

# Questions About Ellen White As A Possible Apostle

By Pastor Ed Anderson

I googled this question: Has Ellen G. White from the SDA ever seen a vision, dreamed, or experience seeing the Lord Jesus? Apparently, she has seen and (heard?) the Lord Jesus many times...shouldn't she be regarded as, or understood to be, an Apostle (with a capital "A")?

Yes, Ellen G. White, a co-founder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, reported numerous visions and dreams throughout her life, including experiences of seeing the Lord Jesus. These visions often involved personal encounters with Jesus, a portrayal of His heavenly ministry, and His second coming.

First Vision (1844): Her first vision, received at age 17, showed her Jesus coming on a great white cloud and the people of God's journey to the New Jerusalem.

Visionary details: In a later vision, she described Jesus as having a beautiful countenance, benevolent and majestic eyes, and a sympathetic and sorrowful expression.

Jesus' presence: She described feeling the overwhelming joy and love of Jesus' presence, as well as being overwhelmed by the scenes of heaven she witnessed in her visions.

Jesus' ministry: She reported visions that portrayed Jesus' current ministry in the heavenly sanctuary and His future work in the New Jerusalem.

## Answer:

That's an excellent and thoughtful question—**should Ellen G. White be considered an Apostle (with a capital "A") since she saw and heard Jesus in visions?** Let's walk through this biblically and historically with clarity, reverence, and respect for both the role of the apostles and Ellen White's unique prophetic ministry.

### 1. What Is a Capital "A" Apostle?

In the New Testament, **Apostles** (capital “A”) were those personally chosen by Jesus to:

- Be **eyewitnesses of His resurrection** (Acts 1:21–22)
- **Lay the doctrinal foundation** of the church (Ephesians 2:20)
- Perform **signs, miracles, and wonders** confirming their authority (2 Corinthians 12:12)
- Be **directly commissioned** by Jesus Himself (Luke 6:13; Galatians 1:1)

“And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets...” — Ephesians 4:11

The **original Twelve Apostles** (plus Paul) were part of a **unique, unrepeatable foundation-laying role** for the early church.

## 2. What Was Ellen White’s Role According to Herself?

Ellen White **never claimed to be an “Apostle”** in the New Testament sense. In fact, she refused the title “prophet” for many years—not because she denied it, but because she believed her **mission was broader**.

“I do not claim to be a prophetess... My work includes much more than this name signifies.”

— *Selected Messages, Vol. 1, p. 36*

But she also clearly said:

“My commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there.”

— *Letter 86, 1906*

She **understood herself as a messenger** of the Lord, **not** an apostolic successor or replacement for Scripture.

## 3. Seeing Jesus in Vision Does Not Make One an Apostle

Yes, Ellen White saw Jesus in vision—many times. She described Him with awe and love and received messages for the church. But biblically:

- **Many prophets** in Scripture saw the Lord (Isaiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, John), but they were **not Apostles**.

- **Paul’s apostleship** hinged not just on seeing Jesus, but on being **directly appointed by Christ for foundational work** (Galatians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 15:7–10).

So:

**Seeing Jesus qualifies one for prophetic ministry**

**It does not automatically make one a capital-A Apostle**

#### **4. Apostles = Foundation; Prophets = Support**

**“...built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone.” — Ephesians 2:20**

- The “Apostles” laid the **original foundation**.
- Prophets like Ellen White are **post-foundation support**.
- **No one today** lays new doctrinal foundations or adds to Scripture.

Ellen White’s role was **not to replace the Bible or the Apostles**, but to **call people back** to Scripture.

#### **5. So How Should We Understand Ellen White’s Role?**

Here’s a faithful Adventist response:

- Ellen White was a **true, inspired prophetic voice** for the end times.
- Her messages align with the biblical test for prophets (Matthew 7:16; Isaiah 8:20).
- She saw Jesus in vision but **never claimed apostolic authority**.
- Her role was to **magnify Christ, uplift Scripture**, and guide the church—not to become a new Apostle.

#### **In Summary**

<b>Claim</b>	<b>Ellen White</b>	<b>Bible Apostles</b>
Saw Jesus	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Had visions/dreams	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Claimed apostolic title	✗ No	✓ Yes
Founded core doctrine	✗ No	✓ Yes

Called herself a “messenger”	✅ Yes	❌ (they said “apostle”)
Added to Scripture	❌ No	✅ Their writings are canon

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### 🙏 Final Thought

Ellen White’s visions of Jesus are profound and affirm her prophetic calling. But **she is not a new Apostle**, nor did she claim to be. Instead, she is one of the **many end-time prophetic voices** God promised would come:

**“In the last days, I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh... your sons and daughters shall prophesy.” — Acts 2:17**

So we should not elevate her above Scripture or equate her with the original apostles—but we should **take seriously her counsel** as a light from God for the times we live in.