

29. THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY.

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1. FROM WHERE DID BIBLE THEIR MESSAGES?

2 PETER 1:21 "FOR PROPHECY THE WILL OF MAN, BUT MEN WERE _____ BY THE _____".

The Bible was no invention of man. It came directly from God. The prophets wrote in their own words what they were told by the Holy Spirit.

PROPHETS RECEIVE

NEVER HAD ITS ORIGIN IN SPOKE FROM GOD AS THEY

2. HOW DID GOD REVEAL HIS MESSAGE TO THE PROPHETS?

NUMBERS 12:6 "HE SAID, 'LISTEN TO MY WORDS: WHEN A _____ OF THE LORD IS AMONG YOU, I REVEAL MYSELF TO HIM IN _____, I SPEAK TO HIM IN _____".

3. DID THE GIFT OF PROPHECY CONTINUE IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH?

EPHESIANS 4:11-13 "IT WAS HE WHO GAVE SOME TO BE APOSTLES, SOME TO BE _____ SOME TO BE EVANGELISTS AND SOME TO BE PASTORS AND TEACHERS, TO PREPARE GOD'S PEOPLE FOR WORKS OF SERVICE, SO THAT THE _____ MAY BE _____ UNTIL WE ALL REACH _____ IN THE FAITH".

The Christian church has been given the gifts of the spirit so it will progress. By these gifts God seeks to mould the character and spiritual growth of His people. One of these gifts is the gift of prophecy. We should see it in the Christian church.

4. WHAT WAS ONE WORK OF A PROPHET?

EZEKIEL 3:17 "SON OF MAN, I HAVE MADE YOU A _____ FOR THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL: SO HEAR THE WORD I SPEAK AND GIVE THEM _____ FROM ME".

The prophet Ezekiel is said to be a watchman. He gave God's people warnings of their spiritual dangers to keep them from disaster.

5. WHAT IS ANOTHER WORK OF A PROPHET?

2 CHRONICLES 36:15 "THE LORD, THE GOD OF THEIR FATHERS, SENT WORD TO THEM THROUGH HIS _____ AGAIN AND AGAIN, BECAUSE HE HAD PITY ON HIS PEOPLE AND ON HIS DWELLING PLACE".

As well as a watchman, a prophet can be a messenger, faithfully delivering the message God gives. The purpose of a prophet is to guide and direct God's people, and call them to repent. They speak on God's behalf - they are God's mouthpiece. Not all Bible prophets have foretold the future. Samuel, Ezra and John the Baptist made no predictions beyond their time. Not all prophets wrote part of the Bible - Nathan, Elijah, Anna, to name three.

6. WAS A PROPHET'S MESSAGE ALWAYS WELCOME?

2 CHRONICLES 36:16 "BUT THEY _____ GOD'S MESSENGERS _____ HIS WORDS, AND _____ UNTIL THE WRATH OF THE LORD WAS AROUSED AGAINST HIS PEOPLE AND THERE WAS NO REMEDY".

MATTHEW 23:37,38 "O JERUSALEM, JERUSALEM, YOU WHO _____ THE PROPHETS AND _____ THOSE SENT TO YOU. HOW OFTEN I HAVE LONGED TO GATHER YOUR CHILDREN AS A HEN GATHERS HER CHICKS UNDER HER WINGS, BUT YOU WERE _____. LOOK, YOUR HOUSE IS LEFT TO YOU DESOLATE".

The world was not worthy of these men of God. The people would not listen, and to stifle the voice of God, they had killed the prophets He sent. Often, future generations accepted the prophets of the past who had been martyred, but killed the prophet living in their own time!

7. WERE THERE PROPHETS IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH?

ACTS 11:27 “DURING THIS TIME, SOME _____ CAME DOWN FROM JERUSALEM TO ANTIOCH”.

8. IS THE PROPHETIC GIFT LIMITED TO MALES?

LUKE 2:34,36 “THEN SIMEON BLESSED THEM AND SAID TO MARY, HIS MOTHER: ‘THIS CHILD IS DESTINED TO CAUSE THE FALLING AND RISING OF MANY IN ISRAEL, AND TO BE A SIGN THAT WILL BE SPOKEN AGAINST’..... THERE WAS ALSO A _____, _____, THE DAUGHTER OF PHANUEL, OF THE TRIBE OF ASHER. SHE WAS VERY OLD: SHE HAD LIVED WITH HER HUSBAND SEVEN YEARS AFTER HER MARRIAGE....”.

Simeon and Anna were two prophets living at the time of Christ’s birth. Some are surprised that a woman should fit into the prophetic work, but prophetesses are not uncommon in the Bible. Huldah in the time of King Josiah and Miriam, who prophesied by the Red Sea, and Deborah, who went into battle with Barak, were other prophetesses.

ACTS 21:8,9 “...PHILIP THE EVANGELIST ... HAD _____ UNMARRIED _____ WHO _____.

Philip, the Evangelist, had four daughters who had the prophetic gift. God makes no difference between male and female when He bestows His gifts on mankind.

9. IN WHAT TWO WAYS CAN THE LAST DAY CHURCH BE IDENTIFIED?

REVELATION 12:17 “THEN THE DRAGON WAS ENRAGED AT THE WOMAN AND WENT OFF TO MAKE WAR AGAINST THE REST OF HER OFFSPRING -THOSE WHO OBEY GOD’S COMMANDMENTS AND HOLD TO THE _____ “.

10. WHAT IS THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS?

REVELATION 19:10 “...FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IS THE _____ “.

The prophetic gift is also to be found in God’s last church. God’s people are described in the last days as those that keep His commandments, and have the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy.

11. DO WE HAVE OTHER EVIDENCE THAT THERE WOULD BE PROPHETS IN THE LAST DAYS?

JOEL 2:28,29 “AND AFTERWARD, I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT ON ALL PEOPLE. YOUR _____ AND _____ WILL _____, YOUR OLD MEN WILL DREAM DREAMS, YOUR YOUNG MEN WILL SEE VISIONS. EVEN ON MY SERVANTS, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT IN THOSE DAYS”.

Joel’s prophecy in chapter 2 is about the last days. The Bible is clear that the gift of prophecy can be expected towards the end of time. Seventh-day Adventists believe they represent the church with God’s last message to the world. They also believe that God gave the gift of prophecy to a young woman named Ellen Harmon.



12. MANY SCOFF AT PROPHETIC CLAIMS BUT WHAT SHOULD BE OUR ATTITUDE TO THE PROPHETIC GIFT?

1 THESSALONIANS 5:19-21 “DO NOT PUT OUT THE SPIRIT’S FIRE, _____ EVERYTHING”.

We are told not to scorn prophetic claims, but rather, put them to the test to see if they are genuine. “Prove all things”. Does Ellen G. White (nee Harmon) measure up to the tests?

When the Advent movement arose around 1840, God sought a man to be His spokesman. The angel of the Lord appeared to William Foe in vision, and commanded him to relate what he saw. He related two visions, but refused the third. Not very long after this, he became sickly and died. The gift was then given to a talented young man by the name of Hazen Foss. He refused to relate the vision given to him, and was told by the angel that the gift of prophecy would be given to “the weakest of the weak”. The third person to receive the gift was a humble, godly woman, named Ellen Gould Harmon. She was brought up in a Methodist home and was converted at a Bible camp meeting at the age of 12. Unlike her two predecessors who were offered the prophetic gift, she was poorly educated. She had only three years of primary schooling. She received her first vision at the age of 16, at a prayer meeting where there were over 60 people present. She lived for 88 years, during which time she received over 2,000 visions and prophetic dreams. She married a young minister, James White, and they had four boys. Widowed when 54 years old, she spent her time caring for the poor, the needy, and orphans. She also traveled and conducted public meetings where audiences up to 15,000 were held spellbound. She was a prolific writer. Her books, if placed flat on one another, would reach the height of a man. As Mrs. White felt the presence of the Lord coming upon her, she would say “glory” three times. She would then go into vision, her physical strength leaving her. Sometimes she would be strengthened supernaturally. On one occasion, with her arm outstretched, she held a family Bible, weighing 181lbs, at shoulder level for half an hour. Mr. America, who tried the same feat several years ago, managed to hold it for only four minutes. Mrs. White’s eyes were open in vision, but she was not conscious of her surroundings. She appeared to be watching something. At the commencement of her visions she would slowly exhale until all breath was gone. She did not breathe again until the vision was over, and some visions lasted over two hours. On various occasions, doctors examined her and tested her while she was

in vision. Two skeptics at one time held her nose and mouth for ten minutes, but her colour, blood pressure and heartbeat remained normal. These physical phenomena were also experienced by Bible prophets. See Numbers 24:3,4 and Daniel 10:8,17,18. Jesus warned His followers to beware of false prophets. By their "fruits" - that is, a Godly life and the results of their teachings, a true prophet will be recognized. The fruits of Mrs. White's life reveal her as a genuine Christian. She did not make many prophecies regarding the future, but history now testifies to the accuracy of what she predicted.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES 1890 - "The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury, by having repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord will arise to shake terribly the earth. We shall see troubles on all sides. Thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea. Navies will go down, and human life will be sacrificed by the millions. Fires will break out unexpectedly, and no human effort will be able to quench them. The palaces of the earth will be swept away in the fury of the flames. Disasters by rail will become more and more frequent: confusion, collision, and death without a moment's warning on the great lines of travel. The end is near, probation is closing".

In 1904 she wrote, "Soon great trouble will arise among the nations.... trouble that will not cease until Jesus comes".

Her books help the reader to a deeper love for Christ, and a clearer understanding of the Bible. She constantly exalted the Scriptures. She said, "I take the Bible as it is, as the inspired Word. Let not a mind or a hand be engaged in criticizing the Bible. Cling to it as it reads. I commend to you this book". Selected Messages, Vol.1, pp.17,18. Concerning her writings, she said, "The Lord has given a lesser light (her writings) to lead men and women to the greater light" (the Bible). Her writings are like a powerful telescope. It does not put new stars into the sky, but reveals clearly what is already there. Approximately, 40% of her writings are on healthful living. Her understanding of nutrition and health were far ahead of her time. Medical science has since discovered many things which were written by Mrs. White in the last century. For example, in "Ministry of Healing", p.327, she said, "Tobacco is a slow, insidious, but most malignant poison". All too well we know today the malignancies caused by smoking. Ellen White was given the unpleasant task of rebuking the erring. No one likes to be rebuked. At least the prophets in the Bible were rebuking others; we don't mind that of course! But it wasn't easy for the prophet either. Her writings excel on the subject of Christ and His saving grace. Christ said, "By their fruits you will know them". Notice the beauty and inspiration of the following passages:

EVANGELISM, p.185 - "Lift up Jesus, you that teach the people. Lift Him up in sermons, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls confused, bewildered, lost, to the Lamb of God... Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song".

STEPS TO CHRIST, p.67 - "He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in the place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned".

1 SELECTED MESSAGES p.367 "By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account, Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. He can say with rejoicing, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.'"

CHRIST OBJECT LESSONS p.311 "Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided, can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. All our righteousness's are as filthy rags."

God had promised the Spirit of Prophecy to the remnant church. It was given to help prepare God's people for the eternal kingdom. Just a final word from the Bible. "Despise not prophesyings". 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21. "Have faith in the Lord your God and you will be upheld, have faith in His prophets and you will be successful". 2 Chronicles 20:20.

To believe the writings of Ellen G. White is not to believe a woman - it is to believe God's messenger. She was inspired, as were the Bible prophets. In love, God has given us the Spirit of Prophecy, to save us from the deceptions of the end time world.

Friend, do you wish to prosper spiritually? "Believe His prophets".

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