

# A Gift From Jesus



## **THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING OVERFLOW**

### **December 21, 1974—Northern Europe-West Africa Division**

In the Northern Europe-West Africa Division there are two senior colleges: Adventist College of West Africa (better known by the acronym, ACWA and pronounced Ak-wah) at Ikeja in Western Nigeria, established in 1959; and Newbold College, Bracknell, in the Royal county of Berkshire, England, founded as Stanborough College in Watford, Hertfordshire, in 1901. The services of the graduates of these two colleges have blessed many lands. These two institutions will benefit equally from the offering overflow of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the fourth quarter.

For the growth and development of the church in this division we believe there is no wiser investment than that in Christian education and Adventist youth.

Is there a continent more eager for education than Africa? Is there one in greater need of Christian education? Hardly. At ACWA limited facilities are greatly handicapping the educational program. Among many urgent needs is the need for a library. Toward this project the offering overflow on December 21 will make a substantial contribution.

In September, 1972, Newbold College began to offer a fifth year of ministerial training. In cooperation with Andrews University this additional year of study leads to the master's degree or, with additional study at Andrews, to the master of divinity degree. Work in the sophisticated countries of Europe requires well-trained evangelists and ministers. In view of the postgraduate program it was necessary that the school provide a new library. This was completed early this year, and we have counted on your generous gifts as a part of the plan to finance its construction.

We are facing forward and by God's grace and with your help, great things will be done to prepare youth for their part in the church's final triumph.

**W. Duncan Eva, President**  
**Northern Europe-West Africa Division**

# A GIFT FROM JESUS

## Introduction

Jesus is a giver. His gifts are many; but the lessons for this quarter focus on one gift from Jesus.

Paul referred (Eph. 4:11) to prophets, along with apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers as gifts bestowed on the church by the ascended Saviour. Paul does not speak of these gifts abstractly as abilities looking for persons to attach to but concretely as persons whom the Lord Jesus has blessed with certain abilities and entrusted with certain responsibilities. His gifts to the church are people able to serve the church for Jesus.

The gift from Jesus referred to by the title of these lessons is the gift of a person, Ellen G. White, whom God gave to the remnant church to serve in a prophetic role.

Through the ages the divine Revealer of truth has employed prophets as His agency for the communication of essential knowledge to the church and to the world. A prophet is a spokesman for God sent by God whose messages ring with truth and authority.

The messages that came to Seventh-day Adventists through the agency of His messenger, Ellen White, came from the same God who spoke through the prophets of old. She served the Adventist people in much the same way as Nathan, Gad, Iddo, and Shemaiah served the people of God in Old Testament times and as John the Baptist, Agabus, and Silas in New Testament times. See *The Great Controversy*, Introduction, page viii. No writings of these prophets are included in the Sacred Canon. The messages of Ellen White are not included in the Bible either. She spoke and wrote to attract the minds of the Lord's people to the Word. The spirit of prophecy writings are a link that binds Seventh-day Adventists to the Bible.

The relationship of the writings of Ellen White to the Holy Scriptures will receive special attention in these Sabbath School lessons. Her work magnifies Bible teaching and focuses Bible truth upon the character and mission of the remnant people.

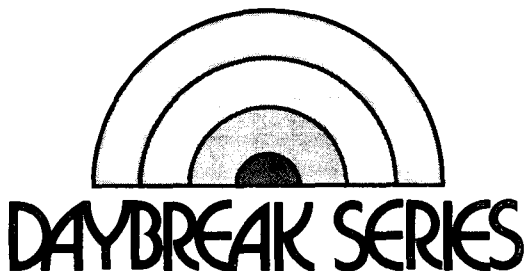
The inspired messengers were not always men. Women also served in a prophetic role in Bible times. Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Anna, and the four daughters of Philip are examples. The Spirit of God on one occasion came upon Mary, the mother of our Lord, and upon Elisabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. Both uttered prophetic truth vital to the times in which they lived and relevant to the needs of the Christian church.

Years ago Ellen White wrote concerning the importance of understanding the place of the Spirit of prophecy in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

"As the end draws near and the work of giving the last warning to the world extends, it becomes more important for those who accept present truth to have a clear understanding of the nature and influence of the *Testimonies*, which God in His providence has linked with the work of the third angel's message from its very rise."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 654.

We shall utilize passages from the Word of God to illustrate the work of the ancient prophets. In places there may seem to be some repetition, but this provides opportunity to present new facets of the subject. In this quarter's lessons parallels will be drawn between the experiences of Bible prophets and those of Ellen White. The frequent mention of the name of one person is necessary in dealing with the subject. But Christ is our leader—not any human being, however gifted!

# A NEW SYMBOL FOR SABBATH SCHOOL STUDY!



DAYBREAK, a new series of Adult Sabbath School lessons will begin with the first quarter of 1975.

The DAYBREAK series objective is summarized in the following inspired statement from page 196 of *Evangelism*: "The theme of greatest importance is the third angel's message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels. All should understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in the daily life, for this is essential to salvation. We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully, in order to understand these grand truths; and our power to learn and comprehend will be taxed to the utmost."

Developed by the Sabbath School Department of the General Conference, DAYBREAK provides for a broad, balanced, and connected study of the themes proclaimed by the three symbolic angels of Revelation 14. In each quarter during the series, the lessons will cover an area of study suggested in these messages. These important lessons will help each Sabbath School member gain a better understanding of God's plan for preparing His people for the DAYBREAK of eternity.

DAYBREAK Adult Sabbath School lessons are also available on cassette. Contact your Adventist Book Center for complete information.

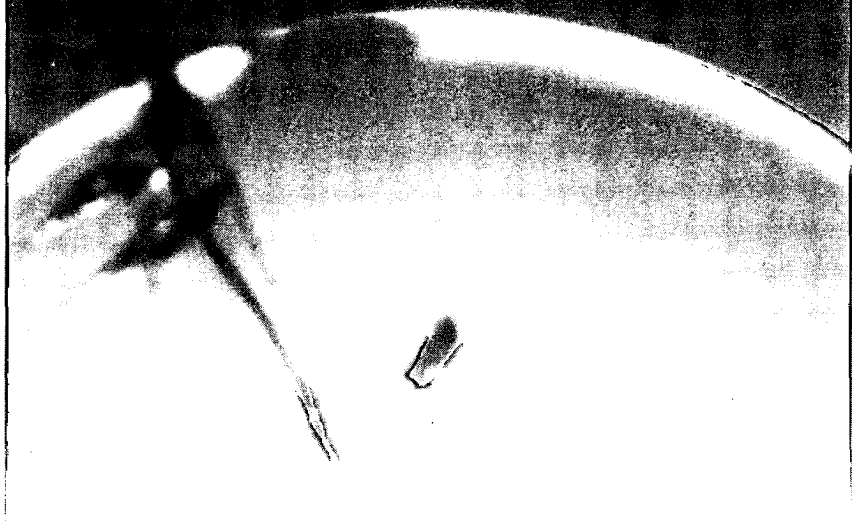
## **Lesson Titles for the Quarter**

1. Heaven's Media of Communication
2. The Prophet's Call
3. Scope of the Prophet's Work
4. Prophetic Visions and Dreams
5. The Prophet Delivers God's Message
6. Testing the Claims of the Prophet
7. Integrity of the Prophetic Message
8. The Primacy of the Bible
9. The Importance of the Spirit of Prophecy
10. Christ's Church
11. A Gift That Guards and Guides
12. Prophecy, a Guiding Light
13. Confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy

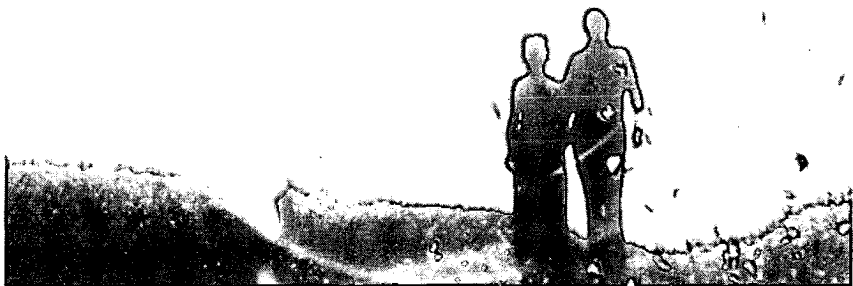
Adult Sabbath School Lessons (regular edition), No. 318, October-December, 1974. Single copy, 35 cents; one year (four issues), \$1.40; no additional charge to countries requiring extra postage. Published in the U.S.A., by Pacific Press Publishing Association (a corporation of S.D.A.), 1350 Villa Street, Mountain View, California 94042. Second-class mail privileges authorized at Mountain View, California. From 3579 requested. When a change of address is desired, please be sure to send both old and new addresses.

**Copyright 1974 by Pacific Press Publishing Association**

Cover design by Concerned Communications



Adam and Eve communed  
"with their Maker with no  
obscuring veil between."  
—DA 50.



# Heaven's Media of Communication



**"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Ps. 19:1, 2.**

Human reason alone has never been able to solve the fundamental questions of life. In practical, everyday affairs it can accomplish much, but in matters that should concern us most—where we came from, our purpose in life, what lies ahead—reason alone gropes blindly. Adding scientific investigation to reason does not provide an adequate source of knowledge to enable us to answer the most vital questions.

"But you and I as human beings long for and need certainty; our minds reach out for truth. We resent and rebel against tyranny, but we welcome the voice of authority. We want to know that there is a purpose and a plan for our lives. We want to be assured that wisdom greater than our own is available to guide us into the future.

"In Christianity man's need for authority and certainty is fully met. Belief in the existence of God, in His solicitous interest in us individually and collectively, and in His ability to carry out His purposes, is the heart of a Christian's faith. God is interested in me, and He will guide my life to its appointed purpose if I allow Him to direct my way. Here is knowledge that brings certainty. But to possess this certainty I must know God.

"As we consider the sources of information about God, we might well echo the question of Zophar: 'Canst thou by searching find out God?' or, as the

Revised Standard Version states it, 'Can you find out the deep things of God?' Job 11:7. Without divine aid the human mind can no more discover the things of God than it can solve the problems of life. We know about God only what He has seen fit to disclose to us.

"God reveals to us as much of His wisdom as it is best for us to comprehend. He reveals what we need to understand of His eternal nature, His ability to accomplish what He wills (omnipotence), His perfect knowledge (omniscience), His all-pervading presence (omnipresence), and His perfect character. He has made plain His relationship to man by setting forth His plan of life. He reveals His interest in this world in His way of dealing with His creation—including what is in store for the future. It has been left with us individually to determine how we will use the means God has provided for us to discover Him and His will for us."—T. H. Jemison, *Christian Beliefs*, page 3.

But what are the media by which God reveals Himself and His purposes to us? These revelations are needed, and they have been mercifully provided, as we shall note in the lesson this week.

## LESSON OUTLINE

1. **A Dialogue, Gen. 1:27, 28**
2. **A Barrier, Isa. 59:2**
3. **Various Media, Ps. 19:1-4**
4. **The Urim and Thummim, Ex. 28:29, 30**
5. **The Prophetic Channel, 1 Cor. 14:4**
6. **Modern Guidance, Joel 2:28, 31**

**A DIALOGUE**  
**Part 1**

In the following passage is a record of God's communicating with Adam and Eve. What means did He use to communicate with them?

**"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."** Gen. 1:27, 28.

Notice that "the blessing for the animals [v. 22] was pronounced regarding them, 'God blessed them, saying,' whereas the blessing for the human race was expressed 'unto them.' As intelligent beings [created in God's image] they were able to listen to God and to receive communications. This verse contains the first revelation of God to man. . . .

**"Subdue it.** This revelation also contains instruction concerning man's duty and destiny, to rule over the earthly creation works, a commission expressed almost in the same words as those of the divine council recorded in v. 26. The only difference is the additional phrase, 'subdue it,' granting man the right to utilize for his necessities the vast resources of the earth."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Gen. 1:28.

**On what other occasion did God speak directly to man? Gen. 2:15-17.**

This was a conversation. The first man and woman talked to the Lord and listened to Him speak. Communion was open and unhindered.

"So long as they remained loyal to the divine law, their capacity to know, to enjoy, and to love would continually increase. They would be constantly gaining new treasures of knowledge, discovering fresh springs of happiness, and obtaining clearer and yet clearer conceptions of the immeasurable, unfailing love of God."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 51.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Is it possible today for a Christian to dialogue with God? How?**

"The holy pair were not only children under the fatherly care of God but students receiving instruction from the all-wise Creator. They were visited by angels, and were granted communion with their Maker, with no obscuring veil between. . . . The laws and operations of nature, which have engaged men's study for six thousand years, were opened to their minds by the infinite Framer and Upholder of all."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 50, 51.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Education*, pages 20-22.



**Part 2**  
**A BARRIER**

**What barrier now exists between man and God?**

**"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Isa. 59:2.**

"Your iniquities have become separators betwixt you and your God." Rotherham, *The Emphasized Old Testament*.

**Since the fall, how has God communicated with man? Heb. 1:1.**

**"At sundry times.** Gr. *polumerōs*, 'in many portions,' 'in many ways.' The full light from the throne of God did not burst upon men in one great flash of glory. Rather, it came slowly, little by little, as men could comprehend it.

**"In divers manners.** Gr. *polutropōs*, 'in various ways.' God spoke through the prophets by spoken and written message, by parable, and by means of visual aids. Whatever means were employed, it was God who spoke."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Heb. 1:1.

If we accept the view that the Bible has been given to us by the true and living God, then we must believe His declarations in the Bible concerning the revelation of His character given through His Son, Jesus Christ. God has spoken to the human race in various ways and at different times since the fall of man. Inspiration has been a principal medium.

**It was God Himself who spoke.** Notice the words in Hebrews 1:1. "God . . . spake." The writer emphasizes the fact that it was God who spoke through the prophets. The book may bear the name of Isaiah, Amos, Daniel, or John, but God is the source of their messages.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Are you aware of barriers in your life that prevent a daily dialogue with God? How can these "separators" be removed?**

"Had Adam and Eve never disobeyed their Creator, had they remained in the path of perfect rectitude, they could have known and understood God. But when they listened to the voice of the tempter, and sinned against God, the light of the garments of heavenly innocence departed from them; and in parting with the garments of innocence, they drew about them the dark robes of ignorance of God. The clear and perfect light that had hitherto surrounded them had lightened everything they approached; but deprived of that heavenly light, the posterity of Adam could no longer trace the character of God in His created works."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 1, p. 1084.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 57, 58.

**Part 3**      **What means of communication of God with man is given**  
**VARIOUS MEDIA**      **in Psalm 19?**

**"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun." Ps. 19:1-4.**

See also Rom. 1:20.

"Among the heathen are those who worship God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never brought by human instrumentality, yet they will not perish. Though ignorant of the written law of God, they have heard His voice speaking to them in nature, and have done the things that the law required. Their works are evidence that the Holy Spirit has touched their hearts, and they are recognized as the children of God."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 638.

"Through *nature* and *revelation*, through His *providence*, and by the influence of *His Spirit*, God speaks to us."—*Steps to Christ*, page 93. (Emphasis supplied.) Thus there are at least four ways in which God speaks to us today individually.

Sometimes God has used more direct ways of communicating with people.

**Through whom did God warn Lot? Gen. 19:1-3, 12, 13. See also Heb. 1:14.**

From time to time members of the human family have entertained angels (Heb. 13:2) and communed with them as they brought some message from heaven to the inhabitants of earth. Christ and two angels appeared in person to Abraham. Gen. 18:1, 2, 22, 33; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 138, 139. Compare Judges 6:11, 12; 13:3, 8, 9; Luke 1:11, 19, 26, 27.

**What means did God use to warn Pharaoh of coming famine? Gen. 41:1-7.**

God at times communicated through dreams to persons who were not prophets, giving some specific information or warning. See Gen. 40:5; Dan. 2:1; 4:4, 5; Matt. 2:13, 14. These divinely given dreams did not make the one who dreamed them a prophet.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Did you ever know of an instance where a dream had religious significance? How can you be sure of the source of such dreams?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 600-604.

Part 4  
THE URIM AND  
THUMMIM

What means did God provide by which He might reveal His will to ancient Israel through the high priest?

**"And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually. And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually." Ex. 28:29, 30.**

See also Lev. 8:8.

In *Unger's Bible Dictionary* the following note appears on page 1128: "These [the Urim and Thummim] formed the medium through which the high priest ascertained the will of Jehovah in regard to any important matter affecting the theocracy (Num. 27:21). Even such early writers as Josephus, Philo, and the Rabbins are unable to furnish any precise information as to what the Urim and Thummin really were. On every side we meet with confessions of ignorance."

But Ellen White wrote: "At the right and left of the breastplate were two large stones of great brilliancy. These were known as the Urim and Thummim. By them the will of God was made known through the high priest. When questions were brought for decision before the Lord, a halo of light encircling the precious stone at the right was a token of the divine consent or approval, while a cloud shadowing the stone at the left was an evidence of denial or disapprobation."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 351.

Dr. Unger remarks, however, that "in *Urim*, Hebrew scholars, with hardly an exception, have seen the plural of *ur* (light or fire). . . . The literal English equivalent would of course be 'lights.'"—*Unger's Bible Dictionary*, page 1128.

## THINK IT THROUGH

**Does God always reveal His will to His people on every essential subject? When I wish to know God's will for me personally, what should I do?**

"Those who decide to do nothing in any line that will displease God, will know, after presenting their case before Him, just what course to pursue. And they will receive not only wisdom, but strength. Power for obedience, for service, will be imparted to them, as Christ has promised. Whatever was given to Christ—the 'all things' to supply the need of fallen men—was given to Him as the head and representative of humanity. And 'whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.' 1 John 3:22."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 668.

## FURTHER STUDY

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 351.

**Part 5**  
**THE PROPHETIC**  
**CHANNEL**

**To whom is the prophet's message directed?**

**"He that prophesieth edifieth the church." 1 Cor. 14:4.**

"First of all, what is prophecy? Don't be too quick to answer that prophecy is simply 'foretelling the future before it happens.' For while this is certainly an important phase of prophecy, it is not the only phase. The word 'prophecy' comes from two Greek parts: pro means 'forth' or 'before;' phemi means 'to speak'—that is, in advance—or, 'to speak forth'—that is, to announce something in front of other people. Prophecy, therefore, is the speaking forth of the revealed mind of God whether this utterance pertains to the present or to the future."—Henry Herbert Ehrenstein, *Eternity*, August, 1966.

While the prophet's main function is to serve the church as the Lord's spokesman, his work is not limited to the children of God. Jonah and Daniel, for example, were God's prophets, but they spoke portions of their messages to the Gentile world.

"Prophecy is the revelation of the will of God by a man or woman who is God's chosen spokesman. The prophet stands first before God to discern His will, and then stands before men to declare that divine will."—Henry H. Ehrenstein, *Eternity*, August, 1966.

**By what means did God commonly impart His messages to prophets? Num. 12:6; Hosea 12:10.**

"The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed have themselves embodied the thought in human language."—*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, page v.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Read the first part of Isaiah 66:5. Then ask yourself the question, What is my attitude toward the messages of the Bible prophets? What is your answer?**

"God has been pleased to communicate His truth to the world by human agencies, and He Himself, by His Holy Spirit, qualified men and enabled them to do this work. He guided the mind in the selection of what to speak and what to write. The treasure was entrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, nonetheless, from Heaven. The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language, yet it is the testimony of God."—*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, pages vi, vii.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, pages v-vii.

**Part 6**      **What does the prophet Joel say about prophetic guidance**  
**MODERN GUIDANCE**      **in the last days?**

**"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." Joel 2:28, 31.**

"In immediate connection with the scenes of the great day of God, the Lord by the prophet Joel has promised a special manifestation of His Spirit. Joel 2:28. This prophecy received a partial fulfillment in the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; but it will reach its full accomplishment in the manifestation of divine grace which will attend the closing work of the gospel."—*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, page ix.

**What is one important characteristic of the people of God in the last days? Rev. 12:17; 19:10.**

"The expression 'spirit of prophecy' refers specifically to the 'manifestation of the Spirit' in the form of a special gift of the Holy Spirit that inspires the recipient and enables him to speak authoritatively as a representative of God (1 Cor. 12:7-10) when 'moved by the Holy Ghost' to do so (2 Peter 1:21). The context of the expression in Rev. 19:10 defines 'the testimony of Jesus' and 'the spirit of prophecy' in this sense. In view of the fact that the 'remnant' of ch. 12:17 specifically refers to the church after the close of the 1260 prophetic days of vs. 6 and 14, that is, after 1798 . . . , ch. 12:17 stands as a clear prediction of the special manifestation of the 'spirit,' or 'gift,' of prophecy in the church in our day. Seventh-day Adventists believe the ministry of Ellen G. White meets the specifications of Rev. 12:17 in a unique way."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 876.

**What did Paul say was given to the Corinthian believers by Jesus Christ? 1 Cor. 1:4-7.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Why should the church today especially need divine guidance?**

"When the apostles of Christ were to bear His gospel to the world and to record it for all future ages, they were especially endowed with the enlightenment of the Spirit. . . . At this time [the final conflict] the special endowment of divine grace and power is not less needful to the church than in apostolic days."—*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, pages ix, x.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Early Writings*, pages 76-78.

# The Prophet's Call



**"And the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." Amos 7:15.**

"The prophet is a person supernaturally called and qualified as a spokesman for God. . . . The prophet was in a special sense God's official representative to His people on earth. . . . The prophet was chiefly a teacher of righteousness, spirituality, and ethical conduct, a moral reformer bearing messages of instruction, counsel, admonition, warning, whose work often included the prediction of future events. . . .

"A prophet first received instruction from the Lord and then conveyed it to the people. These 2 aspects of the prophet's work were reflected in the names by which prophets were known in OT times: seer (*chozeh* or *ro'eh*) and prophet (*nabi'*). The title of seer was more common in the earlier period of Hebrew history (1 Sa 9:9). The term used more frequently in the OT was *nabi'*, 'prophet,' which designated him as God's spokesman. As a 'seer' the prophet discerned God's will, and as 'prophet' he conveyed it to others."—*SDA Bible Dictionary*, page 879.

### **LESSON OUTLINE**

- 1. The Call, Isa. 6:8, 9**
- 2. Jeremiah's Commission, Jer. 1:4, 5, 9**
- 3. The Gift in the Old Testament, Jude 14, 15 (first part)**
- 4. The Gift in the New Testament, Heb. 1:1, 2**
- 5. The Prophets' Humanity, James 5:17**
- 6. The Prophets Cruelly Treated, Matt. 23:29-31**

**Part 1**      **What were the circumstances of Isaiah's call to his prophetic office and who gave him his message?**  
**THE CALL**

**"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not." Isa. 6:8, 9.**

The prophet did not choose his own work. His brethren did not elect or appoint him to this important office. The prophetic gift was not handed down from father to son. "The call to prophetic office, and the accompanying bestowal of the prophetic gift, were acts of God, as in the case of Isaiah (ch 6:8, 9), Jeremiah (ch 1:5), Ezekiel (ch 2:3-5), and Amos (ch 7:15). Moses received his call at the burning bush (Ex 3:1 to 4:17). . . . Accompanying the prophetic call was a special endowment qualifying the prophet to speak for God. This call constituted each prophet a 'watchman' over the house of Israel (see Eze 33:7), and made the prophet strictly accountable to God for faithfully delivering the messages he was commissioned to bear (vs 3, 6)."—*SDA Bible Dictionary*, page 881.

**How did Elijah announce Elisha's call to be his successor? 1 Kings 19:19-21. See 2 Kings 2:13, 14.**

"As Elijah, divinely directed in seeking a successor, passed the field in which Elisha was plowing, he cast upon the young man's shoulders the mantle of consecration. . . . The Spirit of God impressed Elisha's heart as to the meaning of the prophet's act. To him it was the signal that God had called him to be the successor of Elijah. . . .

"Elisha understood the meaning of the call. He knew it was from God, and he did not hesitate to obey. . . . Without hesitation he left a home where he was beloved, to attend the prophet in his uncertain life."—*Prophets and Kings*, pages 219, 220.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What kind of people hear and obey the call of heaven? Does the Lord expect from all the same kind of service?**

"The call to place all on the altar of service comes to each one. We are not all asked to serve as Elisha served, nor are we all bidden to sell everything we have; but God asks us to give His service the first place in our lives, to allow no day to pass without doing something to advance His work in the earth."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 221.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Prophets and Kings*, pages 217-220.



**Part 2**  
**JEREMIAH'S**  
**COMMISSION**

**What was God's message to Jeremiah when called to the prophetic office?**

**"Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. . . . Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." Jer. 1:4, 5, 9.**

Credentials are those things that give "title to credit or confidence." What was it about Jeremiah that warranted the confidence of the people of Judah? Jeremiah's "vocation was his, not by human choice, but by virtue of a direct commission from God. The deep sense of the divine call was the driving force of his ministry and his support and stay in moments of discouragement against the hostility of his people."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Jer. 1:4.

**To whom does the Lord often turn to do His work? 1 Cor. 1:26-31.**

Ellen White humbly wrote concerning her call in her youth to serve as God's messenger to His people: "My Saviour declared me to be His messenger. 'Your work,' He instructed me, 'is to bear . . . the message to the erring ones, to carry the word before unbelievers, and with pen and voice to reprove from the Word actions that are not right.'"—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 32.

In an ancient school the students had a three-years course. In the first year they were called the wise men; in the second they were called the philosophers, those who wished to be wise men; in the third year they were called the disciples, learners.

It is from among humble men and women who are willing to receive divine instruction that God calls His messengers to serve His church. Is today any different from Jeremiah's time?

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What was Jeremiah's principal qualification for prophetic office? See Jeremiah 1:6, 7. What could be said of Ellen White at the time she was called?**

"God can use every person just in proportion as He can put His Spirit into the soul temple. The work that He will accept is the work that reflects His image. His followers are to bear, as their credentials to the world, the ineffaceable characteristics of His immortal principles."—*The Ministry of Healing*, page 37.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Prophets and Kings*, pages 407, 408.

**Part 3**  
**THE GIFT IN THE**  
**OLD TESTAMENT**

**Who is the earliest prophet mentioned in the Bible?**

**"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all." Jude 14, 15 (first part).**

"Enoch was the first prophet among mankind. He foretold by prophecy the second coming of Christ to our world, and his work at that time. . . . His prophecy is not found in the writings of the Old Testament. We may never find any books which relate to the works of Enoch, but Jude, a prophet of God, mentions the work of Enoch."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 1, p. 1088.

**What is said concerning the word of the Lord in the days of Samuel? 1 Sam. 3:1.**

The *Revised Standard Version* reads: "And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision." Yet there is the record of a solemn message delivered to Eli from the "Lord the God of Israel," through a "man of God." 1 Sam. 2:27-36.

**What gift did God entrust to Daniel? Dan. 1:17 (last part).**

"While Daniel clung to his God with unwavering trust, the Spirit of prophetic power came upon him. While he was instructed of man in the duties of court life, he was taught of God to read the mysteries of future ages and to present to coming generations, through figures and similitudes, the wonderful things that would come to pass in the last days."—*The Sanctified Life*, page 24.

**Were those prophets inspired whose writings were not included in the Old Testament canon? 1 Chron. 29:29; 2 Chron. 9:29.**

"During the ages while the Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament were being given, the Holy Spirit did not cease to communicate light to individual minds, apart from the revelations to be embodied in the Sacred Canon. . . . Mention is made [in the Bible] of prophets in different ages, of whose utterances nothing is recorded. In like manner, after the close of the canon of the Scripture, the Holy Spirit was still to continue its work, to enlighten, warn, and comfort the children of God."—*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, page viii.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Why are Ellen G. White's writings not a part of the canon of Scripture?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 84-86.

**Part 4**  
**THE GIFT IN THE**  
**NEW TESTAMENT**

**Who was the greatest spokesman for God?**

**"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Heb. 1:1, 2.**

See also John 6:14.

Christ referred to Himself as a prophet. Matt. 13:53-57. He fulfilled the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:15, 18. The multitude who were fed by the loaves and fishes recognized in the miracle-working Christ the Messiah-Prophet that "should come." Matt. 11:3. Like all prophets before and since, He spake for God and on His behalf. Indeed, He spoke as God, the supreme revelation of divinity. And note that in Jesus' messages the predictive element was prominent. See Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21.

"Who, but Jesus Christ by His Spirit and divine power, guided the pens of the sacred historians that to the world might be presented the precious record of the sayings and works of Jesus Christ?"—Ellen G. White, Manuscript 1, 1892.

**In whom was the prophetic gift exercised in early New Testament times? Luke 2:25-38. See also Luke 1:67-79.**

Paul indicated that the gift of prophecy would remain in the Christian church till the close of time. Eph. 4:11-13.

**How did Paul receive divine revelations? 2 Cor. 12:1-4.**

"The apostle Paul early in his Christian experience was given special opportunities to learn the will of God concerning the followers of Jesus. He was 'caught up to the third heaven,' 'into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.' He himself acknowledged that many 'visions and revelations' had been given him 'of the Lord.' His understanding of the principles of gospel truth was equal to that of 'the very chiefest apostles.' . . .

"The impression that he received when in vision was ever with him, enabling him to give a correct representation of Christian character. By word of mouth and by letter he bore a message that ever since has brought help and strength to the church of God."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 469, 470.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**In what sense is every Christian to do the same work as the prophet?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 480; *The Desire of Ages*, page 98.

**Part 5**  
**THE PROPHETS'**  
**HUMANITY**

**Did Elijah's call to the prophetic office remove his humanity from him?**

**"Elias [Elijah] was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months." James 5:17.**

Prophets are human beings, and God only is infallible. God calls the prophet to reveal the divine message. The instruction received exerts a positive influence on his own life, but he is not deprived of thinking ordinary thoughts or of conversing on topics of everyday interest. He may make mistakes as did Peter (see Gal. 2:11-14), or complain to God as did Jeremiah (see Jer. 12:1; 15:15-18), but this does not invalidate the divine message he bears for God. In her day Ellen White lived an exemplary life, but she said concerning herself: "In regard to infallibility, I never claimed it; God alone is infallible."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 37.

**Desirous of learning God's will for Judah, of whom did Hilkiah the priest and his associates seek counsel? 2 Kings 22:12-14.**

Commenting on this text, Joseph Priestly remarks: "'It pleased God to distinguish several women with the spirit of prophecy, as well as other great attainments, to shew that, in his sight, and especially in things of a spiritual nature, there is no essential pre-eminence in the male sex.'"—*Notes on All the Books of Scripture*, vol. 2, p. 40." (Quoted by W. E. Read in *The Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the Church*, page 110.)

When Ellen White [then Ellen Harmon] was just a young woman of seventeen—soon after her first vision—she wrote:

"As God has shown me in holy vision the travels of the Advent people to the Holy City . . . , it may be my duty to give you a short sketch of what God has revealed to me. . . . I have tried to bring back a good report and a few grapes from the heavenly Canaan, for which many would stone me, as the congregation bade stone Caleb and Joshua for their report. (Num. 14:10.) But I declare to you, my brethren and sisters in the Lord, it is a goodly land, and we are well able to go up and possess it."—*Early Writings*, pages 13, 14. (Written in April, 1846.)

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Ellen White's sketch of her earliest vision was a "good report," encouraging and full of hope for the future of the advent people. Throughout her later messages this emphasis runs like a golden thread.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Prophets and Kings*, pages 167-170.

**Part 6**  
**THE PROPHETS**  
**CRUELY TREATED**

**How were the prophets and messengers of the Lord often treated?**

**"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets." Matt. 23:29-31.**

See also Acts 7:52.

Often the prophet was called upon to deliver unpleasant messages of reproof or correction. At times he met a spirit of retaliation and revenge. Early in her experience Ellen White was confronted with an adverse reception of a message of reproof. When instructed as to her duty she was told: "The loss is not yours, but mine. God sees not as man sees. He lays out the work that He would have done, and you do not know which will prosper, this or that."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 11.

**How did Ahab respond to the solemn prophetic message God gave to him through Micaiah? 2 Chron. 18:17, 25, 26.**

**What was one of Jeremiah's experiences as God's messenger to rebellious Judah? Jer. 37:11-17; 38:6.**

Was Ellen White's pathway always a pleasant one? She wrote concerning her task: "From the beginning of my work, I have been pursued by hatred, reproach, and falsehood. Base imputations and slanderous reports have been greedily gathered up and widely circulated by the rebellious, the formalist, and the fanatic. . . .

"This warfare has been kept up for nearly forty years, but I have not felt at liberty even to notice their vile speeches, reproaches, and insinuations. . . .

"Jesus, the Majesty of heaven, He who was equal with God, was in the world thirty-three years, and yet there were but few who acknowledged His divine character. [See John 15:18-20.] And can I, who am so weak, so unworthy, a frail creature of humanity, expect greater success than was enjoyed by the Saviour of the world?"—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 69, 70.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Can you think of reasons why the prophetic voice is needed in modern times? What attitude to the prophetic message do you assume? What reasons do people have for ridiculing or persecuting the prophets of God?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 657-659.

## LESSON 3

October 13-19

# scope of the Prophet's work

**"And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved."  
Hosea 12:13.**

From a study of the life and work of Bible prophets one can observe the broad scope of their spiritual activities. Beyond the immediate and special functions of receiving visions and imparting light in sermons or written messages, these inspired men spelled out by their holy lives and example the high destiny of the church in godly living and witnessing. Elijah and Elisha were reformers and educators. Jeremiah, Nathan, and John the Baptist were reprovers of sin. Isaiah was a counselor; Paul and Peter, missionaries, evangelists, and pastors; Ezekiel, a pastor and shepherd of God's exiled flock.

"All the instruction we need to guide us in this life and to prepare us for the life to come has been given us through the gift of prophecy. No phase of life has been overlooked. The messages which the Spirit 'moved' the prophets to write provide a basis for our every decision. However, the principles have not been stated theoretically and catalogued so we may use the Scriptures like a dictionary or encyclopedia without having read the whole book and made its ideas our own. Most of the principles have been illustrated in life situations. It is left with us to study the situations and the way God dealt with human beings, to discover the principles involved, and to apply them to our life in comparable situations. . . .

"No matter what question or problem faces us, God has communicated enough knowledge of His will to guide our understanding and decision if we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us."—  
T. H. Jemison, *Christian Beliefs*, page 55.

Ellen White wrote: "My work has covered so many lines that I cannot call myself other than a messenger, sent to bear a message from the Lord to His people, and to take up work in any line that He points out."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 34.

R. R. Figuhr, for over twelve years world president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, declared that the spirit of prophecy has been the secret of success in the denomination's various departments and organizations.

"The gift of prophecy has guided, counseled, warned, and inspired. The secret of our efficient organization and the extension of our work around the world, as well as our clear position on great fundamental principles, can all be traced to this divinely inspired counsel. . . . I deeply appreciate this gift."

#### LESSON OUTLINE

1. A Predictor, Amos 3:7
2. A Varied Work, Hosea 12:13
3. An Educator, 2 Kings 6:1-3
4. A Reprover of Sin, Jer. 1:17, 18
5. Relation to Prior Prophets, Zech. 1:4
6. Revival Message, Amos 4:12

predicts

guides

corrects

inspires

warns

counsels

reproves

**Part 1**      **What does God reveal to His prophets?**  
**A PREDICTOR**

**"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." Amos 3:7.**

*"Surely the Lord God will do nothing]* in reference to the punishment, correction, or blessing of his people—

*"But he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.]* They are in strict correspondence with him, and he shows them *things to come*. Such *secrets* of God are revealed to them, that they may inform the people; that, by repentance and conversion, they may avoid the evil, and, by walking closely with God, secure the continuance of his favour."—*Clarke's Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 677.

The prophets of God often announced to the sinful people of Israel and Judah God's "secrets" as threatenings of wrath and promises of blessing. These were all conditional prophecies or predictions, and the predictive work of the prophets was largely of this character. The prophet, however, is more than a *forecaster*. He speaks *for* God as His representative and opens up the "secret" intentions and purposes of the divine mind.

Numerous predictions were made by the Bible prophets meeting fulfillment in local events, e.g., Jeremiah's forecast of the death of Hananiah (Jer. 38:12-17) and Simeon's prediction concerning the work Jesus would do and the sorrow that would pierce Mary's heart. Luke 2:34, 35. Predictions were also made that met fulfillment in sweeping events of secular and church history. Some illustrations of these are found in Daniel 2 and 7; Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21. The predictions of Ellen White were of both kinds. See *Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 97-103; *The Great Controversy*, pages 464, 644.

**THINK IT THROUGH**      **The prophecies of God's judgments are fulfilled unless changes come in the parties concerned. Our actions have something to do with altering God's purposes. Does this represent mercy or instability on God's part? In whom does the instability lie?**

On every package sent out by a certain printer in a large city of the eastern United States is an impressive trademark. It is simply a circle within which is his name and the words "I never disappoint." Every promise the Lord ever made might well bear that mark.

**FURTHER STUDY**      *The Desire of Ages*, page 234.



**Part 2**  
**A VARIED WORK**      **What was Moses' work as Israel's prophet?**

**"And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved." Hosea 12:13.**

Moses made few predictions regarding the future, but he was "a prophet," used of God to lead Israel and to protect them from Satan's deceptions and from their enemies. Not all who were called to the prophetic office did the same type of work. John the Baptist performed no miracles, but he was sent to prepare the way of the Lord. Jesus declared that John was a prophet and that "there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." Matt. 11:9, 11. Samuel's work was largely one of spiritual guidance.

**What was the first great truth revealed in Moses' writings? Gen. 1:1.**

"The preparation of the written word began in the time of Moses. Inspired revelations were then embodied in an inspired book. This work continued during the long period of sixteen hundred years—from Moses, the historian of creation and the law, to John, the recorder of the most sublime truths of the gospel."—*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, page v.

**From what source did Moses receive the various statutes and precepts given to the children of Israel? Deut. 4:1, 2, 5.**

"Moses was commanded to write, as God should bid him, judgments and laws giving minute instruction as to what was required. These directions relating to the duty of the people to God, to one another, and to the stranger were only the principles of the Ten Commandments amplified and given in a specific manner, that none need err."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 364.

In *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 608 Ellen White describes the nature of the Lord's instruction through her for Israel today. "It is to come down to the minutiae of life, keeping the feeble faith from dying, and pressing home upon believers the necessity of shining as lights in the world."

**THINK IT THROUGH**      **In what specific ways have the prophets' testimonies influenced me most?**

"If the people who now profess to be God's peculiar treasure would obey His requirements, as specified in His word, special testimonies would not be given to awaken them to their duty and impress upon them their sinfulness and their fearful danger in neglecting to obey the word of God."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 607.

**FURTHER STUDY**      *Education*, pages 173-184.

**Part 3**      **What Old Testament incident reveals the prophet as an**  
**AN EDUCATOR**      **educator, living and working with his students?**

**"And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go."**  
**2 Kings 6:1-3.**

"The schools of the prophets were founded by Samuel to serve as a barrier against the widespread corruption, to provide for the moral and spiritual welfare of the youth, and to promote the future prosperity of the nation by furnishing it with men qualified to act in the fear of God as leaders and counselors."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 593.

The basic testimony on Christian education and church schools among Seventh-day Adventists appeared in 1872. Ellen White's counsel on education throughout her life may be summarized as follows:

Build schools where youth can be taught the Bible. Train the hand and the head as well as the heart. Give them a well-balanced training. Teach them how to live for this world and to prepare for the next. And let this good work be extended to all the world.

In the book *Education* Ellen White wrote: "To restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized—this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life."—*Education*, pages 15, 16.

**What was often the result of the messages of Jeremiah?**  
**Jer. 29:19; 32:33.**

Jeremiah's experience is illustrative of the experience of other prophets. They acted as guides and teachers of the people in doctrine and right living, though often their work was frowned upon by the careless and the guilty. The prophet's voice was God's call to higher, holier living.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What is the relation of redemption to education? How long does the educational and redemptive work of God continue in our lives?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Education*, pages 45-50.

**Part 4**      **What is a difficult yet most important feature of the prophet's work as illustrated in Jeremiah's commission?**  
**A REPROVER OF SIN**

**"Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land." Jer. 1:17, 18.**

Ellen White was conscious that her work as God's messenger included the role of a moral reformer: "I have not come to cry peace; you can hear this voice wherever you go. There are those who will be glad to lull you to sleep in your carnal security; but I have a different work. My message is to alarm you, to bid you reform your lives, and cease your rebellion against the God of the universe. Take the Word of God, and see if you are in harmony with it. Is your character such as will bear the search of the heavenly investigation? Remember, Jesus says: 'Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.'"—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, June 22, 1911. See *Testimonies*, Vol. 4, pp. 12, 13.

**What are the thoughts that God thinks "toward" His people? Jer. 29:11-14.**

Judah, because of her sin, was to go into captivity. But the Lord would bring the people back again—first to Himself and second to their Judean homes. Thus the prophet's messages would be first a reproof for sin and forecast of judgment and second a harbinger of deliverance.

**Are the prophetic messages of rebuke an omen of rejection or a call to accept God's love? Rev. 3:19.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Would it not be well for us today to put ourselves in the place of ancient Israel and Judah and ask: Would we have done as they did under the circumstances? Is God's rebuke the same as God's rejection?**

"The experience of Israel, . . . as recorded in the one hundred fifth and one hundred sixth psalms, contains lessons of warning that the people of God in these last days especially need to study. I urge that these chapters be read at least once every week."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 98, 99.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 33, 34.

**Part 5**  
**RELATION TO**  
**PRIOR PROPHETS**

**"Why did Zechariah endorse and reemphasize the messages of "former prophets"?"**

**"Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the Lord." Zech. 1:4.**

Read Zech. 1:3-6; 7:7-14. Compare 1 Cor. 14:37.

The prophetic writings show a remarkable agreement, each of the prophets being under the control of the Spirit of God. In Bible times contemporary prophets studied what "the former prophets" had written. Dan. 9:2. In the Ellen White writings the messages of the Bible prophets were exalted and magnified so that the beauty of truth stood out. This is a distinct mark of a genuine messenger of God.

"The *Testimonies* are not to belittle the word of God, but to exalt it and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 606.

Stephen Haskell, early Bible teacher and administrator of the church, wrote concerning this aspect of the prophet's work:

"What are some of the unmistakable fruits by which a true prophet may be recognized? The testimony of every true prophet will agree with the testimony of the prophets of God before him, and it may be a further development of the same truth uttered by them . . . 'as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.'"

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Compare the contemporary and the prior prophets. Are they rivals? Do they compete, each for a following of his own? Or does the true contemporary prophet confirm the faith of the church in the revelations of "the former prophets," magnifying them and showing their relevance for today? See 1 Cor. 14:32.**

"If you lose confidence in the testimonies you will drift away from Bible truth."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 98.

"The testimonies of His Spirit call your attention to the Scriptures, point out your defects of character, and rebuke your sins; therefore you do not heed them. And to justify your carnal, ease-loving course you begin to doubt whether the testimonies are from God. If you would obey their teachings you would be assured of their divine origin. Remember, your unbelief does not affect their truthfulness. If they are from God they will stand."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 234.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, "The Spirituality of the Law," pages 55, 56.

**Part 6**  
**REVIVAL MESSAGE**

**What message may be considered as summing up the overall objective of the messages of the prophets?**

**"Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." Amos 4:12.**

"Prepare to meet thy God" was the consuming burden of Amos to his backslidden people. It is the message of the prophets through all time including the last days. The first Testimony pamphlet published in 1855 closed with an article entitled, "Prepare to Meet the Lord."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 123-126. In the last article in the ninth volume of the *Testimonies*, published forty-four years later, in 1909, the same pen urges:

"My brother, my sister, I urge you to prepare for the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. Day by day cast the love of the world out of your hearts. Understand by experience what it means to have fellowship with Christ. Prepare for the judgment, that when Christ shall come, to be admired in all them that believe, you may be among those who will meet Him in peace."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 285.

The messages of Elijah the prophet to apostate Israel, of John the Baptist to the Jews in Christ's time, and of Seventh-day Adventists to the world today are alike. The call to prepare to meet God is sounding *now*. Are we giving this message effectively? Personally?

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What is involved in preparation to meet God face to face? This call by the prophet implies basic needs for change in our lives. Will the study of the nine volumes of the "Testimonies" help us to discern these needs?**

"'Prepare to meet thy God' (Amos 4:12), is the warning to be given to the world. It is a warning to us individually. We are called upon to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. There is a work for you, my brother, to do, to yoke up with Christ. Make sure that your building is on the rock. Do not risk eternity on a probability. You may not live to participate in the perilous scenes on which we are now entering. The life of no one of us is assured for any given time. Should you not watch every moment? . . .

"Are my sins pardoned through faith in Christ? Have I been born again? Am I complying with the invitation, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' (Matt. 11:28)?"—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, pp. 116, 117.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 332, 333.

# prophetic VISIONS

*“While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, ‘Look again, and look a little higher.’ At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path.”—Early Writings, page 14.*

*“After I came out of vision, everything looked changed; a gloom was spread over all that I beheld. Oh, how dark this world looked to me. I wept when I found myself here, and felt homesick. I had seen a better world, and it had spoiled this for me. I told the view to our little band in Portland, who then fully believed it to be of God. That was a powerful time. The solemnity of eternity rested upon us.”—Early Writings, page 20.*

# and DREAMS

**“And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.” Num. 12:6.**

God spoke to the prophet through visions. No one rule can be laid down concerning the manner in which the visions were given or the way in which the light was conveyed to the prophet. The words of Hebrews 1:1—“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets”—take on special significance.

The *SDA Bible Dictionary* defines the prophetic “vision” as follows: “A supernatural means by which God communicates His will to His servants the prophets (Is 1:1, etc.). . . . A vision may come in waking moments (Dan 10:7; Acts 9:3, 7), by day (Acts 10:3) or night (Gen 46:2), or it may come as a dream (Num 12:6). The Bible makes no sharp distinction between visions and dreams, except possibly that dreams come during hours of slumber. In vision the prophet becomes oblivious of his natural surroundings and the Spirit of God so controls the sensory areas of his brain that the prophet seems literally to see, hear, and feel what is presented to him in vision. A vision may contain instruction for God’s people, or reveal facts about the future that will enable God’s people to live more intelligently in the present. In vision the prophet sometimes seems to be transported over considerable distances (see Eze 3:12-15; 8:3; 40:2; cf. 2 Cor 12:2-4).”—Art. “Vision,” pages 1134, 1135.

Throughout Ellen White’s long ministry of seventy years (1845-1915) revelations came to her in visions of the day and visions of the night. The light thus communicated to her by God she embodied in her addresses, numerous periodical articles, hundreds of personal, written testimonies, and in her many published books—at the present time about sixty in English.

## LESSON OUTLINE

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>God-given Visions, Num. 12:6</b></li> <li>2. <b>Visions and Physical Phenomena, Dan. 10:7, 8, 17, 18</b></li> <li>3. <b>Ellen White’s Experience in Vision</b></li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. <b>Prophetic Night Visions, Dan. 7:1, 2, 13</b></li> <li>5. <b>Reality of the Prophetic Dream, Ezék. 40:2, 4</b></li> <li>6. <b>How Light Came to Ellen White</b></li> </ol> |
|--|--|

**Part 1**  
**GOD-GIVEN VISIONS**      **How did God say He would communicate with one whom He chose to be a prophet?**

**“And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.” Num. 12:6.**

See also Gen. 15:1.

**Under what circumstances was Ezekiel given a vivid vision? Ezek. 8:1, 3, 4.**

Ellen White's experience in vision was similar to that of Ezekiel. Often her visions were given while she was in the presence of others. She also received light from God in the dreams of the night season. She wrote:

“As inquiries are frequently made as to my state in vision, and after I come out, I would say that when the Lord sees fit to give a vision, I am taken into the presence of Jesus and angels, and am entirely lost to earthly things. I can see no farther than the angel directs me. My attention is often directed to scenes transpiring upon earth.

“At times I am carried far ahead into the future and shown what is to take place. Then again I am shown things as they have occurred in the past. After I come out of vision I do not at once remember all that I have seen, and the matter is not so clear before me until I write, then the scene rises before me as was presented in vision, and I can write with freedom. Sometimes the things which I have seen are hid from me after I come out of vision, and I cannot call them to mind until I am brought before a company where that vision applies, then the things which I have seen come to my mind with force.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, pp. 292, 293.

**THINK IT THROUGH**      **What is the difference between the dream of a prophet and the ordinary dream of the average person? How may one recognize a divinely inspired dream?**

“The multitude of dreams arise from the common things of life, with which the Spirit of God has nothing to do. There are also false dreams, as well as false visions, which are inspired by the spirit of Satan. But dreams from the Lord are classed in the word of God with visions and are as truly the fruits of the spirit of prophecy as visions. Such dreams, taking into the account the persons who have them and the circumstances under which they are given, contain their own proofs of their genuineness.”—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 569, 570.

**FURTHER STUDY**      *Early Writings*, pages 13, 14.



**Part 2**  
**VISIONS AND**  
**PHYSICAL**  
**PHENOMENA**

**What changes did Daniel note in himself in connection with one of his visions?**

**"And I Daniel alone saw the vision. . . . And there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." "As for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me." Dan. 10:7, 8, 17, 18.**

**How is the experience of another prophet described? Num. 24:2-4.**

"Falling into a trance, but having his eyes open. Literally, 'falling down and his eyes uncovered.' The words 'into a trance' are supplied. The meaning seems to be that he fell down on his face on the ground, but that his eyes remained open. . . . Compare the experience of Saul (1 Sam. 19:23, 24), of Ezekiel (Eze. 1:28), of Daniel (Dan. 8:17, 18; 10:8-19), of John (Rev. 1:17). . . . It is certainly true that in whatever position his body may have been, whether prostrate or upright, his natural senses were held inoperative and his sensory perception was controlled by the Spirit of God."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Num. 24:4.

**What does Paul say about his experience while in one of his visions? 2 Cor. 12:1-4.**

"In his visions Paul saw many things not lawful for a man to utter. But many other things which he saw in the heavenly courts were woven into his teachings. The truth flashed from his lips as a sharp, two-edged sword. The impressions made upon his mind by the Holy Spirit were strong and vivid, and they were presented to the people in a way that no one else could present them. Paul spoke in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, pp. 1106, 1107.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How can we detect pseudo-charismatic manifestations? May we expect such phenomena in the last days? Matt. 24:11, 24.**

"The apostle Paul was highly honored of God, being taken in holy vision to the third heaven, where he looked upon scenes whose glories might not be revealed to mortals. Yet all this did not lead him to boastfulness or self-confidence."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1107.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Early Writings*, pages 15, 16.

**Part 3**  
**ELLEN WHITE'S**  
**EXPERIENCE**  
**IN VISION**

Many persons witnessed Ellen White in vision. G. I. Butler, president of the General Conference while Ellen White was in mid-life, in a series of articles for the *Review and Herald* reported physical phenomena paralleling the experience of Daniel.

"They [the visions] generally, but not always, occur in the midst of earnest seasons of religious interest while the Spirit of God is specially present. . . . The time Mrs. White is in this condition has varied from fifteen minutes to one hundred and eighty. During this time the heart and pulse continue to beat, the eyes are always wide open, and seem to be gazing at some far-distant object, and are never fixed on any person or thing in the room. They are always directed upward. They exhibit a pleasant expression. There is no ghastly look or any resemblance of fainting. . . .

"While she is in vision, her breathing entirely ceases. No breath ever escapes her nostrils or lips when in this condition. This has been proved by many witnesses, among them physicians of skill, and themselves unbelievers in the visions, on some occasions being appointed by a public congregation for the purpose. . . . When she goes into this condition, there is no appearance of swooning or faintness, her face retains its natural color, and the blood circulates as usual. Often she loses her strength temporarily and reclines or sits; but at other times she stands up. She moves her arms gracefully, and often her face is lighted up with radiance as though the glory of Heaven rested upon her. She is utterly unconscious of every thing going on around her, while she is in vision, having no knowledge whatever of what is said and done in her presence." —*Review and Herald*, June 9, 1874.

Neither in the Bible nor in the writings of Ellen White do we find the physical phenomena cited as a test. It was an evidence—one among many. To those who were eyewitnesses of Mrs. White in vision, the experience was unforgettable and inspired faith and built confidence in the gift. In the earlier years of her experience the visions were frequently given publicly. In the later years (1884-1915) the visions were usually given privately at night.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Were these manifestations natural or supernatural? Is it possible to explain the visions of the Bible prophets, or of God's messenger, Ellen White, by scientific methods?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Early Writings*, pages 17, 18.

**Part 4**  
**PROPHETIC NIGHT**  
**VISIONS**

**During what hours did Daniel receive the vision described in Daniel 7?**

**"In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. . . . I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him." Dan. 7:1, 2, 13.**

Often while the prophet slept, and his mind was free from what went on about him, God revealed truth to him in a prophetic dream or vision of the night. "It does not seem possible to draw any very precise distinction between the prophetic 'dream' and the prophetic 'vision.' In the case of . . . Daniel (Dan. vii, 1), they seem to melt into each other."—M'Clintock and Strong, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. 8, art. "Prophet," p. 646.

**What other prophet received visions during the night? Acts 16:9. See also Gen. 46:2-4.**

Ellen White was favored by God with approximately 2,000 revelations in dreams and visions, by day and by night, over a period of seventy years.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Did the validity of the revelation depend upon the hours of the day or night when it was received? Did the presence or absence of physical phenomena make any difference?**

"It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the *Testimonies*.' Satan knows how to make his attacks. He works upon minds to excite jealousy and dissatisfaction toward those at the head of the work. The gifts are next questioned; then, of course, they have but little weight, and instruction given through vision is disregarded.' 'Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the *Testimonies*, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction.' 'By giving place to doubts and unbelief in regard to the work of God, and by cherishing feelings of distrust and cruel jealousies, they are preparing themselves for complete deception.'"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 672.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Early Writings*, pages 19, 20.

**Part 5**  
**REALITY OF THE**  
**PROPHETIC DREAM**

**By what means did God reveal to Ezekiel truths concerning the restored temple?**

*"In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel." "And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee." Ezek. 40:2, 4.*

"In both dream and vision what carried religious significance was the fact that the presentation did not come through the ordinary sense channels, or as a product of the mind's conscious activity. On this account it was accepted as a revelation from God. . . . The result is sometimes presented as if it had come to the prophet in a manner analogous to sense experience,—the prophet sees, hears, questions, replies."—James Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Vision," Vol. 4, p. 871. (Emphasis supplied.)

**In what form were messages given to Zechariah? Zech. 1:8-10; 4:1-7. To John the revelator? Rev. 1:10-20. See Rev. 12.**

**To what point was Ezekiel on one occasion seemingly conveyed in vision? Ezek. 8:1-12.**

Frequently in Ellen White's experience she seemed to be taken to some distant place where she saw and heard what was occurring. While in Moss, Norway, in 1887, she seemed to be at the Saint Helena Sanitarium in California and witnessed what took place as the patients settled their accounts.

In *Counsels on Health*, pages 412, 413, she describes a seeming visit to the Battle Creek Sanitarium where she saw how the work was done and heard the conversation of the helpers.

On the night of April 16, 1906, she seemed to be on an eminence and viewed the great San Francisco earthquake that occurred two days later. Read her vivid description in *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, pp. 92, 93.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Before one challenges the method by which God reveals the light, it is wise to read the prophetic messages and ask, Is this light or darkness?**

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. 46:9, 10.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 58, 59.

**Part 6**  
**HOW LIGHT CAME**  
**TO ELLEN WHITE**

Ellen White sometimes saw historical scenes in vision. In her introduction to the book *The Great Controversy* she makes allusion to the manner in which the light therein revealed came to her:

“Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of life, the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God’s holy law.”—*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, page x. See also page xi.

As she wrote of her views of the second coming of Christ, she declared: “Scenes of such thrilling, solemn interest passed before me as no language is adequate to describe. It was all a living reality to me.”—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 76.

In *Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 41, 42, Ellen White describes the view God gave to her of the final conflict between Christ and Satan:

“In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict. One army was led by banners bearing the world’s insignia; the other was led by the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel. Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust as company after company from the Lord’s army joined the foe and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God. . . .

“At last the victory was gained. The army following the banner with the inscription, ‘The commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,’ was gloriously triumphant. The soldiers of Christ were close beside the gates of the city, and with joy the city received her King. The kingdom of peace and joy and everlasting righteousness was established.”—*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 41, 42. See also *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, pp. 28, 29.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**On which side will we stand in the final battle between the church and the world? Do the visions affect our decision making? Our outlook for the present and the future?**

“The question is asked, How does Sister White know in regard to the matters of which she speaks so decidedly, as if she had authority to say these things? I speak thus because they flash upon my mind when in perplexity like lightning out of a dark cloud in the fury of a storm. . . . At such times I cannot refrain from saying the things that flash into my mind, not because I have had a new vision, but because that which was presented to me perhaps years in the past has been recalled to my mind forcibly.”—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 37.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 60, 61.

October 27 to November 2

**"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches." Rev. 1:10, 11 (first part).**

Through the vision the prophet's mind was enlightened. When not in vision but still aided by the Spirit of God, he presented to others orally or in writing what he saw and heard. This he did in the best language at his command. On different occasions he employed different words in describing the same vision.

"The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented. Men will often say such an expression is not like God. But God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen. Look at the different writers.

"It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the word of God."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 21.

Ellen White's experience in receiving and delivering God's messages was parallel with the prophets of God in past ages. Hers was not a singular, bizarre, or one-time phenomenon setting her apart as odd and peculiar. She was another prophet through whom God gave His messages.

The following passage gives an illus-

tration of how God spoke through the spirit of prophecy in establishing our doctrines upon the Bible:

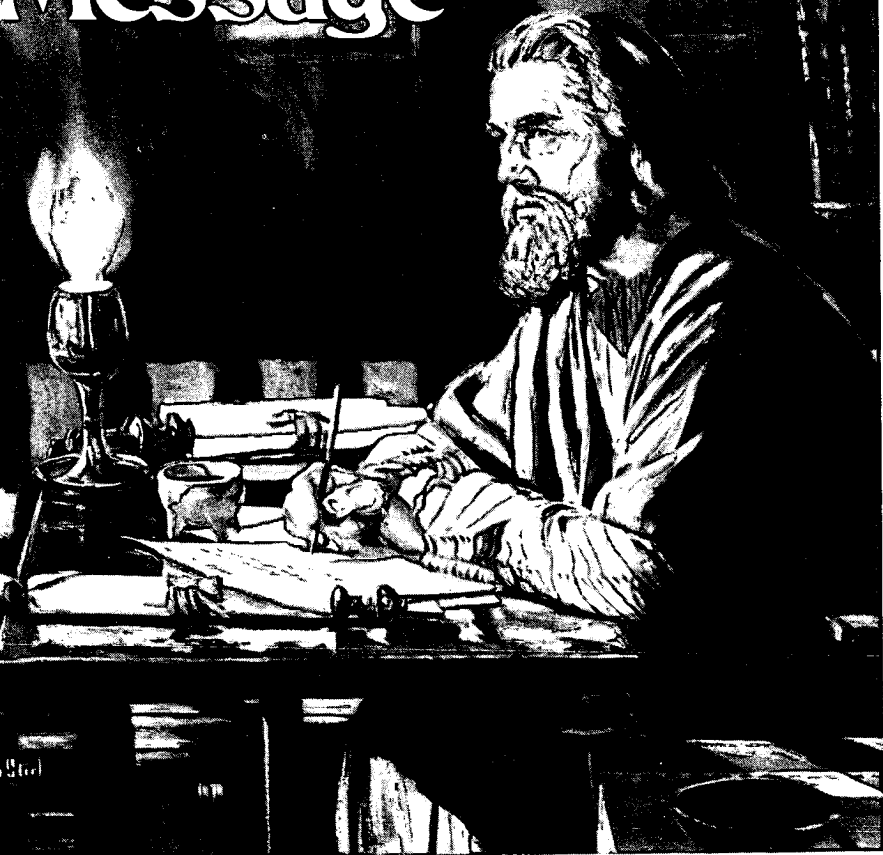
"We are to be established in the faith, in the light of the truth given us in our early experience. At that time one error after another pressed in upon us; ministers and doctors brought in new doctrines. We would search the Scriptures with much prayer, and the Holy Spirit would bring the truth to our minds. Sometimes whole nights would be devoted to searching the Scriptures, and earnestly asking God for guidance. Companies of devoted men and women assembled for this purpose. The power of God would come upon me, and I was enabled clearly to define what is truth and what is error.

"As the points of our faith were thus established, our feet were placed upon a solid foundation. We accepted the truth point by point, under the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. I would be taken off in vision, and explanations would be given me. I was given illustrations of heavenly things, and of the sanctuary, so that we were placed where light was shining on us in clear, distinct rays."—*Gospel Workers*, page 302.

## LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Oral and Written Testimonies, Jer. 1:17**
2. **Literary Assistants, Jer. 36:4, 17, 18**
3. **Divine Messages in Human Language, Ezek. 40:4**
4. **Validity of Prophet's Messages, 1 Cor. 1:11**
5. **The Prophet as a Reprover, 2 Sam. 12:1, 7**
6. **A Messenger From God, 2 Peter 1:20, 21**

# The Prophet Delivers God's Message



**Part 1**  
**ORAL AND WRITTEN**  
**TESTIMONIES**

**What command came to the youthful prophet Jeremiah regarding the message God would impart to him?**

**"Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them."** Jer. 1:17.

See also Ezek. 11:25.

The prophet is charged by God to deliver to the people the messages which he has received. The prophet must bear a careful and undiluted testimony of all that God has revealed to him.

**What was one means by which the prophets delivered the prophetic message to the people? Jer. 26:2, 4 (first part). See Zech. 1:3; 1 Kings 11:29-40.**

Through *the spoken word* the prophet conveyed the message of the Lord in a discourse before a company of people and also in personal testimony by private interviews.

**What were prophets at times bidden to do with the messages they received? Isa. 30:8; Jer. 36:2; Rev. 21:5.**

Concerning her experience, Ellen White has written:

"Early in my public labors I was bidden by the Lord, 'Write, write the things that are revealed to you.'"—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, June 14, 1906.

**How was a message often conveyed to an individual or church? Col. 4:16; 2 Thess. 3:14, 17. Compare 2 Chron. 21:12-15.**

The messages entrusted to Ellen White were written out by her and often conveyed by letters (often called "testimonies"). Literally thousands of such communications were mailed from her home through the years. Of this she says:

"In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 67. See also *Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 33.

Concerning the work of communicating God's love, she urged: "Talk it, pray it, sing it, fill the world with the message of His truth, and keep pressing on into the regions beyond."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 30.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How would our world work have been affected if Ellen G. White had not delivered faithfully the Lord's instruction regarding medical evangelism and educational work? What form or shape would the church witness have taken?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 654-657.



**Part 2**  
**LITERARY**  
**ASSISTANTS**

**"Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book."**

**"And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth? Then Baruch answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book." Jer. 36:4, 17, 18.**

See also Rom. 16:22.

Baruch wrote out Jeremiah's message. It is probable that some of Paul's epistles were dictated. Ellen White's procedure was to write out her messages in longhand. These handwritten manuscripts were sometimes given to a secretary to put into finished form. During her lifetime she wrote about 100,000 pages or 25,000,000 words. A large number of these manuscripts are on file in the White Estate offices at the General Conference.

Ellen White described her writing in these words: "As the work grew, others assisted me in the preparation of matter for publication. After my husband's death, faithful helpers joined me, who labored untiringly in the work of copying the testimonies and preparing articles for publication."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 50.

"D. E. Robinson, for many years a literary assistant [at Elmhaven], said in 1933:

"'In all good conscience I can testify that never was I presumptuous enough to venture to add any ideas of my own or to do other than follow with most scrupulous care the thoughts of the author.'"—Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White—Messenger to the Remnant*, page 60.

"It was ever a source of regret to Mrs. White that her schooling had been very brief [only three years of formal education], and her knowledge of the technical rules of writing was therefore limited. W. C. White [her son] says he clearly remembers the earlier years of her work in Battle Creek, when James White, on coming home from the Review and Herald office, would be asked to listen to what Mrs. White had written, and to help her in preparing it technically for publication. Then, as she read to him, he would comment on the matter, rejoicing in the power of the message, and would point out weaknesses in composition and faulty grammar."—Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White—Messenger to the Remnant*, page 6.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Contemplate the miracle of transmission of divinely inspired thoughts and ideas through weak human language. The wonder is that Ellen White's words even approached the majesty of the glorious truths of inspiration revealed to her!**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 657-660.

**Part 3**  
**DIVINE MESSAGES**  
**IN HUMAN**  
**LANGUAGE**

**What instructions were given to Ezekiel in connection with his vision of the temple?**

**"And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel." Ezek. 40:4.**

"The man" whom Ezekiel saw in his vision instructed the prophet to set his heart upon all that God would show him that he might accurately "declare" to "the house of Israel" all that he saw. The revelation of truth was the Lord's. The language of the prophet describing the vision was the language of man.

**Who is the source of the messages of the Bible? 2 Tim. 3:16 (first part).**

"The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all 'given by inspiration of God' (2 Tim. 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. . . .

"The Ten Commandments were spoken by God Himself, and were written by His own hand. They are of divine, and not of human composition. But the Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human."—*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, pages v, vi.

Describing her own experience, Ellen White has written: "Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 37.

How did Ellen White at one time refer to the special aid of God's Spirit as she wrote of what was shown to her? "While I am writing out important matter, He is beside me helping me, . . . and when I am puzzled for a fit word with which to express my thought, He brings it clearly and distinctly to my mind."—Ellen G. White, Letter 127, 1902.

At the General Conference session of 1883 an action was taken which sets forth this concept of inspiration:

"We believe the light given by God to His servants is by the enlightenment of the mind, thus imparting the thoughts, and not (except in rare cases) the very words in which the ideas should be expressed."—*Review and Herald*, Nov. 27, 1883.

**FURTHER STUDY** *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 660-663.

Part 4  
VALIDITY OF  
PROPHET'S  
MESSAGES

What prompted the apostle Paul to write his first epistle to the church at Corinth?

**"For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you." 1 Cor. 1:11.**

"How was it with the apostle Paul? The news he received through the household of Chloe concerning the condition of the church at Corinth was what caused him to write his first epistle to that church. Private letters had come to him stating the facts as they existed, and in his answer he laid down general principles which if heeded would correct the existing evils. . . .

"Because the Lord had not given him a new revelation for that special time, those who were really seeking light did not cast his message aside as only a common letter. No, indeed. The Lord had shown him the difficulties and dangers which would arise in the churches, that when they should develop, he might know just how to treat them. . . .

"Should he not take notice of the reports concerning their state of anarchy and division? Most assuredly; and the reproof he sent them was written just as much under the inspiration of the Spirit of God as were any of his epistles."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 65, 66.

Was every message from Ellen White the result of a specific vision? "Some have taken the position that the warnings, cautions, and reproofs given by the Lord through His servant, unless they come through special vision for each individual case, should have no more weight than counsels and warnings from other sources. . . . If, however, in response to some question, statement, or appeal from churches or individuals, a testimony is written presenting the light which God has given concerning them, the fact that it has been called forth in this manner in nowise detracts from its validity or importance."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 683, 684.

THINK IT THROUGH

**Have you ever wondered how the light found in the book "Education" came to Mrs. White? Also, "Steps to Christ," "Counsels on Sabbath School Work," et cetera? Was it all by direct vision in each case?**

"I have no special wisdom in myself; I am only an instrument in the Lord's hands to do the work He has set for me to do. The instructions that I have given by pen or voice have been an expression of the light that God has given me."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 691.

FURTHER STUDY

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 663-665.

**Part 5**  
**THE PROPHET**  
**AS A REPROVER**

**In what way was God's message of rebuke delivered to King David?**

**"And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor." "And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man." 2 Sam. 12:1, 7.**

God through Nathan rebuked David for his adulterous and murderous course in the case of Bathsheba and Uriah. 2 Sam. 12:1-7. John the Baptist rebuked Herod for taking Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Matt. 14:3-12. A man of God also rebuked Jeroboam, king of Israel, for his idolatrous practices. 1 Kings 13:1-6. These testimonies of the prophets recorded in the Scriptures "are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Cor. 10:11.

Similarly, personal testimonies were written by Ellen G. White. These have been included in the nine volumes of the *Testimonies*. Ellen White explained that "since the warning and instruction given in testimony for individual cases applied with equal force to many others who had not been specially pointed out in this manner, it seemed to be my duty to publish the personal testimonies for the benefit of the church. . . .

"In rebuking the wrongs of one, He designs to correct many."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 658, 659.

**What rebuke did Peter administer to a deceived believer? Acts 8:18-24.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Paul said before King Agrippa "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Acts 26:19. Shall we not—all of us—inquire individually, Am I obedient to the instruction God gives to me through the visions of His servant?**

"I was . . . directed to bring out general principles, in speaking and in writing, and at the same time specify the dangers, errors, and sins of some individuals, that all might be warned, reprov'd, and counseled. I saw that all should search their own hearts and lives closely to see if they had not made the same mistakes for which others were corrected and if the warnings given for others did not apply to their own cases. If so, they should feel that the counsel and reproofs were given especially for them and should make as practical an application of them as though they were especially addressed to themselves."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 687.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 666-668.

**Part 6**  
**A MESSENGER**  
**FROM GOD**

**Upon what divine power was the prophet dependent?**

**"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:20, 21.**

**With what solemn words were the prophets at times enjoined to be faithful in delivering God's messages? Jer. 26:2; Ezek. 2:5-7.**

When the people of God in any age walk contrary to the guidance of His chosen representatives, they offend God. See 1 Sam. 8:1-10.

Wrote Ellen White: "I saw the state of some who stood on present truth, but disregarded the visions—the way God had chosen to teach in some cases, those who erred from Bible truth. I saw that in striking against the visions they did not strike against the worm—the feeble instrument that God spake through—but against the Holy Ghost. I saw it was a small thing to speak against the instrument, but it was dangerous to slight the words of God. I saw if they were in error and God chose to show them their errors through visions, and they disregarded the teachings of God through visions, they would be left to take their own way, and run in the way of error, and think they were right, until they would find it out too late."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 40.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

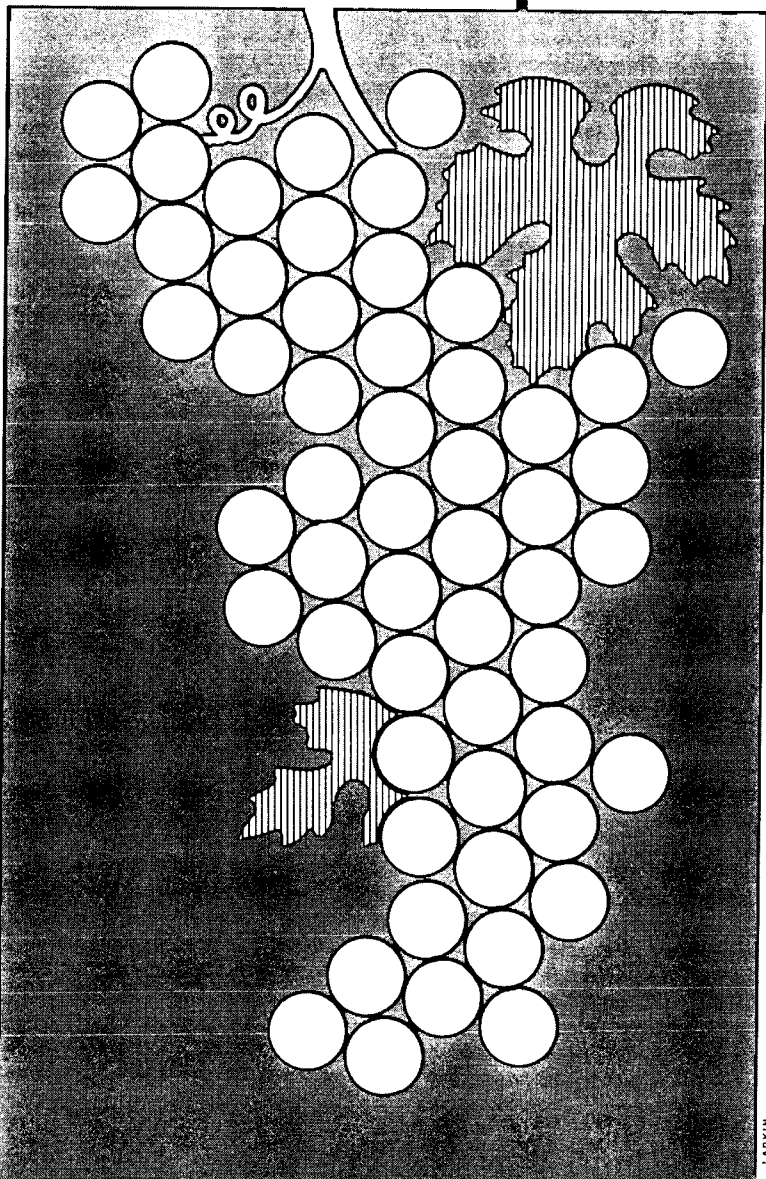
**Have you ever read anything in the Bible or in the "Testimonies" that seemed to have been written just for you? When such messages were in the nature of a reproof, did you regard them as applicable as the gracious promises?**

"Through His Holy Spirit the voice of God has come to us continually in warning and instruction, to confirm the faith of the believers in the Spirit of prophecy. . . . Time and trial have not made void the instruction given, but through years of suffering and self-sacrifice have established the truth of the testimony given. The instruction that was given in the early days of the message is to be held as safe instruction to follow in these its closing days."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 41.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 669, 670.

# Testing the Claims of the Prophet



**“Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” 1 Thess. 5:20, 21.**

“Christ warned His disciples: ‘Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.’ . . . Here is a test, and all can apply it if they will. Those who really desire to know the truth will find sufficient evidence for belief.”—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 671, 672. See also *The Acts of the Apostles*, page 263.

In addition to the specifically designated Bible tests, there are certain marks of divine guidance which prove helpful in examining the claims of anyone who says he speaks for God. These tests must be applied to Ellen White as well as any other person.

The message of the true prophet will be (a) distinct for its high quality in thought and utterance, (b) geared to the practical needs of the people, (c) applicable to current situations, (d) on a high spiritual plane, not childish or mixing sublime and ridiculous things, and (e) not tempered to cater to the favor of men.

The testimony of the prophet will be motivated not by impressions or feelings or impulses but by definite revelations from God. We see the physical phenomena connected with the visions of Ellen White as one evidence among other evidences.

We now turn to the basic Bible tests, and we shall examine Ellen White’s work in the light of these tests. Remember, we do not test the Bible by Ellen G. White’s writing, but we test the writings of Ellen G. White by *the Bible!*

**LESSON**

**OUTLINE**

- 1. The Prophet and God, Deut. 13:1-3**
- 2. Forecast and Fulfillment, Deut. 18:22**
- 3. The Humanity of Christ, 1 John 4:1, 2**
- 4. “By Their Fruits,” Matt. 7:15-20**
- 5. Testing Ellen G. White**
- 6. Beware of False Prophets, 1 John 4:1**

Part 1  
THE PROPHET  
AND GOD

What is one means by which a false prophet can be detected?

"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known; and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the word of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams." Deut. 13:1-3.

Did Ellen White's work call people to God or away from God? Her oral and written messages exalted God, His commandments, and His Word, the Bible.

"The law of God is the one unerring rule by which all opinions, doctrines, and theories are to be tested. Says the prophet: 'If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.'"—*The Great Controversy*, page 452. See also *The Great Controversy*, pages 461-491.

On the last page of her first book, *Christian Experience and Views*, published in 1851, she wrote: "I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice."—*Early Writings*, page 78. See also *The Great Controversy*, pages 593-602.

"Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the Word of God. The Spirit which inspired the Scriptures, always leads to the Scriptures."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 43.

**By what standard or test do some oppose the truth? 1 Timothy 6:20.**

"When a man feels so very wise that he dares to dissect God's Word, his wisdom is, with God, counted foolishness. When he knows more, he will feel that he has everything to learn. And his very first lesson is to become teachable."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 42.

**What blessing is promised to the meek of the earth? Psalm 25:9.**

"Those who have most to say against the testimonies are generally those who have not read them, just as those who boast of their disbelief of the Bible are those who have little knowledge of its teachings. They know that it condemns them and their rejection of it gives them a feeling of security in their sinful course."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 45, 46.

## THINK IT THROUGH

**Read Matthew 5:3-5. In what way do the first three Beatitudes relate to the question of receiving divine guidance?**

## FURTHER STUDY

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 671-674.



Part 2  
FORECAST AND  
FULFILLMENT

## What is another test of a prophet's work?

**"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him." Deut. 18:22.**

The proof of a prophet's credentials lies, in part, in the fulfillment of his predictions. See 1 Sam. 9:6; Lam. 3:37.

Although Ellen White's work was not basically that of a forecaster of future events, yet in some instances she predicted conditions and events whose fulfillments give evidence of her prophetic gift. For example, in 1904 she wrote: "The time is fast coming when the controlling power of the labor unions will be very oppressive."—*Country Living*, page 9. In 1906 she wrote thus of calamities: "I am bidden to declare the message that cities full of transgression, and sinful in the extreme, will be destroyed by earthquakes, by fire, by flood."—*Evangelism*, page 27.

In other instances the predictive nature of her statements is not so evident, but she stated insights into the society of her day that have become increasingly descriptive of present-day society: (1) Decadence—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 13; (2) Anarchy—*Education*, page 228; (3) Urban problems—*Testimonies*, Vol. 7, p. 82; (4) Youth dissipation—*Temperance*, page 274.

**In applying the test of fulfilled predictions, what must be taken into consideration? Jer. 18:9, 10.**

The fulfillment of certain prophecies may be dependent on the attitude of individuals or nations concerned, whether this condition is stated in the prophecies or not. Certain conditions arose, for example, in leading the children of Israel promptly into the Promised Land which led the Lord to alter His purpose.

Ellen White wrote thus to Seventh-day Adventists concerning the conditional nature of God's promises: "The angels of God in their messages to men represent time as very short. Thus it has always been presented to me. It is true that time has continued longer than we expected in the early days of this message. Our Saviour did not appear as soon as we hoped. But has the word of the Lord failed? Never! It should be remembered that *the promises and threatenings of God are alike conditional.*"—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 67. (Emphasis supplied.)

## FURTHER STUDY

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 675-678.

**Part 3**  
**THE HUMANITY**  
**OF CHRIST****What does John state as another mark of a true prophet?**

**"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." 1 John 4:1, 2.**

The Bible writings come to focus in the incarnate Christ. Ellen White's central theme in her writings was also the God-Man Jesus Christ, whom she proclaims as indwelling Saviour and supreme Lord.

In her book *The Desire of Ages* we see evidences of the honor in which she held the Lord Jesus Christ. In another book she wrote, "The crucified Messiah is the central point of all Christianity."—*Counsels to Teachers*, pages 23, 24.

In the following forceful paragraph Ellen White writes of the incarnate Christ:

"In contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an unfathomable mystery, that the human mind cannot comprehend. The more we reflect upon it, the more amazing does it appear. How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem's manger! How can we span the distance between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one. It is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in humanity, we look upon God, and see in Him the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person."—Ellen G. White *Comments, SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 1130.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**When one reads "The Desire of Ages" and "Steps to Christ," with whom does he converse? Is the level of communication between Ellen White and the reader or Jesus Christ and the reader?**

"Jesus Christ is everything to us,—the first, the last, the best in everything. Jesus Christ, His Spirit, His character, colors everything; it is the warp and woof, the very texture of our entire being. . . . Christ is a living Saviour. Continuing to look unto Jesus, we reflect His image to all around us."—*Messages to Young People*, page 161.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 679-682.

**Part 4**      **What reasonable test should be applied to anyone professing to exercise the prophetic gift?**  
**"BY THEIR FRUITS"**

**"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. . . . Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Matt. 7:15-20.**

The fruit of a prophet's work is to be found (1) in his own personal life and experience, (2) in the lives of those who give heed to his messages and are influenced by them, and (3) in the character of the work and institutions which he attempts to establish.

Some of the fruit of Ellen White's life has been to open up the Scriptures to the understanding of those who read her books, to attract the reader to Jesus, and to advance the work of God in the world by counsel that resulted in the establishment of: (1) church organization; (2) educational work in all levels; (3) medical institutions; (4) publishing houses; and (5) worldwide extension of church work.

F. M. Wilcox, a past editor of the *Review and Herald* and an associate of Ellen White, said in a sermon at a General Conference session, June 7, 1946: "Her life and Christian experience conformed to the pure, simple, dignified principles of the gospel of Christ. She exemplified in her own life, as does every true prophet, the principles of truth she taught to others.

"The work of Mrs. White should not be judged by some detail, by the turn of a phrase or sentence, or by some seeming contradiction in her writings. It should be judged by the spirit which has characterized her work through the years, by the fruit it has borne in connection with the great religious movement with which it was associated, and in the development of which it bore a prominent part and exerted a molding influence."

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**In what specific ways have the spirit of prophecy writings influenced or affected the life of the Adventist people? My own personal life? Has this influence spilled over into the world about me? In what ways?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 683-685.

**Part 5**  
**TESTING**  
**ELLEN G. WHITE**

What invitation did Ellen White give to investigators who sought to examine the fruitage of her prophetic visions?

"Let the *Testimonies* be judged by their fruits. What is the spirit of their teaching? What has been the result of their influence? 'All who desire to do so can acquaint themselves with the fruits of these visions.' . . .

"'God is either teaching His church, reprovng their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The *Testimonies* are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil.'"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 671.

Back in 1889, when Ellen White learned that certain men at the Battle Creek College were criticizing the Bible, she wrote:

"When men venture to criticize the Word of God, they venture on sacred, holy ground, and had better fear and tremble and hide their wisdom as foolishness. God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His Word, selecting some things as inspired and discrediting others as uninspired. The testimonies have been treated in the same way; but God is not in this."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 23.

Ellen White wrote of her experience as God's messenger thus:

"As the Lord has manifested Himself through the spirit of prophecy, 'past, present, and future have passed before me. I have been shown faces that I had never seen, and years afterward I knew them when I saw them. I have been aroused from my sleep with a vivid sense of subjects previously presented to my mind; and I have written, at midnight, letters that have gone across the continent and, arriving at a crisis, have saved great disaster to the cause of God. This has been my work for many years. A power has impelled me to reprove and rebuke wrongs that I had not thought of. Is this work of the last thirty-six years from above or from beneath?'"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 671.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What is your testimony concerning the spirit of prophecy?**

"Christ warned His disciples: . . . 'A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.' . . . Here is a test, and all can apply it if they will. Those who really desire to know the truth will find sufficient evidence for belief."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 671, 672.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 687-689.

**Part 6**  
**BEWARE OF FALSE**  
**PROPHETS**

**What warning does John sound to guard the church from deception?**

**"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1.**

See also Matt. 7:15.

Four times in Matthew 24 Jesus pinpointed *deception* as a principal sign of His second advent. "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." Matt. 24:11.

Ellen White in 1905 reiterated this warning through the pages of our church paper: "There will be those who will claim to have visions. When God gives you clear evidence that the vision is from Him, you may accept it, but do not accept it on any other evidence; for people are going to be led more and more astray."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, p. 72.

How are we to test those who claim divine enlightenment?

"There will be false dreams and false visions, which have some truth, but lead away from the original faith. The Lord has given men a rule by which to detect them: 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them' (Isa. 8:20). If they belittle the law of God, if they pay no heed to His will as revealed in the testimonies of His Spirit, they are deceivers. They are controlled by impulse and impressions, which they believe to be from the Holy Spirit, and consider more reliable than the Inspired Word. They claim that every thought and feeling is an impression of the Spirit; and when they are reasoned with out of the Scriptures, they declare that they have something more reliable. But while they think that they are led by the Spirit of God, they are in reality following an imagination wrought upon by Satan."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, pp. 98, 99.

See also *Revival and Beyond* by Ellen G. White, and *Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, pp. 61-118.

Ellen White wrote: "The track of truth lies close beside the track of error, and both tracks may seem to be one to minds which are not worked by the Holy Spirit, and which, therefore, are not quick to discern the difference between truth and error."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 202.

**What does Paul admonish Christians to do? 1 Thess. 5: 20, 21.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Have I ever had occasion to use the "yardsticks" suggested in this lesson? Have I personally applied them to the life and teachings of Ellen White?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 690, 691.

# Integrity of the Prophetic Message

“My Instructor said to me, Tell these men that God has not committed to them the work of measuring, classifying, and defining the character of the testimonies. Those who attempt this are sure to err in their conclusions. The Lord would have men adhere to their appointed work. If they will keep the way of the Lord, they will be able to discern clearly that the work which He has appointed me to do is not a work of human devising.

“Those who carefully read the testimonies as they have appeared from the early days, need not be perplexed as to their origin. The many books, written by the help of the Spirit of God, bear a living witness to the character of the testimonies.”—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pages 49, 50.

**"As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak." 2 Chron. 18:13.**

In Bible times there were those who denied the divine source of the prophetic messages, declaring that in the testimony the prophet bore he was influenced by certain individuals or circumstances.

If the prophet's messages were only an expression of his own opinion or the opinion of one close to him, then his claim to prophethood would be false. At some point the criteria for a prophet would be applied to his work, and he would be found wanting.

In the early years of Ellen White's ministry a few attributed her visions to hypnotism. See *Early Writings*, pages 21-23. At times in later years it was suggested that she was influenced by strong church leaders about her—her husband, for example, and other administrators, physicians, or educators. When one man suggested to her that her testimony revealed that she had been misinformed by certain brethren, she wrote with great candor: "You think individuals have prejudiced my mind. If I am in this state, I am not fitted to be entrusted with the work of God."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, p. 63.

Was Ellen White "fitted to be entrusted with the work of God"? Each student will have to answer that question for himself. But an accurate response will result only from careful, prayerful study. Is not this matter of such importance that prejudice and preconceived ideas must be laid aside? Here we examine the integrity of the prophetic message.

## **LESSON OUTLINE**

- 1. Dependability of the Prophetic Word, 2 Peter 1:19**
- 2. A "Thus Saith the Lord," Hosea 1:1**
- 3. Micaiah, the Invulnerable Prophet, 2 Chron. 18:1-8**
- 4. Accusations, Jer. 43:2**
- 5. God's Power Over Balaam, Num. 22:1-7; 23:5-11**
- 6. Integrity of the Spirit of Prophecy Writings**

**Part 1**  
**DEPENDABILITY**  
**OF THE**  
**PROPHETIC WORD**

**What is Peter's evaluation of the prophetic message?**

**"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." 2 Peter 1:19.**

"Prophets . . . are men who are sure, because they are Spirit-taught; and they speak therefore with the note of absolute authority."—G. Campbell Morgan, *The Ministry of the Word*, page 84.

On the mount of transfiguration Peter saw a great light and heard a voice from heaven. Peter refers to this experience in 2 Peter 1:16-18. But he says that prophecy is surer than what he saw and heard on the mountain with Jesus.

There are also sensory miracles wrought by Satan. When tested by the sure word of prophecy, these may be identified as deception. Thus the sure word of prophecy becomes a testing instrument. This is true in many instances.

Ellen White wrote about one principal deception, spiritualism: "A correct understanding of 'what saith the Scriptures' in regard to the state of the dead is essential for this time. God's Word declares that the dead know not anything, their hatred and love have alike perished. We must come to the sure word of prophecy for our authority. . . . Unless we are rooted and grounded in the truth, we shall be swept away by Satan's delusive snares. We must cling to our Bibles. If Satan can make you believe that there are things in the Word of God that are not inspired, he will then be prepared to ensnare your soul. We shall have no assurance, no certainty, at the very time we need to know what is truth."—*Evangelism*, page 249.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Sight, sound, touch, taste? Or the "sure word of prophecy"? What would you do if confronted personally, visibly, by a person who appeared to be a departed relative?**

"He [Satan] is, through his power and lying wonders, tearing away the foundation of the Christian's hope and putting out the sun that is to light them in the narrow way to heaven. He is making the world believe that the Bible is uninspired, no better than a storybook, while he holds out something to take its place; namely, *spiritual manifestations!*"—*Early Writings*, page 91.

"The people of God must be prepared to withstand these spirits [impersonating the dead] with the Bible truth that the dead know not anything, and that they who thus appear are the spirits of devils."—*Early Writings*, page 262.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 534-536.



**Part 2**  
**A "THUS SAITH**  
**THE LORD"**

**What did the prophets often designate to be the source of the messages they bore?**

**"The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel." Hosea 1:1.**

See also Hag. 1:3, 7, 13.

The Bible prophets have declared that the word they gave the people came from God. They often introduced the divine communication through them by a phrase such as "the word of the Lord came unto me, saying." Some of the variants of this expression are listed below:

"Thus saith the Lord." 2 Sam. 7:8.

"As God hath said." 2 Cor. 6:16.

"And God spake." Gen. 8:15.

"The Holy Ghost saith." Heb. 3:7.

"I the Lord have said." Ezek. 21:17.

"The Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake." Acts 1:16.

**What is the Word of the Lord said to be? Ps. 119:105.**

It is Christ Himself who speaks in the Word, and He is represented in the Scriptures as "the Light." John the Baptist "was sent to bear witness of that Light." John 1:7, 8. Jesus said, "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." John 12:36.

The Bible is also a light. When light from Christ reaches the world through the prism of His Word, we see the colors of the rainbow and light and beauty appear. The prophets take the light of God and break it up into its rainbow parts—prophecy, proverbs of wisdom, doctrine, admonition, counsel, rebuke, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness. But in all of these the Light Himself, Jesus Christ, is revealed. See John 1:4, 5, 9. "This is the word of the Lord," the prophets proclaim.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**"Thus saith the Lord—" Does the expression sound pontifical? Why does He speak to us at all—to us who are sinners?**

"We can trace the line of the world's great teachers as far back as human records extend; but the Light was before them. As the moon and the stars of the solar system shine by the reflected light of the sun, so, as far as their teaching is true, do the world's great thinkers reflect the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Every gem of thought, every flash of the intellect, is from the Light of the world. . . . 'He that followeth Me,' said Jesus, 'shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'"—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 464, 465.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Steps to Christ*, "A Knowledge of God," pages 87-90.

**Part 3**  
**MICAH, THE INVULNERABLE PROPHET**

**What circumstances led King Ahab of Israel to inquire of the prophet Micaiah concerning a proposed military expedition? 2 Chron. 18:1-8.**

"The prophet of the Lord did not prophesy good concerning Ahab because there was nothing good to prophesy. He delivered messages to Ahab as they were given to him by God. Ahab hated Micaiah because he hated the truth and despised the Lord. Truth is truth, whether it is appreciated or not. What the prophet of the Lord said, would come to pass, whether Ahab desired it or not."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on 2 Chron. 18:7.

**How did Ahab's officer attempt to influence Micaiah in his message to the king? 2 Chron. 18:12.**

**What did Micaiah resolve to do regardless of circumstances? 2 Chron. 18:13, 16, 27.**

Micaiah, the true prophet of the Lord, who could not be influenced, was sent to prison. King Ahab, in spite of the forecast of disaster, went into battle and was slain. 2 Chron. 18:33, 34. Jehoshaphat barely escaped with his life. 2 Chron. 18:31; 19:1.

Suppose that the prophets of God would succumb to bribes, to threats, to flattery—what would happen to the word of the Lord which they were commissioned to deliver? And if the word of the Lord could be polluted with men's notions and theories, how could the church come to know God's will?

The prophet Micaiah was typical of all the true prophets. He was courageous and unyielding in the conduct of the Lord's business, refusing to deliver a message of "peace and safety" when the Lord warned of war and calamity. See 1 Thess. 5:3.

Ahab heaped to himself the false prophets (teachers). He had "itching ears" and wanted to hear only that which was pleasant, but his obstinate self-will proved disastrous.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Has God preserved the purity of the Bible writings? What of Mrs. White's messages to the church today?**

"Many, very many, are questioning the verity and truth of the Scriptures. Human reasoning and the imaginings of the human heart are undermining the inspiration of the Word of God, and that which should be received as granted, is surrounded with a cloud of mysticism. Nothing stands out in clear and distinct lines, upon rock bottom. This is one of the marked signs of the last days."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 15.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Prophets and Kings*, pages 195, 196.

**Part 4**  
**ACCUSATIONS**

**As Jeremiah delivered an important prophetic message to the leaders of Judah, of what did they accuse him?**

**"Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the Lord our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there." Jer. 43:2.**

**Who was said to have originated the counsel Jeremiah declared to be from the Lord? Jer. 43:3.**

In an endeavor to dismiss God's clear instruction which did not appeal to them as reasonable or safe counsel, the charge was now made by the princes that Jeremiah's message had actually originated with his literary assistant, Baruch, and not with the Lord.

As Jehoiakim of old burned the recorded words of the prophet Jeremiah in the "fire on the hearth," so in defiance of the message some have at times destroyed the testimonies of Ellen White. Of this she wrote: "The spirit of opposition to reproof, that led to the persecution and imprisonment of Jeremiah, exists today. Many refuse to heed repeated warnings, preferring rather to listen to false teachers who flatter their vanity and overlook their evil-doing."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 437.

Who have been credited with writing certain Ellen White messages? At times it was suggested that Mrs. White's literary assistants, rather than the Lord, were responsible for certain messages of counsel that were sent out.

"There are those who say, 'Someone manipulates her writings.' I acknowledge the charge. It is One who is mighty in counsel, One who presents before me the condition of things.'"—Ellen G. White, Letter 52, 1906.

The inspired counsels were not altered as they passed from the handwritten drafts to the printed page. Mrs. White had no "ghost" writers.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**If you were a prophet of God with a "thus saith the Lord" for the people, how could you (and why would you) settle for a substitute message of purely human origin? Could you live with yourself while practicing such deception? And how long would you expect to retain God's favor under such circumstances?**

"If God's people will not study these messages that are sent to them from time to time, they are guilty of rejecting light. . . .

"Heed the instruction; follow the light. The Lord has a controversy with His people because in the past they have not heeded His instruction and followed His guidance."—Ellen G. White, Letter 292, 1907.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Prophets and Kings*, pages 432-439.

**Part 5  
GOD'S POWER  
OVER BALAAM**

**What did Balak request Balaam to do, and with what results? Num. 22:1-7; 23:5-11.**

"Balaam was once a good man and a prophet of God; but he had apostatized, and had given himself up to covetousness; yet he still professed to be a servant of the Most High. He was not ignorant of God's work in behalf of Israel; and when the messengers announced their errand, he well knew that it was his duty to refuse the rewards of Balak and to dismiss the ambassadors. . . . But his pride was flattered by the words of his ambassadors, 'He whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.' The bribe of costly gifts and prospective exaltation excited his covetousness. He greedily accepted the offered treasures, and then, while professing strict obedience to the will of God, he tried to comply with the desires of Balak."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 439.

**What did Balaam state about the source of his message? Num. 22:38.**

**On what was this explanation based? Verse 20.**

"As he [Balaam] professed to be God's prophet, . . . all he should say would be supposed to be uttered by divine authority. Hence he was not to be permitted to speak as he chose, but must deliver the message which God should give him. 'The word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do,' was the divine command."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 441.

**When the king remonstrated with Balaam for not cursing Israel, what was Balaam's answer? Num. 23:12, 25, 26; 24:10-13.**

"The ingenuity of men has been exercised for ages to measure the Word of God by their finite minds and limited comprehension. If the Lord, the Author of the living oracles, would throw back the curtain and reveal His wisdom and His glory before them, they would shrink into nothingness and exclaim as did Isaiah, 'I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips' (Isa. 6:5)."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 18.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**The God of truth is in control of the processes of revelation. He will not permit any perverse man to frustrate His Word or any sincere purposeful man to be deceived. See John 7:17.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 439-441.

**Part 6**  
**INTEGRITY OF THE**  
**SPIRIT OF PROPHECY**  
**WRITINGS**

To whom did Ellen White give credit for the messages found in her books?

"Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given His servant to be given to the world."—*Colporteur Ministry*, page 125.

Specifically, how did God speak through His servant?

*Articles in church papers:* "I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision—the precious rays of light shining from the throne."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 67.

*The letter testimonies:* "You might say that this communication was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God, to bring before your minds things that had been shown me. In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 67.

*Interviews:* "This morning I attended a meeting where a select few were called together to consider some questions that were presented to them by a letter soliciting consideration and advice on these subjects. Of some of these subjects I could speak, because at sundry times and in divers places many things have been presented to me."—*The Southern Work*, page 72.

Ellen White at one time answered the charge that she had been influenced in the content of her writing. She wrote:

"Some are ready to inquire: Who told Sister White these things? They have even put the question to me: Did anyone tell you these things? I could answer them: Yes; yes, the angel of God has spoken to me."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 3, p. 314.

While discussing the editorial policy of the *Signs of the Times*, a church paper, Ellen White prefaced her counsels by saying, "Permit me to express my mind, and yet not my mind, but the word of the Lord."—*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, page 112.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What are the reasons that you would give for defending the integrity of Ellen White's writings?**

"What reserve power has the Lord with which to reach those who have cast aside His warnings and reproofs, and have accredited the testimonies of the Spirit of God to no higher source than human wisdom? In the judgment what can you who have done this offer to God as an excuse."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 465, 466.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 62-66.

# The Primacy of the Bible



**"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11.**

"The Bible contains all the principles that men need to understand in order to be fitted either for this life or for the life to come. And these principles may be understood by all. . . . Many of its treasures lie far beneath the surface, and can be obtained only by diligent research and continuous effort. . . .

"When thus searched out and brought together, they will be found to be perfectly fitted to one another. Each Gospel is a supplement to the others, every prophecy an explanation of another, every truth a development of some other truth. The types of the Jewish economy are made plain by the gospel. Every principle in the word of God has its place, every fact its bearing. And the complete structure, in design and execution, bears testimony to its Author. Such a structure no mind but that of the Infinite could conceive or fashion. . . .

"In its wide range of style and subjects the Bible has something to interest every mind and appeal to every heart. In its pages are found history the most ancient; biography the truest to life; principles of government for the control of the state, for the regulation of the household—principles that human wisdom has never equaled. It contains philosophy the most profound, poetry the sweetest and the most sublime, the most impassioned and the most pathetic. Immeasurably superior in value to the productions of any human author are the Bible writings. . . .

"The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden to that last glorious promise of the Revelation, 'They shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads' (Revelation 22:4), the burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme,—man's uplifting,—the power of God, 'which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' 1 Corinthians 15:57."—*Education*, pages 123-126.

#### **LESSON OUTLINE**

- 1. Inspiration of the Writers, 2 Tim. 3:16, 17**
- 2. Spirit-moved Men, 2 Peter 1:21**
- 3. Imperfection of Human Speech, Ezek. 40:4**
- 4. Holiness, a Prerequisite, Luke 1:70; 2 Peter 3:2**
- 5. Authority of the Scriptures, John 5:39**
- 6. How to Study the Bible, Acts 17:11**

**Part 1**  
**INSPIRATION OF**  
**THE WRITERS**

**“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.**

“ ‘Inspiration’ is found twice in the KJV: (1) Job 32:8, where ‘inspiration’ is literally ‘breath,’ and (2) 2 Ti 3:16, where the phrase, ‘all scripture is given by inspiration of God,’ is literally, ‘all Scripture is God-breathed.’ ”—*SDA Bible Dictionary*, page 504.

Inspiration in the prophetic sense represents the Holy Spirit’s action upon a human agent’s mind, enabling that individual (1) to receive divine instruction either through visions or by direct impressions and (2) to communicate the heavenly messages in writing or in speech.

**What chain of heavenly communication is described by John? Rev. 1:1-3, 10, 11.**

**For what reason did the apostle Paul give thanks to God? 1 Thess. 2:13.**

The supernatural influence exerted on the writers of Scripture by the Holy Spirit gave to their writings a certain trustworthiness that could not be found in the works of ordinary authors. One evidence of its divine origin is the change produced in the lives of the students of Scripture.

**What prayer did Jesus pray on behalf of His disciples? John 17:17.**

The Bible’s power to sanctify men—to set them apart as holy men for God’s service—is linked by a mysterious “power line” to its supreme inspiration! How else could its vitality be explained!

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Can the Bible’s power to change a person’s life be limited to the first exposure? What is the role of Scripture in continued spiritual growth?**

“The truth is constantly unfolding and presenting new features to different minds. All who dig in the mines of truth, will constantly discover rich and precious gems. We are anxious that all who claim to believe the truth now open before us, and especially those who take the responsibility of teaching the truth to others, should have a clearer conception themselves of the all-important significance of the themes of the Bible.”—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 404.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 299-301.



**Part 2**

**SPIRIT-MOVED MEN**

**What word did Peter use to describe the workings of divine inspiration?**

**"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21.**

"The Spirit of God 'moved' the prophets. This is a word of wonderful significance. Literally, it means to be 'borne along,' 'carried along,' 'impelled' or 'driven.' Weymouth uses 'impelled,' and in Acts 27:15, 17 we read of the ship in which the apostle Paul sailed as being 'driven' by the storm. This is the same word."—W. E. Read, *The Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the Church*, page 17.

**What was the Spirit's function in John's vision? Rev. 1:10.**

John says that he "was in the Spirit," that is, the prophet received the Spirit of God and was under His influence when the visions of Revelation were given to him. See *The Sanctified Life*, page 75.

The possession of the spirit of prophecy by a prophet was dependent upon God's gift and the prophet's reception of the communication by the Spirit of God. John was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Rev. 1:10. Ellen White wrote, "I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 37.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Are poets, preachers, teachers, and musicians inspired in the same sense as a prophet?**

"From the earliest times, prophets had been recognized as teachers divinely appointed. In the highest sense the prophet was one who spoke by direct inspiration, communicating to the people the messages he had received from God. But the name was given also to those who, though not so directly inspired, were divinely called to instruct the people in the works and ways of God. For the training of such a class of teachers, Samuel, by the Lord's direction, established the schools of the prophets."—*Education*, page 46.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, pp. 9-12.

**Part 3**  
**IMPERFECTION OF**  
**HUMAN SPEECH**

**Did God communicate to Ezekiel the exact words of His message?**

**"And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel." Ezek. 40:4.**

See also Ezek. 11:24, 25.

"It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the word of God."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 21.

**Was the book of Revelation dictated word for word to the apostle John? Rev. 1:11.**

John's vision of Revelation might have been written in language different from the original phraseology and still have conveyed to the reader the inspired ideas. The prophet must communicate God's message in the language at his command, which in any event was not capable of doing perfect justice to the representations he saw.

"The Bible, perfect as it is in its simplicity, does not answer to the great ideas of God; for infinite ideas cannot be perfectly embodied in finite vehicles of thought. Instead of the expressions of the Bible being exaggerated, as many people suppose, the strong expressions break down before the magnificence of the thought, though the penman selected the most expressive language."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 22.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Read the vision of Revelation 1:12-20. If you had been a prophet like John, would you have described the scene in the identical language that John used?**

"I walk with trembling before God. I know not how to speak or trace with pen the large subject of the atoning sacrifice. I know not how to present subjects in the living power in which they stand before me. I tremble for fear lest I shall belittle the great plan of salvation by cheap words. I bow my soul in awe and reverence before God, and say, Who is sufficient for these things?"—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 167.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 19-23.

**Part 4**  
**HOLINESS A**  
**PREREQUISITE**

**What kind of prophets are God's messengers frequently described as being?**

**"As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began." Luke 1:70.**

**"That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." 2 Peter 3:2.**

Holiness of life was essential to the prophetic office. The prophet might be struggling against personal prejudice like Jonah, or fall into sin like David, or sin like Moses on the borders of the Promised Land, but God could and did accept the confession and repentance of these men. However, He could not and did not continue to accept an apostate like Balaam, who sold his allegiance to God for money and the favor of the world.

The life record of Ellen White, while not free from frailties, was distinguished for its Christlike consistency and integrity. She was a Christian woman who had faith in Jesus and lived by that faith. The prophets of God had themselves to be what they expected the people under their labors to become. To teach holiness meant to live holiness. "Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. Godliness—godlikeness—is the goal to be reached."—*Education*, page 18.

This is in harmony with God's command, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:16.

**What kind of people should Christians be? 1 Peter 2:9. Compare Deut. 7:6.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How is holiness of life obtained? Why do not God's servants have more of true holiness in their lives? What is the hindrance to a repetition of the successes of Pentecost?**

"True holiness is wholeness in the service of God. This is the condition of true Christian living. Christ asks for an unreserved consecration, for undivided service. He demands the heart, the mind, the soul, the strength. Self is not to be cherished. He who lives to himself is not a Christian."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 48, 49.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, pages 593-595; *Christ's Object Lessons*, "Two Worshipers," page 160.

**Part 5**  
**AUTHORITY OF**  
**THE SCRIPTURES**

**Of whom do the Scriptures testify?**

**"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39.**

"As you read the Bible, you will see the matchless charms of Jesus. You will fall in love with the Man of Calvary. . . . You may drink of the waters of salvation. . . . Then your lips will speak thanksgiving to God."—*Life Sketches*, page 293.

**In His earthly life, to what authority did Christ appeal? Luke 4:4, 8, 10. See also Matt. 26:31; Deut. 8:3; Zech. 13:7.**

"Jesus met Satan with the words of Scripture. 'It is written,' He said. In every temptation the weapon of His warfare was the word of God. Satan demanded of Christ a miracle as a sign of His divinity. But that which is greater than all miracles, a firm reliance upon a 'Thus saith the Lord,' was a sign that could not be controverted. So long as Christ held to this position, the tempter could gain no advantage."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 120.

"We are to receive God's word as supreme authority. We must accept its truths for ourselves. And we can appreciate these truths only as we search them out by personal study."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, p. 402.

**What is said of the enduring nature of the Word of Deity? Isa. 40:8; Matt. 24:35; Ps. 119:89.**

"This Holy Book has withstood the assaults of Satan, who has united with evil men to make everything of divine character shrouded in clouds and darkness. But the Lord has preserved this Holy Book by His own miraculous power in its present shape—a chart or guidebook to the human family to show them the way to heaven."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 15.

**What unique power is found in the Word of God? 1 Peter 1:23-25; 2:2.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**The messages of Ellen White are like an inspired commentary on the Holy Scriptures. "Education," pages 174, 175, e.g. No other author in modern times has done more to make God's book "come alive."**

"The truths of the Bible, received, will uplift the mind from its earthliness and debasement. If the word of God were appreciated as it should be, both young and old would possess an inward rectitude, a strength of principle, that would enable them to resist temptation."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 319.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, pages 596-598.

**Part 6**  
**HOW TO STUDY**  
**THE BIBLE**

**What noble example in Bible study was set by the Bereans?**

**"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11.**

*Study with prayer.* "Never should the Bible be studied without prayer. Before opening its pages we should ask for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and it will be given."—*Steps to Christ*, page 91.

*Approach with humility.* "We should . . . engage in the study of the Bible with . . . a prayerful dependence upon God and a sincere desire to learn His will. We must come with a humble and teachable spirit to obtain knowledge from the great I AM. Otherwise, evil angels will so blind our minds and harden our hearts that we shall not be impressed by the truth."—*The Great Controversy*, page 599.

**What important principle stated with respect to the book of Revelation can be applied to the whole Bible? Rev. 22:18, 19.**

*Respect all the Scripture.* "When men, compassed with human infirmities, affected in a greater or less degree by surrounding influences, and having hereditary and cultivated tendencies which are far from making them wise or heavenly-minded, undertake to arraign the word of God, and to pass judgment upon what is divine and what is human, they are working without the counsel of God. . . . Skepticism has been aroused in many minds by the theories presented as to the nature of inspiration. Finite beings, with their narrow, short-sighted views, feel themselves competent to criticize the Scriptures, saying: 'This passage is needful, and that passage is not needful, and is not inspired.'"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 709.

*Take Bible as it reads.* "The language of the Bible should be explained according to its obvious meaning, unless a symbol or figure is employed. Christ has given the promise: 'If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine.' John 7:17. If men would but take the Bible as it reads, if there were no false teachers to mislead and confuse their minds, a work would be accomplished that would make angels glad and that would bring into the fold of Christ thousands who are now wandering in error."—*The Great Controversy*, page 599.

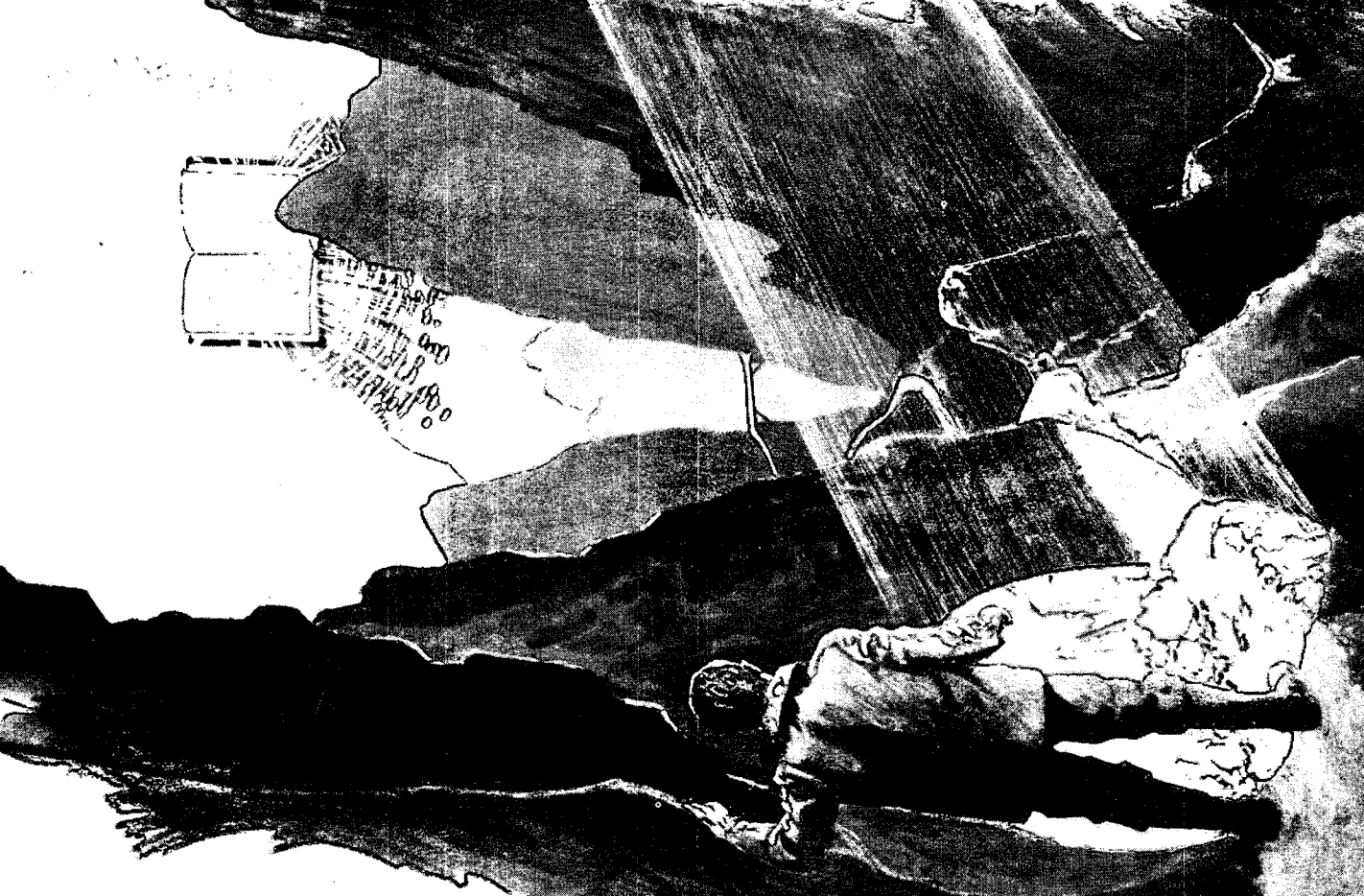
**Why cannot the "natural man" understand the Scriptures? 1 Cor. 2:12-14.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What are the qualifications of the seeker for truth in God's Word?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, pages 599-602.



# The Importance of the Spirit of Prophecy

**"Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. 4:8, 11-13.**

A total of more than twenty gifts of the Holy Spirit are enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and Romans 12. Most are mentioned only once, some twice. Teaching is specified three times and prophecy four times.

It is important for Adventists to understand the role of this unique and important gift in their midst, especially in view of the following statement: "In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the testimonies of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now concerning His will and the course that He would have them pursue."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, pp. 147, 148.

Ellen White explained, concerning her own work, that, "The word of God is sufficient to enlighten the most beclouded mind and may be understood

by those who have any desire to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the word of God their study are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women without excuse, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, bringing them back to the word that they have neglected to follow.' 'The word of God abounds in general principles for the formation of correct habits of living, and the testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call their attention more especially to these principles.'"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 663, 664.

"I have a work of great responsibility to do," she wrote, "to impart by pen and voice the instruction given me, not alone to Seventh-day Adventists, but to the world. I have published many books, large and small, and some of these have been translated into several languages. This is my work—to open the Scriptures to others as God has opened them to me."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 236.

## LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Blessings of Spiritual Gifts,**  
1 Cor. 12:1
2. **Enduring Nature of the Gifts,**  
1 Cor. 14:1
3. **Purpose of the Gift of Prophecy,**  
Eph. 4:11, 12
4. **Active Among the Laodiceans,**  
Rev. 3:14, 18, 19
5. **Applies Bible Principles, Acts 10:34**
6. **The Lord's Messenger, John 1:21, 23**

**Part 1**  
**BLESSINGS OF**  
**SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

**Of what would Paul not have the Corinthian believers to be ignorant?**

**“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.” 1 Cor. 12:1.**

See also Eph. 4:11.

The church should understand the place and operation of “spiritual gifts.” We talk much about the fruit of the Spirit, little about the gifts. The gifts beautify the church and make it noble in character, united in purpose, strong in witness—ready for translation to heaven. In one sense the gifts of the Holy Spirit are the tree from which the fruit of the Spirit emerges. The labors and efforts of gifted pastors, teachers, evangelists, and the spirit of prophecy operating in the ministry of Ellen White have resulted in the fruitage of changed and godly lives. The books *Steps to Christ* and *The Desire of Ages* have borne a great witness.

James White wrote in his preface to *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 3, p. 29: “The object of the gifts, as stated by Paul, was ‘for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith.’ These were Heaven’s appointed means to secure the unity of the church. Christ prayed that His people might be one, as He was one with His Father. Read John xvii. Paul exhorted the Corinthians in the name of Christ to be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. Read 1 Cor. i, 10; Rom. xv, 5; Phil. ii, 1, 2; 1 Pet. iii, 8; v, 5. The gifts were given to secure this state of unity.”

**Enumerate the principal gifts of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 12: 28, 8-10. See also Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:8-16.**

“Finally we see that the out-pouring of the Spirit, the gift of prophecy and dreams and visions of the Lord, are to be sufficiently remarkable to constitute signs of the Second Advent, and that they are classed with the signs in the sun and moon; with ‘wonders in the heavens and in the earth.’ To the sceptic and worldly-wise this sentiment will probably seem heretical; but when compared with Joel ii, 28-32; Acts ii, 14-22, it will be seen to be truth. Heaven and earth will pass away, but God’s word will stand.”—James White, *Review and Herald*, April 21, 1851.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What gift of the Holy Spirit is more important than prophecy? If the gifts of teaching and evangelism, for example, have their place among the remnant people, why not the gift of prophecy?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, pages vii-ix.



Part 2  
ENDURING NATURE  
OF THE GIFTS

What gift did Paul say the Corinthian believers were especially to desire?

**"Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." 1 Cor. 14:1.**

In Volume 1 of the *Testimonies* Ellen White wrote concerning the duty of the church to prize the gifts and not to surrender their faith in them because of "disappointed ones."

"Some, I was shown, could receive the published visions, judging of the tree by its fruits. Others are like doubting Thomas; they cannot believe the published *Testimonies*, nor receive evidence through the testimony of others; but must see and have the evidence for themselves. Such must not be set aside, but long patience and brotherly love should be exercised toward them until they find their position and become established for or against. If they fight against the visions, . . . the church may know that they are not right. God's people should not cringe and yield, and give up their liberty to such disaffected ones. God has placed the gifts in the church that the church may be benefited by them; and when professed believers in the truth oppose these gifts, and fight against the visions, souls are in danger through their influence, and it is time then to labor with them, that the weak may not be led astray by their influence."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 328, 329.

**Where were spiritual gifts to be manifest? 1 Cor. 12:28.**

For over a century General Conference sessions have voted confidence in the gift of prophecy given to Ellen White.

The following statements, made by delegates in official session of the General Conference in 1867 and 1958 are typical:

**"Resolved,** That we express our continued faith in the perpetuity of Spiritual gifts during the gospel dispensation, and our gratitude to God that he has intimately connected the spirit of prophecy with the proclamation of the third angel's message."—*Review and Herald*, May 28, 1867.

**"As delegates to the world session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, we reaffirm our belief and full confidence in this prophetic gift, as manifested through Ellen G. White."—Review and Herald, June 25, 1958.**

THINK IT THROUGH

**If the spirit of prophecy books were removed from us in one stroke, what would result?**

Ellen White wrote, "Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 55.

FURTHER STUDY

*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, pp. x-xii.

**Part 3**  
**PURPOSE OF THE**  
**GIFT OF PROPHECY**

**What is God's stated purpose in bestowing spiritual gifts in the church?**

**"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph. 4:11, 12.**

See also 1 Cor. 12:7; 14:22.

**How long were the gifts to remain in the church? Are they needed today? Eph. 4:13, 14.**

**What prayer did Jesus pray for His followers? John 17:21.**

"God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing, and another having faith and views entirely opposite, each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 3, p. 446.

Uriah Smith, first secretary of the General Conference and longtime editor of the *Review and Herald*, testified concerning the influence of the spirit of prophecy:

"Their fruit [of the writings of Ellen White] is such as to show that the source from which they spring, is the opposite of evil.

"They tend to the purest morality. They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They point out the perils through which we are to pass to the kingdom. They reveal the devices of Satan. They warn us against his snares. They have nipped in the bud, scheme after scheme of fanaticism which the enemy has tried to foist into our midst. They have exposed hidden iniquity, brought to light concealed wrongs, and laid bare the evil motives of the false-hearted."—*Review and Herald*, June 12, 1866, page 9.

**What prayer did David offer concerning God's Word? Ps. 119:22, 24, 36, 111.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What should be my response to God for His gift of prophecy?**

"Thank God for the bright pictures which He has presented to us. Let us group together the blessed assurances of His love, that we may look upon them continually."—*Steps to Christ*, page 118.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 236-238.

**Part 4**  
**ACTIVE AMONG**  
**THE LAODICEANS**

**How does the True Witness deal with the Laodicean church, and what counsel does He offer?**

**"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." Rev. 3:14, 18, 19.**

All the benefits of Christ's atonement are offered freely to the Laodiceans. To make us feel our need of Christ and His gift of salvation there is a chastening process. This is accomplished by the messages of reproof and correction given to us in His inspired messages.

Ellen White declared: "The Lord has seen fit to counsel Elder [Uriah] Smith, to give him words of reproof because he had erred; but is this an evidence that God has forsaken him?—No. 'As many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent' (Rev. 3:19). The Lord reproves wrongs in His people, but is this an evidence that He has rejected them?—No. There are errors in the church, and the Lord points them out by His own ordained agencies, not always through the testimonies."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, p. 81.

**Instead of an indication of God's rejection, of what is the chastening of the Lord a certain evidence? Heb. 12:6, 7.**

**What excellent results does this chastening produce? Verse 11.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What is the meaning to the church today of the message to Laodicea? Before you answer—ask, Am I included?**

"The message to the Laodiceans is applicable to Seventh-day Adventists who have had great light and have not walked in the light. It is those who have made great profession, but have not kept in step with their Leader, that will be spewed out of His mouth unless they repent."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, p. 66.

"The counsel of the True Witness is full of encouragement and comfort. The churches may yet obtain the gold of truth, faith, and love, and be rich in heavenly treasure."—*The Faith I Live By*, page 306.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, pp. 87-90.

**Part 5**      **What important Bible principle did Peter's vision of Acts 10**  
**APPLIES BIBLE**      **remind him?**  
**PRINCIPLES**

**"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10:34.**

Read Acts 10:1-35. See 2 Chron. 19:7.

The vision God gave to Peter on the housetop corrected him as a Jew in his prejudicial attitude toward the Gentiles. In Peter's case the problem was race prejudice—an attitude condemned by the Scriptures (Deut. 10:17) and the example of Jesus (Matt. 15:21-29). Yet the apostle learned the lesson slowly. See Gal. 2:11-14. But the vision helped him to grasp the Bible principle.

The visions of Ellen White correct those who err from Bible principles. At the close of her first book, *Christian Experience and Views of Mrs. E. G. White* (1851), she presented the matter like this:

"I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the 'last days'; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth. Thus God dealt with Peter when He was about to send him to preach to the Gentiles. (Acts 10.)"—*Early Writings*, page 78. (Emphasis supplied.)

How does Ellen White indicate the relationship of her messages to the Bible? "Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light."—*Colporteur Ministry*, page 125.

The operation of the Holy Spirit in the writings of Ellen White was intended to exalt the Scripture testimony, not to supersede it. The following extract from a testimony published in 1876 shows this:

"Brother J would confuse the mind by seeking to make it appear that the light God has given through the *Testimonies* is an addition to the word of God, but in this he presents the matter in a false light. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the minds of His people to His word, to give them a clearer understanding of it."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 246.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**A mother will tie a string around her forgetful child's finger. What has God done by His Spirit to help the church today not to forget Bible principles?**

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."—*Life Sketches*, page 196.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, first five pages of "Introduction" by Uriah Smith.

**Part 6**  
**THE LORD'S**  
**MESSENGER**

**What claim did John the Baptist make?**

**"And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No." "He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias." John 1:21, 23.**

John the Baptist made no claim to greatness. But Jesus called him a prophet "and more than a prophet." Matt. 11:9.

What claim did Ellen White make for herself and her work? "I have had no claims to make, only that *I am instructed that I am the Lord's messenger*; that He called me in my youth to be His messenger, to receive His word, and to give a clear and decided message in the name of the Lord Jesus."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 32.

Why did Ellen White refrain from claiming to be a prophet? In a public address delivered Oct. 2, 1904, in Battle Creek, Michigan, she stated that she did "not claim to be a prophetess."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 35. Explaining this later, she wrote: "My work includes much more than this name signifies. I regard myself as a messenger, entrusted by the Lord with messages for His people. . . . My commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there."—Page 36.

What work did God "especially" assign to Ellen White?

"The work which the Lord has laid out before me especially is to urge young and old, learned and unlearned, to search the Scriptures for themselves; . . . to assure all that the clear knowledge of the Bible outdoes all other knowledge in making man what God designed he should be."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 686.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Does the reading of these prophetic writings whet my appetite for Bible study? When I read Ellen White's writings, do I find myself thinking primarily of the writer's style or of God's salvation; of Ellen White or of Christ; of the beauty of the language or of the truth expressed?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, second five pages of "Introduction" by Uriah Smith.

Evangelists

Teachers

Prophets

Apostles

# CHRIST'S Church

Pastors

Evangelists

Prophets

Pastors

Apostles

Apostles

Prophets

Apostles

Teachers

Pastors Apostles

ts

Teachers

Evangelists

**"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:17.**

### **A Church Second to None**

"God has a distinct people, a church on earth, second to none, but superior to all in their facilities to teach the truth, to vindicate the law of God. . . . Let all . . . be found at last among those who have the patience of the saints, who keep the commandments of God, and have the faith of Jesus."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 58.

### **Built on a Sure Foundation**

"Let none seek to tear away the foundations of our faith—the foundations that were laid at the beginning of our work by prayerful study of the word and by revelation. Upon these foundations we have been building for the last fifty years. Men may suppose that they have found a new way and that they can lay a stronger foundation than that which has been laid. But this is a great deception. Other foundation can no man lay than that which has been laid.

"In the past many have undertaken the building of a new faith, the establishment of new principles. But how long did their building stand? It soon fell, for it was not founded upon the Rock. . . .

"So we are to hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. Words of power have been sent by God and by Christ to this people, bringing them out from the world, point by point, into the clear light of present truth. With lips touched with holy fire, God's servants have proclaimed the message. The divine utterance has set its seal

to the genuineness of the truth proclaimed."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 297.

### **Attack by the Enemy**

"The enemy is seeking to divert the minds of our brethren and sisters from the work of preparing a people to stand in these last days. His sophistries are designed to lead minds away from the perils and duties of the hour. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give to John for His people. They teach that the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to receive special attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin and rob the people of God of their past experience, giving them instead a false science.

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.' Jeremiah 6:16."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 296.

"Let all be careful not to make an outcry against the only people who are fulfilling the description given of the remnant people who keep the commandments of God and have faith in Jesus, who are exalting the standard of righteousness in these last days."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 58.

### **LESSON OUTLINE**

- 1. The Spirit in the Church, 1 Cor. 3:10, 11**
- 2. Endowments of the Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:7-11**
- 3. The Church in Prophecy, Rev. 12:1**
- 4. The Remnant Church, Rev. 12:17 (first part)**
- 5. Identification of the Remnant, Rev. 12:17; 19:10 (last part)**
- 6. The Church Today**

**Part 1**  
**THE SPIRIT IN**  
**THE CHURCH**

**Identify the foundation of God's work in the world.**

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and an other buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3:10, 11.

"To those who believe, Christ is a sure foundation. Upon this living stone, Jews and Gentiles alike may build. It is broad enough for all and strong enough to sustain the weight and burden of the whole world."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 175.

**How did Christ begin to lay the foundation of His church? John 1:36-51.**

"With the calling of John and Andrew and Simon, of Philip and Nathanael, began the foundation of the Christian church."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 141.

**Whom did Jesus appoint as His successor in this world? John 14:16-18.**

"The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 669.

"The Comforter is called 'the Spirit of truth.' His work is to define and maintain the truth. He first dwells in the heart as the Spirit of truth, and thus He becomes the Comforter. There is comfort and peace in the truth, but no real peace or comfort can be found in falsehood. . . . Through the Scriptures the Holy Spirit speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the heart."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 671.

**How long was the Spirit to abide with the church? John 14:16.**

"Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples.

"We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more today."—*The Faith I Live By*, page 53.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How can the church today enjoy a larger measure of the Spirit's presence?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 19-23.



**Part 2**  
**ENDOWMENTS OF**  
**THE SPIRIT**

**What endowments were promised to the Christian church through the Spirit?**

**"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues. But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." 1 Cor. 12:7-11.**

The Holy Spirit was the highest gift that Christ could solicit from the Father for the benefit of His people. But the Spirit of God, Himself a Gift, became a Giver of gifts. 1 Cor. 12:1, 7.

Uriah Smith, in the last page of his introduction to the book *Patriarchs and Prophets*, wrote: "These gifts are said to be 'set in the church,' and if a gift is bestowed upon even one member of the church, it may be said that that gift is 'in the church.'"

**What assurance of His continuing presence did Christ give to His disciples? Matt. 28:20, last part.**

Jesus' promise, "Lo, I am with you always," is fulfilled through the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Master said of His representative, the Spirit of God, "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John 14:17. Wrote John, "Hereby we know that he [Christ] abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." 1 John 3:24.

The Spirit of God, said Jesus, would "abide with you for ever." John 14:16. The gifts of the Spirit are to be with the church until the end of time—always functioning in harmony with the "truth as it is in Jesus," our Lord and Leader.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**The pastor, evangelist, and teacher in your local church are God's gift to you. What happens when God's gifts are spurned? Is prophecy a gift also?**

"God often uses the simplest means to accomplish the greatest results. It is His plan that every part of His work shall depend on every other part, as a wheel within a wheel, all acting in harmony. The humblest worker, moved by the Holy Spirit, will touch invisible chords, whose vibrations will ring to the ends of the earth, and make melody through eternal ages."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 822, 823.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Christ's Object Lessons*, "Talents," pages 327, 328.

**Part 3**  
**THE CHURCH IN**  
**PROPHECY**

**By what symbol did Christ represent the church to John?**

**"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Rev. 12:1.**

Read Rev. 12:2-5.

(1) The woman clothed with the sun represents the true church. See Jer. 6:2; Eph. 5:25.

(2) The "man child" who will rule the world with a rod of iron is Jesus Christ. See Ps. 2:7-9.

(3) The great red dragon is symbolic of Satan in a primary sense and, secondarily, of pagan Rome. See Rev. 12:9; *The Great Controversy*, page 438.

(4) The remnant of the woman's seed stands for the last true church of Christ. See Rev. 12:17.

Unsuccessful in his attacks upon the "man child" of the woman, Satan next attacked the church. Persecution broke out against the infant church in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1; 9:1, 2), later over much of the pagan Roman Empire, still later throughout papal Europe (for nearly 1,260 years—Rev. 12:6, 14). It was a time of great trial for the faithful few who followed the truth of God and rejected the quasi-Christian doctrine of the established church.

By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the flood tide of persecution ceased. The time was now ripe for the fulfillment of the last part of the symbolic prophecy concerning the tried and tested church of the last days—the remnant.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Open and painful persecution is an unknown experience to most Christians today. Why? Did not Jesus suffer the cruelest persecution? Is the absence of persecution a sign of God's favor?**

"The same spirit of hatred and opposition to the truth has inspired the enemies of God in every age, and the same vigilance and fidelity have been required in His servants. The words of Christ to the first disciples are applicable to His followers to the close of time: 'What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.' Mark 13:37."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 56, 57.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 11-13.

**Part 4**  
**THE REMNANT**  
**CHURCH**

**What action did Satan take against the woman and her children?**

**"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed." Rev. 12:17 (first part).**

The noun "remnant" is from the Greek, *loipoi*, "remaining ones," from the verb, *leipō*, "to leave," "to leave behind," and does not here represent a few scattered believers but a group led forth from mystical Babylon as a remnant was led out of literal Babylon at the end of the exile. See *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, pp. 812-815.

The "remnant" are as much the object of Satan's attacks at the close of the gospel dispensation as Christ and the apostles were at the time the Christian church was established. Warfare against God's people has never ceased. Rather it has intensified through the centuries and will soon reach its climax.

Speaking of the near future in the context of Revelation 12:17, Ellen White wrote:

"The dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected. In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet's words: 'The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.' Revelation 12:17."—*The Great Controversy*, page 592.

**In view of the coming destruction of the world's civilization, what experience does Peter say believers should have? 2 Peter 3:11.**

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**True martyrs are never self-made; they are created by the circumstances of their fidelity to God and the truth.**

"Satan hopes to involve the remnant people of God in the general ruin that is coming upon the earth. As the coming of Christ draws nigh, he will be more determined and decisive in his efforts to overthrow them. Men and women will arise professing to have some new light or some new revelation whose tendency is to unsettle faith in the old landmarks. Their doctrines will not bear the test of God's word, yet souls will be deceived."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 295, 296.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 41, 42.

**Part 5  
IDENTIFICATION  
OF THE REMNANT**

**What marks of identity are provided to distinguish the remnant church?**

**"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev. 12:17; 19:10 (last part).**

Most translators of these verses render it "testimony of Jesus" or "to Jesus."

"The term [testimony of Jesus] in the original Greek is in the genitive case, generally the equivalent of the English construction with *of*, most commonly indicating possession. Hence it can be understood as Jesus' testimony—the testimony that Christ Himself bears today when He manifests Himself in a special way through those who have the gift of prophecy. . . .

"It is not testimony *to* Jesus or *concerning* Jesus, but the testimony *of* Him."—W. E. Read, *The Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the Church*, pages 107, 108.

**What did the angel declare that John's brethren the prophets possessed? Rev. 19:10; 22:9.**

**What further marks of identity does the remnant church possess? Rev. 14:12.**

The gift of prophecy is to appear in a Christian church which has the "faith of Jesus" and that church keeps "the commandments of God" (including the Sabbath). These two characteristics—faith and obedience—identify the remnant church of the prophecy.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Many a sincere person pleading with God for light and truth would give a fortune to discover the true church. What value has this identifying text (Rev. 12:17) to you as a Seventh-day Adventist?**

"The Lord will teach us our duty just as willingly as He will teach somebody else. If we come to Him in faith, He will speak His mysteries to us personally. . . . Those who decide to do nothing in any line that will displease God, will know, after presenting their case before Him, just what course to pursue. And they will receive not only wisdom, but strength. Power for obedience, for service, will be imparted to them, as Christ has promised."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 668.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 3, pp. 446-448.

**Part 6  
THE CHURCH  
TODAY**

In what Christian movement of these latter days have the gift of prophecy and the other marks of prophetic identity been observed? As students of Bible prophecy, Seventh-day Adventists see in the historical movement to which they belong a fulfillment of the specifications of the prophecy. While other born-again Christians, honest in heart, are *potentially* members of the remnant church, we hold, without a sense of bigotry, to the solemn truth that the Seventh-day Adventist movement itself represents the remnant of Revelation 12:17.

**What message of truth has been entrusted to the remnant people? Rev. 14:6-12. Compare Matt. 24:14.**

"Christ is coming the second time, with power unto salvation. To prepare human beings for this event, He has sent the first, second, and third angels' messages. These angels represent those who receive the truth, and with power open the gospel to the world."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, pp. 978, 979.

The people who give this three-fold message constitute *the* "remnant" of the long and worthy line of God's chosen people who have "survived the fierce onslaughts of the dragon down through history, most particularly the darkness, persecution, and error of the 'time, and times, and half a time,' or 1260 'days' of vs 6, 14. It is God's *last* 'remnant' by virtue of the fact that it is the appointed herald of His final appeal to the world to accept the gracious gift of salvation (ch. 14:6-12)."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 815.

**What did Jesus promise concerning the triumph of the church He established? Matt. 16:18 (last part). Compare Joel 2:32.**

"I warn the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be careful how you receive every new notion and those who claim to have great light. The character of their work seems to be to accuse and to tear down. Let the believers heed the voice of the angel who said to the church, 'Press together.' In unity is your strength. Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous. God hath a church, and Christ hath declared, 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' The messengers the Lord sends bear the divine credentials."—Ellen G. White, *The Remnant Church*, page 46 (first printing, p. 53).

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Is it possible to be numbered among the believers in God's remnant church and to advocate the truth without false pride? with great and humble joy?**

**In these days of uncertainty, what is the result of knowing for sure "the present truth"? See 2 Peter 1:12.**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 132-135.

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Ps. 32:8.



HARRY ANDERSON. ARTIST. © RBH 1949

# A Gift that Guards and Guides

During the seventy years of her ministry (1845-1915) Ellen White was used as God's instrument to bring prophetic guidance to His people, often in times of crisis. A historical review of the guiding and guarding influences of the spirit of prophecy in church life through the years gives clear, convincing ground

for confidence in God's leadership. This was true especially in the early days when error and fanaticism threatened the leaders of the movement and she wrote:

"Those who passed over the ground step by step in the past history of our experience, seeing the chain of truth in the prophecies, were prepared to accept and obey every ray of light. They were praying, fasting, searching, digging for the truth as for hidden treasures, and the Holy Spirit, we know, was teaching and guiding us. Many theories were advanced, bearing a semblance of truth, but so mingled with misinterpreted and misapplied scriptures, that they led to dangerous errors. Very well do we know how every point of truth was established, and the seal set upon it by the Holy Spirit of God. And all the time voices were heard, 'Here is the truth,' 'I have the truth; follow me.' But the warnings came, 'Go not ye after them. I have not sent them, but they ran.' (See Jeremiah 23:21.)

"The leadings of the Lord were marked, and most wonderful were His revelations of what is truth. Point after point was established by the Lord God of heaven. That which was truth *then*, is truth today."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, pp. 103, 104.

Ellen White was not the leader of the advent movement as Moses was of the Exodus movement. She did not serve in a kingly capacity as David did over Israel. Her work was more like the work of Samuel, who was a teacher in Israel. But as the Israel of old, "from Dan to Beersheba," recognized in Samuel the work of a true prophet of God, so have Seventh-day Adventists recognized in the work of Ellen White an instrumentality of God's Holy Spirit sent to give guidance and spiritual aid and comfort to His people. Her messages have been a guarding, preserving influence.

Many instances in Ellen White's ministry gave evidence of the special guidance and guarding intervention of the Lord in connection with the beginnings and growth of the advent movement.

## **LESSON OUTLINE**

- 1. Guardianship, 1 Sam. 9:9**
- 2. Vision of the Publishing Work**
- 3. Establishing Church Order, Acts 6**
- 4. Guidance, 2 Chron. 32:20, 22**
- 5. Messages That Preserved, Hosea 12:13**
- 6. In Times of Crisis, Eph. 4:14, 15**

Part 1  
GUARDIANSHIP

What were the prophets in Samuel's day called?

**"Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer." 1 Sam. 9:9.**

In one of her earliest books, *Spiritual Gifts*, Bk. 1, Ellen White described the many scenes of the great controversy vision given to her at Lovett's Grove, Ohio, in the spring of 1858. In writing out her views she prepared a book of 219 pages. Over 200 times she wrote, "I was shown," "I was pointed back," "I saw," "I was told," "It was presented before me," et cetera. Thus she described scenes past and future as an "eyewitness." Eventually the great controversy theme was presented more fully in the *Conflict of the Ages* series.

The prophetic visions of Ellen White, from the earliest day of the movement, provided:

1. *Protection against danger from within the church.* When, in the 1850's, self-confidence, pride, and fanaticism threatened the spirituality of the movement, the spirit of prophecy counsels exposed this perilous position. See *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 113-115; 311-323; 356, 357; 409-419.

2. *Protection against danger from without the church.* The devices of the enemy were unmasked, first in exposing mesmerism (or hypnotism), then much in the public eye, and in revealing the true elements of deception in modern spiritualism, which had its beginnings in 1848. See *Early Writings*, pages 59, 60; 262-266.

3. *Guidance in the understanding of basic Christian truths.* The people of God were led into a fuller understanding of the plan of redemption and into a clearer knowledge of the meaning of current events and future events through the comprehensive great controversy vision of 1858. See *Early Writings*, pages 145-295.

"I was shown . . . that I should devote myself to writing out the important matters for volume 4 [*The Great Controversy*]; that the warning must go where the living messenger could not go, and that it would call the attention of many to the important events to occur in the closing scenes of this world's history.—Letter 1, 1890."—*Colporteur Ministry*, page 128.

THINK IT THROUGH

Name two or three specific areas where the spirit of prophecy has proved to be the "eyes" of the church. Consider 2 Chronicles 20:20 (last part) in the light of this special guidance.

FURTHER STUDY

*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, pp. 8-10.



**Part 2**  
**VISION OF THE**  
**PUBLISHING WORK**

At a conference held in the home of Otis Nichols at Dorchester, Massachusetts, in November, 1848, the pioneers sought God for special guidance. Heaven seemed near, and to Ellen White was given a vision full of light. At first there was only a tiny moving light. But it circled the globe and became bigger all the time. After the vision she said to her husband:

"I have a message for you. You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people. Let it be small at first; but as the people read, they will send you means with which to print, and it will be a success from the first. From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear round the world."—*Life Sketches*, page 125.

Thus through the guiding light of prophecy *Present Truth*, our first denominational periodical, was born. Scores of people accepted the third angel's message in the months that followed. This initial printing endeavor brought "good tidings" and "peace" and "salvation" to those who read it. Today 50 publishing houses issue literature in nearly 200 languages, valued at approximately \$50,000,000 a year—"streams of light" going "clear round the world"!

"One cannot dip deeply into the story of the Seventh-day Adventist publishing work without knowing that here, indeed, is the vanguard of the church. In Christ-centered publishing houses the odor of printer's ink is transformed into the incense of heaven; the rumble of presses swells into the thunder of truth; the shuffle of paper makes way for the rustle of angel wings."—M. Carol Hetzell, *The Undaunted*, introduction.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Millions of people—literally—have joined the Seventh-day Adventist church through the long years. Many were first impressed by reading our literature. What influence have Seventh-day Adventist books and magazines exerted upon your mind and character? How will it be in the future?**

"God will soon do great things for us if we lie humble and believing at His feet. . . . More than one thousand will soon be converted in one day, most of whom will trace their first convictions to the reading of our publications."—*Colporteur Ministry*, page 151.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Life Sketches*, pages 125-128.

**Part 3**  
**ESTABLISHING**  
**CHURCH ORDER**

**What experiences in the New Testament church demonstrated the value of church order and organization? Acts 6.**

See also Acts 15:6-32.

What a blessing clearly defined organization was to the early Christian church. The "remnant church" experienced similar incidents as discordant elements worked against unity. Ellen White wrote of this in 1851, encouraging the development of gospel order to protect the little flock of believers.

"I saw that this door at which the enemy comes in to perplex and trouble the flock can be shut. I inquired of the angel how it could be closed. He said, 'The church must flee to God's Word and become established upon gospel order, which has been overlooked and neglected.' This is indispensably necessary in order to bring the church into the unity of the faith."—*Early Writings*, page 100.

As early as 1853 James White wrote in favor of "order and strict discipline in the church of Christ." Others supported the suggestion to organize in the interests of the growing church. In 1861 the first local conference was organized in Michigan with Joseph Bates as president. The General Conference followed in 1863. Today the church is established on every continent and major island. If it had not been for the development of organization, we could not today carry on a widespread mission program.

**What experience came to the apostle Paul that led him to carry the gospel to Europe? Acts 16:9, 10.**

"Advance!" "Advance!" "Enter new territories" has been the watchword among God's servants in apostolic and subsequent times. It was through a vision that Paul was led to carry the gospel to Europe. Likewise our first overseas worker, John N. Andrews, entered Europe in response to a prophetic vision given the Lord's messenger. In a night vision, "One of dignity and authority" was heard by Ellen White to speak: "The whole world," He said, 'is God's great vineyard.'"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 7, p. 34.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel." But in the early 1870's there was nothing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church established except in America. The spirit of prophecy goaded the church into action. In 1874 we began to move into mission territory. Where would we have been today without this provocative testimony?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 239, 650-653.

**Part 4**      **In the days of Hezekiah what remarkable instance of divine**  
**GUIDANCE**      **guidance and protection occurred?**

Then "Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and . . . the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side." 2 Chron. 32:20, 22.

Compare Isa. 37:1, 2, 6, 7, 33-37.

As Hezekiah, the God-fearing king, and the prophet Isaiah sought the deliverance of Judah from threatened annihilation at the hand of the boastful king of Assyria, "the Lord sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men" (2 Chron. 32:21), and the king of Assyria was compelled to abandon the expedition. Jerusalem was "guided . . . on every side."

And God has guided His remnant people "on every side" through the spirit of prophecy. The following illustrations make this clear:

1. Initial counsels on healthful living in 1863 resulted in the establishment of a medical institution in 1866 at Battle Creek, Michigan. Here the sick might find physical and spiritual healing and "learn how to take care of themselves and thus prevent sickness."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 494. This was the beginning of a large sanitarium and hospital work which has since spread over the globe.

2. The reorganization of the General Conference in 1901 occurred at a time when the work was being hampered by centralization of authority. Today Seventh-day Adventists have developed a structure of church organization that provides for decision making in the field where the decision is needed.

The church was confronted with a reorganization plan along non-sectarian lines and following pantheistic teaching as advocated by one of our best known leaders. But the servant of the Lord gave specific counsel against it. "Who has authority to begin such a movement?" she asked. "We have our Bibles. We have our experience, attested to by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with this truth?"—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 205. See also page 204.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Were the counsels of Ellen G. White practical or theoretical?  
Did one type of counsel exclude the other?**

**Part 5**  
**MESSAGES THAT**  
**PRESERVED**

**In addition to leading the nation of Israel, what other work is Moses said to have done?**

**"And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved." Hosea 12:13.**

God miraculously delivered Israel, degraded in slavery and largely in ignorance and apostasy, by the hand of Moses and led them to the borders of the Promised Land.

*"By a prophet was he preserved."* To ensure the best of spiritual and physical health God gave to His people just laws, intended to make of them an exhibit before all the world of the benefits to be derived from a cheerful adherence to right principles. But time and again they rebelled, and time and again the prophetic voice of Moses was heard warning them of the tragedies that would follow disobedience and assuring them of the favor and blessings of God if they followed the divine instruction. Their preservation and survival as a nation depended on this. See Ps. 106; 1 Cor. 10:1-11.

A review of the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church discloses how by the hand of a prophet we have been "preserved" by the divine instruction and protected from Satan's many attacks.

*Protection from fanaticism.* One of the first burdens laid upon the youthful Ellen Harmon in the early days was to erect a wall about the church and protect it from fanatics who taught extreme views such as holy flesh and instantaneous sanctification.

In *Life Sketches*, pages 83-89, we read of attempts made by some to set specific times for the Lord to come. These dangerous views were squarely met by Ellen White. She was shown by the Lord that these dates would pass by. See also *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 72.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**The church will face fanatics again, and the experiences of the past will be repeated. Though extreme views will be taught and practiced, the church as a whole will not be misled. What is the source of our protection? How can we tell the difference between truth and error?**

"The principles of truth that God has revealed to us are our only true foundation. They have made us what we are. The lapse of time has not lessened their value. It is the constant effort of the enemy to remove these truths from their setting, and to put in their place spurious theories. He will bring in everything that he possibly can to carry out his deceptive designs. But the Lord will raise up men of keen perception, who will give these truths their proper place in the plan of God."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 201.

Part 6  
IN TIMES OF CRISIS

What result follows the operation of spiritual gifts in the church?

**"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." Eph. 4: 14, 15.**

Paul pictured the church with a membership stable in all its positions, not "tossed to and fro" by "every wind of doctrine" introduced "by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness."

Five "Sabbath conferences" were held in 1848 by the early Sabbath-keeping Adventists to seek out the truths of the Bible.

"At these conferences, . . . the several points of truth were formed into one united belief. It was here that the foundations of Seventh-day Adventist doctrine were laid. And here again, God used the Spirit of prophecy to protect and lead His people, through giving one or two visions at each of the conferences. These visions, however, did not constitute a substitute for Bible study. . . .

"Writing shortly after the time of the Sabbath conferences, Ellen White stated: 'We had to search and wait the opening of truth, receiving a ray of light here and a ray there, laboring and pleading for God to reveal truth to us. But now the truth is plain; its rays are brought together. The blazing light of truth when it is presented as it should be can be now seen and brought to bear upon the heart.'—E. G. White MS 3, 1854. (Feb. 12, 1854.)"—Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White—Messenger to the Remnant*, pages 38, 39.

**At a time of crisis in the experience of Israel, through what means did the Lord bring about deliverance? 2 Chron. 20: 14-20. See Judges 4:1-7, 14.**

THINK IT THROUGH

**What are the areas of need for guidance and protection today? Do Ellen White's writings meet this need?**

"Although there are evils existing in the church, and will be until the end of the world, the church in these last days is to be the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin. The church, enfeebled and defective, needing to be reprovved, warned, and counseled, is the only object upon earth upon which Christ bestows His supreme regard."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 49.

FURTHER STUDY

*Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 24-26.

# Prophecy, a Guiding Light

“The history which the great I AM has marked out in His word, uniting link after link in the prophetic chain, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tells us where we are today in the procession of the ages, and what may be expected in the time to come. All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order.”

—Education, page 178.

**"And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." John 14:29.**

It is God's intention that His people today shall have a clear knowledge of certain developments to take place in the future and be able to face these events, informed and ready for any eventuality. The coming of events, then, rather than taking His people by surprise, would be faced intelligently and would strengthen and confirm their faith in Christ, and, as Ellen White comments, "they would say to one another: 'He told us that this would come, and what we must do to meet it.'"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 235.

God's seers of old, with the prophetic view, peered down through the centuries and saw the larger features of the events of the last days, and what they saw they recorded for the instruction and encouragement of the whole world. In harmony with His declared purpose, God has again spoken in our time through the spirit of prophecy, and in so doing He has given to us in more minute detail a picture of the events of the last days before Jesus' return. And the inspired message confirms the word of the Bible prophets and *aids* in a fuller and more complete understanding.

An old English poet said, "If you can look into the seeds of time and tell which seeds will grow and which will not, speak thou to me." Fulfilled prophecy is still the basic test of divine inspiration. When the intelligent seeker for truth observes one fulfillment of prophecy after another, he is then willing to listen to God's voice and obey it.

## **LESSON OUTLINE**

- 1. For the Individual, Dan. 12:1, 2**
- 2. In Religion, 2 Thess. 2:3, 4**
- 3. In the Economic World, 1 Tim. 6:9, 10**
- 4. In Science, Judges 13:3, 7**
- 5. In Preparation to Meet God, Zech. 3:1-7**
- 6. A World Work Completed, Matt. 24:14**

**Part 1  
FOR THE  
INDIVIDUAL**

**When God's people shall be delivered from the time of trouble, what event will take place?**

**"And at that time shall Michael stand up . . . : and there shall be a time of trouble . . . : and . . . thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 12:1, 2.**

*The special resurrection.* "It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. . . .

"There is a mighty earthquake. . . .

"Graves are opened, and 'many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth . . . awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' Daniel 12:2. *All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law.*"—*The Great Controversy*, pages 636, 637. (Emphasis supplied.) See also *Early Writings*, pages 285, 286.

It is the longing desire of every Seventh-day Adventist to see Jesus come in the clouds of heaven, but many have fallen asleep and rest in the grave. Nevertheless, those who are saved will not be denied the fulfillment of their brightest hope. They will be raised from the grave in the special resurrection of Daniel 12:2 and actually witness the return of Christ.

**What do the New Testament writers foretell concerning the deceptive power of satanic agencies? 2 Thess. 2:9, 10; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 16:13, 14.**

"Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to deceive the world. The foundation of his work was laid by the assurance given to Eve in Eden: 'Ye shall not surely die.' . . . Little by little he has prepared the way for his masterpiece of deception in the development of spiritualism. He has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time. . . . Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His word, the whole world will be swept into the ranks of this delusion."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 561, 562.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How do the prophecies regarding the special resurrection and spiritism affect your life and your future?**

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, pages 624, 625, 636-638.



**Part 2**  
**IN RELIGION**

**What astounding development did the apostle Paul predict would take place in the religious world?**

**"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." 2 Thess. 2:3, 4.**

See also Rev. 13:3, 4, 8, 9, 14-18.

The prophecy of the great apostasy was fulfilled. However, there came a diminishing of its power, called in prophecy "a deadly wound." When the "wound" heals, the power of the apostasy will return and surpass its former oppression.

"God's word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the Protestant world will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. . . . We shall soon see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution."—*The Great Controversy*, page 581.

**What somber experience lies ahead for all of God's faithful people? Rev. 3:10.**

"Just before us is the 'hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.' Revelation 3:10. All whose faith is not firmly established upon the word of God will be deceived and overcome."—*The Great Controversy*, page 560. See *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, pp. 11, 43.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Said Jeremiah: "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" Jer. 12:5.**

"Christ foresaw that the undue assumption of authority indulged by the scribes and Pharisees would not cease with the dispersion of the Jews. He had a prophetic view of the work of exalting human authority to rule the conscience, which has been so terrible a curse to the church in all ages. And His fearful denunciations of the scribes and Pharisees, and His warnings to the people not to follow these blind leaders, were placed on record as an admonition to future generations."—*The Great Controversy*, page 596.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Great Controversy*, pages 563, 572-574.

**Part 3**  
**IN THE ECONOMIC**  
**WORLD**

**What is the root of all evil?**

**"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."**  
1 Tim. 6:9, 10.

See also 1 John 2:15-17.

"The Bible condemns no man for being rich, if he has acquired his riches honestly. Not money, but the love of money, is the root of all evil. It is God who gives men power to get wealth; and in the hands of him who acts as God's steward, using his means unselfishly, wealth is a blessing, both to its possessor and to the world."—*The Ministry of Healing*, page 212.

Will business operations ever return to normal? "There are not many, even among educators and statesmen, who comprehend the causes that underlie the present state of society. . . . They are struggling in vain to place business operations on a more secure basis. If men would give more heed to the teaching of God's word, they would find a solution of the problems that perplex them."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 13. (Emphasis supplied.)

**What is Paul's warning against confederacy with unbelievers? 2 Cor. 6:14-18. See Isa. 8:11-13.**

*Gigantic monopolies.* "The work of the people of God is to prepare for the events of the future, which will soon come upon them with blinding force. In the world gigantic monopolies will be formed. Men will bind themselves together in unions that will wrap them in the folds of the enemy. A few men will combine to grasp all the means to be obtained in certain lines of business. Trades unions will be formed, and those who refuse to join these unions will be marked men."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, p. 142. See also *Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 42.

This prediction concerns business combinations to monopolize wealth as well as trade unions. Oppression, cruelty, and avarice are offensive to God whether practiced by industry or labor. God's people are to be free from all involvement with the selfish control of wealth and from dishonest, violent efforts to acquire it.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**How does personal freedom figure in the gigantic struggle between capital and labor? What about the individual's right to work? To accumulate wealth honestly? To observe the Sabbath by choice? To refrain from violence? To choose not to be organized?**

**Part 4**      **What counsel was given to the mother of Samson before the**  
**IN SCIENCE**      **birth of her child?**

**"And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son." "But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death." Judges 13:3, 7.**

See also verses 13, 14.

Ellen White points to prenatal influence as the reason for the dietary prohibitions laid upon the wife of Manoah.

"The effect of prenatal influences is by many parents looked upon as a matter of little moment; but heaven does not so regard it. The message sent by an angel of God, and twice given in the most solemn manner, shows it to be deserving of our most careful thought."—*The Ministry of Healing*, page 372.

Ellen White earnestly counseled through the years the importance of the mother's influence on the unborn child. But not until recently has science confirmed the reality of prenatal influence.

**What results followed the temperate dietary practices of Daniel and his friends? Dan. 1:5, 8-15, 20.**

Closely linked with the physical, mental, and moral welfare of any people are their habits of eating and drinking. Of the nearly two thousand pages comprising the five spirit of prophecy books devoted to health, a large proportion is devoted to diet.

"There are but few as yet who are aroused sufficiently to understand how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their characters, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 488, 489.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**The fact that a humble woman without scientific degrees could persuade thousands of people to accept revolutionary concepts of diet is a miracle. The greater miracle is that the ideas were not faddish but scientifically sound, resulting in good health whenever applied with balance and adequate instruction.**

"The Spirit of God cannot come to our help, and assist us in perfecting Christian characters, while we are indulging our appetites to the injury of health, and while the pride of life controls."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, page 57.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*The Ministry of Healing*, page 371-378.

**Part 5**  
**IN PREPARATION**  
**TO MEET GOD**

**In Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the angel, what did Satan do? What did the change of raiment signify? What promise was made to Joshua, the high priest? Zech. 3:1-7.**

"Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. . . .

"Satan urges before God his accusations against them, declaring that they have by their sins forfeited the divine protection, and claiming the right to destroy them as transgressors."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 472, 473.

"All that have put on the robe of Christ's righteousness will stand before Him as chosen and faithful and true. Satan has no power to pluck them out of the hand of Christ."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 471.

**What question asked by Jesus suggests a condition that will exist in earth's last days? Luke 18:8. See Matt. 24:12.**

"I was shown the people of God, and saw them mightily shaken. Some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, were pleading with God. . . .

"Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. . . .

"I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking among God's people."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 179-181.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**The solemn appeal of the True Witness to prepare to meet God should stir us to respond in love.**

"Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 216.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 467-476.

**Part 6**  
**A WORLD WORK**  
**COMPLETED**

**What work will be accomplished before Christ comes?**

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."—Matt. 24:14.

Compare Matt. 28:18-20.

In the vision of January 3, 1875, Ellen White was shown many lights illuminating a world shrouded in darkness. She was led in 1892 to declare: "The missionary work in Australia and New Zealand is yet in its infancy, but the same work must be accomplished in Australia, New Zealand, in Africa, India, China, and the islands of the sea, as has been accomplished in the home field."—*Life Sketches*, page 338.

In 1892 we had not yet opened our first mission station in Africa. It was yet a year before colporteurs were to enter India and a full decade before missionaries were dispatched to China. As for the islands of the sea, we had just made the smallest beginning.

**Who will finish the work of the gospel? Romans 9:28.**

"I saw that the quick work that God was doing on the earth would soon be cut short in righteousness and that the messengers must speed swiftly on their way to search out the scattered flock."—*Early Writings*, page 50.

The prophetic assurance of triumph gives courage to the believers. Note the following prophetic assurances:

(1) *The Lord will bring us through triumphantly.* "There is no need to doubt, to be fearful that the work will not succeed. God is at the head of the work. . . . Let us have faith that God is going to carry the noble ship which bears the people of God safely into port."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, p. 390.

(2) *God will continue with them even to the end.* "I am encouraged and blessed as I realize that the God of Israel is still guiding His people, and that He will continue to be with them, even to the end."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 2, p. 406. (From a message by Ellen White to the General Conference in session, 1913.)

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**If God is with His church till the end, is not the church a good place to remain? If all church members were like me, what kind of a church would it be?**

"There is a great work to be done, and every effort possible must be made to reveal Christ as the sin-pardoning Saviour, Christ as the Sin Bearer, Christ as the bright and morning Star; and the Lord will give us favor before the world until our work is done."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, pp. 20, 21.

**FURTHER STUDY**

*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, pp. 19-25.

# Confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy

## STEWARDSHIP

**"Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Acts 26:19.**

For a full quarter we have been studying the gift of prophecy in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We have seen how the Lord has communicated His messages through this agency. The questions now come to each one of us, What is my relationship to this gift? What do the spirit of prophecy counsels mean to me? How will I study and apply these counsels? The answer to these questions ought not to be postponed or evaded. Denton E. Rebok in his book *Believe His Prophets*, pages 315, 316, wrote:

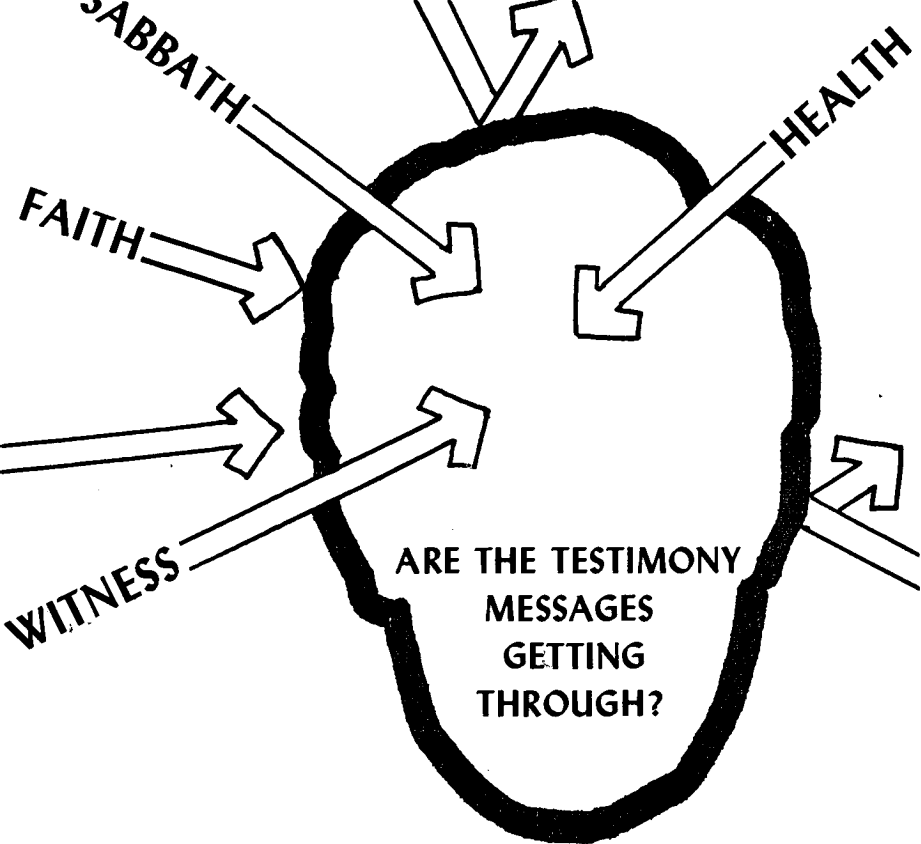
"I believe that the writings of Ellen G. White describe what God wants of me and what God will do for me through His Son Jesus Christ. They are words of beauty and of power. They present before me the pattern for the Christian life. I accept her words as she has declared them to be, words of reproof for the 'erring,' words 'of encouragement to the meek and lowly,' words of 'counsel,' 'instruction,' 'correction.' They are not the 'commandments of the Decalogue,' but the wise counsel and earnest entreaties of a kind heavenly Father through His chosen messenger.

"I find myself in perfect agreement with the great mass of counsel given, but like so many others I am tempted to despise and reject *ONLY the testimonies which reprove my darling sins, conflict with my own preconceived ideas of theology, and disturb my self-complacency.*

"In these few, very few, items I am daily praying that God will help me to conform completely and perfectly to His will and standard."

This author then appeals to all of us as follows:

"Brethren and sisters of the Advent family, let us give most careful, thoughtful, and prayerful consideration to the topic of this study, and take our stand with the remnant church for the message given to us as a people, and for the messenger whom God chose to accomplish His will and purpose in and for us



as probationary time comes to an end, as history comes to its last chapter, as Christ finishes His work for the salvation of men, and as closing events in the great controversy bring us ever nearer to the grand consummation of all things earthly.

"We have every reason to rejoice as Seventh-day Adventists in the abundant provision made by God Himself for our salvation. He loves us with a tender love. He is kind and good and gentle. He has anticipated our every need, and has given us the help we must have at every turn in life's way. He is ready to fit us for His kingdom. May each and every one of us be molded and fashioned according to His own divine pattern. He wants you and me in His presence throughout eternity." Page 320.

#### **LESSON OUTLINE**

- 1. Attitude Toward Reproof, Hosea 6:5**
- 2. Accept or Reject, Isa. 30:10**
- 3. Understanding the Inspired Messages, Acts 26:19**
- 4. Misuse of the Testimonies**
- 5. A Vital Question, Acts 26:27**
- 6. The Believer's Promise, 2 Chron. 20:20**

**Part 1**  
**ATTITUDE TOWARD**  
**REPROOF**

**What symbols did God use to describe the work of the ancient prophets?**

**“Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth.” Hosea 6:5.**

See also Heb. 12:5; 1 Peter 4:12, 13.

**What purpose did the Lord have in sending prophets to backslidden Judah? What was the response? 2 Chron. 24:19.**

“In many cases the *Testimonies* are fully received, the sin and indulgence broken off, and reformation at once commences in harmony with the light God has given. In other instances sinful indulgences are cherished. . . . The *true* reason is not given. It is a lack of moral courage—a will, strengthened and controlled by the Spirit of God, to renounce hurtful habits.”—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 32. See also *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 234.

**How does a wise man receive reproof? Prov. 9:8; 15:32.**

Many who received personal testimonies from Ellen White accepted the reproof with gratitude. One was a minister and president of a conference in North America who was reproofed for his public advocacy of fanatical teachings and actions. Humbly he acknowledged in the General Conference session of 1901 the Lord’s counsel:

“‘In the testimony [presented by Ellen White] . . . the test came to me. But, brethren, I can thank God this morning that my faith in the Spirit of prophecy remains unshaken. God has spoken. He says I was wrong, and I answer, God is right, and I am wrong. . . .

“‘I have asked God to forgive me, and I know that He has done it. As delegates and representatives of the cause of God in the earth, I now ask you to forgive me my sins, and I ask your prayers for strength and wisdom to walk aright in the future. It is my determination, by the help of God, to join glad hands with you in the kingdom of God.’”—Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White—Messenger to the Remnant*, page 20.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Ellen White explained to a certain member that she would gladly communicate to that person words of commendation but the Lord had not revealed these characteristics to her. She had been shown the sins which were the stumbling blocks and which must be removed if the believer was to negotiate the road to heaven. What spiritual roadblocks appear before you that the “Testimonies” mark out for removal?**



**Part 2**  
**ACCEPT OR**  
**REJECT**

**"Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits." Isa. 30:10.**

See also Ezek. 33:30-33.

"There are some in these last days who will cry: 'Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits.' But this is not my work. God has set me as a reprover of His people; and just so surely as He has laid upon me the heavy burden, He will make those to whom this message is given responsible for the manner in which they treat it."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, pp. 231, 232.

**What was Ahab's attitude toward the true prophet of God? 1 Kings 22:8.**

**To what may an attitude of resistance lead? Acts 7:52, 59.**

"It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the *Testimonies*.' Satan knows how to make his attacks. He works upon minds to excite jealousy and dissatisfaction toward those at the head of the work. The gifts are next questioned; then, of course, they have but little weight, and instruction given through vision is disregarded.' 'Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the *Testimonies*, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction.'"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 672.

**What was David's attitude toward the message that came to him from the prophet Nathan? 2 Sam. 12:7-9, 13, 14.**

At a general gathering of workers in Europe in 1885, Ellen White's interpreter was D. T. Bourdeau, a leading minister. He wrote for the *Review and Herald* of Nov. 10, 1885, as follows:

"Not only does this gift reprove sin without dissimulation and partiality, as did Nathan when he said to David, 'Thou art the man;' but it deals in words of encouragement to help those reproved to overcome, and to inspire hope, faith, and courage to the desponding. It not only probes the wound, but it also pours in the oil, binds the wound, and hastens the process of restoration. It brings the receiver to the Bible."

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**Study Elder Bourdeau's comment carefully and note how much can be tabulated as assets in the prophetic ledger. For every word of warning in the spirit of prophecy there are ten words of hope and promise!**

**Part 3**  
**UNDERSTANDING THE**  
**INSPIRED MESSAGES**

As Paul recounted his experience before King Agrippa, what did he declare had been his personal relationship to the vision God gave him?

**"Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Acts 26:19.**

The apostle practiced the truth he believed. So should we be obedient to what we know that has been revealed to us.

**How does the honest seeker understand revealed truth? 1 Cor. 2:12, 13.**

Just as the student is admonished to view the Bible as a whole, comparing scripture with scripture, so he should gain the full picture of all the prophetic counsels of Ellen White available on a given point, putting statement with statement. "The testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given, as scripture is explained by scripture."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 42.

The thoughts on any teaching that is controversial should remain in solution and not crystalize until *all* the available counsels on the subject are before us.

**What need sometimes arises among those who have known God's message before? .Heb. 5:12. Compare 2 Peter 1:1-12.**

The Christian must progress in his knowledge of truth. He should steadily advance in an understanding of Bible principles. It is his privilege to enjoy a growing and dynamic, not a static, experience. The writings of the prophets offer basic principles to guide the life toward the goal of Christian perfection.

When we study the spirit of prophecy, we must consider the time, place, and circumstances of the giving of the Lord's message. Mrs. White wrote of the publication and use of her writings: "Regarding the testimonies, nothing is ignored; nothing is cast aside; but time and place must be considered."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 57.

Israel was instructed that their garments should carry a fringe of blue to designate them as God's people. Num. 15:38. Dedication to God may be shown today in modest attire, but the principle is applied in a manner different from its application with Israel. Each Christian is to study prayerfully how to apply principles to the specific issue at hand.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What perplexing issues now confront me personally that the writings of Ellen White may help me resolve?**

Examine the three-volume *Comprehensive Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White*. Here you will be led to helpful statements that will throw light on your problems.

**Part 4**  
**MISUSE OF THE**  
**TESTIMONIES**

Against what misuses of the writings of Ellen White are we warned?

1. *Used to force an issue.* "They profess to believe the testimony borne, and some do harm by making them an iron rule for those who have had no experience in reference to them."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 369.

2. *Used as proof for unbelievers.* "Some have taken an injudicious course; when they have talked their faith to unbelievers, and the proof has been asked for, they have read a vision, instead of going to the Bible for proof. . . . The visions can have no weight with those who have never seen them and know nothing of their spirit. They should not be referred to in such cases."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, pp. 119, 120.

3. *Brief excerpts used out of context.* "There are those who pick out from the Word of God, and also from the Testimonies, detached paragraphs or sentences that may be interpreted to suit their ideas, and they dwell upon these."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 179.

*The prophetic writings are up-to-date.* "I have been shown that the principles that were given us in the early days of the message are as important and should be regarded just as conscientiously today as they were then."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 158.

*Messages leave a possibility of doubt.* "If you refuse to believe until every shadow of uncertainty and every possibility of doubt is removed, you will never believe. The doubt that demands perfect knowledge will never yield to faith. Faith rests upon evidence, not demonstration."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 69.

*The principles set forth in the messages are universal in their application.* Ellen White's messages are for the world church. Consider her eleven years of service in Europe and Australia and the many pages of messages dealing with the international scope of the work of the church. She was not "a provincial seer" but God's messenger to the international church of Seventh-day Adventists.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**The spirit of prophecy counsels are not outmoded or out of place today. If Ellen White is "old hat," how about the Bible written eighteen centuries before the "Testimonies"?**

"Through His Holy Spirit the voice of God has come to us continually in warning and instruction, to confirm the faith of the believers in the Spirit of prophecy. . . . Time and trial have not made void the instruction given. . . . The instruction that was given in the early days of the message is to be held as safe instruction to follow in these its closing days."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 41. (Written in 1907.)

**Part 5**  
**A VITAL**  
**QUESTION**

**In Paul's appeal to Agrippa, what pertinent question did he ask?**

**"King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." Acts 26:27.**

Compare 2 Kings 17:13, 14; Luke 24:25.

"My brethren, beware of the evil heart of unbelief. The word of God is plain and close in its restrictions; it interferes with your selfish indulgence; therefore you do not obey it. . . . And to justify your carnal, ease-loving course you begin to doubt whether the testimonies are from God. If you would obey their teachings, you would be assured of their divine origin."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 234.

**When there is no prophetic vision, what dire consequences result? Prov. 29:18. Compare 1 Sam. 3:1.**

The Hebrew word here translated "vision" always means prophetic vision.

"Satan is . . . constantly pressing in the spurious—to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish' (Prov. 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 48.

**What solemn question does Peter ask? 2 Peter 3:10, 11.**

D. E. Rebok, for years a spiritual leader among us, writes: "Thinking through this solemn instruction given by the apostle, I have come to the conclusion that the warning is for *me* personally, and the appeal is to *me* as to what kind of person I am going to be from today on. It is not my business primarily to think about you and your condition—the kind of person you ought to be. That is your problem. My problem is, What kind of person ought I to be? If each of us will answer that question for himself, I feel confident that we shall be ready for this great event that is described in such graphic terms."—*Believe His Prophets*, page 278.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**The principle of love to God and love to man must prompt every action if we are to avoid the pharisaical life.**

"We are not to be as the Pharisees, bound about by set rules and regulations. . . . We are to be careful not to make laws like the laws of the Pharisees, or to teach for doctrines the commandments of men."—*Medical Ministry*, page 284.

**Part 6**  
**THE BELIEVER'S**  
**PROMISE**

**With what words did Jehoshaphat encourage the people as they followed the Lord's direction given through the prophet?**

**"And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." 2 Chron. 20:20.**

"Believe his prophets, and you will succeed" is the RSV rendering. Here is God's formula for "success" in the Christian life.

At a time of crisis in our work, Ellen White declared: "Some will yield their faith, and will deny the truth of the messages, pointing to them as falsehoods.

"Some will hold them up to ridicule, working against the light that God has been giving for years, and some who are weak in the faith will thus be led astray.

"But others will be greatly helped by the messages. Though not personally addressed, they will be corrected, and will be led to shun the evils specified. . . . The Spirit of the Lord will be in the instruction, and doubts existing in many minds will be swept away. . . . Light will dawn upon the understanding, and the Spirit will make an impression on minds, as Bible truth is clearly and simply presented in the messages. . . . God has been sending His people."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 41, 42.

**THINK IT THROUGH**

**What advantages accrue to the Christian who orders his life by the Word of God and the testimonies of His Spirit? What is to be gained by rejecting the counsel of the Lord? Is neglect of the "Testimonies" as hazardous as their rejection? Is your position on the spirit of prophecy positive and decided? How can you use the spirit of prophecy writings to lead others to Christ?**

In a Sabbath sermon delivered at College View, Nebraska, in the year 1909 Ellen White paused, surveyed the large congregation, and exclaimed, "O Brethren and Sisters, how many of us believe with heart and soul that we have a heaven to win and a hell to shun? We cannot now do just exactly what we want to do."

The time has come for all of us to ask, "Lord, what wilt *Thou* have me to do?" In searching our Bible and the spirit of prophecy writings, we may find the answer. We can also find the Saviour by whose grace and power we may enter into a new life. As we prepare for Jesus' coming, let us share with all whose lives we touch every day our faith in God's guidance in this Seventh-day Adventist movement.

## LESSONS FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1975

Sabbath School members who have not received a copy of the *Adult Lessons* for the first quarter of 1975 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first two lessons. The title of the series is "God Is Like This—" which is a study of the revelation of God as provided by the life and teachings of Jesus.

**First lesson:** "God Is Like This—Jesus Reflected Him." Memory verse, John 1:18. Outline as follows: (1) Jesus Revealed the Father, John 14:9. (2) His Deeds Prompted by His Father, John 5:19. (3) His Words Prompted by His Father, John 12:49. (4) Jesus Did His Father's Will, John 6:38. (5) Jesus Relied on the Scriptures, Matt. 4:4, 7, 10. (6) The Meaning of Jesus' Life, John 14:10.

**Second lesson:** "God Is Like This—He Cares About People." Memory verse, Luke 19:10. Outline as follows: (1) The Lost Coin, Luke 15:8. (2) The Lost Sheep, Luke 15:3, 4. (3) The Good Shepherd, John 10:14, 15, 17. (4) The Lost Son, Luke 15:11-13. (5) Other Sheep, John 10:16. (6) Father Gave Son to Die for Man, John 3:16.

## **The Blessing of Daily Study**

"Every day some portion of time should be appropriated to the study of the lessons, not merely in learning to mechanically repeat the words, while the mind does not comprehend the meaning; but to go to the very foundation, and become familiar with what is brought out in the lesson."—"Counsels on Sabbath School Work," page 53.

### **My Pledge**

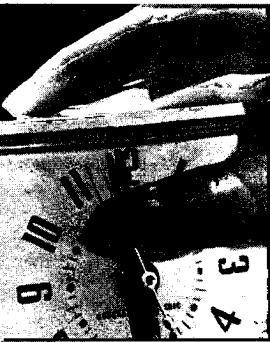
As one who greatly desires to improve his knowledge of the Scriptures, I pledge myself to the careful and prayerful study of some portion of my Sabbath School lesson each day of the week.

---

(signed)

The regular adult Sabbath School lessons are available free each month in Braille and 16 $\frac{2}{3}$  rpm records to blind and physically handicapped persons who cannot read normal inkprint. This includes individuals who because of arthritis, multiple sclerosis, paralysis, accidents, old age, and so forth, cannot hold or focus on normal inkprint publications. Contact the Christian Record Braille Foundation, Box 6097, Lincoln, Nebraska 68506.

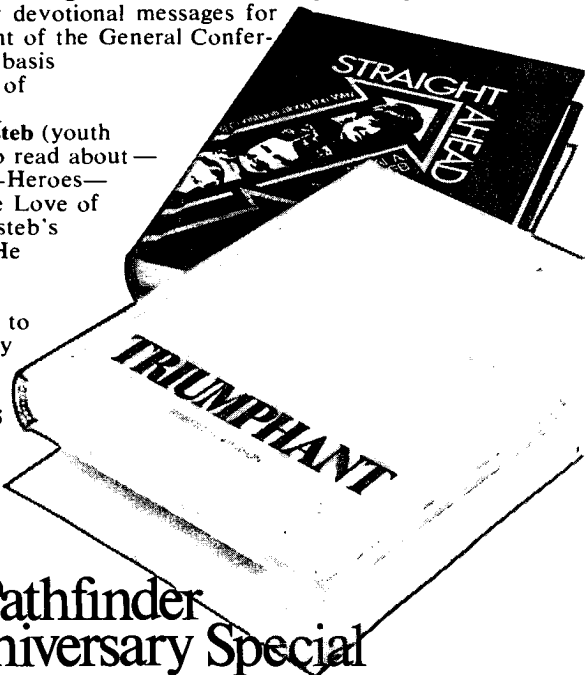
# Have a Good Day



What you do with the first hour of the morning should prepare you for the whole day. Two books to give you the good preparation you need. The daily devotional books for 1975. Give yourself a good day. **FAITH TRIUMPHANT** Robert H. Pierson (senior devotional) Amid political and economic fiascoes, in a world riven with strife and broken promises, what assures victory to the Christian? Faith, of course! Faith in our Creator and Redeemer, faith in His soon return, faith in His Word, in His Spirit, and in His church. With firm confidence in His message for these last days and in the movement He has established for the proclamation of that message, we shall see our hope triumph. In daily devotional messages for

1975, Robert H. Pierson, president of the General Conference, portrays with sure lines the basis of our faith and the dawning rays of its fulfillment. Price \$3.95

**STRAIGHT AHEAD** Adlai A. Esteb (youth devotional) Whatever you like to read about—Adventure—Biography—Humor—Heroes—Poetry—Missions—Miracles—The Love of God—it's all there in Dr. Adlai Esteb's youth devotional book for 1975. He calls it *Straight Ahead*, because that's good advice for you Christians—or anybody. We invite you to add *Straight Ahead* to your library and read it daily. Think about it prayerfully. Let it make a difference in your life. Price \$3.95 You may order these books from your local Adventist Book Center or ABC Mail-Order Service, P.O. Box 31776, Omaha, Nebraska 68131.



## Pathfinder 25th Anniversary Special

Save \$1.00 on the youth devotional when you purchase a senior devotional at regular price. **Both books only \$6.90** Please add 30 cents for the first book and 15 cents for each additional book for postage and handling. Add State sales tax where necessary.



# 3 NEW GUIDING LIGHTS

From the pocket-sized STW\* series.

## 1. JOURNEY TO THE SON

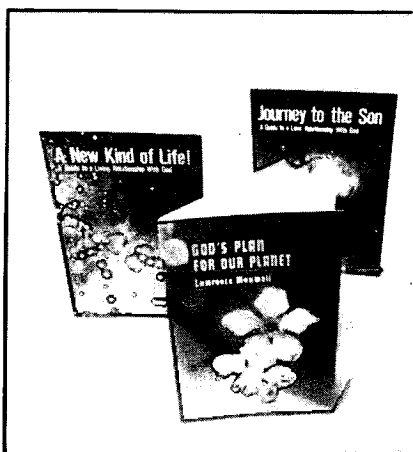
"We are determined to end up the richest, fattest, smuggest, and most complacent people who ever failed to meet the test of survival." The choice is ours. JOURNEY TO THE SON illustrates the conflict between God's plan and man's failing substitutes. By Kenneth J. Holland.

## 2. A NEW KIND OF LIFE

"Depending wholly on God and cooperating with Him, you will develop physically, mentally, and spiritually to the highest degree—to the glory of God and the blessing of humanity." A NEW KIND OF LIFE outlines the satisfactions of following God's provisions and commandments. By Kenneth J. Holland.

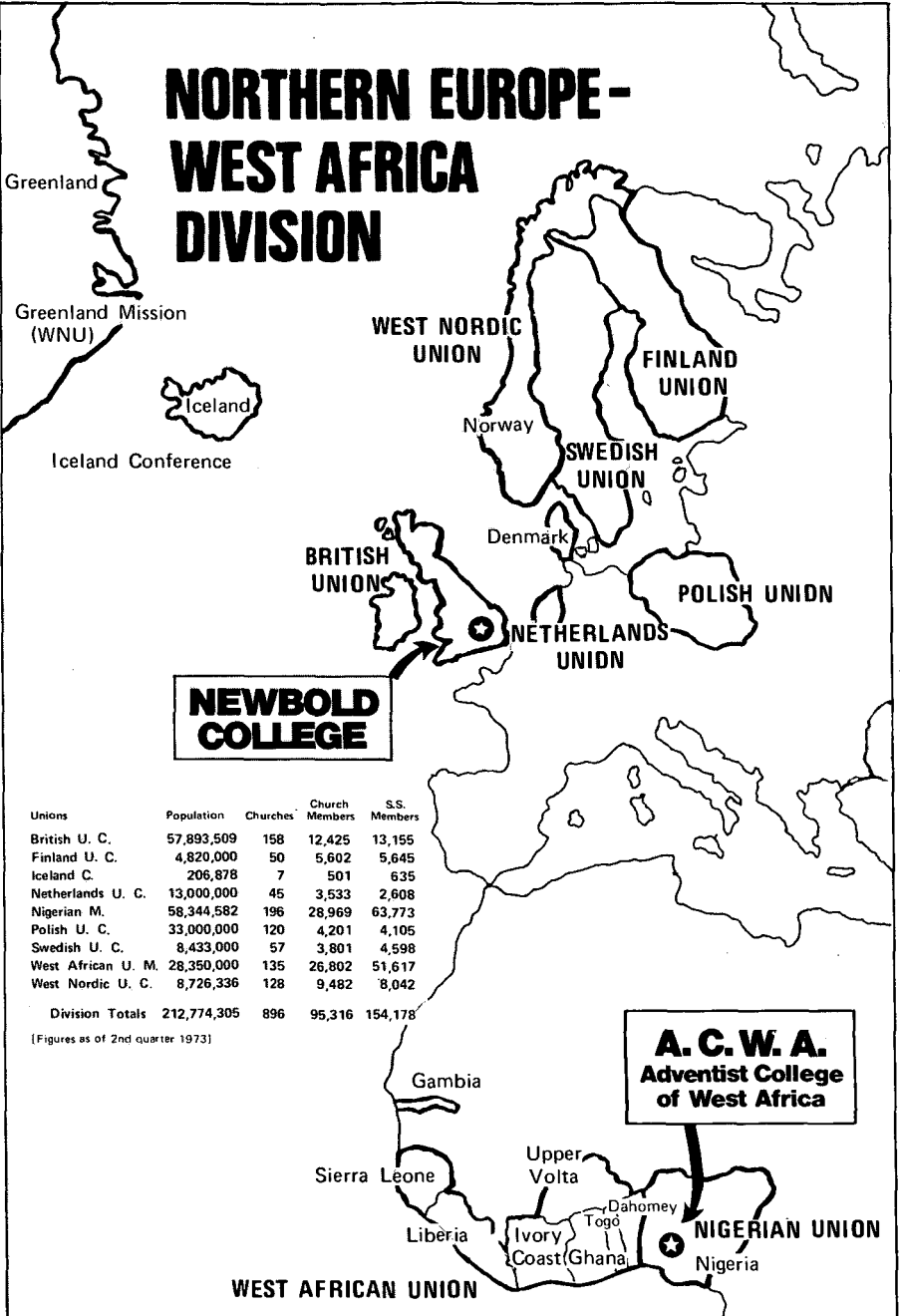
## 3. GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR PLANET

From the creation of our earth to life in the new earth—the Bible is brought to life in a new mini-size. GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR PLANET is especially valuable for new converts. By Lawrence Maxwell.



\*See the entire Stories That V series at your Adventist Book Center. Or order from ABC Mail Service, 2621 Farnam Street, Omaha, NB 68131. Canada: 216th Avenue NE, Calgary, Alberta T2E 1J9. Send 50 cents for each book and include 35 cents for the first, 10 cents for each additional for mailing and handling. Tax where applicable. Brought to you by Pacific Press.

# NORTHERN EUROPE- WEST AFRICA DIVISION



**NEWBOLD  
COLLEGE**

**A. C. W. A.  
Adventist College  
of West Africa**

Unions	Population	Churches	Church Members	S.S. Members
British U. C.	57,893,509	158	12,425	13,155
Finland U. C.	4,820,000	50	5,602	5,645
Iceland C.	206,878	7	501	635
Netherlands U. C.	13,000,000	45	3,533	2,608
Nigerian M.	58,344,582	196	28,969	63,773
Polish U. C.	33,000,000	120	4,201	4,105
Swedish U. C.	8,433,000	57	3,801	4,598
West African U. M.	28,350,000	135	26,802	51,617
West Nordic U. C.	8,726,336	128	9,482	8,042
<b>Division Totals</b>	<b>212,774,305</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>95,316</b>	<b>154,178</b>

[Figures as of 2nd quarter 1973]

