second death’ that is placed in contrast with everlasting life” [27, p. 544]. Ellen White wrote that all people became sinners because of the fall of Adam and, accordingly, all are headed to the grave. All people will come to life at the end of time, but there will be a big difference between them [27, p. 544].

Ellen White wrote that the worthy, blessed, and holy will not die the second death (Luke 20:35; Rev. 20:6). However, “Those who have not secured pardon through repentance and faith must receive ‘the wages of sin,’ punishment ‘according to their works,’ ending in the ‘second death’” [27, p. 544]. Ellen White argued that the fate of sinners is eternal nothingness: “Since it is impossible for God to save the sinner in his sins, He deprives him of the existence which his transgressions have forfeited and of which he has proved himself unworthy” [27, p. 544]. White referred to the following Old Testament texts: “‘Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.’ ‘They shall be as though they had not been.’ Ps. 37:10; Obad. 16. They sink into hopeless, eternal obliv-

ion” [27, p. 544]. Ellen White believed that by destroying sinners, the second death would end the existence of evil. White wrote that, “Thus will be made an end of sin, with all the woe and ruin which have resulted from it. Says the psalmist: ‘Thou hast destroyed the wicked, Thou hast put out their name forever and ever. O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end.’ Ps. 9:5, 6” [27, p. 545].

Ellen White argued that the earth would be a prison for the devil for a thousand years, he would not be able to gain access to other places in the universe. She wrote, “It is in this sense that he is bound: there are none remaining, upon whom he can exercise his power. He is wholly cut off from the work of deception and ruin which for so many centuries has been his sole delight” [27, p. 659]. White used an Old Testament passage from the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 14:12-20) to describe the state of the devil during the millennium. She wrote that Satan would suffer greatly during a thousand years of inactivity. As he wanders through the devastated land, he will see the results of his rebellion against the Lord, and his abandonment will cause him pain. White stated: “Since his fall his life of unceasing activity has banished reflection; but he is now deprived of his power and left to contemplate the part which he has acted since first he rebelled against the government of heaven” [27, p. 660]. According to her, the devil will await his future fate with trepidation and fear, knowing that he will have to answer in full for all the evils he committed. Ellen White wrote that, “Satan also and evil angels are judged by Christ and His people... When the Judge of all the earth shall demand of Satan, ‘Why hast thou rebelled against Me, and robbed Me of the subjects of My kingdom?’ the originator of evil can render no excuse. Every mouth will be stopped, and all the hosts of rebellion will be speechless” [25, p. 216].

Ellen White described the devil’s last attempt to defeat the people of God, he will unite the resurrected sinners around him-

self and lead them to the New Jerusalem to capture it. She wrote that, “At last the order to advance is given, and the countless host moves on, – an army such as was never summoned by earthly conquerors, such as the combined forces of all ages since war began on earth could never equal” [26, p. 664]. In this military campaign against Jesus Christ, among all the evil beings, Satan will be the most powerful warrior. He will organize a huge number of warriors into groups and appoint appropriate commanders for them. Then the devil will lead all the forces of evil behind him. White stated, “With military precision, the serried ranks advance over the earth's broken and uneven surface to the city of God. By command of Jesus, the gates of the New Jerusalem are closed, and the armies of Satan surround the city, and make ready for the onset” [26, p. 664].

Ellen White described how, in this tense moment, Jesus Christ appears on the throne in all his majesty and power, surrounded by his followers. In her opinion, this is when the final coronation of the Son of God will take place, who will proclaim the verdict of God's Court. White cited Rev. 20:11, 12 and stated, “And now, invested with supreme majesty and power, the King of kings pronounces sentence upon the rebels against his government, and executes justice upon those who have transgressed his law and oppressed his people” [26, p. 665]. The gaze of Jesus will penetrate every soul and all sinners will remember every moment in their lives when they broke God's law and committed sin. According to Ellen White, the Lord will show before everyone the recorded scene of the events of Calvary. These dramatic last moments of the wicked are depicted as follows: “The awful spectacle appears just as it was. Satan, his angels, and his subjects have no power to turn from the picture of their own work. Each actor recalls the part which he performed” [26, p. 667]. White described that Herod, Herodias, Pilate, soldiers, priests, rulers, and the crowd would see their terrible part in this crime of killing the

Messiah and would be deeply struck by the magnitude of their guilt. She wrote, “They vainly seek to hide from the divine majesty of His countenance, outshining the glory of the sun, while the redeemed cast their crowns at the Saviour’s feet, exclaiming, ‘He died for me!’” [26, p. 667].

Ellen White argued that sinners outside the city included Nero, papal priests, and prelates who placed themselves above God. She depicted, “The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God, on the charge of high treason against the government of Heaven. They have none to plead their cause; they are without excuse; and the sentence of eternal death is pronounced against them” [26, p. 668]. Sinners will realize that sin is iniquity, a life lived in violation of the Law of God written on the tablets of the covenant.

Ellen White describes in detail the devil’s reaction to the coronation of the Son of God. It will be a paralyzing experience for him that will remind him of his entire life and rebellion against Jesus. Surprisingly, White argued that Satan admits he is wrong: “Satan sees that his voluntary rebellion has unfitted him for Heaven. He has trained his powers to war against God; the purity, peace, and harmony of Heaven would be to him supreme torture” [26, p. 670]. The devil will realize that all his accusations against the mercy and justice of the Lord were unfounded. All the accusations he makes against God will indeed turn against him. The obviousness of his atrocities will force him to bow before Christ and acknowledge the justice of the sentence against him.

According to Ellen White’s interpretation, all questions regarding good and evil in the context of cosmic conflict will become clear at this moment of judgment. God’s justice, righteousness, and rightness will be revealed to the entire universe and the rule of the devil will be completely condemned. She claimed that, “Satan’s own works have condemned him. God’s wisdom, his justice, and his goodness stand fully vindicated. It is seen that all his

dealings in the great controversy have been conducted with respect to the eternal good of his people, and the good of all the worlds that he has created” [26, p. 670].

However, the devil’s struggle does not end with the recognition of God’s justice. According to Ellen White, his character and rebellious spirit will not change and therefore he will continue to fight to the end, “he rushes into the midst of his subjects, and endeavors to inspire them with his own fury, and arouse them to instant battle. But of all the countless millions whom he has allured into rebellion, there are none now to acknowledge his supremacy. His power is at an end” [26, p. 671]. Ellen White believed that sinners will realize the hopelessness of their struggle against an almighty God. This will make them even more furious, which they will direct against the devil.

At this moment of the devil’s ferocity, eternal fire will descend from heaven and burst out from the depths of the earth. He will devour all sinners along with the evil angels. Ellen White used many Old Testament texts (Prov. 11:31; Isa. 9:5; 11:6; 34:2, 8; Mal. 4:1; 2 Pet. 3:10) to describe the punishment of sinners. In her opinion, the entire earth will turn into a great sea of fire during the burning of the wicked. Although Ellen White argued that sinners would not be tormented forever in fire, but would be burned and die an eternal death, she assured that each person would have a different duration of torment. She explained, “some are destroyed as in a moment, while others suffer many days. All are punished ‘according to their deeds.’ The sins of the righteous having been transferred to Satan, he is made to suffer not only for his own rebellion, but for all the sins which he has caused God’s people to commit” [26, p. 673]. White argued that Satan’s punishment would be the greatest and most powerful of all sinful beings. He will be the last creature among those who rebelled against God, who will still suffer while others will already die. Fire will destroy both the root and branches of evil. White con-

cludes: “The full penalty of the law has been visited; the demands of justice have been met; and Heaven and earth, beholding, declare the righteousness of Jehovah” [26, p. 673].

Practical Life

The third important theological theme is the practical life of the Christian. Ellen White often used the passage Rev. 20 in practical advice for Christian living. The main essence of these calls was related to repentance and God’s judgment. Ellen White, commenting on God’s judgment in Rev. 20:12-15, wrote: “It is our privilege to understand the great responsibilities that God has placed upon us, so that we shall not be in darkness as to what is coming upon our world. We cannot afford to meet that day without a preparation” [22, p. 25, 26]. Ellen White believed that John’s words about God’s judgment (Rev. 20:11-13) would soon be fulfilled, so she called for reliance not on people, but on God. She called: “Let us rely on God. He never fails a trusting soul” [8, p. 1].

A similar call has been written elsewhere. Ellen White, based on the Rev. 20:12-15 explained that there was little time left before the second coming of Jesus Christ. Soon, the words about God’s judgment from the book of Revelation will be fulfilled, so the future fate depends on the decision of people: “Day by day we are deciding whether the future will bring to us eternal life or eternal death. Only by a union with Christ, whose property we are by creation and by redemption, can we win eternal life. He gave His life as a propitiation for man’s sin, but His sacrifice avails only for those who accept Him as their Saviour” [10, p. 1]. Also, Ellen White commenting on the Rev. 20:11-15, called: “I have questioned in my mind, as I have seen the people in our cities hurrying to and fro with business, whether they ever thought of the day of God that is just upon us. Every one of us should be

living with reference to that great day which is soon to come upon us” [22, p. 25].

Ellen White once preached from the biblical passage Rev. 20:11-15. She wrote: “The Lord helped me by His Holy Spirit to give a most solemn discourse to this people in regard to the future judgment, when every case would be decided and justified or condemned according to their obedience or disrespect of God’s law and disregard of His requirements” [15, p. 1]. She continued: “I felt urged to make a most solemn appeal that none should trifle with their soul’s salvation. Eternal interests are to be their first consideration. To do God’s will is to obey His commandments” [15, p. 1]. Ellen White used the passage Rev. 20:12, 15 and made the following call: “You must compare your character with the great moral standard of righteousness, God’s holy law. If the character will not bear the comparison to that law now, how will it stand the test of the judgment?” [18, p. 1].

Ellen White used the text Rev. 20:11-15 to strengthen the call for accountability in the publishing ministry, since at the judgment of God all matters will be revealed. She wrote: “Let all take heed as to the principles that govern their dealings with one another, for all their works are to be brought into judgment. There must be no confederacy to ignore the individuality of the publishing work on the Pacific Coast” [4, p. 1]. White believed that the brothers should not dilute Pacific Press’s identity in their attempts to increase the strength of another publisher in Battle Creek. She stated: “The Pacific Press has been led to depend too largely upon Battle Creek. Its managers should have discerned the talents to be found on the Pacific Coast and would have shown true wisdom in securing all the ability possible in order to make their work a complete whole” [4, p. 1].

Ellen White used Rev. 20:12, 15 in a letter to young people to emphasize the idea that God is recording all the actions of people for future judgment. She emphasized, “Your reputation is at

stake. Day by day the record of your words, your actions, and your influence is being made in the books of heaven. This you will one day meet... In that great day will you be pleased to meet the record that you have made while at this school?" [6, p. 1]. White claimed that the witness was constantly in the bedroom, hearing every word. Nothing is missed from the close attention of this witness, but every gesture and every action is recorded.

Also, in her New Year's greetings, Ellen White, quoting the biblical passage Rev. 20:11-15, wrote: "I greet you this morning with a "Happy New Year." Another year, with its burden of record, has passed into eternity. We know not what that record is, and cannot know till the judgment. But a new year has commenced, and I feel like dedicating myself anew to God – soul, body, heart, and strength" [7, p. 1]. White asked what the entries on the new page for the new year would be? What will be recorded in each person's individual history? These rhetorical questions were a kind of incentive to think about life and go to heaven on the right path.

In a personal letter to Ira Abbey, Ellen White called for repentance and quoted a passage from Rev. 20:12, 15. She urged: "Do not, I entreat of you, sit down in hopeless despair and do nothing. Do not heed any farther the great tempter [when he says] that it is no use for you to try" [17, p. 1]. According to her, a person's sinful state would only lead to destruction if he came to Jesus based on his works. However, Jesus is ready to save and accept the worst and greatest sinner.

In a personal letter to Arthur and Rosetta, Ellen White quoted the passage Rev. 20:12, 15 in her call to repentance. She emphasized: "Oh, the worth of the soul! It cannot be estimated by you, Arthur and Rosetta, because you have not cultivated a sense of the great sacrifice made by the Son of God to save the soul from eternal ruin. You do not realize the abhorrence which the Lord has for sin" [18, p. 1]. White argued that while God is in-

deed harsh towards sinners who resist and categorically refuse to repent, yet he gladly has mercy on those who come with sincere repentance. The Lord rewards such people.

The hermeneutic principles of Ellen White played an important role in the development of theological ideas in the interpretation of Revelation 20. Ellen White firmly embraced a literal interpretation of the millennial kingdom. She considered the thousand years, the resurrection, and the chronology of events as real occurrences. White's unwavering commitment to a premillennialist view led her to reject alternative perspectives on this passage, even categorizing some as false and potentially damaging to one's salvation.

An analysis of the writings of Ellen White reveals three main theological themes in the interpretation of Revelation 20. The first major theological theme concerns the ultimate fate of humanity. Ellen White maintained that there would be a general resurrection of the dead at the end of time, where all individuals would be raised from their graves to face judgment. However, she made a clear distinction between two resurrections. The first is for the righteous, and the second is for the wicked. These resurrections differ in terms of the participants, timing, and the nature of the resurrected individuals. The first resurrection involves the saints and occurs before the millennial kingdom, with those being raised in glorified and incorruptible bodies to receive their rewards. In contrast, the second resurrection involves the wicked and takes place after the thousand years, with sinners being raised in the same bodies in which they died to receive their punishment. Ellen White's views on these resurrections highlight her second theological theme – the final judgment.

White believed that a pivotal aspect of Revelation 20 is the impending judgment of God, in which the Lord, accompanied by the saints, will pronounce judgment upon both sinners and the forces of evil, including demons and Satan. Over a period of a

thousand years, the resurrected righteous would participate in this judgment. The actions of sinners will be scrutinized, and their punishment will be determined based on their deeds.

The writings also outline White's view of the final destiny of sinners. She argued that those who do not obtain pardon through repentance and faith would experience the second death, which she interpreted as eternal nothingness and a forfeiture of existence. Ellen White also detailed the final rebellion led by Satan and their confrontation with the coronation of Jesus Christ. After acknowledging their guilt, sinners are consumed by eternal fire, with each person experiencing varying durations of torment according to their deeds. This process is depicted as the eradication of evil and the vindication of God's justice.

The third theological theme of Revelation 20 for Ellen White is the practical life of the Christian. Ellen White emphasizes the practical implications of God's judgment, focusing on the need for personal repentance, accountability, and dedication to God. Ellen White's messages encourage individuals to consider their actions and relationship with God as they prepare for the impending judgment. The writings of Ellen White also highlight the opportunity for mercy and salvation when one turns to God with a repentant heart.

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Теологічні теми тисячолітнього царства в працях Еллен Уайт

Анотація

Тисячолітнє Царство (Об. 20) було дискусійною темою в християнській теології, включаючи XIX століття, коли виникла Церква Адвентистів сьомого дня. Однією із засновниць адвентистської церкви була Еллен Уайт, праці якої відіграють важливу роль як у практичному житті, так і в теології адвентистів. Серед багатьох досліджень теологічних концепцій в працях Еллен Уайт, тема тисячолітнього царства залишається недослідженою. Ця стаття є першою спробою визначити теологічні теми тисячолітнього царства в працях Еллен Уайт. Аналіз показує, що Уайт прийняла буквально тлумачення тисячолітнього царства і зайняла преміленіалістський підхід. Еллен Уайт розкрила три головні теологічні теми в тлумаченні Об'явлення 20. Перша головна теологічна тема стосується кінцевої долі людства: перше воскресіння для праведних, а друге для нечестивих. Друга головна теологічна тема – останній суд, під час якого Бог винесе вирок як над грішниками, так і над силами зла, включаючи демонів і сатану. Третьою теологічною темою Одкровення 20 для Еллен Уайт було практичне життя християнина.

Ключові слова: Об'явлення 20, тисячолітнє царство, пророцтво, книга Об'явлення, Апокаліпсис, Адвентисти, герменевтика, есхатологія, Новий Завіт.