Arthur White

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON QUARTERLY

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THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

SENIOR DIVISION, No. 268, SECOND QUARTER, 1962

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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.

Name.....

LESSON TITLES FOR THE QUARTER

1. How God Communicates With Man
2. The Call to the Prophetic Office
3. The Broad Scope of the Prophet's Work
4. The Prophetic Vision
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. Place and Work of the Spirit of Prophecy
10. Marks of the Remnant Church
11. A Gift That Guides and Guards
12. Prophecy, a Guiding Light
13. Confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy

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Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The gift of prophecy is one of God's choicest gifts to men. Through the ages the divine Revealer of truth has employed this agency as His principal means of communication between heaven and earth. A prophet is a spokesman for God, whose messages ring with truthfulness and authority. The word of God has come to us through the agency of prophets. Indeed, Seventh-day Adventists hold "that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament were given by inspiration of God, contain an all-sufficient revelation of His will to men, and are the only unerring rule of faith and practice."—"Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists," Declaration 1, *Church Manual,* page 29.

The Bible writers clearly implied that in the last days the gift of prophecy would be manifest in the church. Seventh-day Adventists see in the experience of Ellen G. White a fulfillment of this prediction, and in their official statement of fundamental beliefs declare:

"That God has placed in His church the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4. That these gifts operate in harmony with the divine principles of the Bible, and are given 'for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.' Eph. 4:12. That the gift of the spirit of prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church. (1 Cor. 1:5-7; 1 Cor. 12:1-28; Rev. 12:17; Rev. 19:10; Amos 3:7; Hosea 12:10, 13.) They recognize that this gift was manifested in the life and ministry of Ellen G. White." —*Ibid.,* p. 34.

The messages that came to Seventh-day Adventists through the agency of His messenger, Ellen G. White, came from the same God who spoke through prophets of old. But the messages of Mrs. White are not an addition to the Bible. She served the Adventist people in much the same way as Nathan, Gad, Iddo, and Shemaiah served the people of God in the Old Testament, and John the Baptist, Agabus, and Silas in the New Testament. See *The Great Controversy,* Introduction, page viii, trade ed.; page 10, missionary ed.

The line of inspired messengers of God who served God's people in Bible times included such women as Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Anna, and the four daughters of Philip. These messengers of God were His servants just as much as Moses or Paul or Peter.

Years ago Ellen G. 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.

The purpose of these lessons is to help our people gain this understanding, by presenting for study the manifestation of the gift of prophecy in Bible times as well as in modern times. As a basic structure, we shall utilize passages from the word of God to illustrate the work of the prophets of old. Parallels will also be drawn between the experiences of Bible prophets and those of the modern messenger of the Lord.

The relationship of the writings of Ellen G. White to the word of God will receive careful attention in these lessons. In order more fully to amplify some phases of the subject, extended notes have been used, making some lessons longer than others.

Because of the peculiar nature of these lessons and their importance to the church at this time, the Daily Study Record and the outline of the lesson have been omitted to allow more space for note material.

How God Communicates With Man

MEMORY VERSE: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." Amos 3:7.

STUDY HELPS: "The Great Controversy," Introduction, pages v-vii, trade ed.; pages 7-9, missionary ed.; A. G. Daniells, "The Abiding Gift of Prophecy," pages 15-21; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show (1) that the channels of communication between heaven and earth are open in spite of man's fall into sin, and (2) that since the Fall the gift of prophecy has been the principal channel for communicating light to mankind.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"Before the entrance of sin, Adam enjoyed open communion with his Maker; but since man separated himself from God by transgression, the human race has been cut off from this high privilege. By the plan of redemption, however, a way has been opened whereby the inhabitants of the earth may still have connection with heaven. God has communicated with men by His Spirit, and divine light has been imparted to the world by revelations to His chosen servants. 'Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' 2 Peter 1:21."—*The Great Controversy,* Introduction, page v.

Before and After Man's Fall

1. How did God communicate with man before the Fall? Gen. 1:27, 28; 2:15-17.

NOTE.—Adam and Eve then enjoyed open communion with their Creator. "The blessing for the human race was expressed 'unto them.' As intelligent beings they were able to listen to God and to receive communications. This verse contains the first revelation of God to man."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Gen. 1:28.

2. Since the Fall, how has God communicated with man? Heb. 1:1. Compare Isa. 59:2.

NOTE.—Sin erected a barrier between man and God which brought about changes in man's basic relationship to his Maker, but a merciful God could not fail to establish a means of communication with lost man in order to reclaim him. "In many and various ways" (Heb. 1:1, R.S.V.) God spoke to man after the Fall, seeking to reach him with messages of instruction and salvation.

Means of Communication

3. By what other means does God communicate with man? Ps. 19:1-4; Rom. 1:20.

NOTE.—"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.

4. Through whom did God warn Lot? Gen. 19:1-3, 12, 13. Compare Heb. 1:14.

NOTE.—From time to time members of the human family 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 13:3, 8, 9; Luke 1:19, 26, 27.

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

NOTE.—God at times communicated through dreams to individuals, giving some specific information or warning. See Gen. 40:5; Dan. 2:1; 4:4, 5; Matt. 2:13, 14. Those to whom God thus communicated were not prophets, nor did the rare experience place them in the category of prophets.

6. What other means did God provide through which He might reveal His will to ancient Israel? Ex. 28:29, 30; Lev. 8:8. Compare 1 Sam. 30:7, 8.

NOTE.—"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.

7. What did Jesus say concerning Himself? John 12:46. Compare John 1:1-5, 9, 14, 18.

NOTE.—All lines of communication and authority were embodied in Christ, "who was the desire of all nations, the Priest greater than Aaron, the Prophet greater than Moses, the King greater than David, the true Star of Jacob, and Sceptre of Israel."—Farrar, *The Life of Christ,* E. P. Dutton Co., N.Y., 1875, vol. 1, p. 146.

The Father on several occasions communicated with Christ in an audible voice. Matt. 3:17; John 12:28; Luke 9:35.

Prophecy the Principal Channel

8. Besides dreams and Urim, what other method of communication from God was available to ancient Israel? 1 Sam. 28:6.

NOTE.—Dreams, Urim, and prophets, "these were God's own appointed mediums of communication."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 683.

"The king had by his own act forfeited the benefits of all the methods of inquiring of God. . . . Could he expect to be answered by God when he had cut off the channels of communication that Heaven had ordained?"—*Ibid.,* p. 676.

9. By what means did God commonly impart His messages to prophets? Num. 12:6.

10. What is the message of the prophet frequently called? Hosea 1:1; Joel 1:1; Micah 1:1.

NOTE.—The expression, "word of the Lord," indicates clearly that God, not man, is the source of the message. In the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel the expression, "the word of the Lord came," is used many times.

Prophetic Guidance for Our Time

11. What does the Old Testament say of prophetic guidance in the last days? Acts 2:16-21. Compare Joel 2:28-32.

NOTE.—"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.

12. What is one important characteristic of the remnant people of God? Rev. 12:17; 19:10.

NOTE.—"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 (see on Dan. 7:25), 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."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* vol. 7, p. 876.

13. How did Paul refer to those who were waiting for the day of the Lord? 1 Thess. 5:4-6; 1 Cor. 1:4-7.

NOTE.—The apostle Paul envisioned the Corinthian Christians as enjoying a full, rich, well-informed experience, as "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" and as coming behind in no gift, as "the testimony of Christ," or the spirit of prophecy, was confirmed in them. See Rev. 12:17; 19:10.

Thought Questions: (1) Can you think of other methods employed by God to speak to man? (2) How does God speak to your heart?

Lesson 2, for April 14, 1962

The Call to the Prophetic Office

MEMORY VERSE: "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.

STUDY HELPS: "S.D.A. Bible Dictionary," article "Prophet," pages 879-883; A. G. Daniells, "The Abiding Gift of Prophecy," pages 22-29; 36-45; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show (1) the manner in which God called certain ones to the prophetic office, and (2) how the prophets' work was sometimes received by the people.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"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 two 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 (*nabî'*). 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 *nabî'*, '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."—*S.D.A. Bible Dictionary,* page 879.

The Divine Call

1. Who called Isaiah to his important work and gave him his message? Isa. 6:8, 9. Compare 2 Peter 1:21.

NOTE.—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). Elisha's call to the prophetic office was announced by Elijah (1 Ki 19:19, 20; cf. 2 Ki 2:13, 14). 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)."—*S.D.A. Bible Dictionary,* page 881.

2. How and when was Jeremiah called to the prophetic office? Jer. 1:4-10.

NOTE.—A prophet is one who speaks for God. In the first chapter of his book, Jeremiah presents as the credentials of his prophetic office the account of his divine call. "This 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."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary* on Jer. 1:4.

Ellen G. White 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 My word. Strange things will arise, and in your youth I set you apart 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,* b. 1, p. 32.

Prophets Through the Ages

3. How early in history was the prophetic gift manifested? Luke 1:70.

NOTE.—"It is the voice of Christ that speaks through patriarchs and prophets, from the days of Adam even to the closing scenes of time."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 799.

4. According to the Scripture record, what patriarch was first endowed with the prophetic gift? Jude 14, 15.

NOTE.—"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 life was a specimen of Christian consistency. Holy lips alone should speak forth the words of God in denunciation and judgments. 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, in *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* vol. 1, p. 1088.

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

NOTE.—The Revised Standard Version reads: "And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision."

That the words "no open vision" do not indicate a complete cessation of prophetic

utterance at that time is evident from the fact that they are immediately preceded by a solemn message delivered to Eli from the "Lord God of Israel," through a "man of God." 1 Sam. 2:27-36.

6. How was Elisha called to the prophetic office? 1 Kings 19:15, 16, 19-21.

NOTE.—Usually the call of God to the prophet was direct, as in the experience of Jeremiah and Amos. In the case of Elisha, God made His choice known to the prophet Elijah, and he was bidden to convey the message to his successor, whom he found faithfully discharging his daily tasks.

7. What gift did God entrust to Daniel? Dan. 1:17, last part.

NOTE.—"God has said, 'Them that honor Me I will honor' (1 Sam. 2:30). 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."—Ellen G. White, *The Sanctified Life,* 1956 ed., p. 24.

8. By whom was the prophetic gift exercised in early New Testament times? Luke 2:25-38. Compare Luke 1:41-55, 67-79.

NOTE.—Anna and Simeon had the gift of prophecy. Jesus pointed to John the Baptist as one of the greatest of the prophets. Luke 7:28. Christ referred to Himself as a prophet. Matt. 13:53-57. He fulfilled the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:15. Paul (2 Cor. 12:1-5), and John (Rev. 1:10), were prophets. Both indicated that the testimony of Jesus or the gift of prophecy would be seen in the church that awaited the return of Christ, thus suggesting the divine purpose that the gift of prophecy should remain in the Christian church till the close of time. 1 Cor. 1:4-7; Rev. 12:17; 19:10.

9. How does Paul describe the manner in which he received certain divine revelations? 2 Cor. 12:1-4.

NOTE.—"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.

10. What description of Elijah indicates that the call to the prophetic office does not remove the prophet above and away from his human characteristics? James 5:17. Compare 2 Cor. 4:5-7.

NOTE.—Prophets are human beings, and God only is infallible. True, God calls the prophet to reveal the divine message, but the prophet is a member of the human family still, possessing human faculties and frailties. Through vision he receives heavenly instruction and of this he faithfully bears testimony, guided by the Spirit of God. Thus he becomes a channel of heavenly communication, and his message is an inspired message. Naturally, the instruction received exerts a positive influence on his life. But, holy man that he is, he is not deprived of thinking ordinary thoughts or of conversing on topics of everyday interest. He may have strong home ties. He continues to be a normal individual, engaging in human activities, perhaps in his

community. He may make mistakes, as did Peter, the inspired apostle. See Gal. 2: 11-14. But this does not invalidate the divine message he bears for God. In our day, Ellen G. White lived an exemplary life. To this fact all who were acquainted with her bear witness; but said she: "In regard to infallibility, I never claimed it; God alone is infallible."—*Selected Messages,* vol. 1, p. 37.

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

NOTE.—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 show 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 the Scripture,* vol. 2, p. 40.

12. How were the prophets often treated? Matt. 23:29-31; Acts 7:52.

NOTE.—The life of the prophet was not an easy one. Often he was called upon to deliver messages of reproof or correction. Such messages were never pleasant, and at times led to a spirit or retaliation and revenge. The prophet must bear his message fearlessly, regardless of the outcome. Early in her experience Mrs. 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. 5, p. 658.

Thought Questions: (1) Can you think of reasons why the prophetic voice has been heard in modern times? (2) What attitude to the prophetic message do you assume?

Lesson 3, for April 21, 1962

The Broad Scope of the Prophet's Work

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

STUDY HELPS: "Selected Messages," b. 1, pp. 33, 34; "Education," pages 45-50; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show that the prophets generally were entrusted with a broad work that included more than foretelling future events.

THE LESSON

Introduction

From a study of the life and work of the Bible prophets, you will 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 and women spelled out by precept and example the high destiny of the church in holy living and witnessing. Elisha was a reformer and an educator. Nathan and John the Baptist were reprovers of sin. Isaiah was a counselor; Paul and Peter, evangelists and pastors; Ezekiel, a shepherd of God's flock. Ellen G. 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,* b. 1, p. 34.

Many Phases of Endeavor

1. What does God reveal to His servants the prophets? Amos 3:7.

NOTE.—The foretelling of future events is included in the opening up of God's "secrets." The prophet, however, is more than a *forecaster*. He speaks *for* God as His representative, and he speaks *forth* the words of the Lord as God's messenger. In each case, God's prophet opens up the "secrets" of the divine mind and will to the inquiring mind of man, imparting knowledge and guidance essential to his well-being.

2. What was Moses' work as Israel's prophet? Hosea 12:13.

NOTE.—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.

The Example of Moses

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

NOTE.—"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 Great Controversy,* Introduction, page v.

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

NOTE.—"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.

5. In what law did the prophet present instruction to ensure the well-being of God's chosen people? Mal. 4:4.

NOTE.—In the law given to Moses, God outlined in minute detail many moral responsibilities as well as civil obligations of the people.

"In the teaching that God gave to Israel, the preservation of health received careful attention. . . . Health principles were taught and sanitary laws enforced."—*The Ministry of Healing,* page 277.

Certain areas of guidance were clear and comprehensive, and among them emphasis was laid upon:

a. Cleanliness of person, attire, and dwelling in relation to disease. Deut. 23:14; Lev. 15:1-12; 14:44-48.

b. Proper diet. Lev. 20:24, 25.

c. Mental outlook. Deut. 16:11; 26:11.

"Had the Israelites obeyed the instruction they received, and profited by their advantages, they would have been the world's object lesson of health and prosperity. If as a people they had lived according to God's plan, they would have been preserved from the diseases that afflicted other nations. Above any other people they would have possessed physical strength and vigor of intellect."

"The Israelites failed of fulfilling God's purpose, and thus failed of receiving the blessings that might have been theirs. But in Joseph and Daniel, in Moses and Elisha, and many others, we have noble examples of the results of the true plan of living. Like faithfulness today will produce like results."—*The Ministry of Healing,* pages 283, 285.

6. Before Moses died, what view of the Promised Land was given to him? Deut. 34:1-5.

NOTE.—Moses was wrapped in prophetic vision, in a manner common to God's prophets in all ages. Scenes of the past and future were unfolded before Israel's leader, as if he were actually an eyewitness to the events.

"Every part of the country was spread out before him, not faint and uncertain in the dim distance, but standing out clear, distinct, and beautiful to his delighted vision. In this scene it was presented, not as it then appeared, but as it would become, with God's blessing upon it, in the possession of Israel. He seemed to be looking upon a second Eden."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 472.

What was shown to Moses was vividly described by one to whom similar views were given. See *Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 475-477.

Instruction, and Reproof of Sin

7. What Old Testament incident reveals the prophet as an educator, living and working with his students? 2 Kings 6:1-3.

NOTE.—"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. In the accomplishment of this object Samuel gathered companies of young men who were pious, intelligent, and studious. These were called the sons of the prophets."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 593.

"The schools of the prophets, established by Samuel, had fallen into decay during the years of Israel's apostasy. Elijah re-established these schools, making provision for young men to gain an education that would lead them to magnify the law and make it honorable."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 224.

8. What is a difficult yet most important feature of the prophet's work? Jer. 1:17-19; Ezek. 2:3-8.

NOTE.—"He sent His prophets to warn the guilty, denounce their sins, and pronounce judgment upon them. . . . In His providence the Lord has seen fit to teach and warn His people in various ways. By direct command, by the Sacred Writings, and by the spirit of prophecy has He made known unto them His will. My work has been to speak plainly of the faults and errors of God's people. . . . But I have been shown that it is not mine to choose my work, but humbly to obey the will of God." —*Testimonies,* vol. 4, pp. 12, 13.

9. In what role was the prophet frequently cast? Jer. 29:19; 32:33.

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

10. How did Zechariah endorse and simplify the messages of "former prophets"? Why was this necessary? Zech. 1:3-6; 7:7-14. Compare 1 Cor. 14:37.

NOTE.—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 G. White writings the messages of the Bible prophets are magnified so that the beauty of truth stands out.

"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. 5, p. 665.

Preparation of Men and Women to Meet God

11. What helpful lesson concerning prophetic guidance is taught by a simple Old Testament experience? 1 Sam. 9:1-10, 18-20.

NOTE.—Saul and his servant, not finding the objects of their search, recognized that God was mindful of their problem. They sought out Samuel, His messenger, for direction. They received the answer before asking their questions. In God's word and in the counsels of the spirit of prophecy we may find messages which point the way.

"There is instruction that the Lord has given me for His people. It is light that they should have, line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. This is now to come before the people, because it has been given to correct specious errors and to specify what is truth. The Lord has revealed many things pointing out the truth, thus saying, This is the way, walk ye in it."—Ellen G. White (Letter 117, 1910), quoted in *Messenger to the Remnant,* page 82, by Arthur L. White.

12. What message of hope did Isaiah give? Isa. 40:1, 2.

13. What appealing message may be considered as summing up the overall objective of the messages of the prophets? Amos 4:12, last part.

NOTE.—"Prepare to meet thy God" is the consuming burden of the messages of the prophets through all time. The first Testimony pamplet 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 last volume of the *Testimonies,* published fifty-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.

Thought Questions: (1) What phase of the prophet's work is most important? (2) How have the prophets influenced us most?

Lesson 4, for April 28, 1962

The Prophetic Vision

MEMORY VERSE: "I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets." Hosea 12:10.

STUDY HELPS: "Early Writings," pages 13-20; "Testimonies," vol. 1, pp. 58-61, 21-35; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show that (1) God uses visions and prophetic dreams to speak to the prophets; (2) physical phenomena sometimes attend the visions and help to substantiate faith; (3) there are varieties in modes of revelation, but the message is of the same divine origin.

THE LESSON

Introduction

God spoke to the prophet through visions. No one rule can be laid down concerning the manner in which the visions were given, nor the way in which the light was conveyed to the prophet. The words of Hebrews 1:1, that "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets," take on special significance.

The *S.D.A. 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 wak-

ing 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," pp. 1134, 1135.

Throughout Ellen G. 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 oral addresses and in numerous periodical articles, hundreds of personal, written testimonies, and in her many published books.

Prophetic Revelation of Divine Origin

1. In general, how did God communicate His messages to the prophets? Num. 12:6. Compare Gen. 15:1; Ezek. 8:3, 4.

NOTE.—"The Lord God speaking to Aaron and Miriam from the pillar of cloud, says, '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.'

"This then is the manner in which the Lord spoke through the prophets. By the power of His Spirit he takes complete possession of the mind, impressing upon its tablets those things which He is pleased to reveal. Then when restored to the natural state, the chosen person could speak or write out those words of instruction for others' benefit. Events passed before the mind in vision like a moving panorama. These in the normal state brought up again by the aid of the Spirit of God are conveyed to others."—George I. Butler, *Review and Herald,* May 12, 1874.

Some Visions Accompanied by Physical Phenomena

2. How did Daniel describe his experience in connection with one of his visions? Dan. 10:7, 8, 15-18.

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

NOTE.—"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."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* on Num. 24:4.

Balaam, once a loyal prophet of God, had apostatized. Because of his high profession as a servant of the Lord, Balaam would look upon the message he bore as a message from God. Therefore the Lord manifested Himself to Balaam as He would to the prophet walking consistently in the way of the Lord. See *Patriarchs and Prophets,* pages 439, 440.

4. How does Paul describe his experience while in one of his visions? 2 Cor. 12:1, 2.

5. Describe Ellen G. White's experience while in open vision during the early years of her prophetic ministry.

Answer: There were many who witnessed Mrs. White in vision. One, G. I. Butler, president of the General Conference while Mrs. White was in mid-life, in a series of articles for the *Review and Herald* reported as follows:

"They [the visions] generally, but not always, occur in the midst of earnest sea-

sons of religious interest while the Spirit of God is specially present, as those can tell who are in attendance. 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 everything 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.

6. What purpose was served by the physical phenomena in connection with the visions of Mrs. White?

Answer: "These messages were thus given to substantiate the faith of all, that in these last days we might have confidence in the spirit of prophecy."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald,* June 14, 1906.

Neither in the Bible nor in the writings of Ellen G. White do we find the physical phenomena cited as a test. It was an evidence—one among many—and 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 accompanied by physical phenomena. In the later years, God spoke to His servant in the silent visions of the night season.

Night Visions or Prophetic Dreams

7. During what hours did Daniel receive the vision described in Daniel 7? Dan. 7:1, 2, 13.

NOTE.—Often while the prophet slept, and his mind was free from what went on about him, God communicated 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 Abraham (Gen. 15:1) and of Daniel (Dan. 7:1), they seem to melt into each other." —McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature,* vol. 8, art. "Prophet," p. 646.

G. I. Butler observed that "when the Spirit . . . takes possession of the [prophet's] mind during one's waking hours, it is called a vision. When during one's sleeping hours, a dream."—*Review and Herald,* May 12, 1874.

8. Name another prophet who received visions at night. Acts 16:9. Compare Gen. 46:2-4.

NOTE.—"The visions of the night" were not equated by the prophets with ordinary dreams of ordinary persons, nor must we so confuse them. Wrote Ellen G. White:

"There are many dreams arising 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. 5, p. 658.

How the Light Came to the Prophet

9. How did the Lord in prophetic vision reveal to Ezekiel truths concerning the restored temple? Ezek. 40:2-4.

NOTE.—"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, ed., *Dictionary of the Bible,* art. "Vision," vol. 4, p. 871.

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

NOTE.—In symbols many facets of truth could be imparted in a brief representation. The word of God abounds in symbolic representations. To the mind of Ellen G. White there were often opened by symbols or figures events of consequence and meaning to the church. For example, the growth of modern spiritualism was shown to her as a fast-moving train plunging ahead with "lightning speed to perdition." It seemed to her that "the whole world was on board." See *Early Writings,* page 263. Sometimes the symbolic would blend into the real. See her first vision in *Early Writings,* pages 13-20, or *Testimonies,* vol. 1, pp. 58-61.

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

NOTE.—Frequently in Mrs. 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 guests 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 of that same year. Read her vivid description in *Testimonies,* vol. 9, pp. 92, 93.

12. What answer did Mrs. White give to inquiries concerning her visions and her state while in vision?

Answer: "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."—*Spiritual Gifts,* vol. 2, p. 292; *Selected Messages,* b. 1, p. 36.

NOTE.—In her introduction to the book *The Great Controversy,* Mrs. White 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."—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,* b. 1, p. 76.

Thought Questions: (1) Why cannot physical phenomena be considered a conclusive test of a prophet? (2) What tests of a prophet's work can you think of?

You need the Sabbath school and the Sabbath school needs you.

Lesson 5, for May 5, 1962

The Prophet Delivers God's Message

MEMORY VERSE: "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.

STUDY HELPS: "Selected Messages," b. 1, pp. 49-58; "Testimonies," vol. 5, pp. 654-660; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show that the prophet was a spokesman for God who bore oral and written testimony of what had been revealed to him in vision.

THE LESSON

Introduction

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 and the instruction he received. This he did in the best language at his command, and on different occasions employed different words in describing the same vision. Words were merely a means by which the message was conveyed.

The Testimony of the Prophet

1. What command came to the youthful prophet Jeremiah regarding the message God would impart to him? Jer. 1:17. See also Ezek. 11:25.

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

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

NOTE.—Through the spoken word the prophet conveyed the message of the Lord in a discourse before a company of people or in personal testimony by private interviews.

3. What were prophets at times bidden to do with the messages they received? Isa. 30:8; Jer. 36:2; Rev. 21:1, 2, 5.

NOTE.—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.' At the time this message came to me, I could not hold my hand steady. My physical condition made it impossible for me to write. But again came the word, 'Write the things that are revealed to you.' I obeyed; and as the result it was not long before I could write page after page with comparative ease. Who told me what to write? Who steadied my right hand, and made it possible for me to use a pen?—It was the Lord."—*Review and Herald,* June 14, 1906.

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

NOTE.—The messages entrusted to Mrs. White were written out by her and often conveyed by testimony letters. 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.

5. At times what help did the prophets employ? Jer. 36:4, 17, 18; Rom. 16:22.

NOTE.—Baruch aided Jeremiah. Paul implies that some of his messages were dictated. Mrs. White painstakingly wrote out her messages, but employed good secretarial help, which relieved her of detailed copy work. Of this she has written:

"While my husband lived, he acted as a helper and counselor in the sending out of the messages that were given to me. We traveled extensively. Sometimes light would be given to me in the night season, sometimes in the daytime before large congregations. The instruction I received in vision was faithfully written out by me, as I had time and strength for the work. Afterward we examined the matter together, my husband correcting grammatical errors and eliminating needless repetition. Then it was carefully copied for the persons addressed, or for the printer.

"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.

"But the reports that are circulated, that any of my helpers are permitted to add matter or change the meaning of the messages I write out, are not true."—*Selected Messages,* b. 1, p. 50.

Divine Messages in Human Language

6. What instructions were given to Ezekiel in connection with his vision of the temple? Ezek. 40:4.

NOTE.—"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" all that he saw to "the house of Israel." The revelation of truth was the Lord's. The language of the prophet describing the vision was the language of man. The prophetic descriptions of Ezekiel, Daniel, Revelation, etc., were written in the prophet's own words. Thus the divine message reached mankind in language he could understand.

7. Through which of his senses did the apostle John, while in vision, receive information and instruction? Rev. 1:10, 11.

NOTE.—John was instructed to write what *he saw.* "In the case of visions the scenery passed before their [the prophets'] mind, something like a panoramic view of a landscape, gradually unfolding, in symbolical imagery, forms of glory or of gloom; accompanied with actions of a corresponding character, not unfrequently exhibiting, as in actual occurrence, the future and distant events."—McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature,* vol. 8, art. "Prophet," p. 648.

"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 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. 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 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.

Concerning her own experience, Mrs. White has recorded: "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,* b. 1, p. 37.

At the General Conference session of 1883 an action taken set forth this concept in the following words: "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.

8. What prompted the apostle Paul to write his letter, known as 1 Corinthians, to the church at Corinth? 1 Cor. 1:11.

NOTE.—"Paul was an inspired apostle, yet the Lord did not reveal to him at all times just the condition of His people. Those who were interested in the prosperity of the church, and saw evils creeping in, presented the matter before him, and from the light which he had previously received he was prepared to judge of the true character of these developments. 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. . . .

"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.

Personal Testimonies of the Prophets

9. In what way was God's message of rebuke delivered to King David? 2 Sam. 12:1-7.

NOTE.—God through Nathan rebuked David as John the Baptist rebuked Herod for taking Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. A man of God also rebuked Jeroboam, king of Israel, for his idolatrous practices. These testimonies of the prophets recorded in the Scriptures are for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Similarly, personal testimonies written over a period of years by the messenger to the remnant church have been compiled into nine volumes, so that *all* might benefit by the prophetic messages sent to a few.

"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 "Testimony 15" [*Testimonies,* vol. 2, p. 9], speaking of the necessity for doing this, I said: 'I know of no better way to present my views of general dangers and errors, and the duty of all who love God and keep His commandments, than by giving these testimonies. Perhaps there is no more direct and forcible way of presenting what the Lord has shown me.' . . . In rebuking the wrongs of one, He designs to correct many."—*Testimonies,* vol. 5, pp. 658, 659.

10. In what firm manner did Peter bear testimony to a deceived believer? Acts 8:18-23.

NOTE.—"In a view given me about twenty years ago, 'I was then 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, reproved, 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. 5, p. 660.

11. Upon what divine power was the agent of prophecy dependent? 2 Peter 1:20, 21.

NOTE.—In answering a question in 1860 concerning the visions, Mrs. White reveals to what extent she is dependent upon the aid of the Spirit of God in delivering the messages:

"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. I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing a vision, as in having the vision. It is impossible for me to call up things which have been shown me unless the Lord brings them before me at the time that He is pleased to have me relate or write them."—*Spiritual Gifts* (1860), vol. 2, pp. 292, 293; *Selected Messages,* b. 1, pp. 36, 37.

A Messenger From God

12. 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.

13. Whom did Israel reject when they asked Samuel for a king? 1 Sam. 8:1-10.

NOTE.—When the people of God walked contrary to the guidance of His chosen representatives they offended God. 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. Then in the time of trouble I heard them cry to God in agony, 'Why didst Thou not show us our wrong, that we might have got right and been ready for this time?' Then an angel pointed to them and said, 'My Father taught, but you would not be taught. He spoke through visions, but you disregarded His voice, and He gave you up to your own ways, to be filled with your own doings.' "—*Selected Messages,* b. 1, p. 40.

Thought Questions: (1) Have you ever read anything in the Bible or in the *Testimonies for the Church* that seemed to have been written just for you? (2) When such messages were in the nature of a reproof, did you regard them as equally inspired with the gracious promises?

Lesson 6, for May 12, 1962

Testing the Claims of the Prophet

MEMORY VERSE: "Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. 5:20, 21.

STUDY HELPS: "Testimonies," vol. 5, pp. 671-676; "Selected Messages," b. 2, pp. 63-100; A. G. Daniells, "The Abiding Gift of Prophecy," pages 277-307; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show how (1) to test the work of an individual who claims the gift of prophecy, and (2) to apply these standard Bible tests to the life and ministry of Ellen G. White.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"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 which we shall study in this lesson, there are certain evidences which oftimes prove to be of great service in examining the claims of anyone who says he speaks for God. The message of the true prophet will be (*a*) timely, (*b*) of a practical nature, (*c*) on a high spiritual plane, not childish or mingling the sublime and the ridiculous, and (*d*) not tempered to curry the favor of men.

The testimony will be motivated, not by impressions or impulses, but by a definite vision from God, and in historical connotation we see the physical phenomena connected with the visions as one evidence among other evidences. We now turn to the basic Bible tests, and we shall examine Mrs. White's work in the light of these tests.

Four Bible Tests

1. By what unerring standards must the teachings of any who lay claim to the gift of prophecy be measured? Isa. 8:20.

2. What is another crucial test of a prophet's work? Deut. 18:20-22. Compare Jer. 28:9; 2 Peter 1:19.

NOTE.—The proof of a prophet's credentials lies, in part, in the fulfillment of his predictions. Note how this was found true of Samuel. 1 Sam. 3:16-21.

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

NOTE.—The fulfillment of certain prophecies may be dependent on the attitude of those concerned, whether this condition is stated in the prophecies or not. Many promises were made to Israel which were not fulfilled because Israel came so far short of doing God's will. Certain conditions arose which led the Lord to alter His purpose in leading the children of Israel promptly into the Promised Land. "Ye shall know My breach of promise," the Lord declared. See Num. 14:34, margin.

The Lord postponed the clearly predicted overthrow of Nineveh. The city was not destroyed in forty days, as the prophet declared, yet Jonah was a true prophet. See Jonah 1:2; 3:2, 3, 5, 10.

Of the conditional nature of God's promises, Ellen G. White, writing of the continuation of time beyond their early expectation and especially in the light of her statements that time was short, wrote: "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 that 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,* b. 1, p. 67.

4. What was given as another mark of a true prophet? 1 John 4:1, 2.

NOTE.—"Loyalty to the person of Christ —to His pre-existence, His Incarnation, His Deity, His divine Sonship, His virgin birth, His miracle-working power, the divine authority of His teaching, His substitutionary and expiatory death, His literal resurrection, His ascension, His mediatory and intercessory priesthood, and the promise of His bodily, visible, personal, and imminent return—this is the fundamental test for determining satisfactorily whether a prophet is false or true."—C. B. Haynes, *The Gift of Prophecy,* revised ed., pp. 110, 111.

5. What very reasonable test should be applied to anyone professing to exercise the prophetic gift? Matt. 7: 15-20.

NOTE.—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, (3) the character of the work which he attempts to establish.

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

Answer: "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, reproving 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.

7. How did Ellen G. White explain her experience as God's messenger?

Answer: "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.

8. In applying to Mrs. White's work the test of Isaiah 8:20, what do we find?

Answer: Ellen G. White's oral and written messages exalted the law of God and guided sincere searchers for truth to the Holy Scriptures.

" 'To the law and to the testimony.' While conflicting doctrines and theories abound, 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.

On the last page of her first book, 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.

9. Give illustrations of Mrs. White's predictions of future events.

Answer: In 1849 and 1850 she identified the mysterious knockings at Hydesville, N.Y., as the work of Satan and predicted that spiritualism would take on a religious mold, that it would explain away the miracles of Christ as the result of its power, and would sweep the world in its rapid and widespread growth. See *Early Writings,* pages 43, 59, 88. How accurately this has been fulfilled!

In 1890, years before "modern" warfare and our two world wars, she predicted the results of such gigantic conflicts. See *Messages to Young People,* pages 89, 90.

NOTE.—God opened to her mind scientific truth in advance of scientific discovery. Three illustrations are cited: In 1905 she stated significantly that "tobacco is a slow, insidious, but most malignant poison."—*The Ministry of Healing,* page 327. Recent scientific tests reveal that tobacco smokers of long standing may develop lung cancer while unaware of the developing tumor. Also in 1905, when discussing dietary indiscretions, she warned of "cancerous germs."—*Ibid.,* p. 313. Today medical science, as the result of extensive research, and after many denials, has linked cancer with certain viruses or "miniature germs" in both animals and human beings.

In 1869 Ellen White wrote: "Whatever disturbs the circulation of the electric currents in the nervous system lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind."—*Testimonies,* vol. 2, p. 347.

In the early years when Ellen White thus wrote, the idea that there were electrical currents in the body was quite foreign to the thinking of physicians. In fact, but very little was known about electricity at the time. But now we come down nearly a century from the time Ellen White wrote

of "electric currents in the nervous system" and find the scientific world is taking note of the tiny pulsating electric currents emanating from the brain, the frequency and size of which vary with the individual.

"Today several hundred laboratories in the United States and a similar number in Europe are recording and interpreting charts of the electrical discharges of human brains. Their total annual output of charts would girdle the earth. Hospitals all over the world have accumulated thousands upon thousands of brain-prints."—*Scientific American,* June, 1954, p. 54.

10. How did Mrs. White exalt Jesus Christ and direct men and women to Him as Lord and Saviour?

Answer: All her writings ring true as steel to the great fundamentals of Christianity. Especially in her book *The Desire of Ages* do we find multiplied evidences that testify to the dignity and honor of the Lord Jesus Christ who, as John wrote, "is come in the flesh." 1 John 4:2. Note the following: "The crucified Messiah is the central point of all Christianity."—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students,* pages 23, 24. "We are believers in Christ, . . . in His divinity and in His pre-existence."—*Testimonies,* vol. 6, p. 58.

11. What is revealed when we apply the test, "By their fruits ye shall know them"?

Answer: The fruits of the spirit of prophecy teachings as seen in the lives of those who consistently follow its counsels, as witnessed in the sound and rapidly growing work of the church, and as demonstrated in Ellen White's own personal life, all unite to declare that the tree which bore the fruit is good.

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."—*The Spirit of Prophecy Treasure Chest,* pages 10, 11.

A Warning Against False Prophets

12. What warning does John sound to guard the church from false prophets? 1 John 4:1. Compare Matt. 7:15; 24:11.

NOTE.—Ellen G. 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 in foreign countries and in America."—*Selected Messages,* b. 2, p. 72.

13. Are we justified in testing those who claim divine enlightenment by the messages given through the spirit of prophecy?

Answer: "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."—*Selected Messages,* b. 2, p. 98. (Italics supplied.)

Appeal to Our Faith

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

Thought Questions: (1) Have you personally "measured" the spirit of prophecy writings, using the "yardstick" suggested in this lesson? (2) What is the best proof in your mind that Ellen G. White was the inspired messenger of God?

Lesson 7, for May 19, 1962

Integrity of the Prophetic Message

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

STUDY HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 534-536; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show (1) that the messages of the prophets are dependable, in spite of the fact that the writers were human and fallible, and (2) that the messages of the prophet were not molded by influences about him.

THE LESSON

Introduction

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 were influenced, if his messages were but a reflection of the opinion or devices of those about him, or his testimonies originated with the thoughts of his own mind, then his message would obviously be false, and his claims would be rejected.

In the early years of Mrs. White's ministry a few attributed her visions to mesmerism. 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, 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: "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,* b. 2, p. 63.

The Prophetic Message Dependable

1. What can be said concerning the surety of the messages of the prophets? 2 Peter 1:19.

NOTE.—"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.

2. What did the prophets often designate to be the source of the messages they bore? Hosea 1:1; Haggai 1:3, 7, 13.

An Attempt to Influence the Prophet

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

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

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

NOTE.—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. Jehoshaphat barely escaped with his life.

Accused of Being Influenced

6. As Jeremiah delivered an important prophetic message to the leaders of Judah, of what did they accuse him? Jer. 43:1, 2.

NOTE.—Jeremiah's counsel which was rejected by many leaders in Judah is recorded in the preceeding chapter. See Jeremiah 42:4-22. Jeremiah had faithfully delivered God's message which he gave in response to inquiries that these same men had made concerning the course that Judah should take in a time of national crisis. See verses 1-4.

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

NOTE.—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 the message had actually originated with Jeremiah's literary assistant, and not with the Lord.

This attempt to dismiss as unworthy of confidence the written messages of the prophets did not cease in Jeremiah's day. 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. Mrs. White makes reference to this charge, but gives credit for the influences working upon her mind to "One who is mighty in counsel." She wrote:

"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."—Letter 52, 1906, quoted in *Messenger to the Remnant,* page 17, by Arthur L. White.

Mrs. White was instructed of God as to whom she could trust and whom she could not trust in the copying of her handwritten messages and assisting in preparing the manuscripts for the printer. She herself examined every page before it was sent out. We may be assured that the counsels were not altered as they passed from the handwritten drafts to the printed page. Mrs. White had no "ghost" writers.

God's Controlling Power Recognized

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

NOTE.—"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 he ventured to dally with temptation, and urged the messengers to tarry with him that night, declaring that he could give no decided answer till he had asked counsel of the Lord. Balaam knew that his course could not harm Israel. God was on their side, and so long as they were true to Him no adverse power of earth or hell could prevail against them. But his pride was flattered by the words of the 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.

9. How did Balaam, who was covetous, make it clear that his pronouncement would be dictated by God? Num. 22:38. On what was this explanation based? Verse 20.

NOTE.—"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.

10. When the king remonstrated with Balaam for not cursing Israel, how did Balaam answer? Num. 23: 12, 25, 26; 24:10-13.

Integrity of the Spirit of Prophecy Writings

11. To whom did Mrs. White give credit for the messages found in her books?

Answer: "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.

NOTE.—Further observation fills out the picture as we read her comments concerning the messages as set forth in other ways.

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."—*Ibid.*

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. . . .

"As my brethren read the selections from letters, I knew what to say to them; for this matter has been presented to me again and again."—Ellen G. White, *Southern Work,* page 97.

12. With what assuring words did Mrs. White answer the charge that she had been influenced in the content of her writing?

Answer: "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.

NOTE.—Addressing the officers of one of the denomination's large institutions at a time of crisis, Ellen G. White wrote from Australia:

"Unbelief is expressed by the words, 'Who has written these things to Sister White?' But I know of no one who knows them as they are, and no one who could write that which he does not suppose has an existence. Someone has told me,—He who does not falsify, misjudge, or exaggerate any case."—*Special Instruction Relating to the Review and Herald Office and the Work in Battle Creek,* page 16.

13. What answer did Mrs. White give to the suggestion that certain testimonies reflected her personal opinion?

Answer: "In the testimonies sent to —— I have given you the light God has given to me. In no case have I given my own judgment or opinion. I have enough to write of what has been shown me, without falling back on my own opinions. . . . Instead of repenting before God, you reject His words, and attribute all the warnings and reproof to the messenger whom the Lord sends."—*Testimonies for the Battle Creek Church,* 1882, page 58.

NOTE.—Discussing the editorial policy of the *Signs of the Times,* Mrs. White prefaced her counsels by saying, "Permit me to express my mind, and yet not my mind, but the word of the Lord."—Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors,* page 112.

The following words need no comment: "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 wis-

dom? In the judgment what can you who have done this offer to God as an excuse for turning from the evidences He has given you that God was in the work? 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' "—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 466.

Thought Questions: (1) What are the personal reasons that you would give for defending the integrity of Mrs. White's writings? (2) Have you noticed the uniformity of doctrine and emphasis in the spirit of prophecy counsels?

Lesson 8, for May 26, 1962

The Primacy of the Bible

MEMORY VERSE: "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, throughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

STUDY HELPS: "Selected Messages," b. 1, pp. 15-23; "The Great Controversy," chapter 37; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show (1) that the word of God is a trustworthy and infallible revelation of God's will, and (2) that when its purpose is understood and the manner of reading and interpretation is clear, and its message accepted, we shall find salvation in its pages.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"In His word, God has committed to men the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of experience."—*The Great Controversy,* Introduction, page vii.

"I take the Bible just as it is, as the Inspired Word. I believe its utterances in an entire Bible. . . .

"Brethren, cling to your Bible, as it reads, and stop your criticisms in regard to its validity, and obey the word, and not one of you will be lost."—*Selected Messages,* b. 1, pp. 17, 18. See also *Education,* pages 123, 124.

Inspiration of the Bible Writers

1. What claim did Paul make concerning the Holy Scriptures? 2 Tim. 3:15-17.

NOTE.—" '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.' "—*S.D.A. Bible Dictionary,* page 504.

A 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 proof of its divine validity is the change produced in the life of the student of Scripture. It "effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1 Thess. 2:13.

2. How did Peter describe the workings of divine inspiration? 2 Peter 1:21.

NOTE.—"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.

John says that he "was in the Spirit," (Rev. 1:10), "that is, I received the Spirit of prophecy, and was under its influence when the first vision was exhibited."—*Clarke's Commentary,* vol. 6, p. 972.

3. Did God communicate to the prophet, in each case, the very words of His message? Ezek. 40:4; 11:24, 25. Compare Rev. 1:10, 11.

NOTE.—"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; and the obedient, believing child of God beholds in it the glory of a divine power, full of grace and truth."—*The Great Controversy,* Introduction, pages vi, vii.

4. What term is sometimes applied to the prophets of God? Luke 1:70; 2 Peter 3:2. Compare 2 Peter 1:21.

NOTE.—The prophets who were moved by the Holy Spirit were holy men, men called of God to do a holy work, and certainly holiness of life was an essential prerequisite to the prophetic office. Only holy men and women were called to bear "the word of the Lord." 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 the person of apostates like Balaam who sold his allegiance to God for the favor of the world. The life record of Ellen G. White, while not free from frailties, was distinguished for its Christlike consistency and integrity.

Authority of the Scriptures

5. Of whom do the Scriptures testify? John 5:39.

NOTE.—"Jesus said of the Old Testament Scriptures,—and how much more is it true of the New,—'They are they which testify of Me,' the Redeemer, Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. John 5:39. Yes, the whole Bible tells of Christ. From the first record of creation—for 'without Him was not anything made that was made'—to the closing promise, 'Behold I come quickly,' we are reading of His works and listening to His voice. John 1:3; Revelation 22:12. If you would become acquainted with the Saviour, study the Holy Scriptures."—*Steps to Christ,* 1956 and pocket eds., p. 88.

"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.

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

NOTE.—"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.

7. What is said of the enduring nature of God's word? Isa. 40:8; Matt. 24:35; Ps. 119:89.

NOTE.—"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,* b. 1, p. 15.

8. What unique power is found in the word of God? 1 Peter 1:23-25; 2:2; John 17:17.

NOTE.—"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.

"Let the student take the Bible as his guide and stand like a rock for principle, and he may aspire to any height of attainment."—*Ibid.,* p. 322.

How to Study the Bible

9. What noble example in Bible study was set by the Bereans? Acts 17: 11. Compare Ps. 119:33, 36, 38, 40.

NOTE.—"We should exert all the powers of the mind in the study of the Scriptures and should task the understanding to comprehend, as far as mortals can, the deep things of God; yet we must not forget that the docility and submission of a child is the true spirit of the learner. . . . 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.

"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.

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

NOTE.—"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. The Lord will not prosper such a work. The effect will be disastrous, both upon the one engaged in it and upon those who accept it as a work from God. Skepticism has been aroused in many minds by the theories presented as to the nature of inspiration. Finite beings, with their narrow, shortsighted 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.

"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 upon thousands who are now wandering in error."—*The Great Controversy,* page 599.

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

12. What will be the experience of all who live by the truths of the Bible? Ps. 119:103, 104. Compare Luke 4:4.

Thought Questions: (1) Do you hold the Bible in the same high esteem as did Ellen G. White? (2) Cite instances in which the writings of Mrs. White magnify the Scriptures.

Place and Work of the Spirit of Prophecy

MEMORY VERSE: "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 fullness of Christ." Eph. 4:8, 11-13.

STUDY HELPS: "The Great Controversy," Introduction, pages vii-xii, trade ed.; pp. 9-14, missionary ed.; "Selected Messages," b. 1, pp. 24-39; "Patriarchs and Prophets," Introduction, by Uriah Smith; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show (1) that spiritual gifts are to operate in the church in the last days; (2) the relationship that exists between the Bible and the spirit of prophecy writings; and (3) to clarify the role of the spirit of prophecy in the remnant church.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"'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.

The Blessings of the Spiritual Gifts

1. Of what would Paul not have the Corinthian believers to be ignorant? 1 Cor. 12:1.

NOTE.—The church should understand the place and operation of spiritual gifts. We talk much about the fruits 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. Wrote James White in his preface to *Spiritual Gifts,* vol. 3:

"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 17. 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. 1: 10; Rom. 15:5; Phil. 2:1, 2; 1 Peter 3:8; 5:5. The gifts were given to secure this state of unity."—Page 29.

2. Enumerate the principal gifts of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 12:28, 8-10.

NOTE.—It is important for the church to understand the role of the gift of prophecy in its midst. Wrote Ellen White: "'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. 5, p. 661.

3. What gift did Paul say the Corinthian believers were especially to desire? 1 Cor. 14:1.

NOTE.—Wrote A. G. Daniells, for over twenty years president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: "The gift of prophecy is one of God's choicest gifts to the human family. Indeed, it ranks next to the supreme gift of His only-begotten Son and of His Holy Spirit to a world estranged and separated by sin."—*The Abiding Gift of Prophecy,* page 15.

4. Where were spiritual gifts to be manifest? 1 Cor. 12:28. For how long? 1 Cor. 13:9, 10.

NOTE.—The appearance of the gift of prophecy among Seventh-day Adventists has been recognized since the beginning by leaders of the movement. This faith has been expressed in General Conference sessions for nearly a century. The church has unwaveringly clung to its belief in the divine guidance manifest through the agent of the prophetic gift, Ellen G. 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. And because God provided that His instruction through the gift of prophecy should be published in books and made available to all, the blessings of the gift live on. We believe that these writings are God's inspired counsel to the church."—*Review and Herald,* June 25, 1958.

Purpose of the Spirit of Prophecy

5. What is God's purpose in bestowing spiritual gifts in the church? Eph. 4:11-14; 1 Cor. 12:7; 14:22, last part.

NOTE.—The testimony of Uriah Smith, one of the pioneers of the church, concerning the influence of the spirit of prophecy on the lives of church members will be helpful:

"Their fruit 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 falsehearted. They have warded off dangers from the cause of truth upon every hand. They have aroused and rearoused us to greater consecration to God, more zealous efforts for holiness of heart, and greater diligence in the cause and service of our Master."—*Review and Herald,* June 12, 1866, page 9.

6. How does the True Witness deal with the Laodicean church, and what counsel does He offer? Rev. 3:14, 19.

NOTE.—This chastening process is accomplished by the messages of reproof and correction given through the prophets. Is it not significant that this is brought to view in connection with the message to the Laodicean church?

Applying the words of this text to the testimonies she bore, Ellen White declared:

"The Lord has seen fit to counsel Elder ——, 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,* b. 2, p. 81.

7. 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.

8. How did the vision of the sheet let down from heaven, given to the church through Peter, teach an important Bible principle? Acts 10:1-35. Compare 2 Chron. 19:7.

NOTE.—As the vision of Peter corrected him in his error and prejudice toward the Gentiles, so the prophetic writings correct those who have a tendency to err from Bible principles. Wrote Ellen G. White at the close of her first book in which she presented the early vision:

"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. (Italics supplied.)

9. How does Mrs. White indicate the relationship of her messages to the Bible?

Answer: "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.

Writing further of this relationship Mrs. White observed: "The Spirit was not given —nor can it ever be bestowed—to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested."—*The Great Controversy,* Introduction, page vii.

NOTE.—That the writings of Mrs. White were not given to take the place of the Bible, the following extract from a testimony published in 1876 will show:

"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.

The Work of Mrs. Ellen G. White

10. What claim did Mrs. White make for herself and her work?

Answer: "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,* b. 1, p. 32.

11. What did Mrs. White refrain from claiming?

Answer: In a public address delivered October 2, 1904, in Battle Creek, Michigan, Mrs. White stated that she did "not claim to be a prophetess."—*Selected Messages,* b. 1, p. 35. Explaining this later, she wrote:

"During the discourse, I said that I did not claim to be a prophetess. Some were surprised at this statement, and as much is being said in regard to it, I will make an explanation. Others have called me a prophetess, but I have never assumed that title. I have not felt that it was my duty thus to designate myself. Those who boldly assume that they are prophets in this our day are often a reproach to the cause of Christ.

"My work includes much more than this name signifies. I regard myself as a messenger, entrusted by the Lord with messages for His people."—*Selected Messages,* b. 1, pp. 35, 36.

"My commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there."—*Ibid.,* p. 36.

"My work includes much more than the word 'prophet' signifies.

"When this work was first given me, I begged the Lord to lay the burden on someone else. The work was so large and broad and deep that I feared I could not do it. But by His Holy Spirit the Lord has enabled me to perform the work which He gave me to do."—*Ibid.*, pp. 32, 33.

12. What work did God "especially" assign to Mrs. White?

Answer: "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 impress upon all that the study of God's word will expand the mind and strengthen every faculty, fitting the intellect to wrestle with problems of truth, deep and far-reaching; 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.

Thought Questions: (1) Does the reading of these prophetic writings whet your appetite for Bible study? (2) When you read Mrs. White's writings do you find yourself thinking primarily of the writer's style or God's salvation; of Christ or Mrs. White; of the beauty of the language or the truth expressed?

Lesson 10, for June 9, 1962

Marks of the Remnant Church

MEMORY VERSE: "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.

STUDY HELPS: "Testimonies," vol. 3, pp. 446-449; vol. 8, pp. 41, 42; "Testimonies to Ministers," pages 132-135; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary;" "Prophets and Kings," pages 605, 606.

LESSON AIM: To identify the remnant church and to show that its final triumph is sure.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"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. . . .

"He has given His people a straight chain of Bible truth, clear and connected. This truth is of heavenly origin and has been searched for as for hidden treasure. It has been dug out through careful searching of the Scriptures and through much prayer." —*Testimonies,* vol. 3, pp. 446, 447.

"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.

"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. God has divinely appointed agencies—men whom He is leading, who have borne the heat and burden of the day, who are co-operating with heavenly instrumentalities to advance the kingdom of Christ in our world. Let all unite with these chosen agents, and 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,* pages 57, 58.

Christ's Church Through the Centuries

1. What far-reaching truth was given in response to Peter's confession of faith in Christ? Matt. 16:13-19. Compare Eph. 2:19-22.

NOTE.—"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.

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

NOTE.—"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.

3. After Christ's ascension to heaven, who was to be His representative in this world? John 14:16-18.

NOTE.—"He instructed His disciples regarding a most essential and complete gift which He was to bestow upon His followers —the gift that would bring within their reach the boundless resources of His grace. 'I will pray the Father,' He said, 'and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth.' John 14:16, 17."—*The Acts of the Apostles,* page 47.

4. What rich endowments were promised to the church with the coming of the Spirit? 1 Cor. 12:7-11. Compare John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26.

NOTE.—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. These gifts were set *in* the church, not *outside* of it. Wrote Uriah Smith in his introduction to the book *Patriarchs and Prophets:* "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.' "—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page xxi.

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

NOTE.—Jesus' promise, "Lo, I am with you alway," 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, "And hereby we know that He 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 forever." John 14:16. The gifts of the Spirit also are to be with the church until the end of time.

Christian Church in Prophecy

6. By what symbolic representation did Christ the Revelator present to John the Christian church in her warfare against the forces of evil? Rev. 12:1-5.

NOTE.—(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 represents Jesus Christ. See Ps. 2:7-9. (3) The great red dragon represents Satan primarily, and secondarily pagan Rome. See Rev. 12: 9; *The Great Controversy,* page 438. (4) The remnant of the woman's seed represents the last true church of Christ. See Rev. 12:17.

7. How did John describe the conflict of the church following Christ's ascension? Rev. 12:13, 6, 14-16.

NOTE.—Unsuccessful in his attacks upon the "seed" of the woman (Christ), the dragon next attacked the woman, the church. Persecution broke out first against the church in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1; 9:1, 2), later over much of the pagan Roman Empire, still later throughout papal Europe (Rev. 12:6). By the end of the eighteenth century the flood tide of persecution ceased. The time was now ripe for the fulfillment of the last part of the symbolic prophecy concerning the church.

8. How is the persecuting work of Satan against the remnant described? Rev. 12:17, first part.

NOTE.—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 corporate entity, God's visible, divinely commissioned organization on earth." See *S.D.A. 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.

Marks of the Remnant Church

9. What marks of identity are provided to distinguish the remnant church? Rev. 12:17, last part; 19:10, last part.

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

NOTE.—In Revelation 19:10 the angel tells John that there are certain brethren of his "that have the testimony of Jesus." In Revelation 22:9 the angel identifies these brethren of his as "thy brethren the prophets." The prophets are the agents through whom the gift of prophecy operates. Hence it is impossible to have the testimony of Jesus in the remnant church without a prophet—a heaven-ordained mouthpiece for God.

11. What further marks of identity does the remnant church possess? Rev. 14:12, 13.

12. In what Christian movement of these times have the gift of prophecy and the other marks of prophetic identity been manifest?

Answer: As students of Bible prophecy, Seventh-day Adventists see in the movement to which they belong a fulfillment of the specifications of prophecy. While others, honest in heart, are *potentially* members of the remnant church, it should be kept in mind that the Seventh-day Adventist movement itself represents the remnant of Revelation 12:17.

13. What message has been entrusted to the advent people? Rev. 14:6-13. Compare Matt. 24:14.

NOTE.—The people who give this threefold message constitute "*the* 'remnant' of the long and worthy line of God's chosen people that has 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)." —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary,* vol. 7, p. 815.

Wrote Ellen G. White, "God has a church on earth who are lifting up the downtrodden law, and presenting to the world the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. The church is the depositary of the wealth of the riches of the grace of Christ, and through the church eventually will be made manifest the final and full display of the love of God to the world that is to be lightened with its glory. The prayer of Christ that His church may be one as He was one with His Father will finally be answered. The rich dowry of the Holy Spirit will be given, and through its constant supply to the people of God they

will become witnesses in the world of the power of God unto salvation."— *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 50.

14. What did Jesus say concerning the triumph of His church? Matt. 16:18, last part. Compare Joel 2:32.

NOTE.—"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."—*Review and Herald*, Sept. 19, 1893, "The Remnant Church," page 53.

"Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study, and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord. But the waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His word and the testimony of His Spirit. He calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority."—*Counsels to Writers and Editors*, page 52.

Thought Questions: (1) Is it not possible to know the truth about God's remnant church and advocate the truth without being bigoted? (2) In days of uncertainty, what is the result of knowing for a certainty the truth about the remnant church?

Lesson 11, for June 16, 1962

A Gift That Guides and Guards

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

STUDY HELPS: "Testimonies to Ministers," pages 24-62; "The Abiding Gift of Prophecy," pages 330-369; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show (1) how the divine enlightenment which came through the prophet served to guide and guard the Lord's people in Bible times, and (2) how "modern Israel" also has been divinely led and providentially guarded.

THE LESSON

Introduction

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

Ellen G. 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 G. White an instrumentality of God's Holy Spirit sent to give direction and spiritual aid and comfort to His people.

Promises and Messages of Guidance

1. What were the prophets in olden times frequently called? 1 Sam. 9:9.

NOTE.—God sees from the beginning to the end. The prophet, or the seer, is sometimes referred to as the "eyes" of the church.

The prophetic work of Ellen G. White, from the earliest days of the movement, offered:

(*a*) *Protection against elements of danger from within the church.* When in the 1850's self-confidence and pride threatened the spirituality of the movement, the spirit of prophecy counsels exposed our perilous position as revealed in the first messages published in 1855 in the early testimonies. Fanaticism was also exposed and repudiated.

(*b*) *Protection against elements of 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.

(*c*) *Guidance in the understanding of basic Christian truths.* The humble 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. The five volumes known as "The Conflict of the Ages Series" were the outgrowth of this vision of more than a century ago.

2. How does the prophet Isaiah describe those who publish peace and salvation? Isa. 52:7.

NOTE.—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. What was shown to her that day is now known to all. 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 *Present Truth,* our first periodical, was born. Scores of people accepted the third angel's message in the months that followed. This first denominational printing endeavor brought "good tidings" and "peace" and "salvation" to those who read. And the spirit of prophecy counsels brought the paper to birth. Today forty-three publishing houses issue literature in more than two hundred languages, valued at more than $20,000,000 a year—"streams of light" going "clear round the world"!

3. What experiences in the New Testament church demonstrated the value of church order and organization? Acts 6:1-6. Compare Acts 15: 1-32.

NOTE.—What a blessing clearly defined organization was to the early Christian church. To similar protecting experiences in organization the "remnant church" was called, as discordant elements worked against unity. Of this Ellen G. White in 1853 wrote:

"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 1860, a group meeting in Battle Creek voted to call themselves Seventh-day Adventists and to recommend the name to the churches generally. In 1863 the General Conference was organized. Today the church is world-wide, with "gospel order" well established and operative.

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

NOTE.—Advance, advance to new and unentered territories, has been the watchword among Seventh-day Adventists. And in a night vision before the advent movement had sent a single representative to overseas lands, "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. Eternity alone will reveal the influence of the spirit of prophecy in the establishment of our world mission program.

5. In the days of Hezekiah, what remarkable instance of divine guidance and protection is recorded? 2 Chron. 32:22. Compare Isa. 37:1, 2, 6, 7, 33-37.

NOTE.—As Hezekiah the king and Isaiah the prophet 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 Chronicles 32:21), and the king of Assyria was compelled to abandon the expedition in shame. Good King Hezekiah is said to have been divinely guided "on every side."

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

(*a*) Initial counsels on healthful living in 1863 and 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 belted the globe.

(*b*) The establishment of a college in Battle Creek in 1874 in response to prophetic guidance. This school was the first of our major educational institutions, and was followed by hundreds of colleges, academies, and church schools in many lands throughout the earth.

(*c*) The reorganization of the General Conference in 1901 at a time when the work had reached a stage of advanced growth beyond the general plan of administration and leadership. Too much responsibility resided in too few men. In the session of that year, convened at Battle Creek, Sister White personally appealed to the leaders of the church, calling for a division of responsibility reaching down from the General Conference. As a result, smaller units of organization came to birth. Union conferences were organized and departments created to promote important phases of the growing work. Today Seventh-day Adventists have a strong system of church organization.

Messages that Protected and Preserved

6. In addition to leading the nation of Israel, what other work is Moses said to have done? Hosea 12:13.

NOTE.—Again and again through the long centuries God has sent His messengers, the prophets, to warn of errors and dangers, to instruct in right living, and to encourage His people to take a firmer hold of Omnipotence.

God miraculously delivered Israel, degraded in slavery and largely in ignorance and apostasy, from bondage by the hand of Moses and led them to the borders of the Promised Land. 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 dangers of disobedience and assuring them of the favor and blessings of God if they were obedient. By a prophet was Israel led and preserved during those crucial days.

7. What may God's commandment-keeping church, having the "testimony of Jesus," expect at the hand of the dragon, Satan? Rev. 12:17.

NOTE.—The remnant church is the special point of Satan's attacks. Could he overthrow the people of prophecy, he would succeed in thwarting the purposes of God. So from the first, when the people of the prophecy came into being, the "dragon was wroth, . . . and went to make war" with them. But in the text which informs us of Satan's declaration of war is the promise of the guiding light of the spirit of prophecy. A review of the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church discloses how "by the hand of a prophet" we have been "preserved" from Satan's many attacks.

One of the first tasks laid upon the youthful Ellen Harmon in the early days was to meet fanaticism. Her teachings rebuked false views held by some on the doctrine of sanctification. *Life Sketches,* pages 83-89. Attempts to set times for the Lord to come were squarely met as she was shown by the Lord that they would pass by. *Testimonies,* vol. 1, p. 72. Thus the unity of the church was preserved and the messages of warning through the spirit of prophecy erected a wall of protection against unstable and apostate elements.

8. For what purpose did Christ place the gifts in the church? Eph. 4:11, 13.

NOTE.—Paul envisioned the church living in unity, edified and perfected, with a membership stable in its doctrinal positions, not "tossed to and fro" by "every wind of doctrine" introduced "by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness." When Satan in his efforts to mislead souls has attempted to bring in misleading teachings under the banner of "new light," what a blessing it has been to the remnant church to have messages given " 'to correct specious errors and to specify what is truth.' "—Letter 117, 1910.

It was so at the turn of the century, when insidious pantheistic views were artfully pressed upon Seventh-day Adventists as new light. Prominent workers, medical and ministerial, who led out in promulgating these false views of God in nature did not see the evil fruitage of such teachings, which would have neutralized every essential Seventh-day Adventist doctrine. Not a few were intrigued by these beautiful new views concerning the power of God in everything. But at the most critical moment in the crisis, when many men knew not what views to accept, Ellen White, instructed in vision to "meet it," dispatched testimonies across the continent, which, arriving at the crucial moment, clarified the issues, settled the controversy, and saved the cause of God. See the full, thrilling story in *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy,* pages 330-342.

And so the church was saved, "not once or twice," but many times. And the warning, saving counsels given to meet these issues live in the Ellen G. White books to protect the church today.

9. What did the messages of the prophet Elisha do for Israel? 2 Kings 6:8-12.

NOTE.—The attacks upon God's people today may not be in the form of physical violence, yet they are no less real and perilous. One form in which the archenemy brings his attacks upon the remnant is from within, as misguided and overzealous souls misuse the spirit of prophecy counsels that were given to reform, as in-indications that the church has become Babylon.

This was particularly so in 1893 when a layman took that position and published a tract, "The Loud Cry of the Third Angel's Message," proclaiming the Seventh-day Adventist Church as Babylon and urging the coming out of a small group that would give the loud cry and usher in the speedy advent of Christ. The spirit of prophecy clearly and squarely met this delusion, and the Loud Cry offshoot movement was checked. The counsels published first in a series of articles in the *Review and Herald* are today found in *Testimonies to Ministers,* pages 32-62, and in a pamphlet, "The Remnant Church." Subsequent counsels touching this point are also found in *Selected Messages,* b. 2, pp. 63-71. All of the writings are preserved to save us from similar so-called reform movements today. Sister White wrote:

"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, en-

feebled and defective, needing to be reproved, warned, and counseled, is the only object upon earth upon which Christ bestows His supreme regard."—*Testimonies to Ministers,* page 49.

10. At a time of crisis in the experience of Israel, through what means did the Lord lead to deliverance and bring about that deliverance? 2 Chron. 20:14-20. Compare Judges 4:1-7, 14.

NOTE.—The prophetic message of Ellen White, heard on a Sabbath afternoon in 1868 in Bushnell, Michigan, was the turning point in the life of the Bushnell church. The preceding Sabbath the members had decided to disband. But the providential appearance of Elder and Mrs. James White, timely as it was, turned the tide and brought the victory. While speaking in a large oak grove, Sister White communicated to a number of the worshipers messages which God had given to her in vision two years before. Then the truthfulness of these testimonies was confirmed by the parties concerned and it became apparent to all that Mrs. White was indeed divinely inspired. A revival ensued and the church was saved. This is only one instance among many in which God's timely providence was demonstrated through the ministry of Mrs. White.

Thought Questions: (1) Though the modern messenger is resting in her grave, are not the testimonies living and vital as ever? (2) Is history repeating itself today, and is there need for guidance and protection now?

Lesson 12, for June 23, 1962

Prophecy, a Guiding Light

MEMORY VERSE: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." Joel 2:32.

STUDY HELPS: "Testimonies," vol. 5, pp. 467-476; "Prophets and Kings," pages 582-592; "Testimonies," vol. 1, pp. 179-184; "Early Writings," pages 269-273; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show that prophecy is one of God's means for preparing His children for the trying experience that awaits them in the future crisis.

THE LESSON

Introduction

It is God's intention that His people shall have a clear knowledge of what is to take place in the future and be able to face the future informed. Jesus forewarned and forearmed the disciples and reminded them, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." John 14:29. The coming of trials then, rather than taking His people by surprise, would be faced intelligently and would strengthen and confirm their faith in Christ, and, as Ellen G. 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, through 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 mankind. In harmony with His

declared purpose, God has again spoken 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. And the inspired message confirms the word of the Bible prophets and *aids* in a fuller and more complete understanding.

Prophecies That Touch the Individual

1. What experience will come, at the end of the time of trouble, to many of God's people who sleep in their graves? Dan. 12:1, 2.

NOTE.—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, they will not be denied their fondest expectation. They will be raised from the grave and witness the return of Christ. This will be possible because of the special resurrection of Daniel 12:2. Wrote Ellen G. White:

"It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. . . . In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying: 'It is done.' Revelation 16:17.

"That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. 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. See pages 636-640; *Early Writings,* pages 285, 286.

2. 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.

NOTE.—"Satan 'works with all deceivableness of unrighteousness' to gain control of the children of men, and his deceptions will continually increase. . . .

"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 560-562.

3. What astounding development did the apostle Paul predict would take place in the religious world before the end? 2 Thess. 2:3, 4. Compare Rev. 13:3, 4, 8, 9.

NOTE.—"The apostle Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, foretold the great apostasy which would result in the establishment of the papal power. He declared that the day of Christ should not come, 'except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed.'" —*The Great Controversy,* page 49.

"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."—*Ibid.,* p. 581.

4. What somber experience lies ahead for all of God's faithful people? Rev. 3:10.

NOTE.—"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.

"We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude.

"The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones."—*Testimonies,* vol. 9, p. 11. See also page 43.

5. What view is given of distressing troubles in the economic world? James 5:3-6.

NOTE.—"There are not many, even among educators and statesmen, who comprehend the causes that underlie the present state of society. Those who hold the reins of government are not able to solve the problems of moral corruption, poverty, pauperism, and increasing crime. 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.

6. What warning should restrain the child of God from entering into any confederacy with unbelievers? 2 Cor. 6:14-18. Compare Isa. 8:12.

NOTE.—"Men have confederated to oppose the Lord of hosts. These confederacies will continue until Christ shall leave His place of intercession before the mercy seat and shall put on the garments of vengeance. Satanic agencies are in every city, busily organizing into parties those opposed to the law of God."—*Testimonies,* vol. 8, p. 42.

"The trades unions and confederacies of the world are a snare. Keep out of them, and away from them, brethren. Have nothing to do with them. Because of these unions and confederacies, it will soon be very difficult for our institutions to carry on their work in the cities. My warning is: Keep out of the cities. Build no sanitariums in the cities. Educate our people to get out of the cities into the country, where they can obtain a small piece of land, and make a home for themselves and their children. . . .

"Erelong there will be such strife and confusion in the cities, that those who wish to leave them will not be able. We must be preparing for these issues. This is the light that is given me."—*General Conference Bulletin,* April 6, 1903, in *Selected Messages,* b. 2, p. 142.

Advance Scientific Information

7. What counsel was given to the mother of Samson before the birth of the child? Judges 13:13, 7.

NOTE.—Prenatal influences were so important in Samson's case that an angel gave instruction to his parents on this point. In 1905 Ellen G. White wrote:

"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.

The spirit of prophecy through Mrs. White earnestly counseled through the years the importance of the mother's influence on the unborn child. In scientific circles of the world such concepts were not generally held until recent years. In 1954, almost forty years after Mrs. White's death, an authoritative article appeared in a leading journal entitled, "There Is Prenatal Influence." It opened with the introductory declaration: "For years scientists have believed that your unborn baby lives an insulated existence, protected from all external influence, but this is not true. It is

exciting news that you can control the development of your unborn child."—Ashley Montague and Gertrude Schweitzer, *Ladies' Home Journal,* February, 1954. But the messenger of the Lord had written of these things long years before.

8. What far-reaching effects follow right dietary practices? Eccl. 10:17.

NOTE.—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, conveying to the reader the instruction given by God to Ellen White.

In 1958 Dr. Clive M. McCay, Professor of Graduate Studies in Nutrition at Cornell University, closed a public address, and later a series of articles, with these revealing words: "In spite of the fact that the works of Mrs. White were written long before the advent of modern scientific nutrition, no better over-all guide is available today."—*Review and Herald,* Feb. 26, 1959.

The Church Prepares to Meet God

9. 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.

NOTE.—"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. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God."—*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."—*Ibid.*, p. 471.

"While Satan was urging his accusations and seeking to destroy this company, holy angels, unseen, were passing to and fro, placing upon them the seal of the living God. These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb."—*Ibid.*, p. 475.

10. What question asked by Jesus suggests a condition that will exist in earth's last days? Luke 18:8.

NOTE.—"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.

11. What work will be finished before Christ comes? Matt. 24:14. Compare Matt. 28:19, 20.

NOTE.—It was difficult for the early pioneers to grasp the concept of a world work. Not until 1874 did we send our first missionary, J. N. Andrews, to an overseas field. In a vision of January 3, 1875, Ellen G. 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. But the greatly expanded work of the advent movement in all these and many other lands today, with thousands of churches, with mission stations, publishing houses, medical institutions, colleges, and food factories, testify that God has kept His word.

12. What words of the prophets apply to the church triumphant? Song of Solomon 6:10; Isa. 60:1-5; Joel 2:32.

NOTE.—The prophetic assurance of triumph gives courage to the believers. Note the following promises:

(*a*) *Ever on gaining ground.* "The church is to increase in activity and to enlarge her bounds. Our missionary efforts are to be expansive; we must enlarge our borders. . . . While there have been fierce contentions in the effort to maintain our distinctive character, yet we have as Bible Christians ever been on gaining ground."—*Selected Messages*, b. 2, pp. 396, 397, May 6, 1907.

(*b*) *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. . . .

"When you think that the work is in danger, pray, 'Lord, stand at the wheel. Carry us through the perplexity. Bring us safely into port.' Have we not reason to believe that the Lord will bring us through triumphantly?"—*Ibid.*, pp. 390, 391. (Sermon on Sept. 4, 1891.)

(*c*) *God will continue with them even to the end.* "When in the night season I am unable to sleep, I lift my heart in prayer to God, and He strengthens me and gives me the assurance that He is with His ministering servants in the home field and in distant lands. 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."—*Ibid.*, p. 406. (From an E. G. White message to the General Conference in session, 1913.)

Thought Questions: (1) If God is with His church till the end, is not the church a good place to remain? (2) If all church members were like me, what kind of a church would it be?

Lesson 13, for June 30, 1962

Confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy

MEMORY VERSE: "Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Acts 26:19.

STUDY HELPS: "Testimonies," vol. 5, pp. 668-670, 678-683; "Selected Messages," b. 1, pp. 40-48; "S.D.A. Bible Commentary."

LESSON AIM: To show (1) our need of accepting the counsels of the spirit of prophecy; (2) that certain guiding principles should guide us in our study; and (3) that one's happiness and salvation may depend upon his personal attitude toward this gift.

THE LESSON

Introduction

For a full quarter we have been studying the gift of prophecy. 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.

My Attitude Toward Reproof

1. By what figurative language did God describe the work of the ancient prophets? Hosea 6:5.

NOTE.—The hewing here referred to is the same as the hewing of stones for construction purposes. Here is an apt symbol illustrating how the heavenly Sculptor takes the rough granite of the soul and fashions it into a thing of beauty that will adorn the temple of the Lord forever.

2. What purpose did the Lord have in sending prophets to His straying people in days of old? What was the response? 2 Chron. 24:19.

NOTE.—"The question to be settled . . . is: Shall I deny myself and receive as of God the *Testimonies* which reprove my sins, or shall I reject the *Testimonies because* they reprove my sins?

"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 *Testimonies* are rejected, and many excuses which are untrue are offered to others as the reason for refusing to receive them. 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.

3. What messages did rebellious Judah ask the prophets to give? Isa. 30:10. Compare Ezek. 33:30-33.

NOTE.—"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. God will not be trifled with, and those who despise His work will receive according to their deeds."—*Testimonies,* vol. 5, p. 679.

4. What was Ahab's attitude toward the true prophet of God? 1 Kings 22:8. To what did such an attitude often lead? Acts 7:52.

NOTE.—" '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.

5. In contrast to the above, what was David's attitude toward the message that came to him from the prophet Nathan? 2 Sam. 12:7-9, 13.

NOTE.—Reporting on the work of Ellen G. White at a general gathering of workers in Europe in 1885, her interpreter and one of our leading workers in Europe, D. T. Bourdeau, 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, and earnestly endeavors to carry out the instructions it enjoins, exemplifying in a marked degree the rare graces of modesty, true humility, and self-denial. It identifies itself with those for whom it labors, bearing their burdens in earnest, persevering prayer, forgetful of self and ease, and keeping the glory of God and the salvation of souls in view, aiming to secure these at any sacrifice."

Understanding the Testimonies

6. As Paul recounted his experience before King Agrippa, what did he declare had been his personal relationship to heavenly visions? Acts 26:19.

NOTE.—Paul applied the message to his own life. The vision changed his work, his income, his associates, his whole life. He did not stop to question. He knew God had spoken, and he would obey. Should we not look into our own lives and ask, Are we obedient to the heavenly vision?

7. What principle is given to help the honest seeker in his study of revealed truth? 1 Cor. 2:12, 13.

NOTE.—"The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the word as a whole and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme—of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption."—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students,* page 462.

Just as the student is admonished to view the Bible as a whole, 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,* b. 1, p. 42.

8. What need often arises even among those who have known the present truth? Heb. 5:12. Compare 2 Peter 1:1-15.

NOTE.—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 dynamic, not a static, experience. The writings of the prophets offer basic principles to guide the life toward the goal of Christian perfection.

Mrs. White informs us: "I was then 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, reproved, and counseled."—*Testimonies,* vol. 5, p. 660.

To accomplish this effectively, she was instructed that her testimony was "to come down to the minutiae of life."—*Ibid.,* p. 667. Many times in her writings, principles are applied to a specific problem at hand.

9. What must we consider when we study *certain specific counsels* in the Bible and the *Testimonies?*

Answer: The time, place, and circumstances of the giving of the message. As Mrs. White wrote of the publication and use of her writings she declared: "Regarding the testimonies, nothing is ignored; nothing is cast aside; but time and place must be considered."—*Selected Messages,* b. 1, p. 57. It is proper to recognize the circumstances which existed for which certain specific counsels were written. We should find the principles and apply them in our experience today, for principle does not change.

NOTE.—Moses was commanded to remove his shoes, because the place where he stood was holy ground. Exodus 3:5. Respect and reverence in many countries is today shown by other tokens. Paul's counsel to Christian women to pray with their heads covered (1 Cor. 11:5) is under-

stood in accordance with the customs of the time and place, and is not considered obligatory in most countries today. 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 differently than with Israel. Each Christian is to study prayerfully how to apply certain specific principles to the issue at hand.

Proper Use or Misuse

10. Against what uses of the writings of Mrs. White are we warned?

Answer: (1) *Not to be used as an iron rule or club.* "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) *Not to be 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) *Not to select brief excerpts and use them 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,* b. 1, p. 179.

11. Have the passage of the years and the circumstances of modern times made the prophetic writings obsolete?

Answer: "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. From address given by Mrs. White at the General Conference of 1909.

NOTE.—"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,* b. 1, p. 41. Written in 1907.

A Vital Question for All

12. In Paul's appeal to Agrippa, what pertinent question did he ask? Acts 26:27. Compare 2 Kings 17:13, 14; Luke 24:25.

NOTE.—When the prophetic message, with clear, convincing evidence, reaches the heart, it is perilous to turn away in disbelief.

"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. 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. 674.

13. When there is no prophetic vision, what dire consequences result? Prov. 29:18. Compare 1 Sam. 3:1.

NOTE.—"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,* b. 1, p. 48.

14. With what words did Jehoshaphat encourage the people as they followed the Lord's direction given through the prophet? 2 Chron. 20:20.

NOTE.—Writing 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. The testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given, as scripture is explained by scripture. Many will read with eagerness the messages reproving wrong, that they may learn what they may do to be saved. . . . 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 that since 1846 God has been sending His people. These messages are to find their place in hearts, and transformations will take place."—*Selected Messages,* b. 1, pp. 41, 42.

Thought Questions: (1) What advantages accrue to the Christian who orders his life by the word of God and the testimonies of His Spirit? (2) What is to be gained by rejecting the counsel of the Lord? (3) Is neglect of the *Testimonies* as hazardous as their rejection? (4) Is your position on the spirit of prophecy positive and decided?

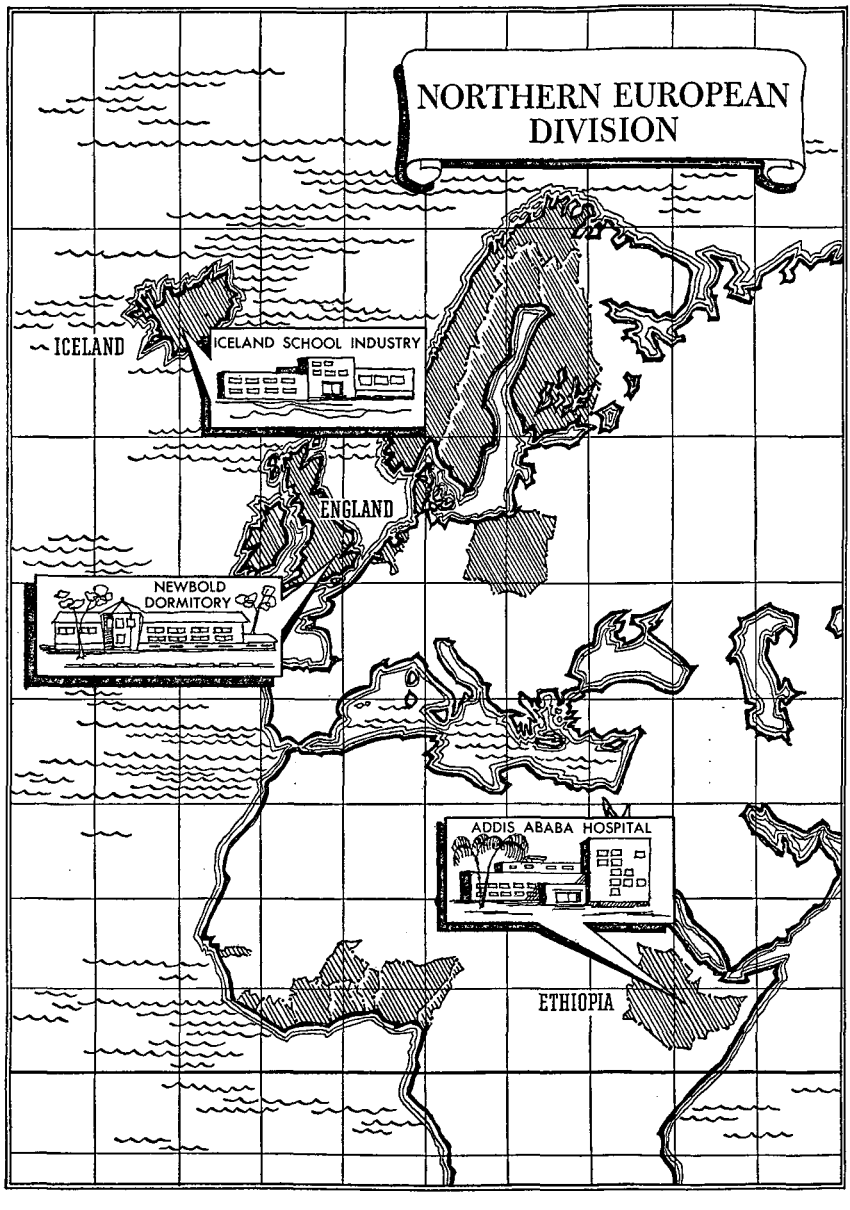
Lessons for the Third Quarter, 1962

Sabbath school members who have failed to receive a senior *Lesson Quarterly* for the third quarter will be helped by the following outline in studying the first lesson. The title of the series is, "Women of the Bible." The first lesson is entitled "Eve, 'The Mother of All Living.'" The Memory Verse is Genesis 2:18. The texts to be studied are:

Ques. 1. Gen. 2:18-20.
Ques. 2. Gen. 2:21, 22.
Ques. 3. Gen. 2:23.
Ques. 4. Eph. 5:28.
Ques. 5. Matt. 19:3-6.
Ques. 6. Gen. 2:15.
Ques. 7. Gen. 2:16, 17.
Ques. 8. Gen. 3:1.
Ques. 9. Gen. 3:2-6.
Ques. 10. Gen. 3:7.
Ques. 11. Gen. 3:12, 13.
Ques. 12. Gen. 3:15.
Ques. 13. Gen. 3:16.
Ques. 14. Gen. 4:1, 2; 5:3, 4.

Northern European Division Statistics

Union Mission	Population	No. of Churches	Church Members	Sab. School Members
British U. C.	57,543,473	111	9,252	8,837
Ethiopian U. M.	23,570,000	13	3,874	6,703
Finland U. C.	4,086,400	46	5,181	5,151
Iceland C.	170,000	8	415	619
Netherlands U. C.	11,000,000	43	2,717	2,360
Polish U. C.	30,000,000	64	3,622	4,158
Swedish U. C.	7,786,066	71	3,783	3,502
West African U. M.	49,390,730	177	25,032	60,345
West Nordic U. C.	8,153,000	138	8,938	7,976
Greenland M.	37,368	1	8	9
Division Totals	191,737,037	672	62,822	99,660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ENGLAND
NEWBOLD DORMITORY
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ETHIOPIA