
A Vindication of Ellen White as Historian

by Jean Zurcher

Ellen White's reliability in describing historical events deserves to be defended. Some Adventists have raised doubts about Ellen White's inspiration and authority by attempting to prove she made significant errors in her writings about historical events. A favorite target is Ellen White's references to the Waldenses and Albigenses.¹ However, on this topic recent scholarship supports Ellen White, not her critics. There were Waldenses who kept the Sabbath and the Albigenses were indeed Christians.

The Waldenses and the Sabbath

Through ages of darkness and apostasy there were Waldenses who denied the supremacy of Rome, who rejected image worship as idolatry, and who kept the true Sabbath. . . . Behind the lofty bulwarks of the mountains—in all ages the refuge of the persecuted and oppressed—the Waldenses found a hiding place. Here the light of truth was kept burning amid the darkness of the Middle Ages. Here, for a thousand years, witnesses for the truth maintained the ancient faith.²

Ellen White has been criticized for saying that a thousand years before the Reformation there

were Waldenses, and that these Waldenses kept the Sabbath. But Ellen White was justified in not tracing the origin of the Waldenses to Pierre Waldo who lived in the 12th century. There existed in Northern Italy, well before Pierre Waldo, various evangelical groups opposing the church of Rome.³ "It was only the malice of their enemies and the desire to blot out the memorial of their antiquity, which made their adversaries impute their origin to so late a period, and to Pierre Waldo."⁴

The real importance of Pierre Waldo consisted in rallying to his cause these various groups, thus founding a religious movement worthy of the attention of the Papacy. The fact that the name of the Waldenses should be mentioned for the first time at the Third Lateran Council in 1179 in connection with Pierre Waldo is not proof that the people took their name from him.⁵ The opposite conclusion can also be sustained. According to ancient usage and the etymology of the name, it seems more logical to affirm with certain historians that Waldo received his name from the "people of the valleys."⁶ Ellen White is perfectly correct to speak of the Waldenses giving their witness for "a thousand years" from the beginning of the Middle Ages.⁷

As for Waldenses observing the Sabbath, we must first point out that Ellen White nowhere says that all the Waldenses were faithful observers of the Sabbath. To the contrary, in the first two pages where she

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discusses the churches of Piedmont, Ellen White speaks on the one hand of the defection of the leaders, and on the other hand of the steadfastness of some, of the compromise of many, and the faithfulness of certain ones.⁸

She then says that "the churches [of Piedmont] that were under the rule of the papacy were early compelled to honor the Sunday as a holy day. Amid the prevailing error and superstition, *many*, even of the true people of God became so bewildered that while they observed the Sabbath, they refrained

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from labor also on the Sunday." So, "while, under the pressure of long-continued persecution, *some* compromised their faith, little by little yielding its distinctive principles, *others* held fast the truth." It is in this context, and following this general observation, that the so-called erroneous statement of Ellen White is placed. "Through ages of darkness and apostasy *there were Waldenses* who denied the supremacy of Rome, who rejected image worship as idolatry, and who kept the true Sabbath" (emphasis added).⁹

In none of these extracts does Ellen White state that the Waldensian church, with a capital *W*, observed "the true Sabbath." Elsewhere Ellen White clearly states that "a striking illustration of Rome's policy toward those who disagree with her was given in the long and bloody persecution of the Waldenses, *some of whom were observers of the Sabbath*" (emphasis added).¹⁰

Secondly, although examples of Sabbath observance in the Middle Ages are rare, we know of some Waldenses who observed the true Sabbath in the north of France. The first

of them arrived from Italy in the 11th century. Pierre Waldo himself, according to certain sources, visited the north of France on his way to Germany.¹¹ By the 15th century there were so many Waldenses in the north of France that the inquisitor of Artois complained, "The third of the world is Waldensian."¹²

Paul Beuzart discovered in the archives of the Pas-de-Calais at Arras an account of the martyrdom in 1420 of Ghuillebert Thuling, pastor of several Waldensian congregations.

On March 25, 1420, when Thulin had come from Valenciennes to visit a group of interested people, at Douai, he was arrested with fifteen other persons. Transferred to Arras, these persons were tried before a tribunal of the Inquisition. Two were imprisoned for life. Nine of the tortured ones recanted and were merely punished. Six weeks later, before a crowd of ten to twelve thousand people, the remaining seven Waldenses, including their pastor, were burned at the stake. The bishop's charges of heresy worthy of death have been preserved; "rejection of the worship of the Virgin and the saints who were not in Paradise; disbelief in the Eucharist and the masses on behalf of the dead; refusal to make the sign of the cross; rejection of confessional." Also, the charge says, "they observed Saturday instead of Sunday."¹³ Records of the event state specifically that the pastor, Ghuillebert Thulin, "kept the Sabbath on Saturday."¹⁴

A second manuscript of the Arras' court action, preserved in the library of Douai, states that these heretics observed "the complete Law of the Jews."¹⁵ Probably for this reason also, the martyrs of Arras, in 1420, as some others at Bois-le-duc in 1533, were marked with a yellow cross, a color used to mark Jews during the Middle Ages.¹⁶

The Albigenses and Dualism

While a whole chapter of *The Great Controversy* is dedicated to the Waldenses, there are only two brief references to the Albigenses. The first of these is found in the introduction to the chapter on "Huss and Jerome," describing how the gospel was implanted in Bohemia before the Hussite reform:

Many of the Waldenses and Albigenses, driven by persecution from their homes in France and

Italy, came to Bohemia. Though they dared not teach openly, they labored zealously in secret. Thus the true faith was preserved from century to century.¹⁷

The second reference to the Albigenses is found in the chapter on "The Bible and the French Revolution." Speaking of the persecutions that took place throughout the history of France, Ellen White writes:

Century after century the blood of the saints had been shed. While the Waldenses laid down their lives upon the mountains of Piedmont "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ," similar witness of the truth had been borne by their brethren, the Albigenses of France.¹⁸

It has been said that these two quotations contain historical errors. First, that Ellen White called the Albigenses the "brethren" of the Waldenses. Second, that she stated that the Albigenses and the Waldenses gave "similar witness of the truth," and thanks to them "the true faith was preserved from century to century." It is said that actually the Albigenses denied most essential Christian doctrines.¹⁹

We must first clarify the names for this group. The name "Albigenses" is generally given to a group of Christians whose movement was born in the region of the city of Albi in the south of France, who in the 12th century withdrew from the Catholic Church to establish what is also called the Cathari Church. Cathari signifies "pure." This name was given them because this group of Christians, beginning in Albi region, said they preached the pure doctrine of the gospel. In this essay "Albigensian" and "the Cathari" are used interchangeably.

Up to the middle of the 19th century we knew the Cathari movement only through the accusations of their persecutors who had to prove they were dealing with dangerous heretics. One of the principal anti-Cathari treatises, the *Liber contra Manicheos*, was written by a former Waldensian, Durand de Huesca, who left Waldensianism to found the order of the "Poor Catholics" about 1207. The main sources of information are declarations made before the Inquisition.²⁰

These were made by persons who were not always in a position to express their beliefs clearly and the declarations were frequently extorted under threat and torture. Also, the reports were made by writers who were better informed about the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle than about elementary biblical truths.²¹

Even the well-known defender of the Catholic point of view, Daniel Rops, put the question to himself: "Is it sure that we know it [Cathari doctrine] exactly?" He is forced to admit: "As far as the Cathari are concerned, it is the trial reports of their questioning, the bulls and the council rules condemning them, which give us information about them, all of which is disturbing none the less."²²

However, today the historian can search authentic Cathari documents that permit researchers to derive information directly from the source. As a matter of fact, thanks to the valuable discoveries in the past decades of 13th-century Cathari manuscripts, it is possible to develop a precise idea of the religion of the Albigenses.²³ Far from being heretics, they were authentic Christians.

Good and Evil

NO one will dispute that "the Albigenses' teachings were based on a dualism which sharply differentiated between an evil material world and the pure world of the spirit." The real issue is what kind of dualism is attributed to the Cathari.

In order to justify the crusade launched against the Albigenses and the extermination of a complete race of people, the inquisitors identified the Albigenses as successors of the Manichean sect opposed by the Catholic Church since the fourth century. Having limited their investigations solely to the documents of the Inquisition, a number of historians have continued to make that charge.²⁴

However, the *Book of the Two Principles*, which represents the most radical Cathari dualism, does not teach a "ditheism," that is to say a belief in two eternal and equal gods, but rather "a moral dualism of good and evil, a cosmic dualism of Christ and Satan."²⁵ Rene Nelli, who studied the Cathari dualism in depth, affirms that "the Cathari never stated that the two principles were 'equal': the evil principle alone shows his imperfection."²⁶ Certainly, "the Cathari could call themselves dualists, since they believed in the existence of a quite negative root of evil in eternity, active and positive in the temporal sphere. . . ." But, "the two supernatural personages that the Cathari put truly in opposition were Satan and Christ."²⁷

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It is true that "some historians, unconscious adversaries to Catharism and behind the times," continue to speak "of two *equal* principles of Catharism." However, for the Occitan heretics, the god of good out-matches without doubt the god of evil, in being, in wisdom, in power and in eternity. If the heresiologists would consent to use the vocabulary of the "heretics" which they study—it would be on their behalf a minimum of objectivity—and not that of the 'inquisitors'; if they would call the good principle the *True God*, as the Cathari did, maybe they would find it more natural and more "scientific," not to make the other—the False—its equal (emphasis added).²⁸

More and more specialists in Cathari

teachings are concluding that "the radical dualism of the Cathari appears founded, in the West, on a *completely different problematic than the one of the ancient Manicheism*." (emphasis added).²⁹ Some are going so far as to say that "the dualism of the Cathari is clearly included within the limits of the conception of the Gospel."³⁰

According to the Cathari understanding of the plan of salvation, Christ was finally to triumph over the dominion of Satan in a world entirely given over to evil; he would deliver the people of God from the corruption of this present evil world in order to gather them into another world, on a new earth and with a new heaven.

Without any doubt the Cathari dualism makes a clear distinction between the material world in which mankind lives and the spiritual world where celestial beings dwell. The *Cathari Treatise* makes it clear that we must not confuse the two realms:

"If the kingdom here below, whose prince we know is evil, were the kingdom of Christ and of God, it would never have such heirs, it would never be doomed to such corruption."

In the same treatise, the Cathari clearly express their faith and hope:

How numerous are those who busy themselves as little as possible with the other world and other beings, but are interested only in those that can be seen in this present world. . . . We say that there is another world and other beings who are incorruptible and eternal, which constitute our hope and our joy.

Still again, speaking of life in the world to come, the author refers to a saying of Jesus in these words:

The Son of God spoke also of two worlds when He said: "The children of this world marry wives, and wives take husbands. But those who will be accounted worthy of having part in that other world and in the resurrection of the dead, will not marry any more, and wives will no longer take husbands."³¹

Satan, or the Principle of Evil

Those who accuse the Cathari of religious dualism inevitably charge them with believing, along with Manichean sects, that Satan or the prince

of darkness is the god of evil, creator of the material world. Obviously the Cathari had to defend themselves against such an interpretation of their dualism.³² *The Book of the Two Principles* states emphatically the orthodox Christian doctrine of Creation:

According to our faith, the Lord, our God created and made all things: the heaven, the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and God founded the universe on the Lord Jesus Christ, in heaven and on earth; and all things were created by Him, in Him and from Him, as many authorities have previously pointed it out.³³

Within that orthodox Christian position the *Cathari Treatise* outlines the Albigensian appreciation of the reality of evil:

According to these texts, God created "all things". But as too many people do not know the Holy Scriptures mean by "all things", we say with truth that generally "all" means only good and spiritual things.³⁴

The Cathari could not believe that God was definitely the author of wars, massacres, executions and all the violence described in the Old Testament. That does not mean they rejected these books.

It is inconceivable that "this God, of whom we have previously said that He was good, holy and just, and high above all praise, would be the supreme cause and principle of all evil: which we do most emphatically deny. . . . Since God is not mighty in evil, in that He has not the power to make evil appear, we must firmly believe that there is another principle which, itself, is mighty in evil. It is from him that comes all the evil which has been, is, and will be."³⁵

At no time did the Cathari attribute to him whom they "characterized as the devil," the power of an "evil Demiurge," creator of the "material world." Certainly, the devil is called "the Powerful One" or "the

Powerful-One-in-evil." But far from being the Manichean god of evil, eternally opposed to the god of good, creator of the world of matter, the devil of the Cathari, himself "created by God,"³⁶ is never other than the one by whom evil exists and who will finally be annihilated, just as the Bible teaches. "That is clearly expressed in the divine writings, that the Lord, the true God, will destroy the 'Powerful One' and all his forces, which work every day against Him and His creation."³⁷

Old Testament vs. New Testament God

Critics of the Cathari go on to accuse them of rejecting portions of Scripture, particularly in the Old Testament, that portray God as jealous and avenging in contrast to the New Testament God of love.

The chronicler of Vaux-de-Cernay, for example, states that the Cathari attribute "to the good God the New Testament, and to the evil God the Old Testament." Pierre Clerque, curate of Montaillou, reports on his part that for the Albigenses "all the Scripture with the exception of the gospels and the *Pater* are inventions and lies."

These charges are absolutely false. To the contrary, the Albigensian author of the *Cathari Treatise* cites as biblical authorities passages from Job, the Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel and Daniel, and declares: "We believe that which the witness of the prophets confirm, and what the authorities of the New Testament more fully demonstrate."³⁸

Certainly the Cathari show a preference for biblical passages that portray God as holy, just and good, but that does not mean they rejected portions of the Bible. One who has cast even a brief glance at the *Cathari Treatise* or at the *Book of the Two Principles* cannot fail to be impressed that just as much place is given to the Old as to the New Testament.

In her introduction to the *Ritual Cathare*, Christine Thouzellier has made two very interesting observations in relation to its use of Scripture. "Regarding the Bible, the author of the *Latin Ritual* seems to have no discriminating prejudices, as well as the author of the *Book of the Two Principles*."³⁹

It is precisely the same with the comparisons "unfavorably" made between the God of the Old Testament and "the New Testament God of love." We do not know any Cathari quotation of this kind, and even if there are some, that would prove in no way that the Cathari were not Christians as such. Many Christians of our day contrast the God of Israel to the God of the Gospels. The churches of the Reformation went as far as putting the Jewish law in opposition to Christian grace, concluding thereby that the rule of grace has superseded that of law.

Certain books of the Old Testament cause the Cathari problems. They could not believe that God was definitely the author of wars, massacres, executions and all the violence described in the historical books of the Old Testament. That does not necessarily mean that they rejected these books. They tried rather to give them an interpretation in harmony with the concept that they had formed of the character of God. Luther did the same thing. He called into question the epistle of James, because it did not harmonize entirely with his conception of justification by faith.

Here is a typical example of how the Cathari reinterpreted a verse of the Old Testament, quoted in the New Testament. The question was whether a text implied God or Pilate and the Pharisees were the real authors of the death of Jesus. "For it is written: I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered" (Matthew 26:31). The author of the *Book of the Two Principles* explains:

It was not the true Lord God who Himself, willingly and directly smote His Son, Jesus Christ. If He Himself, willingly and substantially, had perpetrated this homicide, nobody could in any way

accuse Pilate or the Pharisees, for they would have only accomplished the will of God by that, and if otherwise would have committed a sin in resisting the will of the Lord. It is necessary to resolve this difficulty thus: God smote His Son by allowing His enemies to cause Him to die. They would never have been able to do this if the good Lord Himself had not permitted them this power. This is what Christ said to Pilate: 'You would have no power over me, if it had not been given you from on high.' (John 19:11) . . . The true God allowed this crime because there was no better way to deliver His people from the power of the enemy.⁴⁰

Jesus: Wholly Man, Wholly God

One of the most treacherous slanders made by historians against the Cathari concerns their faith in the person of Jesus Christ. These are simply repetitions of charges made in the documents of the Inquisition. Actually, the writings of the Cathari abound with professions of faith in Jesus as the Son of God. For example: "For that reason, the Son of God Himself, Jesus Christ. . ."⁴¹ "The Lord true God has not beaten His Son Jesus Christ. . ."⁴² "As the redemption of this people drew near and the advent of this reign, that is to say, that of the Son of God. . ."⁴³ The *Cathari Ritual* even includes Matthew 16:13-16: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."⁴⁴

It is certainly not by chance that the Cathari had a preference for the writings of John. These, more than all the others in the New Testament, have as their particular aim to prove that "Jesus is Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31).

Some have also charged that the Cathari rejected Christ's bodily incarnation and resurrection and that they therefore taught that Christ's sufferings on the cross were fictitious, because a good spirit could not be a part of an intrinsically evil fleshly body.

These are the characteristics of a heresy attacked by Paul as well as by John. But the Christ of this docetism heresy is not the Christ of the Cathari. The translation in the Occitan language of 1 John 5:19-21 itself constitutes a masterly rebuttal:

We know that we are of God, and all the world lies in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God has come (*and that he became flesh for us, and died for us, and rose from the dead for us and that He took us with Him*). And he gave us understanding that we might be in His true Son, Jesus Christ is truly God and eternal life'' (emphasis added).⁴⁵ We have placed in parenthesis the explanatory gloss of verse 20, which itself alone is sufficient to refute all accusations that the Cathari rejected the incarnation and resurrection as genuine bodily events. The reality of the sufferings and the death of Christ are confirmed in numerous passages. For example, in the *Manuscript of Dublin* we read that ''our Lord Jesus Christ redeemed the kingdom with His blood'' and that ''for their [men's] sins our Lord Jesus Christ suffered and died so that by His death He conquered him who had the power of death, that is the devil, as the apostle wrote to the Hebrews.''⁴⁶

Lifestyle: Marriage and Vegetarianism

Those attacking the Albigenses for being dualists charge them with bizarre behavior. One of the most frequently repeated slanders against the Albigenses concerns marriage and family life. They have been accused of condemning marriage and considering the begetting of children a sin because those acts overvalue the evil body in contrast to the good soul.

Here is what Jacqueline Dumesnil, an authority on the Cathari, wrote in refutation of these charges:

Let us say at once that the Albigenses had swarms of children! Esclarmonde de Foix, who is considered to be one of the most important persons of the Albigensian church, and who represented that church as a theologian at the conference of Pamiers where she triumphed gloriously over the Catholic bishops; this same Esclarmonde gave twelve children to her husband! This certainly was not a Platonic union, nor a ''mystical'' one (as the enemies of the Albigenses would have us believe!). . .

It is true the Albigenses considered virginity as superior to the married state. Their opinion was

based on the word of St. Paul on the subject of marriage (I Cor. 7:32-34, 38). Based on these verses and on other passages of the same epistle. . . the Albigenses required celibacy of the preachers of the gospel, but of these only. As they exercised an itinerant ministry and lived in absolute poverty, one can imagine that there would have been difficulties for them to have the responsibility of a family. All the more so in a time of persecution when they were hounded from place to place, one cannot see very well how they would have been able to support a family. . . It must be noted, however, that there were never more than a million faithful believers. Celibacy therefore remained true of a small minority, and it does not seem to have visibly affected the birth rate!⁴⁷

In any case, to massacre a million people under the pretense that they ''destroyed the family'' is difficult to understand.

Critics cite as further evidence that the Albigenses were dualists the fact that they were vegetarians. Supposedly they repudi-

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ated the eating of meat because they believed in the transmigration of souls. That the Cathari gave as a reason for their vegetarianism the fact that meat excites the sexual passions, is reasonable. Do we not have good reason to believe the same thing, without that constituting a proof of some kind of Manicheanism?⁴⁸

As to the theological reason, no Cathari text justifies saying that they believed in transmigration of souls. All evidence for that charge comes from secondary sources.⁴⁹ This is a pure invention of their accusers, or a bad interpretation of their general attitude toward animals or even of their belief in the resurrection of the dead. Since the doctors of the church believed in the immortality of

the soul, the biblical doctrine of the resurrection became a teaching was completely strange and anachronistic.

Rene Nelli explains very well that "it is perhaps the belief in the *possible* incarnation of devils in owls, snakes, toads or cats, which sometimes stirred the less educated Cathari to accept also—but exceptionally—the transit of souls *lost to God* into vile and 'wicked' animals" (emphasis added).⁵⁰ A story like the one in Mark 5:1-17 might lead them to believe this: "And the devils begged him, saying: Send us into the swine, so that we may enter into them" (v. 13).

The charge that the Albigenses devalued the material world including the body is supposed to be supported by their views on baptism. They are even accused of rejecting baptism of the body by water and substituting baptism by the immaterial Spirit. Once again this is a gross distortion of the facts. It is true that the Albigenses considered baptism of the Spirit more important than baptism by water, basing their belief on the declaration of John the Baptist: "I baptize you with water. . . He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 3:11). At a time when the church did not know what to say about the Holy Spirit, the Albigenses made reception of the Holy Spirit a requirement for the spiritual life. They practiced the laying on of hands in order to receive the Holy Spirit; what they called "the baptism of Jesus Christ."

Following what they believed to be the example of the apostles, Albigensian worship included a ceremony of laying on of hands called "the consolation," in reference to the Spirit that Jesus had called the "Comforter."⁵¹ For the Albigensians "the consolation" was a purification rite and only those who had been "comforted" were "good" enough to perform this spiritual baptism. It is also only by the Spirit that the believer was in a position to live in harmony with the commandments of God.

But the Albigenses did not despise baptism

by water. They simply considered it insufficient. The proof is in this statement in the *Cathari Ritual*:

Let no-one think that by this baptism [of the Spirit] which you expect to receive, that you should despise the other baptism [by water], nor all that you have been able to do or say as a Christian or of good until now. But you must understand that it is important that you receive this holy ordination of Christ to supplement that which is lacking for your salvation.⁵²

The Albigenses, Brethren of the Waldenses

Ellen White's statement that the Albigenses were "the brethren" of the Waldenses can be understood in several ways.

From a doctrinal point of view it is extremely difficult to separate the Waldenses from the Albigenses. For both, worship was comprised of reading of the Word of God, the sermon, prayer and benediction. Both groups included two elements in the Lord's Supper; rejected worship of images, veneration of the Virgin, or prayers offered to saints; did not believe in the sacrifice of the mass, nor in the real presence of Christ in the host; and rejected belief in purgatory.

We know also that the Albigenses, just as the Waldenses, believed in the one and triune God: the Creator of the universe; Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and an active, personal Holy Spirit. Both taught that humanity was sinful and corrupt, and that sin puts man in contact with devils. But by his work, Christ provided for cleansing from sins and assured an eternal future to his own in his eternal kingdom. Both groups believed that the people of God live as exiles. This present world, "placed under the reign of evil," should not be confused with the kingdom of God. When the Lord Jesus Christ will come in his glory, he will establish his kingdom and destroy the "Powerful-One-in-evil," "from whom stem all evils."⁵³

The chief articles of faith of the Albigenses paralleled those of the Waldenses. So also

did their actions. Both groups demonstrated their evangelistic spirit by translating the gospel into their native tongues. The Albigenes, like the Waldenses, preached poverty. For both the true faithful ones of Christ are those who follow his example by renouncing both worldly power and possessions.

Ellen White Saw Correctly

If one reads carefully the original texts of Cathari teaching, it is impossible to think of the Albigenes as non-Christians or a Manichean sect. On the contrary, we have every reason to believe that the Albigenes, just as the Waldenses, were authentic disciples of Christ. This was also the opinion of St. Bernard who, in 1147, went to the south of France to try to convert the Albigenes to Catholicism. "Their customs are beyond reproach," he remarked. "They do no harm to anyone, they do not eat the bread of idleness, and they teach that man should live entirely by his own labors."⁵⁴ St. Bernard insisted, "If you ask them what their faith is, it is completely Christian; if you listen to their conversation, there is nothing more innocent; and their deeds are in harmony with their words."⁵⁵

In stating that the Waldenses and the Albigenes were witnesses to the truth, Ellen White certainly did not mean that their doctrines were exempt from mistakes or that

they necessarily possessed the truth in every particular as we understand it today. Nevertheless, their understanding of the plan of salvation, their faith in the Lord Jesus as the Son of God, their hope in his return, and their style of living in the world in the expectation of the restoration of all things stamps them as authentic Christians.

Far from being deceived, Ellen White correctly affirmed that the Albigenes, just like the Waldenses, gave their lives for "the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ." At the same time they bore "similar witness to the truth." Thanks to them, "the true faith was preserved from century

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to century." The fact that she borrowed certain information from the historians of her time, in no way means that she necessarily copied their mistakes. In the case of both the Waldenses and the Albigenes, we believe we have given proof that the author of *The Great Controversy* did not commit gross historical errors.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The most recent and complete statement of such criticisms is by Donald Casebolt, *Spectrum*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (February 1981).

2. E.G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1950), pp. 65, 66.

3. Cf. Leroy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Vol. 1, pp. 807-839.

4. Cf. Jacques-Benigne Bossuet, *The History of the Variations of Protestant Churches*, Vol. 2, pp. 110, 120, in LeRoy Edwin Froom, *op. cit.*, p. 830.

5. Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, pp. 56, 66, in LeRoy Edwin Froom, *op. cit.*, pp. 832, 833.

6. Cf. LeRoy Edwin Froom, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, Appendix D, pp. 937-952.

7. Ellen White places the origins of the Waldenses in *The Great Controversy* at "centuries before the birth of Luther" (p. 78), or "hundreds of years before the Reformation" (p. 65), or even "a thousand years" (p. 65).

8. "For centuries," she writes, "the churches of Piedmont maintained their independence; but the

time came at last when Rome insisted upon their submission. After ineffectual struggles against her tyranny, the leaders of these churches reluctantly acknowledged the supremacy of the power to which the whole world seemed to pay homage. There were some, however, who refused to yield to the authority of the pope or prelate."—Ellen White, *op. cit.*, p. 64 (emphasis supplied).

9. *Idem*, p. 65.

10. *Idem*, p. 577.

11. Cf. Paul Beuzart, *Les Heresies pendant le Moyen Age et la Reforme dans la region de Douai, d'Arras et ay pays de l'Alleeu*, Le Puy, 1912. Chapter III, pp. 3, 4, 20.

12. *Idem*, p. 67.

13. *Idem*, p. 47.

14. Cf. Roger Guenin, articles in *Revue Adventiste*, April 1960, and *Servir*, 1st quarter, 1960, p. 6.

15. Manuscript 1169, *Bibliothèque de Douai*, cited by Paul Beuzart, *op. cit.*, p. 47. Cf. note 1.

16. Paul Beuzart, *op. cit.*, pp. 48, 49, Cf. note 3.

17. Ellen White, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

18. *Idem*, p. 271.

19. Donald Casebolt, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

20. It should be said that the Inquisition began about 1204, a period in which Pope Innocent III launched the fourth crusade against the Albigenses, with the cooperation of the armies of the king of France.

21. The preachers of the Albigenses had the habit of saying to their Catholic opponents: "It is you who are heretics, and we can prove that from the New Testament."—Jacqueline Dumesnil, *Les Cavaliers de la Nuit*, p. 184, Belgique, 1964.

Having understood this, the Protestant theologian Albert Reville pointed out that in order to know Cathari teaching, "we are reduced to descriptions given by adversaries, by some apostates, and to depositions gathered by the tribunals of the inquisition. Some are disparaging, others suspect, so that we have to beware especially of the tendency of these judges or of these historians, equally biased, to present as direct dogmas or as beliefs positively professed by the Cathari, many ridiculous or repulsive eccentricities which are only the real or assumed consequences of principles admitted by them. Nothing is more deceptive than a method like this." *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, May 1, 1874, quoted by Deodat Roche, *Le Catharisme*, Vol. 1, 1973.

Ellen White was perfectly correct when she stated: "Written in the heavens, the history of the people of God throughout this gloomy period [that of the papal supremacy] occupies but a small place in human annals. One can scarcely discover the existence of these Christians other than in the calumny of their persecutors. Rome's tactics were to suppress all trace of divergence from its doctrines and decrees."—Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 61.

The historian Pierre Belperron reports this interesting fact, confirming the statement of Ellen White: "In 1235 when the Dauphin, count of Auvergne died, who had accumulated out of curiosity all the

heretical books, the Dominicans constrained his heirs to burn them, and it is regrettable that a lawsuit has not preserved for us a catalogue of this library." *The Crusade Against the Albigenses and the Reunion of Languedoc to France*.

22. Daniel Rops, *L'Eglise de la Cathedrale et de la Croisade*, p. 661. Librairie Artheme Fayard, 16e ed., Paris, 1952.

23. Jean Rouillard, an Adventist pastor, prize winner at the Bible Contest of Jerusalem, member of the society of Cathari studies, published a series of articles in the *Revue Adventiste*, from April to December 1977, under the title: "Knowledge of the Cathari." We find there a detailed description of various Cathari manuscripts actually available for researchers, as well as an article on the main beliefs of the Albigenses. See also the international magazine, *Conscience et Liberte*, 2nd term, 1976.

24. Cf. Daniel Rops, *L'Eglise des Apotres et des Martyrs*, pp. 561-569, Librairie Artheme Fayard, 141e edition, Paris, 1949. See also: *L'Eglise de la Cathedrale et de la Croisade*, pp. 657-678, Paris, 1952.

25. Deodat Roche, *L'Eglise Romaine et les Cathares Albigeois*, p. 171. Arques, 1957.

26. Rene Nelli, *Ecritures Cathares*, p. 19, Editions Planete, 1968.

27. Rene Nelli, *Le Phenomene Cathare*, p. 43, Privat, P.U.F., 1964.

28. Rene Nelli, *La Philosophie du Catharisme, le dualisme radical au XIIIe siecle*, p. 65. Payot, Paris, 1975.

29. *Idem*, p. 10.

30. R. Morghen, *Medioevo Cristiano*, 1958, in Rene Nelli, *Le Phenomene Cathare*, p. 65.

31. *Cathari Treatise*—Jean Rouillard, *Revue Adventiste*, October and December 1977.

In the *Cathari Treatise* the text of John 1:3 is translated as follows: "All things were made by him and without him was not anything made." Rene Nelli explains that it "has to do with relative nonentity and with 'privation': death, darkness, etc. . . ." *Ecritures Cathares*, p. 195.

32. For that reason, we can read in the *Cathari Treatise*: "As some people direct evil criticisms against us on the subject of works and of divine creations, we must . . . grasp more clearly the problem and know the truth of it. First, we honor to the utmost the supreme God, the true God, the Almighty Father, through whom, as we read and as we believe, 'have been made the heaven, and earth, the sea and all that therein is' (Psalm 146:6), as is confirmed by the witness of the prophets and demonstrated even more completely by the authorities of the New Testament." *Cathari Treatise*—Rene Nelli, in *Ecritures Cathares*, pp. 183, 184.

33. Christine Thouzellier, *Livre des deux Principes*, pp. 271, 273. Editions du Cerf, Paris, 1973.

34. *Cathari Treatise*—Rene Nelli, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

35. Christine Thouzellier, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

36. *Idem*, p. 265.

37. *Idem*, pp. 213, 215.

38. Cf. Jean Duvernoy, *Le Catharisme: la religion*

des Cathares, pp. 27, 28, note 3. Edition Privat, Toulouse, 1976. We find in the Appendix II, pp. 120-133, a Scripture index of all biblical quotations. All the books of the Old Testament and of the New Testament appear there, plus certain apocryphal books. Contrary to what is generally thought, the Gospel of Matthew is quoted most often: 165 times compared with 120 for the Gospel of John.

39. Christine Thouzellier, *Ritual Cathare*, pp. 26, 32.

40. Christine Thouzellier, *Livre des deux Principes*, pp. 407, 409.

41. *Idem*, p. 351.

42. *Idem*, p. 407.

43. *Cathari Treatise*—Jean Rouillard, *op. cit.*, October 1977.

44. Christine Thouzellier, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

45. *Occitan Manuscript*, Jean Rouillard, *op. cit.*, October 1977.

46. *Dublin Manuscript*, *Idem*, October 1977.

47. Jacqueline Dumesnil, *Les Cavaliers de la nuit*, pp. 184, 185, Belgique, 1964.

48. Cf. Ellen White in *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 397. See also pp. 389-392, 399.

49. Cf. Rene Nelli, *La Philosophie du Catharisme*, pp. 173-184, Payor, Paris, 1975.

50. *Idem*, p. 184.

51. "So, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,

by the power of our Most Holy Father, the disciples of Jesus Christ were purified by baptism from the stain of their sins. They received from the Lord—as He had received them Himself from His Most Holy Father—the virtue and power of cleansing in turn other sinners by the baptism of Jesus Christ. We find in fact in the gospel of the blessed John, that the Lord Jesus Christ said to His disciples, after the resurrection: 'As my Father has sent me, so send I you.' Having said that, He breathed on them and said to them: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. Sins shall be forgiven to those whom you forgive, and sins will be retained for those whom you retain them.' " *Ritual Cathare*, 9:44-55, Christine Thouzellier, pp. 231, 235.

52. *Ritual Cathare*, 13:73-78, Christine Thouzellier, *op. cit.*, pp. 253, 255.

53. The eschatological vision of the Cathari rests entirely on the teaching of the Scriptures. We find quoted there all the classical references in the Psalms, Daniel, the Gospels, the epistles and the Revelation. Cf. Jean Rouillard, *The Cathari and the Return of Christ*, in *Revue Adventiste*, November 1977, also in *Conscience and Liberty*, No. 12, 2nd quarter, 1976, p. 69.

54. Quoted by Pierre Gosset, *Historie du Moyengage*, Paris, 1876, p. 248.

55. Sermon 65, I, 1495—Quoted by Deodat Roche, *op. cit.*, pp. 83, 84.