

Inspired Revelations: The Gift of Prophecy

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

To be like Jesus in character is God's aim for his people. From the beginning it was God's plan that members of the human family, created in his image, should develop God-like characters. To accomplish this, our first parents in Eden were to receive instruction from Christ and the angels in face-to-face converse. But after Adam and Eve sinned, they could no longer freely speak to heavenly beings in this manner. **Counsels to the Church 9.2.**

He clearly states that spiritual prosperity hinges upon believing His prophets:

2Ch 20:20 *And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.*

It is God's purpose that his people shall be informed and enlightened, knowing and understanding not only the times in which they live but also what is yet to come. This contrasts God's people, "the children of light," **1 Thessalonians 5:5**, with the people of the world.

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

The Scriptures testify that one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy –

Eph 4:11 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

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

This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church –

Through these prophets, members of the human family are led to an understanding of the conflict in earth's closing days, and of the means provided by God to care for his work and to perfect the characters of his people. The church at this time will be in conflict, for John saw Satan as he “*went to make war with the remnant.*” The apostle John identifies the members of the last-day church, “the remnant church,” as those “*which keep the commandments of God,*” **Revelation 12:17**, thus making them a commandment-keeping church. This remnant church would also have “*the testimony of Jesus,*” which is “*the spirit of prophecy.*”

Rev 12:17 *And the dragon was wrath 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 19:10 *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

We believe it was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White –

Paul states that the church that is expectantly waiting for the coming of Christ would come behind in no gift (**1 Corinthians 1:7, 8**). It would be blessed with the gift of the testimony of Christ. When this church of prophecy—the Seventh-day Adventist church—came into being in the mid-1800s, a voice was heard among us, saying, “God has shown me in holy vision.” These were not boasting words, but the utterance of a maiden of seventeen years who had been called to speak for God. Through seventy years of faithful ministry that voice was heard, guiding, correcting, instructing. And that voice is still heard today through the thousands of pages written by the Lord's chosen messenger, Ellen G. White. **Counsels to the Church 10.**

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

The gift of prophecy is not limited to men. In addition to many men who had the gift of prophecy, God also gave the gift to at least eight women: Anna (**Luke 2:36-38**); Miriam (**Exodus 15:20**); Deborah (**Judges 4:4**); Huldah (**2 Kings 22:14**); and the four daughters of Philip, an evangelist (**Acts 21:8, 9**).

Joe 2:28 *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:*

(See Acts 2:14-21).

Her writings speak with prophetic authority and provide comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction to the church –

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

The work of the prophet includes much more than just making predictions. Moses, a prophet of God who wrote six books of the Bible, wrote very little about what was to come in the future. His work is described by Hosea in its broader sense:

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

If there is to be a similarity to this in the final deliverance, it must be that the gift of prophecy, as has been shown in the Scripture citations, is to act its part in preparing a people for that event. As we are nearing this time of that final deliverance, and are in the very period when a people should be heralding the glorious advent of Christ, the inquiry naturally arises, Where is to be found the gift of prophecy? ***The Review and Herald, July 11, 1899***

Jos 1:8 *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

A true prophet's work primarily is to serve the church as opposed to unbelievers. Although a prophet's message may sometimes edify the public, the primary purpose of prophecy is to serve the church.

1Co 14:22 *... but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.*

They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested –

If some self-proclaimed prophet suddenly arose and began drawing crowds with stirring messages, healing the sick, raising the dead, bringing fire from heaven, and revealing knowledge of one's personal secrets – ought we to believe in him or her?

Isa 8:20 *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

The working of great miracles is NOT proof that a prophet is of God.

Revelation 16:14 *They are the spirits of devils, working miracles.*

The devil and his emissaries also have the power to work miracles. Miracles prove only one thing: supernatural power. But such power comes from either God or Satan.

The Bible qualifications for a true prophet include:

1. Live a godly life (**Matthew 7:15-20**).
2. Be called to service by God (**Isaiah 6:1-10; Jeremiah 1:5-10; Amos 7:14, 15**).
3. Speak and write in harmony with the Bible (**Isaiah 8:19, 20**).
4. Predict events that will come true (**Deuteronomy 18:20-22**).
5. Will have visions and dreams (**Numbers 12:6**).

Deu 13:1-5 *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, (2) And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; (3) Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. (4) Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. (5) And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.*

Prophets do not express their own private opinions in spiritual matters. Their thoughts come from Jesus, through the Holy Spirit.

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

Isa 28:10 *For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:*

Final thoughts

Generally, God's plan has been to use the gifts of the Spirit include the Spirit of Prophecy to evangelize to the body of Christ:

Eph 4:11-13 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; . . . Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God*

True prophets reveal exciting new facets of old-time Bible doctrines that were not obvious until pointed out by the prophet (**Amos 3:7**), lead God's people to a closer walk with Jesus and a deeper study of His Word, help God's people understand difficult, unclear, or unnoticed portions of the Bible so that they suddenly come to life for us and bring great joy, help protect God's people from fanaticism, deception, and spiritual stupor, help God's people understand end-time prophecies which, verified by everyday news events, suddenly take on new meaning and help God's people sense the certainty of Jesus' soon return and the end of the world.