

The Lord's Messenger

The gift of prophecy, as manifested through the writings of Ellen G. White, is in the remnant church. Like John the Baptist, who was the forerunner of Christ, Mrs. White, whose work it was to prepare a people for the second advent, made no pretentious claim to be other than a *messenger of the Lord*. Through her writings, God has spoken, and those who have read and carefully studied her books can bear witness as to their inspiration.

Her life was above reproach, and her messages bear the credentials of heaven. They are in perfect harmony with the law and the Scriptures. She stood every physical test while in vision, and was carefully examined by believing and unbelieving medical men. All had to attest to the unusual phenomenon of her physical condition. Though she did not breathe during the time she was in vision, she was able to express audibly the scene passing before her prophetic eyes.

Her work in the remnant church included more than the office of a prophetess. While visions were given her, she engaged and led out in the various branches of reform; such as health, temperance, medical, educational, and even orphanage work.

The voluminous books that came from her pen have been a blessing to the millions who have read them. The beautiful, simple language in which they are written, revealing Jesus Christ and the complete plan of salvation, clearly testify to the divine authorship.

Her works are not designed to take the place of the Bible, but to unfold its hidden treasure. The repeated exhortation from her pen is, "Study the word of God."

2 Chronicles 20:20

God appeals to us to *believe His prophets*.
By so doing, we will prosper spiritually and otherwise.



SUPPLEMENT TO LESSON _____ **25**

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Introduction

In his sinless state, man talked face to face with his Creator with no shadowy curtain between. When sin entered, this method of communication ceased. In order for God to keep in touch with the human family and make known the plan of salvation, a system was devised.

The Holy Spirit was God's divine agency through which He worked to reveal His will to the human family. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1: 21.

These holy men not only spoke, but they wrote what was communicated to them. These writings have been, in the providence of God, preserved, and they have constituted the great spiritual guidebook for the church down through the ages. The Sacred Canon bears the divine credentials. Its study reveals the operating power of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. Its predictions, unity, endurance, and, towering above all else, its transforming power to change and reshape the life, give conclusive evidence of its inspiration.

When the canon of Holy Scripture was closed (and we must admit that the Bible is complete and nothing is omitted that is needful to our salvation—2 Timothy 3:16, 17), the Lord did not cease to communicate to His people. The medium of communication is needful to the end of time; therefore God placed the greatest of all spiritual gifts in the church—the gift of prophecy—to edify, unify, strengthen, and upbuild His church. The work of a prophet is designed to expose sin, correct wrongs, instruct in regard to church difficulties, entreat, encourage the faithless, bring hope to the despairing, and to shed light upon the Scriptures.

There never was a time in the history of the church when she needed the spirit of prophecy more than she does today. The Lord is perfecting His people and getting them ready for translation. This cannot be accomplished without a human instrument through which the Holy Spirit

can speak. Indeed, it would be tragic if God could not still communicate with His people through a prophet.

For centuries before Christ, the church had the Old Testament Scriptures. They contained all the truth that was necessary for salvation. When the twenty-seven books of the New Testament were written, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they did not in any wise weaken the force of the Old Testament Scriptures, but shed light upon them. Nor was it in the mind of God for the New Testament to supersede the Old Testament, although there are many today who actually believe so.

The writings of the spirit of prophecy in the remnant church are not to replace or annul the Bible, nor are they any addition to it. Ellen G. White states very clearly the object and purpose of her writings. Note the following:

“The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man’s duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified in God’s word; yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the *Testimonies* simplified the great truths already given and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse. . . 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, pp. 605, 606.

The Bible is exalted in all of Mrs. White’s writings. One cannot read the *Testimonies* without being drawn to a closer study of the Holy Scriptures and to a profound desire to follow its instruction.

Does the Bible endorse the spirit of prophecy? Let us approach that study with an unbiased mind, praying that the Holy Spirit, who placed this gift in the church, may illuminate our minds, and may we thank God for His goodness to the remnant church.

Prophets Are God’s Means of Communication

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| Numbers 12:6 | It is God who chooses the prophet, through whom, by visions and dreams, He will make known His will to the human family. |
| Hosea 12:10 | Through the ministry of the prophets, God speaks to His church. |

Women as Prophetesses

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| Galatians 3:28 | In Christ there is neither <i>male</i> nor <i>female</i> . If a woman is capable of filling the role of a prophet, God will use such, as He did in Bible times. |
| Exodus 15:20 | <i>Miriam</i> was a prophetess. |
| Judges 4:4 | <i>Deborah</i> was not only a <i>prophetess</i> , but a <i>judge</i> —two of the highest titles that could ever be conferred upon an individual. With all the men in Israel, God did not see fit to choose one of them for the sacred office of a prophet. <i>Deborah</i> , a woman, was the instrument He selected. |
| 2 Kings 22:11-13 | King <i>Josiah</i> sends a delegation to “ <i>inquire of the Lord</i> ” for him concerning the book of the law. |
| 2 Kings 22:14 | The priest and scribe with the other delegation went to “ <i>Huldah the prophetess</i> ” to get the instruction and counsel of God. Through her testimonies a reformation was wrought. 2 Kings 22:15-20; 23:1-20. |
| Luke 2:36 | <i>Anna</i> was a prophetess in the days when the Son of God was born. |
| Acts 21:8, 9 | The four daughters of <i>Philip</i> had the gift of prophecy. |
| Joel 2:28 | In the last days, God will pour out His Spirit so that through His messengers He will do a mighty work. |

Led and Preserved by a Prophet

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| Hosea 12:10 | We need the ministry of the prophetic gift today as never before. The voice of reproof and warning is needed in the remnant church that is getting ready for translation. |
| Hosea 12:13 | As ancient Israel was brought out of Egypt by a prophet and preserved by that gift, so modern Israel is to be led out of Babylon and preserved by a prophet. |

Tests of a Prophet

- Matthew 24:24 There will be counterfeit prophets as we approach the end. Where there is a counterfeit, there must of necessity be the genuine.
- 1 John 4:1 God would never counsel us to test those who claim to be prophets if there were no true prophets.
- Isaiah 8:20 The teaching of a prophet must be in perfect harmony with the Ten Commandments and the Holy Scriptures.
- Matthew 7:20 The life of a professed prophet testifies whether he is true or false.
- Deuteronomy 13:1-4 The working of miracles is not always a true sign of the prophetic calling. The real test is determined by the prophet's attitude toward the law of God.
- Revelation 16:14 Satan will work miracles, and by them will deceive many.

Physical Test While in Vision

- Numbers 24:4 The eyes of a true prophet are open while in vision.
- Daniel 10:5-8 When the angel Gabriel appeared to Daniel, his brightness caused the prophet to lose consciousness, while the unbelievers "fled to hide themselves."
- Daniel 10:9, 10 Daniel fell helpless to the ground.
- Daniel 10:11 He was raised from the ground by divine strength.
- Daniel 10:17 Daniel, although he was able to talk, had no breath in him. It is only God who can preserve life without breath. Satan can never counterfeit this sign of true prophetship. These are the tests which all who claim the office of a prophet should measure up to before they can be accepted as seers for the church.

Five Gifts Comprising the Ministry

- Ephesians 4:8 Christ gave gifts to His Church when He ascended to heaven.
- Ephesians 4:11 Note the five gifts. Among them are "prophets."
- Ephesians 4:12 These gifts were for the ministry. We cannot have a perfect ministry without these five gifts. The purpose of them is to perfect the people. Should there be no prophets, the ministry would be incomplete. Consequently the church would be imperfect.
- Ephesians 4:13 God intended that all five gifts, which include the spirit of prophecy, should remain in the church until the second coming of Christ.

Ignorance Regarding the Gifts

- 1 Corinthians 12:1 There are many who are ignorant today regarding the gifts of the ministry.
- 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 Each of the several gifts has specific service to render, but all under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Human Body a Symbol of the Church

- 1 Corinthians 12:12 The human body has its major members that function and minister to the entire physical need.
- 1 Corinthians 12:13 The spiritual body, the church, has its major members —*apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers*— that minister to the whole church.
- 1 Corin. 12:14, 20 As the human body is made up of various members, so the spiritual body, which is the church, is comprised of members; otherwise it would not be a body.
- Ephesians 4: 15,16
1 Corinthians 12:18 The church is not a disjointed unit, but is a highly organized body, each member contributing his specific endowments for the upbuilding and protection of the church.

Co-ordination of Gifts

- 1 Corinthians 12:15 The *foot* is as much a part of the body as is the *hand*.
- 1 Corin. 12:16, 17 Though the *eye* is a very important part of the body, it cannot take the place of the *ear*.
- 1 Corinthians 12:21 The eye, hand, head, and foot have their definite, specific service to perform in the body. Their service and relationship are remarkably harmonious and reciprocal. Thus it is with the five major gifts which Christ placed in the church.

Major and Minor Gifts

- 1 Corin. 12:27, 28 *Apostles, prophets, and teachers* are the major members of the church; while the gifts of healing, *helps, governments, and tongues* may be classed as the minor.
- 1 Corin. 12:29, 30 Not all can do the same work, but all will be happy and content in their sphere of usefulness in the church. While the gifts are diverse, they are equally honorable because they are energized by the same Holy Spirit.

Seers of the Church

- 1 Samuel 9:9 The prophets are the seers, or eyes, of the church. Any church that does not have a prophet can be likened to the natural body without eyesight.
- 2 Kings 6:8, 9 If the people of God had not possessed the eye, which was the prophet Elisha, to guide them, they would have walked directly into the path of destruction set for them by the king of Syria.

- 2 Kings 6:10 This text reveals how God uses the prophets to protect His spiritual body, even as the natural eyes are used for the preservation of the physical body.
- 2 Kings 6:11 The king could not understand why his military strategy did not succeed. Fearing that one of his men had turned traitor and divulged the secret to the Israelites, he called his cabinet for counsel.
- 2 Kings 6:12 It was the God of heaven who made known the plot by opening the eyes of the prophet to foresee the danger. This is what the prophet will do for the church today.

Prophetic Gift Restored

- 1 Corinthians 1:6 The Testimony of Christ, which is the gift of prophecy (Revelation 19:10), was confirmed or corroborated in the early church.
- 1 Corinthians 1:7 The church that is waiting for the coming of the Lord will not be lacking the gift of the spirit of prophecy.
- Revelation 12:17 The devil is angry with the *remnant church*. It will not be a large body, but its doctrines and ministry the devil hates. Note the two outstanding characteristics of this church. She will be keeping the commandments of God, as did the early church, and will have the gift of the spirit of prophecy, which was evident in Paul's day. These two distinguishing features will attest to the genuineness of the church which claims to be the custodian and bearer of the special closing message of the gospel.

Law and Prophets Go Together

- Proverbs 29:18 The people perish when the eyes, or prophets, are not functioning. If the law is kept, the vision, or eyes, will be restored to the church.
- Lamentations 2:9 When the law is not observed, the gift of prophecy is withdrawn.