

False and True Prophets

How to Tell the Difference

The Bible defines inspiration as a process in which God uniquely imparts eternally important truths through *"his servants, the prophets,"* who *"at sundry times and in divers manners"* have spoken to their contemporaries and to those who would later follow to enable them to understand the divine will of God for their lives.

Prophets were also called seers. A seer is one who perceives things that do not lie in the realm of natural sight or hearing. Although used synonymously to indicate a person who possesses the prophetic gift, the two words illustrate basically separate phases of the experience of the prophet.

"Seer" denotes the reception of the message from God by the prophet. It indicates that God has opened to the view and hearing of the prophet that which is indiscernible to one whom does not possess the prophetic gift. Similar in meaning is another Old Testament word translated "seer." The Hebrew word *Chozeh* (pronounced *Hozeh*) is derived from a word meaning "to see" or "to behold."

From the same source comes the word for "vision," in the sense of a divinely inspired vision. While the words give us various insights into the relationship of the prophet to God's message, all the words designate the prophet in his office as a specific spokesman for God.

As an individual the prophet was fundamentally no different from any other devout follower of God. There was something that set a prophet apart from the crowd, however, and that was their unique relationship with God. No person who had ever had a vision or dream of the throne of God, and had the privilege of conversing with the angels, or of hearing their name called by the divine voice to the prophetic office, could again be the same.

And maybe it is because of that uniqueness that we tend to esteem a prophet higher in our respect than most others. Which can make us vulnerable to being deceived by the same prophet if for some reason they were to stumble in their relationship and walk with God—like Balaam had done in betraying his trust. So, Jesus gave us some insights and warnings about such deceptions. One such warning we find in Matthew 7:15, *"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."*

A FALSE PROPHET

So, we have true prophets/seers and Jesus warns to beware of false prophets/seers. Is it possible to tell the difference? There must be a way or else the warning that Jesus is giving would include ALL prophets, but He didn't do that. He warned us to look out for false prophets/seers that dream dreams, as the Bible says.

Jeremiah 17:9, *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"* We do not know our own hearts let alone can we read the heart of others. So how can we obey Jesus and discern the false prophet? Jesus goes on to say in Matthew 7:16-17, *"Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? ¹⁷ Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit."*

Jesus gives us some tests to separate the true from the false and that is what we must learn if we wish to be obedient to Jesus and not fall into deception from a false prophet. I want to begin by speaking about False Prophets.

If a prophet is a teller of the word of God, then we can then see that the antithesis must be one who misrepresents God; one who told either his own words or the words of the devil or a demon, but certainly not a message from God. The Bible tells us a great deal about false prophets, they're familiar both in the Old Testament and in the New. Notice what it says in Deuteronomy 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."*

It was extremely dangerous to be a false prophet. God is telling Israel here that it takes more than a vision or dream and a miracle to indicate someone as a prophet of God. Their message must be in harmony with previously revealed truth. If it was found that it was not in harmony then that person was to be put to death, as it was evident they were trying to lead God's people astray.

The prophet Ezekiel was in a concentration camp by the river *Chebar*, and at the same time his contemporary, Jeremiah, was in the city of Jerusalem telling the people that they were going to be deported and exiled, and the city was going to be destroyed. And as Jeremiah was preaching that destruction was coming—the Babylonians were God's instrument to come and to sack the city and take the people away to Babylon for 70 years—he was prophesying true things; Satan was raising false prophets all around in Jerusalem preaching against Jeremiah and his message from God.

There was one false prophet in particular called Hananiah that you read all about in Jeremiah 28. The Lord told Jeremiah to wear a yoke and give a message to the king about Babylon and notice verses 10-11, *"Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. ¹¹ And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way."* Hananiah was an opportunist, and he seized the opportunity to be praised by the King and people.

Isaiah faced the same thing. We read in Isaiah 30:8-11, *"Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: ⁹ That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: ¹⁰ Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: ¹¹ Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us."* They knew Isaiah to be a true prophet but wanted nothing to do with him or with God. The very thought of holiness stirred within them feelings of resentment and hatred against Isaiah. The people said to the prophets, to the seers: 'See not' –don't see these things, 'Prophecy not unto us right things, but speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits' –literally 'Tell us lies! We don't want to hear what you're saying, so tell us what we want to hear.'

These false prophets, motivated by their own desire for popularity and their own self-conscious pride, prophesied to the people what they wanted to hear. But not only were they motivated by their own popularity, but also to a substantial extent they were motivated by nationality, they were motivated by an appeal to national pride. Jonah, a true prophet of God, had this issue for a time and that is one reason he tried to run away from giving God's message to Nineveh. You see, the nation of Israel hated the Ninevites.

Not only were these false prophets motivated by popularity and by nationality, but also self-interest. They wanted wealth and worldly security. Balaam is one example of that, and you can go right through the whole of the Old Testament: men and women, false prophets who were only motivated by their own desire for popularity, by nationality, and by their own greed and self-interest.

In the New Testament the first occurrence that we have in reference to false prophets is in the Sermon on the Mount here in Matthew 7:15, "*Beware of false prophets*" Then in Matthew 24:11, 24, "*And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many... 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*" Jesus is telling us that there will be false prophets that arise whose deceptions, signs and wonders are so good that even the very elect of God would be tempted to fall for them.

As we go through the New Testament, we find that the early Church must have been absolutely plagued with such false or what the Greek calls "*pseudo-prophets*," for in nearly every apostolic letter it contains a severe warning against pseudo-false prophets. In some of the letters they use the Greek word '*pseudo-prophetes*,' pseudo-prophets literally, and that's the word that is used in Matthew 7:15. A prophet was one who was inspired by God, and these '*pseudo-prophetes*'—false prophets—were saying that God also inspired them with visions and dreams. They even gave signs and wonders—miracles.

It's similar to another word that you find in only one place in the New Testament, 2 Corinthians 11:13, '*pseudapostolos*,' meaning false apostles. These false apostles weren't just claiming inspiration, but they were claiming that God had put His hand upon them to decide things within the church, and to teach the word of God and lay down doctrine. They were more than prophets, they were apostles. Paul says, first apostles then prophets, then pastors and teachers.

A similar term in the Greek is '*pseudod-idodascalos*,' meaning false teachers. So, you have in the Greek language *pseudo-prophets*, those saying they are seers/dreamers inspired of God; *pseudo-apostles*, those saying that they're called of God to direct the church and to lay down doctrine; and *pseudo-teachers*, those who teach false doctrine. 2 Peter 2:1, "*But there were false prophets--pseudoprophetes also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers--pseudod-idodascalos—among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*"

We don't have time to look at all of these different titles, but you have false brothers spoken of, false speakers, false witnesses, and even in Matthew 24 we have *pseudo-Christoi*—false Christs! Those who the Lord said would pretend to be the Messiah.

Now you will notice that all these Greek words have the word '*pseudo*,' or '*pseuda*,' at the front of them. We have that word in our English language: '*pseudo*.' It literally means in the Greek 'a lie', something that is false, something that is a pretend or imposter and that is exactly what the word

means in our language today. Webster defines pseudo as: *false, a prefix signifying false, counterfeit or spurious.*

Acts 20:26-31, *"Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. 27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. 28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."* Paul is warning the Christians day and night with tears that false prophets, teachers, as grievous wolves would arise from within the church, and his clarion cry, like our Savior's, was to 'Beware!'

The *Didache*, known as "The Teaching," or, "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," is a mysterious primitive Church document describing early Christian ethics, practices, and order. It was a discipline to prepare new converts for baptism. It is an interesting history of the Christian faith and thinking of the author, which is unknown, but it gives us a historical reference outside the Bible of Christian thoughts and practices of that time. And take it as a historical document only as it is not inspired though there are truths from the Bible within it.

The document says that Christians are to beware if any prophet or any preacher remains in their town or in their home over three days as he would then be a false prophet. It goes on to say that if any of them ask anything more than bread, he is a false prophet. If anybody asks for money, or orders a meal to be set forth, and begins to demand things other than necessary bread and water, he is a false prophet. If he stays in your home and he has no trade, refuses to work but sits there all day, you must give him some work! And if you can't get him to work, he is and I quote: *'a trafficker in Christ, beware of such!'* A trafficker in Christ meaning using Christ for his own ends. The motivation is selfish ambition. This is an interesting history of what many Christians at that time felt about testing a professed prophet.

Fortunately, we have the Bible to help us to detect who is false and who is true when it comes to Apostles, prophets, teachers, and Christians! Paul says in 2 Timothy 4:3-4, *"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."* Paul says because of their perverted "lusts" these shallow minded hearers "itch" for fanciful interpretations of Scripture with which to gratify their curiosity and personal "desires." They are interested only in those portions of Scripture they can construe as promising them peace and security. They neglect the stern demands of "sound doctrine," which cut deep into the soul. They have a superficial desire for religion, but only for so much of it as will not disturb the routine of their perverted lives. They want false prophets and teachers to give them worldly security! Jeremiah 5:31, *"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"*

A false prophet will be like the Sadducees and the Pharisees, they will portray a hypocritical, ostentatious, self-righteousness, but they will have no inward life, no vital relationship with God, and no true righteous fruit emanating from their life. Their external profession will not be supported by an internal production of faith and good works because they are unconverted or have fallen away. Their verbal and ritualistic form of righteousness will not bring forth a vital and real production of holy fruit in the life. Essentially the kind of godly characteristics that are seen in Matthew chapters 5 to 7 of the Sermon on the Mount will be absent from the false prophet.

In Matthew 7:15-17 Jesus is giving us a warning not to be deceived, that there will be false prophets and then He tells us how we can recognize them—by their fruits ye shall know them! If we judge a prophet only by his outward profession, we will be deceived. We must look at the fruits of their conduct and labor, and this will help us to detect the false from the true so we will not be deceived. Matthew 7:13-14, *"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: ¹⁴ Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."* A false prophet will preach to go through the wide gate; and if you're going to avoid the wide gate and the wide way, you're going to have to be deaf to the false prophets. 1 John 4:3, *"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."*

At every stage in world history there has been a present truth to be emphasized, but that present truth has varied through the ages. The Jews who were converted after Pentecost needed to accept Jesus as the expected Messiah in order to become Christians, for the point at issue was the deity of Christ. A little later the Gnostics denied, not the divinity, but the humanity of the Savior. They were prepared to believe that the gods manifest themselves to men in various ways but denied that *"the Word was made flesh."* Thus, John's emphasis on the incarnation had peculiar significance for the days in which the apostle lived. But the truth needs emphasis at all times, and never more than in our own day. The fact that the Son of God became man in order to save men must be clearly taught in these times when men more than ever attempt to explain away sin. We need to be personally conscious of the incarnation, to remind ourselves that the God who made that miracle possible is well able to perform any miracle that is needed for our salvation. Our acceptance of His plans and our adherence to His guidance can be a confession of our belief that *"Jesus Christ is come in the flesh."* Such a witness cannot be borne without divine aid, for *"no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost"* (1 Corinthians 12:3). And a false prophet does not have the Holy Ghost!

Again, Matthew 7:15, *"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."* 'Beware of false prophets', literally in the Greek language he is saying: 'Hold your mind away from these false prophets'. Take your mind, and if they're starting to get into your mind, hold your mind away from them. They are there to put us on the broad road, and to keep us from the narrow way. They are there to water down truth and appeal to our feelings. That is not faith but presumption.

Now there are three possible meanings of the sheep's clothing by which you can identify these false prophets. First, they portray themselves to be believers, to be the sheep of God. They present themselves as insiders; they're disguised as sheep—as devout and pious Christians.

But a second meaning is that they are impersonating not just sheep, but shepherds. The words for 'sheep's clothing' can also refer to raiment, like a woolen garment that was worn by a shepherd in Israel. When the shepherd watched his flocks upon the hillside, his garment was one of sheepskin, and he sometimes would wear it inside out so that the wool was inside, and the leather was outside. The prophets wore a similar garment. Elijah wore a mantle, which was a hairy garment or robe. Zechariah 13:4, referring to false prophets, says a very interesting thing about them. *"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive."* In other words, the false prophet wears a rough garment that ordinary prophets would wear to show that they are a prophet, and so they deceive by wearing sheep's clothing, or literally shepherd's clothing.

Luke 20:46-47, *"Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; ⁴⁷ Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation."* The Lord says of the Scribes and the Pharisees that they desire to walk around in long robes to distinguish themselves above others, to show themselves to be leaders so they could receive attention and accommodation. Pious ministers will dress in such a way to bring glory to God as a modest example to the flock. You turn on the tube on Sunday morning and look at what a substantial number of these preachers wear, and it should cause you to pause and consider if they were true or false.

The third idea of this sheep's clothing could be the simple way they come to the people with a gentle, believable exterior. How persuasive they are! They say to the people, *"Look, this gate to heaven, it's not narrow it's wide."* And they behave so kind and so polite and by all appearance are pious. They never talk about overcoming sin, but that Jesus nailed the Law to the cross, so we don't ever have to worry about our sins ever again. Isn't it wonderful?! It's not about God's law but about a personal relationship with Jesus. That is all that matters. It's all about grace! But that is not what a true prophet would declare as it goes against the word of God in the Bible.

In Ezekiel chapter 13 we have an incident of just that with false prophetesses. Verses 21-23, *"Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be hunted; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. ²² Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life: ²³ Therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: and ye shall know that I am the LORD."* You've commended those who are doing wickedness for their wickedness, told them they'll have life; and you've condemned the righteous who are doing what I want them to do, who will have life, you're telling them that they'll have death. What is that other than the narrow way and the broad way being switched by the false prophet?

The point that the Lord is making in talking about sheep's clothing is that the false prophet does not advertise his falsehood. He comes as a preacher of truth, often with the language of faith, and we, as disciples, must be discerning to never judge people by what they project. Never judge them as being from God because of their degrees, or their positions, or their titles. The Lord says, we are to look through the fleece to see who these people really are. That is why John said in 1 John 4:1, *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world."* You will be deceived if you judge them solely on their outward profession, because externally they wear sheep's clothing.

The second half of Matthew 7:15 says that also internally they are ravenous wolves that want to tear the church apart. The wolf is the natural enemy of the sheep. The sheep are naturally entirely defenseless, and the wolf, if he gets among the sheep, would absolutely ravage them. John 10:11-14, *"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. ¹² But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. ¹³ The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."* The good shepherd is always protective of the sheep, and always looks out for wolves; but a hireling, a man who is hired to do the job of a shepherd but isn't really a shepherd and doesn't really love or own the sheep, he would run away and abandon the sheep if a wolf came along. His self-interest causes him to love his life more than he loves the flock; whereas the good shepherd, Jesus said, gives his life for the sheep.

One such hireling was Balaam who professed to be a prophet of the Lord and was offered riches to curse Israel. You can read about that in Numbers 22-24. Notice that in speaking about false teachers and prophets Peter mentions Balaam as one who loved the wages of unrighteousness. 2 Peter 2:13-15, *"And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; ¹⁴ Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: ¹⁵ Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness."*

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 on 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 curse 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.

The curse, which Balaam had not been permitted to pronounce against God's people, he finally succeeded in bringing upon them by seducing them into sin. Balaam witnessed the success of his diabolical scheme. He saw the curse of God visited upon His people, and thousands falling under His judgments; but the divine justice that punished sin in Israel did not permit the false prophet to escape. In the war of Israel against the Midianites, Balaam was slain. The fate of Balaam was similar to that of Judas, and their characters bear a marked resemblance to each other. Both these men tried to unite the service of God and mammon and met with remarkable failure. Matthew 12:30, *"He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."* Balaam helped Balak to overcome Israel by bringing in the whorish Moabite women at Baal-Peor to seduce them and it worked to divide Israel. The messages of a false prophet will scatter or divide the flock of God.

Now the Lord tells us how to test for these false prophets. He goes on in Matthew 7 and changes the metaphor from sheep and wolves to trees and their fruit; from sheep's clothing, which a wolf might wear, to fruit which a tree must bear. But the difference in the two illustrations is that a wolf can disguise himself, but a tree cannot disguise its fruit as its fruit declares what kind of tree it really is.

There are false prophets out there, there's false doctrine out there, and the false prophets and the false doctrines can only bring forth bad fruit. It cannot restrain the flesh, it cannot bring forth holiness, and all it manifests is wickedness. 2 Peter 2:1, *"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."* If you continue reading chapter 2 you can draw a good parallel between false prophets and the false teachers that Peter is talking about. Their fruit is carnal and not spiritual though they wear sheep's clothing. Their works or fruit is of the flesh.

Galatians 5:19-21, *"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness [impure motives], lasciviousness [unbridled lust], ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance [contention], emulations [over zealousness], wrath, strife, seditions [dissension], heresies, ²¹*

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings [indulging in excessive feasting], *and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*" Those are the works of the flesh. Beloved, people who live and manifest the works of the flesh are not going to inherit the kingdom of heaven we just read. This especially includes false prophets, false apostles, and false teachers!

In Romans 8:5-7, "*For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.* ⁶ *For to be carnally minded* [that is fleshly minded] *is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.* ⁷ *Because the carnal mind* [that is the fleshly mind, the unconverted mind] *is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be* [Notice, it is impossible]. A false prophet will give messages that speak against the law of God. They may not do it outright but may say things like, "the law of God was done away with at the cross," or "you cannot be perfect," or "you will sin until Jesus comes." And of course, their immoral conduct will be a big clue as well.

Jesus said in John 7:17, "*If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.*" One who sincerely desires to do the will of God will be enlightened by God and enabled to correctly evaluate the claims of others. A prerequisite to receiving light is that the seeker for truth must be willing to follow in the light that may be revealed. The light that is revealed by a prophet will be in harmony with previous light that was revealed by other prophets of the Lord. So not only will a false prophet speak against the law of God, if not in word, then by their life, they will often share some "new light" that God has given to them. This "new light" message will lead to fanaticism as it will not be in harmony with what all the prophets have spoken.

In Luke 6:26 Jesus said, "*Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.*" Men usually "speak well" of those who possess wealth or power, and who are in a position to respond to flattery in such a way as to benefit the flatterer. I watch the national news in the mornings and from time to time they will have a Christian leader on who they heap all kinds of praise upon, and I listen to this person, and I am sickened by what I hear them say what God's word is and it is pure error. They love to be well spoken of as it really strokes their ego!

1 John 2:15-17, "*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* ¹⁶ *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.* ¹⁷ *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*" A false prophet will be well spoken of by the world and as well as those within the church who follow the world, just as Jesus said they would.

In closing I want to share some of the attributes of a false prophet that we looked at:

1. Outwardly look like sheep—Christians.
2. Inwardly are ravenous; they assume the appearance of holiness in order that they might the more readily get the property of the people. They are full of extortion and excess.
3. Are Hirelings—seek wealth and fame.
4. Cause division in the church. They are wolves that scatter the sheep.
5. Show signs and wonders.
6. Give peace and safety messages when there is no peace.
7. Do not warn God's people of coming danger.
8. Give messages that lead away from God and His word. Often speak "new light" that is not in harmony with old truth.

9. Deny that Jesus came in the flesh.
10. Encourage immoral practices. They do not always reprove sin.
11. Please the unconverted mind.
12. Are well spoken of by the world.

In order for us to detect the false from the true we must know what the true is. To know the truth, we must have a change made within us to see correctly divine things. Jesus said in John 3:3, *"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* Paul says in Romans 8:9, *"...Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."* How do you receive the Spirit of Christ? 1 John 1:7-9, *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

We must confess our sins and repent of them, not in a general way but we must be specific about each sin and Jesus will forgive and cleanse us from our sins as we walk and abide in Him and He in us by the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Word and we must have the word living in us! 1 John 2:29, *"If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."* 1 John 4:15, *"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."* Galatians 5:16, *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."*

We must realize our absolute dependence upon God, that we have no power of our own. We have no ability or strength to overcome the world, the devil, false prophets, or the flesh except when we look to Jesus and choose to cooperate with Him. Jesus said in John 17:17, *"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."* It is the study of the word of God under the direction of the Holy Spirit that will lead us to know the true from the counterfeit. Jesus said in John 16:13, *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."* By knowing the truth, we will be able to discern the false. The Holy Spirit will help us to uncover both. Allow Him into your life to do this.

If you boil the characteristics of a false prophet down you can say that false prophets lead God's people astray from God's commandments and they change what God says will occur. They will perform miracles to try and gain a trust that they are from God. The miracles appear to be real, and may well be real, but all that a false prophet does is a counterfeit of the true. You see, Satan has attempted to counterfeit everything God has done for the benefit of His people. Thus some of the Lord's greatest blessings have been perverted into agencies of destruction. Presumption has been mistaken and substituted for faith. For most of the professed Christian world the day of worship originated by the deceiver has replaced the Sabbath of the Lord. Forms and ceremonies in worship have taken the place of genuine worship of God in spirit and in truth. Salvation through faith has been supplanted by an almost infinite variety of systems of salvation by works.

Seldom does Satan deal in error unmixed with truth, for error alone would not sufficiently deceive those who study the Bible. Many of his teachings contain much that is true and good, and the more truth they contain the more deceptive is the counterfeit. The Sabbath and Sunday question is a good illustration of Satan's methods. The Sabbath is a memorial of creation; Sunday is said to memorialize the resurrection of Christ. The Sabbath is a day of rest from the usual activities of the week, so that God may be worshiped and His work of bringing blessing to others may be done in a special way. Sunday, for the majority of professed Christians, is a day off from regular work so they might do whatever pleases them. For some people this includes a brief period of worship, but for most it does

not. The seventh day Sabbath is the mark of God's authority in the individual life, the seal of Christian experience; but Satan has attempted to make it a mark of peculiar notions or fanaticism. The Sabbath, which was intended by God to be a sign of sanctification through faith, has been perverted by the enemy so that many persons delude themselves by saying that keeping it is an indication that one is attempting to be saved by legalism and good works. God's plan for reaching the minds of men through the messages of the prophets has been counterfeited by Satan, usually in the form of these false prophets.

These false witnesses have accomplished two major objectives in Satan's scheme:

- (1) They have turned men's minds away from God's messages and led them to accept error.
- (2) They have, through their misrepresentations, either in message or in life, caused reproach to be cast upon all true prophets.

Satan cares little what attitude leads one to reject light, as long as the light is rejected. However, No one needs to be deceived as to whether a professed prophet is true or false. Standards have been established in the Bible that make it possible to determine which messengers have come with messages from God and which are counterfeits. If the Bible tests are applied consistently and persistently to the life and teachings of any prophet, they will reveal the actual source of their communications. It is essential that all of the tests be applied to anyone who claims to possess the gift of prophecy. All the requirements must be met.

When you take a look at the history of God's people you will find that when God sends a prophet that Satan then sends false prophets to cause great confusion. There were false prophets during the time of Moses when God sent him to guide the Hebrews to the Promised Land. There were false prophets when John the Baptist was preaching repentance and that the kingdom of God was at hand. Remember that the Jews were looking for the actual prophet Elijah—the one who lived during the time of Ahab—to return so when they heard John, they questioned him as to who he was—if he was that Elijah. The Jews were always dealing with false Christs and prophets that would lead many to ruin. There was Judas the son of Hezekiah, Simon, and Athronges, who were around just before Jesus. Not long after Jesus there was a false prophet named Theudas in Judea, and then a fellow named Menahem ben Judah who partook in a revolt against Agrippa II, and then a Simon bar Kokhba who was defeated in the Second Jewish-Roman War—he died around 135 AD.

All these false prophets and messiahs tended to be zealots and wanted to lead Israel to victory over their oppressors and sit on the throne of David. A misapplication of prophecy that actually helped lead Israel to reject the true Messiah when He did appear. And I will tell you that around the time the three angels messages were first given in the summer of 1844 AD, which was at the end of the 2300 year prophecy of Daniel 8:14, which tells of the change in ministry of Jesus from the Holy Place in heaven to the Most Holy Place, that there were false prophets sent by Satan to cause confusion and divert people away from this most solemn message for mortal man.

Here are some prominent "prophets" that began to hit the scene just before the Great Awakening advent movement:

Ann Lee (1736-1784): Worked with and then led the Shakers. She received no real education. After joining the Shakers, she began to have visions and make revelations, which, she called "testimonies." She was accepted as leader of the Shakers and then as "the second appearing of Christ." She required a peculiar kind of dress, opposed war and the use of pork. Notice the similarities to the truth we find in God's word?

Mrs. Joanna Southcott (1750-1814): Born in England to poor parents, she too was uneducated. She worked as a domestic servant till she was 40 years old. She was a Methodist, having joined the church in 1790. In 1792 she announced herself as a prophetess and published numerous pamphlets setting forth her revelations. She was a Sabbath-keeper and had trances and announced the speedy advent of Christ. Again, notice the similarities to Biblical truth.

Joseph Smith (1805-1844): Founder of the Mormons (also known as the "Latter Day Saints"), who in 1823 began to have "visions" and "revelations," and said he conversed with angels.

Smith published a number of books. He claimed the second advent of Christ was at hand, hence the name, "Latter day saints." His mission was to introduce "the new dispensation" where they are the "saints," and all the other churches are "heathen," or Gentiles. Can you see more similarities to the true? If there weren't similarities, no one would be deceived!

Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910): The prophet/founder of the Christian Science Church. She published a number of books. She had a great interest in health reform. In 1890, she published her most famous book, *Science and Health*, which has been translated into over sixteen languages and reportedly read by over 10,000,000 people. The disciples of Mrs. Eddy believe her writings to be inspired and infallible.

So, you see that there are prophets that Satan sends during the time of the true prophet in order to bring confusion and deception.

A TRUE PROPHET

You may ask, "*Pastor Joel, how do you know that these people are false prophets?*" That is a very fair question. Here is my answer: God has given His word to us that contains tests of a true prophet of God and by using these tests we can discern, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, the true from the false! So, I am going to lay out the biblical tests of a true prophet that is sent from God to His people.

Do you believe the word of God? It is safe to trust God's word and we are given these tests of a prophet so that we may use them to discern the true from the false with confidence! So, I can declare, with confidence, who is and who isn't a prophet of God by comparing them to the tests in the Word of God!

I will list ten tests, and I will give some texts, always, to back each one.

1. A true prophet will prophesy in the Lord's name as they are His messengers.

1 Corinthians 14:28, "*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*" When God appoints a prophet, He sends them to His people! 2 Peter 1:21, "*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.*" True prophecy is a revelation from God. The initiative comes from God. He decides what shall be revealed and what shall remain concealed. Unless the Holy Spirit impresses the mind, man is incapable of prophesying—of speaking forth for God—no matter how ardently he may wish to do so. A true prophet will be one who is moved by the Holy Spirit and speaks the messages they receive from God. Those who are moved by the Holy Spirit will be holy people of God—they obey the Lord.

2. A true prophet will tell the truth.

The Bible says that it is impossible for God to lie, and His messengers will give an accurate message that God has given to them. They will make predictions that come true as they received the prediction from One who knows the future and does not err. Deuteronomy 18:22, *"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."* Jeremiah 28:8-9, *"The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. ⁹ The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him."*

3. A true prophet will not give a private interpretation of Scripture.

2 Peter 1:20, *"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation."*

A prophet is the Holy Spirit's mouthpiece, and thus under divine guidance. They will not intrude their own ideas into the messages that were given them for the benefit of God's people.

4. A true prophet will point out the sins of God's people.

Isaiah 58:1, *"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins."* If a person is a true prophet, they will not just come to you with some lovey-dovey, sloppy agape message and never tell you about your character defects, which need to be changed. God calls all to repentance and so will His prophets. Prophets who fail to draw a clear line between right and wrong, that the people may understand the principles involved, are false prophets.

5. A true prophet will warn God's people of coming judgment.

Exodus 12:12, *"For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD."* God had Moses give this warning to His people—that judgment would come to their door but if the sign of faith—sacrificial lambs blood was on the posts—death would pass by.

Isaiah 3:12-14, *"As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. ¹³ The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people. ¹⁴ The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses."* Isaiah warned of coming judgment to the elders and princes of the people who were robbing and oppressing them. Jeremiah was sent by God to Jerusalem to warn them of God's judgment—to repent or the king of Babylon would come as a desolating power to take them captive.

Daniel 7:9-10, *"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened."* Daniel, a prophet of God, saw the judgment of humanity in a vision and gave warning to God's people.

Romans 2:3-6, *"And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? ⁴ Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? ⁵ But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; ⁶ Who will render to every man according to his deeds."* The apostle Paul, a prophet of God, is giving warning of the judgment.

Revelation 14:6-7, *"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, ⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."* The apostle John saw this in vision while on the isle of Patmos and is warning about the judgment. This message was fulfilled in the fall of the year 1844 and we are now living during the judgment. How is your walk with God my friends? The mercy of God is shown by the fact that He does not bring His judgments upon men until He first warns them through His prophets. He predicts the evil to come in the hope that He may not be forced to inflict it.

6. A true prophet will recognize and teach that Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh.

1 John 4:1-3, *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because **many false prophets** are gone out into the world. ² Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: ³ And every spirit that confesseth not that **Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God**: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."* Now the Greek word for flesh is "sarx," and it is a very interesting word, because it occurs many times in the New Testament. On almost every other occasion it is translated "sinful flesh." The moment you have that understanding of this text, everything falls into place, because every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in our fallen humanity is the spirit of antichrist. A true prophet will teach this truth. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in our humanity, that He adopted our humanity, that He took on Himself the *"seed of Abraham"* and was made in all points like unto His brethren—that is the spirit of God which fills a true prophet.

2 John 7 says, *"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."* Once again, the word is "sarx", which denotes fallen humanity, sinful flesh. Not only did Jesus become a man, but He became a man like us—with a carnal nature and not one like Adam had before he sinned. There is quite a difference between the two and we want to follow the true Christ and the same Jesus that Paul and the apostles followed.

7. A true prophet will not lead people into fanaticism as they will bear good fruit.

What is fanaticism? Let me try to define it as simply as I know how. Fanaticism is taking God's word and saying you believe it, but you go beyond what it says—you either add to it or take away from its plain teachings for whatever reason. Revelation 22:19, *"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."* It is not good to add to or take away from God's word!

Matthew 7:16-20, *"Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? ¹⁷ Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. ²⁰ Wherefore by their fruits*

ye shall know them." A true prophet won't teach some crazy idea that you find out too late has ruined your health, or your family, or something else in your life.

Let's look at a comparison between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. 1 Kings 18:26, 28, 36, *"And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made... 28 And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them... 36 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word."* Can you see that the calm demeanor of the prophet Elijah stands out in sharp contrast with the fanatical, senseless frenzy of the followers of Baal? When you listen to what a true prophet says, you will have good results in your life as a good tree produces good fruit.

Let me give you a quick example. Several years ago, there was a man who claimed to be a prophet who called himself David Koresh. He professed to have a special message from God. He and some of his followers went around to different churches in the United States. Wherever they went, wives would leave their husbands, and they would follow this man here and there and finally to a compound in Waco.

I know this to be true for I had to personally deal with this man, who at the time of our encounter was known by his given name, Vernon Howell. After a gun battle with his former leaders, he changed his name to David Koresh and sent out his lieutenants to recruit followers. It just happened that one of them was a cousin to a close friend and fellow believer that I studied with quite often. We gathered the elders of the local church and heard him out and it caused great division with the local brethren. His teachings were rejected.

My friend and I received a phone call from David Koresh soon after to follow up on the questions we gave his second in command to rebut his teachings. Let me tell you, he really could throw out scriptures verbatim like the leaves of autumn, which is when I realized we were dealing with a supernatural entity. My impression was that Satan was guiding him in our conversation, which we met always with a "Thus saith the Lord!"

We agreed to disagree and left it at that and after hanging up the phone we sat in silent astonishment at what had just transpired. We praised God for His word that kept the devil at bay that night and saved us from ruin. This man professed to be a messenger of the Lord (and more), but he destroyed families and churches, which is not good fruit. A true prophet does not go around breaking up families in God's church. Remember one of the characteristics of a false prophet was that they divide the church, they scatter the sheep. Jesus said that a true prophet would bear good fruit. (See Matthew 7:15-20).

8. A true prophet will build up and edify, the church, they will not tear it apart.

1 Corinthians 14:3-4, *"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. 4 He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.* The prophet receives divine revelations, but he is merely the agent by whom these revelations are to be imparted to the church so that it may be built up. Amos 3:7, *"Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."* A prophet of the

Lord is sent to His church. God proclaims that He will continue to reveal His will to His chosen messengers so that His people will be edified, exhorted, and comforted!

9. A true prophet will live and teach in harmony with preceding prophets and with the Law of God—the Ten Commandments.

Isaiah 8:20, *"To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, there is no light in them."* The Law of God—the Ten Commandments, and the testimony of His prophets as revealed in inspiration. The Hebrew word used here is Torah and means all inspiration—the Law and the prophets! The prophets of God were His witnesses, or spokesmen, and the "testimony" they bore was His message of wisdom and life. God has revealed Himself in His Word. Whatever men may speak that is not in harmony with that Word has "no light" in it. Any person who purports to be a prophet must be in full harmony with the testimony of all the previous Biblical prophets. That is, a true prophet will speak and write "to the law and to the testimony." True prophets do not change or revoke previous revelations given by God. As the apostle Paul expressed it, prophets must be subject to the prophets. 1 Corinthians 14:32-33, *"And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. ³³ For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."*

10. A true Bible prophet must have visions and dreams.

Numbers 12:6, *"Then He said, Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to Him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream."* In the early days of a prophet's ministry, when he has made few written or spoken pronouncements, it is difficult to apply the test of consistency with previously inspired testimony as Isaiah 8:20 requires. The test of fruitage as we read in Matthew 7 is equally difficult to apply until a few years pass and results are seen in the life of the prophet and in the lives of those who have followed the prophet's counsels. The test of fulfilled prediction as Jeremiah 28:9 and Deuteronomy 18:22 speak to cannot be applied until enough time has elapsed to allow a judgment about whether any prophecies made have come to pass.

Obviously, God needed to do something to grab attention, to suddenly cause people to sit up and take notice. Physical phenomena serve this purpose. God had used such methods before with Moses and the miracles in Egypt, also at Pentecost when tongues of fire were seen above the heads of the 120, and these men and women spoke contemporary languages they had never previously studied. Perhaps God used physical phenomena to validate the fact that something supernatural was at work. Of course, witnesses would still need to validate, to authenticate the messages by means of the conventional Bible tests. However, the fact that Satan can and does counterfeit many natural and supernatural phenomena should lead us to make a crucial distinction: Physical phenomena are evidence of supernatural activity, but they are never to be a sole test of the authenticity or legitimacy of a prophet. Such phenomena are used to get our full attention so we can then apply these other biblical tests to confirm its true source.

Now when the Bible talks about visions and dreams it's talking about "Open" visions of the day and prophetic dreams of the night. "Open" visions of the day are a trancelike state into which a prophet entered when going into vision during the day. Both the Old and the New Testaments are replete with references to prophets and apostles receiving such visions from the Lord. These trancelike states may be witnessed by others or not, which is usually not the case with the next method of communication from God, Prophetic dreams of the night. Often the prophets would receive messages from the Lord in the *"night seasons"* as well as during the day. There is no evidence that physical phenomena accompanied the prophetic night dreams, nor is there evidence that the kind of messages given at night were in any way different from those transmitted in the visions of the day.

Now one may ask why would there be the need for both? Well, that is up to God but usually an open vision during the day is for the benefit of actual witnesses. As I said, you may not be able to gain confidence in a prophet who hasn't been ministering long enough to see their fruitage or whether a prediction has come true or not, but you can witness supernatural phenomena. Prophetic dreams are just that—dreams. If someone is witnessing you dream then you have someone in your bedroom! Dreams do not need witnesses as supernatural feats are not needed; just a message is to be given to the prophet from God.

Now what happens to a prophet when they are in an open vision? The book of Daniel gives us a fuller description of a prophet in vision than any other place in the Bible, although there are a few other descriptions. The most complete description of a prophet in vision is in Daniel 10:7. Daniel gives the record of this vision. He says, *"And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men that were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves."* So, the other men realized that something supernatural was happening. That is what occurs when a prophet is in vision. Other people in the room realize that something supernatural is happening.

What is this supernatural thing? Look what it says in Daniel 10:8-11, *"Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. ⁹ Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. ¹⁰ And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. ¹¹ And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling."*

Then he receives instruction from the angel about the latter day; and then it says in verses 15-19, *"And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. ¹⁶ And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. ¹⁷ For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. ¹⁸ Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, ¹⁹ And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me."* Daniel says, *"How can I talk to You Lord, when I am not breathing? There is no breath left in me."* You know, if you took a mirror right now, and if you put this mirror right in front of your face and speak, moisture will gather on the mirror, because when you talk the air is coming out of your mouth. But with a prophet in vision the Lord is actually speaking to the prophet—He is breathing for the prophet, so this is a significant sign. **A prophet in vision does not breathe.** That is a supernatural experience. Now, friends, this is something that is pretty hard to fake.

So, a careful reading of these verses in Daniel 10 shows us six things that happened to Daniel the prophet when he was in vision:

1. He lost his strength and often fell down in a deep sleep.
2. Despite the sleep, he heard a voice speaking to him.
3. In the vision, he arose to his hands and knees and then to his feet when the being touched him.

4. At first, he was dumb (couldn't speak); but when his lips are touched, he is enabled to speak.
5. Throughout the vision he is without breath of any kind. His breathing totally ceased. God was breathing the message, so he was breathing for the prophet.
6. Strength is given him during the vision.

A seventh condition for a prophet in vision is given in Numbers 24:4, *"He hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but **having his eyes open.**"*

7. During the vision, his eyes are open.

What we have just studied are biblical tests of a true prophet. We are to use these tests in determining who has the gift of prophecy and who does not thus being able to tell the false from the true. God has given us these tests so that we may not be deceived. In 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21 Paul says, *"**Quench not the Spirit.** ²⁰ **Despise not prophesyings.** ²¹ **Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.**"* So, it is very important that after testing a prophet we hold fast to the good for Satan always tries to discredit God's messengers and causes us to lose faith in them. Let us not sin against, and quench, the Holy Spirit by despising prophecies. Now what we must do is test to see if one who professes to have the gift of prophecy does pass all Biblical tests of a true prophet of God. And if one does, then we cannot ignore this, or we will be guilty of *"**quenching the Spirit.**"*

Let's take a closer look at the list of "prophets" I mentioned before and what they taught and believed and compare them to the Biblical tests.

Ann Lee believed and taught:

- ❑ God is Dual. Not three male beings in one Godhead, but Father and Mother.
- ❑ Mother Ann (as she is called) taught that there is no resurrection of the body.
- ❑ The souls of all men have endless existence. An immortal soul.
- ❑ Jesus has already returned.

Joanna Southcott believed and taught:

- ❑ She was the woman spoken of in Revelation 12:1–6.
- ❑ For certain sums of money, she would "seal" you as one of the 144,000.
- ❑ At the age of sixty-four she affirmed that she was pregnant and would be delivered of the new Messiah. The date of 19 October 1814 was fixed for the birth, but Messiah failed to appear. She died not long after.

Joseph Smith believed and taught:

- ❑ Christians become gods and goddesses.
- ❑ Men can have multiple wives in heaven—eternal polygamy.
- ❑ God the Father had sex with Mary to conceive Jesus.
- ❑ Mary really wasn't a virgin.
- ❑ Joseph Smith revealed that the actual Garden of Eden is in Jackson County, Missouri.
- ❑ Lucifer and Jesus are brothers.
- ❑ The Bible to be untrustworthy and full of errors.
- ❑ Mormons teach that there is no salvation without Joseph Smith. They teach that Joseph Smith holds the keys to the Kingdom of God. That people will stand before God, Jesus, and Joseph Smith on Judgment Day.

Mary Baker Eddy believed and taught:

- ❑ The creation narrative in the Book of Genesis is allegorical.
- ❑ God is both Father and Mother.
- ❑ There is no final judgment, and no heaven or hell, except as states of mind.
- ❑ Death is an illusion that can be conquered through the conquest of sin. A person who seems to die simply adjusts to another level of consciousness, inaccessible to the living.
- ❑ Jesus did not die on the cross, but was conscious in his tomb, healing himself.
- ❑ The atonement of Jesus was not a propitiatory sacrifice. How could it be if He never died?
- ❑ Eddy regarded her book, Science and Health, as the second coming of Jesus--the WORD of God.

The Bible declares each one of these people to be false prophets!

The Bible says to prove all things. Hold fast that which is good. One of the identifying attributes of the church is that it will have the gifts and bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit. One particular fruit the end time church of God will have is the gift of prophecy. This is one of the identifying attributes of the church of God in our day... the last days. The Jews in the time of Christ missed what God wanted them to know because they did not accept the gift of prophecy that God sent to them in the person of John the Baptist just before Jesus came. They missed it! The most wonderful thing that God sent to them and they missed it! That was part of the reason they rejected the Messiah. Beloved let us not do as they did. Let us not miss the true prophet that God has sent to His people but let us beware of false prophets as Jesus has warned us to do.

A PROPHET FOR THE END TIMES

In 1 Corinthians 12 the apostle Paul compares the church to a body. The body is a collective oneness that is composed of many members and each member of the body was created to fulfill a different function. In verse 27 he says, "*Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*" So, in the same way as the human body functions, the church should be in unity with each member called to fulfill a different function for the good of the church—the body of Christ. Each member will be collaborating with other members to have the body function effectively. For example, the feet of the body represent the act of going and preaching the gospel of peace. The mouth represents the act of teaching. The hands that touch represent the kindness and caring of the church for others. These are all to function in unison to spread the good news of Jesus Christ.

Considering this example of the different attributes of a physical body in relation to the spiritual work of the church, what do the eyes of the body represent? We catch a glimpse of their meaning in two Old Testament texts. 1 Samuel 9:9, "*(Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer.)*" The terms *prophet* and *seer* are closely related. A seer is one who perceives things that do not lie in the realm of natural sight or hearing. Although used synonymously to indicate a person who possesses the prophetic gift, the two words illustrate basically separate phases of the experience of the prophet. "Seer" denotes the reception of the message from God by the prophet—he sees God's communication. It indicates that God has opened to the view and hearing of the prophet that which is indiscernible to one whom does not possess the prophetic gift. These two words are used as synonyms in Isaiah 30:10, "*Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits.*"

While the words give us various insights into the relationship of the prophet to God's message, all the words designate the prophet in his office as spokesman for God. Isaiah 29:10, *"For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered."* Here is a description of the people of Judah groping about blindly, as if in a stupor. The eyes of their understanding were darkened. Their rulers had lost all sense of direction. Their seers, who divined for money, were utterly blind. God had sent them message after message, but with each rejection of light from Heaven they blinded themselves more and more, and their perception of truth became increasingly dull. It was in this sense that the Lord had "closed" their eyes.

We are told in Proverbs 29:18 that, *"Where there is no vision, the people perish [made naked—unclothed]: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."* This is not ordinary vision, but prophetic vision. The first clause literally reads, *"Where there is no vision the people is let loose—made naked or have a lack of restraint."* When a church or nation has so cut itself off from God that He cannot communicate directly with it through His own chosen messengers, then the people lack restraint. They have been unclothed of righteousness. The word Law here comprehends the whole of the revealed will of God. Instead of the anarchy and misery that result when every man does that which is right in his own eyes, there are prosperity and happiness when the will of God is followed as he becomes clothed with the righteousness of Christ.

Is it possible that the blindness—the nakedness of the Laodicean Church, the end time church choosing to be lukewarm, is due to her rejection of the prophetic voice—the seer that God has given to guide them through the end times? Is there a prophet for God's last day people and if so, can we know who it is? The Bible says that we can and will know.

Previously we determined both the characteristics of false and true prophets. We found twelve characteristics of false prophets. A false prophet does not need to have all of these characteristics to prove they are false, but many false prophets have several of these characteristics. The best way to uncover a false prophet is to know the tests of a true prophet and apply them as well. The Holy Spirit will help us to uncover both false and true prophets.

I also shared ten tests of a true prophet of God, and I want to clarify a bit about test ten so that there is no confusion. A true prophet WILL have visions and dreams but there is no evidence in the Bible that all of these physical phenomena always accompanied the visions of every prophet. In fact, they probably did not, except maybe not breathing as God is actually breathing for the prophet while in communication. I think it would depend upon whether the vision is an open vision in the presence of witnesses or not. Open visions were usually in the presence of witnesses. Of course, dreams were not.

Some of these characteristics are not needed when a prophet has a dream from God for no one is there to see the physical phenomena. However, the presence of some of these characteristics serve as strong evidence that his communications are of supernatural origin. It is unwise for us to place great emphasis on the physical manifestations in attempting to demonstrate whether or not any individual is a true prophet, for these may be more easily counterfeited by Satan and his false prophets than the other tests. The Lord has not made these physical evidences the test of the professed prophet, but they must be taken into consideration as a potential sign of supernatural origin. So yes, a true prophet WILL have visions and dreams. Period. No, not all the physical phenomena will always accompany a prophet in vision. I hope that's clear, and I apologize if I confused anyone.

BTW, each one of these ten tests of a true prophet fit into one of three categories. These three categories are:

- (A) **The messages of the prophet.** These messages must be in full agreement with Biblical standards, promises, doctrines and laws.

Please remember that all prophets are human beings that are prone to make mistakes just as we are. So, if in his humanity a prophet of God errs, and the nature of that error is sufficiently serious to materially affect the direction of God's church, the eternal destiny of one person, or the purity of a doctrine, then (and only then) the Holy Spirit immediately moves the prophet to correct the error, so that no permanent damage is done.

- (B) **The personal life of the prophet.** The prophet must be dedicated to Jesus and living in obedience to and in harmony with Biblical principles.

We must be mindful that history and the Scriptures testify that the control of the Holy Spirit over the lives of the prophets did not preclude their freedom to sin; and yet, their sinful acts did not invalidate their prophetic gift!

- (C) **The physical condition of the prophet when in vision.** There are seven physical conditions that will be evident when a true prophet is in vision.

God has given us these tests so that Satan may not deceive us. We are to use these tests in determining who has the gift of prophecy and who does not thus being able to tell the false from the true. After all, it was Jesus who said in Matthew 7:15-16, *"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. ¹⁶ Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"*

In 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21 Paul says, *"Quench not the Spirit. ²⁰ Despise not prophesyings. ²¹ Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."* We will do just that to see if a prophet was raised up at just the right time with the right message for the end time people of God and identify whom that prophet is!

Now, I am going to start by analyzing several time prophecies of the Bible to show a pattern that God has used in helping His people by the work of a prophet. All of these time prophecies are found in the Old Testament. The first three point to events that transpired in Old Testament times. The last two point to events that occurred in New Testament times.

In each of these time prophecies we will find that there is a common *modus operandi* that God uses to convey the reliability of His message through His prophet. It will be one powerful way to help us in determining if there is an end time prophet and who that prophet may be. Before I go on, I better ask if you know the meaning of the expression, *Modus operandi*? It is two Latin words that mean *mode of operating*. As we go through each of these prophecies, we will see God's method of operation to be as follows:

- ❑ God calls a prophet.
- ❑ God imparts a message to that prophet.
- ❑ The message is one of judgment.
- ❑ Linked with the message is a time prophecy.
- ❑ The message is not present truth for that time but for a time in the future.

When the future time period is about to (or has) come to an end, God operates in like fashion again:

- He calls another prophet.
- He imparts the same message to this prophet as he gave to the first one.
- The message is one of judgment.
- The message explains that the time prophecy is coming (or has come) to an end.
- The message given to the original prophet then becomes Present Truth for that time.
- A remnant of God's people is always drawn out and guided by the mission of this prophet and the message given.

I want you to notice too that these time prophecies do not point to insignificant events but relate to great markers of salvation history. So, this *modus operandi* of God is not for every single prophecy found in the bible. The five significant time prophecies I am sharing are:

1. The calling of the first prophet and the global flood in the day of Noah.
2. The call of Abraham and The Exodus of Israel from Egypt.
3. The Babylonian captivity and Israel's restoration to her land.
4. The baptism and death of the Messiah and the close of probation for the Jewish theocracy.
5. The beginning of the final judgment.

Enoch and Noah

The first prophet that is explicitly mentioned in the Bible was Enoch. We are told in Jude 14-15, *"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, ¹⁵ To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."* Notice that Enoch was the first prophet, and he was given a message of judgment. The question is: To what event did this message of judgment apply? The answer is two-fold.

First let's look in Matthew 24:37-39 and we will see that Jesus compared two great events—the flood and His second coming. *"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. ³⁸ For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, ³⁹ And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."*

Enoch's message was first pointing to the wickedness of the world before the flood. Concerning this we are told in Genesis 6:5, 11-13, *"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually... ¹¹ The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. ¹³ And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth."* Enoch was describing Christ's coming to destroy the world for its wickedness at the second coming, but he was also describing the destruction of the world for its wickedness by the flood in the days of Noah. Neither of these events took place during the time of Enoch so this message was not Present Truth for his generation. Now, where is the time prophecy that pointed to the destruction of the world by a flood? This gets very interesting, and we must put ourselves back in Enoch's day to get a feel for the way things were done at that time, especially concerning the naming of God's people. You see, there was a lot more to the name than just a definition of character, there could also be prophetic implications and prophetic timing in a name. This is not done today but you see a lot of this in the book of Genesis especially. More than seventy-five

times in the book of Genesis the significance of names is underlined. Names today are usually picked out of a book because the parents like the sound of it.

So, in order to answer this question of the time prophecy that pointed to the flood we must look beneath the surface of Scripture—we must appeal to the significance of Biblical names. Let me give you some examples. The meaning of the name Adam has been explained in various ways. It is descriptive of:

- His color, from 'Adam, *"to be red or ruddy."*
- His appearance, from an Arabic root word which means *"to shine,"* thus making Adam *"the brilliant one."*
- His nature as God's image, from "dam," meaning *"likeness;"* and
- His origin, from 'ad amah, *"the one of the soil."*

All these descriptions are accurate of the first and created perfect man. *"As man came forth from the hand of his Creator, he was of lofty stature and perfect symmetry. His countenance bore the ruddy tint of health and glowed with the light of life and joy. Adam's height was much greater than that of men who now inhabit the earth. Eve was somewhat less in stature; yet her form was noble, and full of beauty. The sinless pair wore no artificial garments; they were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. So long as they lived in obedience to God, this robe of light continued to enshroud them."* White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p45.

The name Cain means "Gotten" which signifies possession. Eve apparently remembered the promise of Genesis 3:15, and in hoping that he was to be the promised Deliverer named him Cain. Abel means "vanity" or "nothingness." This seems strange unless you take into consideration that Eve thought that Cain was the Redeemer that was promised, so why the need for another son? Vanity, she thought.

Seth means, "appointed." Though Seth was not Adam's first-born son, he was the one through whom the godly line was to be perpetuated after the death of Abel and banishment of Cain. Abraham means "father of many" in Hebrew or as a contraction of ABRAM meaning "many, multitude." Enoch, meaning, "dedicated," was a very appropriate name as he walked so closely with God that he was taken to heaven without seeing death! Definitely a dedicated follower of God!

So, we can see from the Bible that names really meant something about the person and the experience. But in some cases, it meant more than that. So, let's take a look at the name of Enoch's son. What is the meaning of the name of Enoch's son? Who was his son? The book of Genesis informs us that Enoch had a son called Methuselah. Genesis 5:21, *"Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah."* This name is a compound of two Hebrew words: *muwth* (Strong's # 4191) and *shalach* (Strong's # 7971). The word *muwth* has the meaning "to die" and the word *shalach* basically means, "to send." Thus, the whole meaning of the name Methuselah is, *"when he dies it will be sent."* The question begs to be asked: When he dies, what will be sent? The answer is: The worldwide flood.

Wait a minute.... is that true pastor Joel? Yes, it is. Well, I thought that God was not arbitrary. That he didn't send judgment based upon time frames but rather upon spiritual condition? God isn't arbitrary and neither is this time frame. God knows the end from the beginning and so He knows when man will ultimately reject His mercy in favor of sin and thus grieve away the Holy Spirit. He gives man history in advance that is what prophecy is, so we can consider the options and choose to be saved by the merits of His son, Jesus, or continue our path to destruction.

Now, Jewish tradition affirms that Methuselah died just ten days before the flood. That is the tradition. I cannot prove from the Bible that Methuselah died just ten days before the flood, but I can confirm that he died the very year of the flood. Let's put our thinking caps on, as my teachers used to say, grab our calculators—as my teachers never said as they weren't invented yet, and do a little bit of math. Yes kids, I am that old.... not as old as Methuselah though! According to Genesis 5:22, from the time that Methuselah was born till the time that his son Lamech was born 187 years passed. Genesis 5:28 tells us that from the time that Lamech was born until his son Noah was born, 182 years transpired. Genesis 7:11 says that Noah was 600 years old when the flood came. Now let's add up these figures: 187 yrs. + 182 yrs. + 600 yrs. = 969 years. That's 969 years from Methuselah's birth.

Now, do we know how old Methuselah was when he died? Genesis 5:27 says, *"So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died."* So, from the time that Methuselah was born till the flood came—Noah was 600 years old when the flood came—a period of 969 years had transpired. Methuselah was 969 years old when he died, and he died the same year that the flood came. The whole meaning of the name Methuselah is, *"when he dies it will be sent."* Thus, his name was a time prophecy—it announced the very year the world would be destroyed by the flood!

God called His prophet, Enoch, and gave him a message of judgment. Connected with the message of judgment was a time prophecy in the name of his son Methuselah but the message was not present truth for Enoch's generation. Significantly, when the time prophecy was about to reach its end, God called another prophet to make the message of Enoch Present Truth. Of course, we know that the name of that prophet was Noah. Notice what we are told about Noah:

2 Peter 2:5, *"And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."*

Hebrews 11:7, *"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."*

Genesis 6:3 says, *"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."*

The word "strive" is frequently translated "judge" in the rest of the Old Testament. Thus, Noah's message was one of judgment! Was Noah a prophet? Yes. Was the message of Noah a message of judgment? Yes. Did the message of Noah culminate when the time prophecy of Methuselah came to an end? Yes. Did Noah make Enoch's message Present Truth for the ungodly of his generation? Again, yes! And was a remnant saved as a result of the message of Noah? Yes, he and his family were saved from the destruction—a remnant of eight souls! God's *modus operandi*!

Abraham and Moses

In Genesis 20 we are told that Abraham went to the city of Gerar and fearing for his life, he convinced his wife to tell king Abimelech the half-truth that she was his sister instead of his wife. That very evening, God gave Abimelech a dream where He revealed to him the complete truth. God explained that Sarah was also Abraham's wife, and that Abraham was a prophet and commanded him to return Sarah to her husband. Genesis 20:7, *"Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine."* Based upon God's *modus operandi* the question is: Did God give Abraham a message of judgment linked with a time prophecy? The answer is yes.

In Genesis 15:13-14 we find the prophecy about the sojourn of the children of Israel in Egypt for 400 years, *"And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; ¹⁴ And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance."* This prophecy was not Present Truth for the days of Abraham because the patriarch was promised in Genesis 15:15-16, *"And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. ¹⁶ But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."* God called His prophet, Abraham, and gave him a message of judgment. Linked with the message of judgment was a time prophecy but the message was not present truth for his generation. When the four hundred years were about to end, God raised up another prophet who spoke to the same issue as Abraham did. In fact, we are told that on the very day that the time prophecy came to an end, God delivered His people from bondage to the Egyptians. Exodus 12:40-41, *"Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. ⁴¹ And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."*

Now some may say, wait a minute pastor. God said four hundred years to Abraham, and it says here 430 years. What is up with that? Let me tell you. The statement here in Exodus 12:40 seems to imply that the Hebrews actually spent 430 years there, from Jacob's entry to the Exodus. However, in Galatians 3:16-17, it states that the law was promulgated at Sinai 430 years after the covenant between God and Abraham. Paul is referring to the first promise made to Abraham in Haran, so the 430 years began when Abraham was 75 years old. The four hundred years of affliction would then begin 30 years later, when Abraham was 105 years old and his son Isaac 5 years old. So, the same day the four hundred years was up, the children of Israel left Egypt just as God had said to Abraham!

In Hosea 12:13 Moses is specifically called a prophet. *"And by a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved."* Thus, the message of Abraham became Present Truth in the generation of Moses. Was Moses a prophet? Yes. Was the message of Moses a message of judgment? Yes. Did the message of Moses culminate when the time prophecy came to an end? Yes. Did Moses make Abraham's message Present Truth for his generation? Again, yes! And was a remnant saved as a result of the message of Moses? Yes, the children of Israel.

Jeremiah and Daniel

In Jeremiah 1:5 we are told that Jeremiah was called to be a prophet while he was still in the womb. Was Jeremiah given a specific time prophecy along with a message of judgment? Yes indeed! Jeremiah 25:11-12, *"And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. ¹² And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations."* Here Jeremiah was told that the captivity of Judah in Babylon would last a period of seventy years. Afterward, God would intervene to deliver Judah and take her back to the land of Israel. This message was not Present Truth for the days of Jeremiah for he died before the captivity began and ended.

Near the conclusion of the seventy years God called another prophet to make the message of Jeremiah Present Truth, and that prophet was Daniel. God had just judged Babylon the year before as he had promised and now Daniel wondered whether God's people would go back to their land as promised. Notice Daniel 9:1-2, *"In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; ² In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."* Daniel was

studying the very prophecy that God had given Jeremiah. When Cyrus entered Babylon on the night of its fall, Daniel showed Cyrus the prophecies of Isaiah concerning himself (see Isaiah 45:1), and then Cyrus gave the decree exactly seventy years after the captivity began (see Ezra 1:1-4).

Was Daniel a prophet? Yes. Was the message of Daniel a message of judgment? Yes—Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians. Did the message of Daniel culminate when the time prophecy came to an end? Yes. Did Daniel make Jeremiah's message Present Truth for his generation? Again, yes! And was a remnant saved as a result of the message of Daniel? Yes, under the leadership of Daniel, the remnant of Judah was able to go back to their land to rebuild the temple and eventually the walls and the city.

Daniel and John the Baptist

God gave Daniel a time prophecy of seventy weeks. This prophecy contemplated three great events that would transpire during the final seven years.

1. The anointing of Messiah,
2. His death and
3. The close of probation for the nation that rejected him.

Daniel 9:24-27, *"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. ²⁵ Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. ²⁶ And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. ²⁷ And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."*

At the very beginning of the last seven years, John the Baptist made the message of Daniel Present Truth by addressing the exact same issues. First of all, John the Baptist baptized and introduced Jesus. It was at his baptism that Jesus was anointed as the Messiah. Matthew 3:13-17, *"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. ¹⁴ But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? ¹⁵ And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. ¹⁶ And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷ And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

John announced that Jesus was the Lamb of God. It was universally known among the Jews that lambs were slain in the sacrificial service of the Temple. John 1:29, 35-36, *"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world... ³⁵ Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; ³⁶ And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!"*

But John also announced the third event—the judgment that would fall upon the Jewish nation if they rejected the Messiah. Matthew 3:7-12, *"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees*

come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: ⁹ And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. ¹⁰ And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. ¹¹ I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: ¹² Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." In this passage, John the Baptist compares the Jewish nation to a tree, and he affirmed that if the tree did not produce fruit, it would be cut down and thrown into the fire. This was a message of judgment.

It is worthy of note that three years after John the Baptist began preaching and two and a half years after Jesus began His ministry, Jesus told the parable of a tree. Luke 13:6-9, *"He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. ⁷ Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? ⁸ And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: ⁹ And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."* At the end of the final year, Jesus saw a fig tree and invited His disciples to go with Him to eat fruit from it but when he got there the tree had no fruit and therefore, He cursed it. Matthew 21:19, *"And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away."* The very next day Jesus and His disciples passed by the site where the tree was and discovered that it had dried up at the roots. Mark 11:20-21, *"And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. ²¹ And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away."*

As a result of the work of John the Baptist a remnant was prepared to receive Jesus. Most of the disciples of Jesus were previously disciples of John the Baptist. Paul spoke about this remnant when he said in Romans 11:5, *"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."* John the Baptist, who was more than a prophet, preached a message of judgment and made the time prophecy of the seventy weeks present truth in his generation. He also prepared the nucleus of those who would become the disciples of Jesus and the founders of the Christian Church.

Daniel and the End Time prophet

The time prophecy of the seventy weeks that was given to Daniel the prophet was merely the first portion of a larger prophecy—the 2300 days/years. This prophecy announces the beginning of the final judgment in the heavenly sanctuary. Daniel 8:14, *"And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."*

According to Daniel 12 this prophecy was not present truth in the days of Daniel. Daniel 12:4, 9, 13, *"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased... ⁹ And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end... ¹³ But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."*

At the end of the time prophecy of the 2300 days in 1844ad, an intercontinental and interdenominational movement arose to proclaim that the hour of God's judgment had come. Thus,

the message of Daniel 8:14 became Present Truth. Though they were wrong about the event they were correct about the timing of the event. Following the biblical pattern that we have learned, there should be a prophet arise that:

- ❑ Has the same message as he gave to the first prophet—Daniel.
- ❑ The message is one of judgment.
- ❑ The message explains that the time prophecy is coming (or has come) to an end.
- ❑ The message given to the original prophet then becomes Present Truth.
- ❑ A remnant is drawn out and guided by the mission of this prophet and the message.

There were many movements around 1844AD as Satan always counterfeits the actions and messages of God to His people. New England during the Second Great Advent Awakening came to be known as *“the burned over district”* because of the many movements that arose during this time. The following are some of the movements and their champions that arose around this period both in the United States and in Europe:

Mormonism: Joseph Smith

Christian Science: Mary Baker Eddy

Theosophy, New Age: Helena Blavatsky

Baha’i: Abdul Baha

Shakers: Ann Lee

Spiritualism: Fox sisters, Andrew Jackson Davis

Pentecostalism: Margaret McDonald, Charles Parham

Jehovah’s Witnesses: Charles Taze Russell

Evolutionism: Charles Darwin

Marxism: Karl Marx

Let’s take a closer look at those movements and what they taught and believed and compare them to the Biblical tests and God’s modus operandi.

Joseph Smith believed and taught:

- ❑ Christians become gods and goddesses.
- ❑ Men can have multiple wives in heaven—eternal polygamy.
- ❑ God the Father had sex with Mary to conceive Jesus.
- ❑ Mary really wasn’t a virgin.
- ❑ Joseph Smith revealed that the actual Garden of Eden is in Jackson County, Missouri.
- ❑ Lucifer and Jesus are brothers.

Mary Baker Eddy believed and taught:

- ❑ The creation narrative in the Book of Genesis is allegorical.
- ❑ God is both Father and Mother.
- ❑ There is no final judgment, and no heaven or hell, except as states of mind.
- ❑ Death is an illusion that can be conquered through the conquest of sin. A person who seems to die simply adjusts to another level of consciousness, inaccessible to the living.
- ❑ Jesus did not die on the cross, but was conscious in his tomb, healing himself.

Helena Blavatsky

- ❑ Russian occultist.
- ❑ Co-founded the Theosophical Society in 1875 (Greek theos ("god(s)")) and sophia ("wisdom"), thus meaning "god-wisdom", "divine wisdom", or "wisdom of God").

- ❑ Spiritualism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Re-incarnation, Astrology, Alchemy, and Natural Magic.
- ❑ Doctrine of Intelligent Evolution of All Existence; humanity's evolution on earth a part of cosmic evolution, overseen by Secret Spiritual Hierarchy called the Masters of Ancient Wisdom who were advanced spiritual beings.
- ❑ Prepare humanity to meet "World Teacher" known as Lord Maitrya--a high ranking member of the Masters of Ancient Wisdom.
- ❑ Founded magazine entitled, Lucifer.

Abdul Baha

- ❑ Religion of Baha'i--word meaning 'glory' or 'splendor.'
- ❑ Unity of God--all religions lead to God through their leaders; Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammed being the most recent.
- ❑ Unity of Religion--Unified World Order.
- ❑ Unity of Humanity--All people united for peace.

Ann Lee believed and taught:

- ❑ God is Dual. Not three male beings in one Godhead, but Father and Mother.
- ❑ No resurrection of the body.
- ❑ The souls of all men have endless existence. An immortal soul.
- ❑ Jesus has already returned.

Fox Sisters, Andrew Jackson Davis

- ❑ Modern spiritualism began in Hydesville, New York, in 1848. At the home of a blacksmith named John Fox. Strange rapping noises began to occur in the bedroom of Fox's young daughters, Margaret, and Katharine. The girls claimed the noises were communications from the departed spirit of a murdered peddler. They became stars and used spiritualism to make money and spread the deception everywhere they went.
- ❑ **Davis** was a Spiritualist, believed in mesmerism, claimed to be clairvoyant and authored a book praising Shaker Ann Lee.

Margaret McDonald, a 15-year-old Scottish girl, and member of Edward Irving's congregation, spoke in what they believed was the Biblical definition of tongues--it was not and had visions in early 1830 *that included a Secret Rapture of believers before the appearance of the Antichrist*. The reported divine healings, visions and speaking in tongues influenced later Christian leaders in the Higher Life movement to form Pentecostalism.

Charles Parham, an American evangelist, and faith healer began teaching that speaking in tongues was the Bible evidence of Spirit baptism and along with William J. Seymour, a Wesleyan-Holiness preacher, he taught that this was the third work of grace. Both were heavily influenced by the visions and testimonies of Margaret McDonald.

Charles Taze Russell

- ❑ Jesus was given divinity by the Father--thus not always God.
- ❑ The Holy Spirit is not a person but the essence of God's power.
- ❑ Christ returned invisibly in 1874.
- ❑ Armageddon began in 1914.

Charles Darwin

- ❑ Author of the Theory of Evolution--natural selection. Man evolved from primates (apes).
- ❑ Agnostic

- ❑ Critical of the Bible

Karl Marx

- ❑ Socialist
- ❑ Atheist
- ❑ Secular Humanist

So how can we be sure that none of these movements were the genuine manifestation of the prophetic gift? Two main reasons:

1. Each one shows characteristics of false prophets and thus failed the tests of a true prophet of God thus their movements were counterfeits to the true, and
2. None of them addressed or even showed any interest in Daniel's prophecy of the 2300 days thus each failed God's method of operation. They all had a central message, but it had nothing to do with the 2300 days being fulfilled in 1844 AD, or Christianity!

So, we must look for a Christian movement that had a prophet that fits the modus operandi of God that we have seen in the five examples of prophecy that I shared. Not only that, but also, they must pass the ten tests of a prophet as well. But there is even more in the word of God to help us in determining who this prophet for the end times is.

God's prophet will be found among His people and there is no passage in Scripture that describes more accurately the origin, identity, message, mission, and destiny of the end time remnant people than Revelation chapter 10. However, in order to truly understand Revelation 10, we will need to know about subjects such as:

- ❑ Elements of the sanctuary services,
- ❑ The 70 weeks of Daniel 9 in detail,
- ❑ The 2300-day prophecy of Daniel 8 in detail, and
- ❑ The role of the Spirit of Prophecy of Revelation 19, before we can unlock the meaning of Revelation 10.

We can still learn vital elements of the Bible and history that will help paint the picture we need. The Bible gives us the characteristics of the entities described in prophecy and then we must find their fulfillment in history using the historicist method of interpretation. This method is the only one that will bring us to the right conclusion that satisfies all that the Bible has shared, and documented history.

For example, we could say that the characteristics of the beast that rises from the earth in Revelation 13:11-18 indicate that it represents the United States. But nowhere in the Bible will you find the name 'United States.' You see, the Bible gives us the characteristics and then we must find in history the power to which the characteristics apply. The same can be said about the prophecy of Revelation 10. In this particular chapter we find the characteristics that point to the rise of the remnant church, but we must find the fulfillment of these characteristics in history.

Now I don't want you to take my word for it but I guarantee that when we get to a detailed study of Revelation chapter 10 you will most definitely be amazed that the characteristics of the end time remnant church and the prophet God chose to send to His people will fit all the other methods I have been sharing. You will recognize it more quickly because of what we are learning right now. So, we do not need to know anything of Revelation 10 right now in order to find the prophet for the end times,

but we will find later that chapter 10 solidifies what we will discover using the methods right now. There will be no doubts to those who are honest at heart.

Now someone might ask, pastor Joel, why do we need to know about a prophet for the end times? Why is it important? Good questions. As we have seen, God has a method of sending His people exactly what they needed to keep them from being deceived by Satan and help them during major ministry transitions through time that will determine their eternal destiny. It comes down to being saved or not being saved and anyone in history that has been indifferent to or has rejected a prophet of God has not fared well in the judgment that came upon them. It is very important, therefore, to know if God sent a prophet to us for God only gives good gifts, and who that prophet is.

Having said that, there is another method that God used to help us discover His end time people and prophet than what we have learned so far. Remember, we have looked at the traits of false prophets, the tests of a true prophet and God's modus operandi in five OT prophecies leading to the end times. I mentioned Revelation chapter 10 but let me share another method with you.

In the Old Testament, one of the greatest prophets, Elijah, came to the Children of Israel when there was an apostasy and people did not believe in the God of heaven, and they were kneeling down to Baal and idols and judgment was about to be proclaimed upon them. Elijah came with a message from God. It was a stern message, but it woke up a lot of people. There was a great reformation that went throughout the land and throughout the Children of Israel. It was a significant sign in the history of God's people. Ever since that time whenever a prophet arose who brought a great reformation, they would call them an Elijah prophet. God talked about this through the prophet Malachi and notice what he said in 4:5-6, *"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: ⁶ And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."*

So, the Jews who read the scriptures in the book of Malachi began to look for the coming of Elijah the prophet. When Jesus came to this world, the Jews were still looking for the coming of Elijah the prophet. John 1:19–26, *"And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? ²⁰ And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. ²¹ And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? [That is, the prophet Moses predicted in Deuteronomy 18:15.] And he answered, No. ²² Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? ²³ He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. ²⁴ And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. ²⁵ And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? ²⁶ John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; ²⁷ He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."*

Here is what the problem was with the Jews at that time. It is a problem among many Christians today; I hope it is not your problem. You know the Bible says that spiritual things are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2:14, *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* Such a man depends on human wisdom for the solution of all his problems. He lives to please himself and to gratify the desires of the unconverted heart, hence is incapable of understanding and appreciating the things of God. To him the plan of salvation, the wonderful revelation of God's love, is folly. He cannot distinguish between worldly philosophy and spiritual truth because the wisdom of God is understood only by those who permit themselves to be taught by the Holy Spirit. And so, if you

read that and if you cannot discern spiritual things and all you can see is literal things, you are going to be in trouble. You are not going to understand the Word of God like you need to.

The Jews knew that God had taken Elijah in a chariot up into heaven in the days of Ahab. Elijah was up there, and they said, and they taught that before the Messiah comes God is going to send Elijah, the same one who spoke to Ahab and Jezebel. God is going to send him back down from heaven to us. And so, they asked John, *"Are you Elijah? You know, the one that talked to Ahab and Jezebel,"* and John said, *"No. I am not."* Then they said, *"Well, then the Messiah cannot be coming yet, because before the Messiah comes Elijah has to come back down from heaven."* The problem is that they did not discern spiritual things. Was John the Baptist the Elijah prophet who was promised? Yes, he was. Jesus said so. Matthew 11:9–15, *"But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. ¹¹ Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he* [Not greater than John in moral worth, courage, character, or achievement, but in the privilege of being associated with Christ Himself in person. In a sense, John was only at the door of the kingdom, looking in, while the humblest follower of Jesus was in the very presence of the King Himself]. *¹² And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³ For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. ¹⁵ He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."*

Was John the Baptist the Elijah prophet? Yes, according to Jesus he was. And notice what Jesus said about the Elijah prophet. He said in verse 9 that John was not only a prophet, but that he was *"more than a prophet."* John was the personal forerunner of the Messiah. He was the one to whom was given the most important task of all time, that of introducing the Messiah to the world. In John were combined all the great qualities of a true prophet. In character, conviction, and faithfulness no prophet had excelled more than John the Baptist. Very likely any of the prophets of OT times would have gladly sacrificed every privilege that might conceivably have been theirs for the supreme privilege of introducing the Messiah to the world.

Now let me tell you something. This is the absolute best news on the face of the earth right now. There have been three times since the beginning of the world that God has sent His children, because of the crisis they were in, not just a prophet, but somebody who was more than a prophet. The first time God sent His children somebody who was more than a prophet was when He sent Moses. To be freed of Egypt was for God's people the event of the ages and they needed more than a prophet to guide them through that struggle.

There were prophets with Moses and most people don't realize that. Miriam and Aaron were prophets, too. One time they got jealous of Moses, and in Numbers 12:2 they said, *"Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it."* Do you remember what the Lord said to them? Numbers 12:6-9, *"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. ⁷ My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. ⁸ With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently [appearing], and not in dark speeches [riddles]; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? ⁹ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed."* Moses was more than just a prophet as he spoke to God face to face, not needing to have visions and dreams to know God's will for His people. He directed the children of Israel and taught them as a good Shepherd. Moses was more than a prophet.

The second time God sent His children somebody who was more than a prophet was when He sent John the Baptist. When Jesus came, that was the most important event of the ages. Before Jesus came, God sent His children somebody who was a prophet all right, but somebody who was more than a prophet because that was a crisis period and they needed it.

The third time God sent His children somebody who was a prophet, who was more than a prophet, was in the time of the end. In Malachi we read that before the coming of the dreadful day of the Lord, which is speaking about the second coming of Jesus, God said, *"I am going to send you Elijah the prophet."* Though John the Baptist partially fulfilled this prophecy, the **"great and dreadful day of the Lord"** is specifically speaking about the second coming of Jesus and finds its major fulfillment at that time (see Zephaniah 1; Isaiah 2, 13; Joel 2; Acts 2; 1 Thess. 5; 2 Peter 3). So, this 'Elijah' prophet would be no ordinary prophet, this would be a special prophet like that of Moses and John the Baptist.

You and I are living in the most spiritually dangerous time of all the ages, and we need special instruction from heaven to keep us focused on Bible truth. Even the people who are the spiritual leaders of the world do not have confidence in the Scriptures anymore because of the theories of higher criticism, theistic evolution, and spiritualism. The scientific community and the educated people do not have confidence in the Bible because of the theories of geology and evolution, which they have been taught since they were young. And nobody believes in what the Holy Book teaches anymore, who has been involved in spiritualism because they have been taught opposite theories that are contrary to the scriptures.

God knew that this would happen, Jesus predicted it in Luke 18, and so He promised through Malachi the prophet that before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, He was going to do something special for us. He knew we were going to be in trouble: we were going to be in perilous times. There were going to be scoffers; there were going to be mockers. It was going to be an age of unbelief, especially in Bible prophecy. So, the Lord said, I am going to send to you Elijah the prophet, somebody who is more than a prophet. Moses was more than a prophet. John the Baptist was more than a prophet. The Elijah prophet is to be more than a prophet. We know that from the words of Jesus in Matthew 11. The great tragedy that happened to the Jews is that the Elijah prophet came. They asked him, *"Are you Elijah? Are you the one that talked to Ahab and Jezebel?"* He said, *"No, I am not."* So, they said, *"That is not the Elijah prophet"* and they left, and they missed out.

Now the Jews had the Bible--that is the Old Testament. That was all that had been written so far. But do you realize, my dear friend, that those Jews in the time of Christ missed what God wanted them to know because they did not accept the gift of prophecy that God sent to them just before Jesus came? They missed it! The most wonderful thing that God sent to them, and they missed it! That was part of the reason they rejected the Messiah. Let us not do as they did. Let us not miss the Elijah prophet that God has sent to His people to prepare them for Christ's second coming.

God promised His children a special messenger; He promised to send them Elijah the prophet. God considered this so important that in the book of Revelation He describes two characteristics of His remnant people so that we could discern between His true church and the antichrist church—Babylon fallen. Notice what these two traits are in Revelation 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."*** What is the testimony of Jesus Christ? The bible answers our question in Revelation 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."*** 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 them to speak authoritatively as a representative of God when “moved by the Holy Ghost” to do so.

So, the church of God in the time of the end, in our time will have the gift of prophecy from the Holy Spirit. Besides all the gifts of the Spirit it will have a prophet to guide and prepare the church for the final battle before the end of all things. Again, this is one of the identifying attributes of the church of God in our day--the remnant of God in the last days. We are living in a time when God is in the process of calling millions of people to become a part of this remnant. Ephesians 4:11-13, *"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; ¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: ¹³ Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."* This makes it clear to us that the gifts of the Spirit exist until we come into the unity of the faith, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ unto a perfect man. Now that has not yet happened. That will not happen until the church is ready for Jesus to come in the clouds of heaven. So, we know from that Scripture that spiritual gifts are to continue until the Second Coming, including the gift of prophecy.

Some people are terribly mixed up about spiritual gifts. They think that the main spiritual gift is talking in tongues. But if you look at spiritual gifts in Romans 12 or in 1 Corinthians 12 or in Ephesians 4, you will find that tongues is just one of many gifts, and it is never even mentioned as the most important one. The most important gifts are the gifts of apostleship and of prophecy. Let us compare Revelation 12:17 with Revelation 19:10 again so that it is clear. The dragon is the devil; the woman is the church; and the rest of her offspring, or the remnant of her seed, are the last church at the end of time. The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy. So, it would read like this: *"And the devil was enraged with the church, and he went to make war with the last of the church who keep the commandments of God and have the Spirit of Prophecy."*

So, God's last people in the world—will be keeping the commandments. They will be a Sabbath keeping people because that commandment is right in the heart of the Ten Commandments, and they will have the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy. Is that clear enough? The gift of prophecy had to be found in the church in the mid-1800s with someone who passed the biblical tests of a prophet. This prophet must also:

- ❑ Impart the same message that God gave to Daniel.
- ❑ The message must be one of judgment—Daniel 8:14.
- ❑ The message explains that the time prophecy has come to an end—1844 AD.
- ❑ The message given to the original prophet then becomes Present Truth for that time.
- ❑ A remnant of God's people must be drawn out and guided by the mission of this prophet and the message given--a group forming a church.

I want to tell you; I am not the least bit embarrassed to tell you; God has sent His people not only a prophet, but also somebody who is more than a prophet, a special messenger. If we would listen to this special messenger, we would be guided back to all the truth in God's Word because we are far from it right now... so much so that Jesus is waiting to return though we can hasten it. God is going to have a perfect church—called the church triumphant. To have a perfect church, the members have to be adhering to everything in the Bible. The Lord knows that you and I are living 6,000 years from the Garden of Eden, and we all, compared with our forefathers, have very feeble minds. So, the Lord chose to send us a special messenger to lead us back to Bible truth and prepare us to become members of the church triumphant. Isaiah 55:8-9, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are*

your ways my ways, saith the LORD. ⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

1 Corinthians 1:19–29 shows how different God's ways are from our ways. Pay close attention to this for this is special! *"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. ²⁰ Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹ For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. ²² For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: ²³ But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; ²⁴ But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. ²⁶ For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: ²⁷ But **God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;** ²⁸ And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: ²⁹ That no flesh should glory in his presence."*

And when God chose to send His people in the last days a special messenger, He chose to send somebody who would not only be a prophet, but who would be more than a prophet. A special messenger who, if they would listen, would lead them back to the truths of the Bible, so they would be ready for the coming of Christ. Because when Christ comes, He is coming to receive a perfected church—not a backslidden church, not an apostate church, not a lukewarm church, but a perfected church. So, we read in the Bible that God chose to use an instrument that would be so weak that we would be forced to recognize, if we were willing to recognize, that this was the power and the wisdom and the might of God. God chose to send His message through the weakest of the weak. Now who are the weak? 1 Peter 3:7, *"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, **as unto the weaker vessel**, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."*

Please do not be insulted, ladies, but in the Bible Peter does say that the wife is the weaker vessel. I did not say that; please do not be offended. It is in the Bible. It merely means that women are weaker than men. So, if God said He was going to send a message through the weakest of the weak, who would it have to be? When God chose to send His people in the last days a special messenger, He chose to send somebody who would not only be a prophet, but who would be more than a prophet. A special messenger who, if they would listen, would lead them back to the truths of the Bible, so they would be ready for the end times and the coming of Christ. So, we read in the Bible that God will often choose an instrument that would be so weak that we would be forced to recognize, if we were willing to recognize, that this was the power and the wisdom and the might of God. God would at times choose to send His message through the weakest of the weak. Who does the Bible say are the weak? 1 Peter 3:7, *"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, **as unto the weaker vessel**, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."*

So, if God said He was going to send a messenger to His people living in the end times we should not be surprised that he would call the weakest of the weak so we would recognize that their calling was from the wisdom and might of God. They would have to be someone who wielded no great esteem or power in the eyes of the world. Remember the timing of this messenger is in the mid-1800s in the United States so you would think maybe it would be a person of color or a woman, both of which were thought of by many as second class or weak. A civil war would soon break out over this belief of

second-class people. But Peter spoke of a wife being the weaker vessel so it could be a woman, but it would not be just a woman. There are some women who are much stronger than other women. It would have to be a woman who was weak. Not just weak as a woman but a weak woman that God could call.

Somebody might say, "*Pastor Joel, that is impossible. If God were going to send somebody who was going to be more than a prophet, obviously He would send a man. Moses was a man. John the Baptist was a man. God would have to send a man.*" I know that some people do not believe in women prophets. Amazing as it sounds, there are some people that are confused about prophets and who God can use to His glory. Are there actually women prophets in the Bible? It would settle it pretty quickly if the Bible was silent as to women prophets but in both the Old Testament and the New Testament there were women who were chosen as prophets. Now don't confuse the gift of prophecy with being called as an Apostle or an Elder. There are quite a number of other qualifications that go into being an Apostle, Pastor and Elder than for being a prophet.

The Bible tells of women prophets, and it did not even matter what their status was as women. Sometimes men judge women by a woman's status. But whatever her family status was, there were women in all different family relations or status, and God still chose them as prophets. For instance, in the New Testament in the book of Acts it says Philip had four daughters who were prophets, and these daughters were virgins. Acts 21:8-9, "*And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. ⁹ And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.*"

So, can a woman who is a virgin be a prophet? Yes. But would you have to be a virgin to be a prophet? No, because in both the Old and the New Testament there are recorded married women who were prophets. Sometimes it even records their husbands' names. According to both the Old and New Testament, you could be a virgin and be a prophet or you could be married and be a prophet. And then, there were women who were prophets whose husbands had died. Just because their husbands had died, and they were widows did not disqualify them from being a prophet. In fact, when Jesus was born, they brought Him into the temple and one of the persons who came and held Him, adored Him, and admired Him, was Anna, a prophetess. Luke 2:36-38, "*And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; ³⁷ And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. ³⁸ And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.*"

Let's think about this prophetess named Anna. If she had been married at the early age of fifteen, had been married for 7 years to her husband before becoming a widow, and then remained a widow for 84 years, she would then be 106 years of age. Quite remarkable! Anna was very devoted to God as it says that she "*departed not from the temple*" but served God in the same sense that the disciples, after the ascension, "*were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.*" This is not saying that they lived at the Temple nor did Anna. Anna faithfully attended the hours of morning and evening worship. Her life was absorbed in the service of God; she had no other interests to distract her attention. Anna was a widow, and she was a prophetess. Since she was a prophetess, the Lord had given her special instruction. She knew, when she looked at this Baby, that this Baby was the Messiah. She was a prophet.

The Bible presents a number of instances where women have been entrusted with this gift of the Spirit. Miriam, the sister of Moses, was a prophetess (Ex. 15:20), as was Deborah, with whose inspired aid Barak conquered the Canaanites (Judges 4:4). Isaiah's wife was a prophetess (Isa. 8:3), also Huldah, who aided Hilkiah the priest in the reforms of Josiah, king of Judah (2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chron. 34:22). There is no question that a woman can have the spiritual gift of prophecy.

False prophetesses are also mentioned in the Scriptures. Nehemiah 6:14, *"My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear."* Nehemiah speaks her name explicitly as to warn that false prophets, like her, were again busy among the people seeking to seduce them and their leaders from listening to the voice of the true prophets. Revelation 2:20, *"Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols."* As Jezebel sponsored the worship of Baal in Israel (1 Kings 21:25), so in John's day some false prophetess was attempting to lead astray the church at Thyatira.

Joel 2:28-29, *"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: ²⁹ And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."* Joel foretold the pouring out of the gift of prophecy in the latter times upon the "daughters" and "handmaids." This special pouring out of the Spirit results in the display of supernatural gifts, such as prophesying.

Some don't believe there will be any more prophets, in fact I hear this coming from Christian pulpits more and more today, but Joel, Malachi and Jesus make it clear that God will be sending an Elijah prophet. Some don't believe in women prophets, but we have seen that to be against Scripture. Let's recall God's method of operation again... the gift of prophecy had to be found in the church in the mid-1800s with someone who passed the biblical tests of a prophet, is the Elijah prophet promised before the great and dreadful day of the Lord--the second coming of Jesus, was more than a prophet and must:

- ❑ Impart the same message that God gave to Daniel.
- ❑ The message must be one of judgment—Daniel 8:14.
- ❑ The message explains that the time prophecy has come to an end—ended on October 22, 1844, AD.
- ❑ The message given to the original prophet then becomes Present Truth for that time—caused a worldwide awakening.
- ❑ A remnant of God's people must be drawn out and guided by the mission of this prophet and the message given—the movement formed a denomination.

What is a denomination? Webster's defines it as: *The act of naming. A name or title; a class, society or collection of individuals, called by the same name; as a denomination of Christians.* Remember, the Lord can choose the, *"weakest of the weak."* 1 Corinthians 1:27-29, *"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; ²⁸ And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: ²⁹ That no flesh should glory in his presence."*

So the person whom God chose as a special messenger to His people in the end times that passes all the tests of a prophet, gave the message of Daniel 8:14 in the mid-1800s making it present truth

for the end times, the Elijah prophet that was to come before Jesus returned, who was more than a prophet, the weakest of the weak was a person 17 years of age who was so weak that she could not write without her hand shaking. She had been in an accident when she was about nine years of age. A girl had become angry with her and had thrown a rock, and that rock had hit her in the nose, and she had a deformed nose for the rest of her life. When the rock hit her in the nose the blood gushed out and she lost so much blood that she had to be carried home. After some months, she was able to go back to school but when she tried to write, her hand would shake so bad, she could not write. So, she had to quit school. She was not expected to live very long either. The first thing her father would ask when he came home from work was, *"Is she still alive?"* That is the way she grew up. She had no more than a third-grade education. That is the person whom God chose, because He was going to do something to show the difference between His ways and man's ways. He was going to show that the foolishness of God was wiser than men and the weakness of God was mightier than men.

That young woman, at 17 years of age mind you, received her first vision. Even after she received her first vision, she had very serious medical problems and it been thought she would die soon. She was not expected to live because of heart problems. But she lived about 60 more years after that, and that is a miracle from the Lord. Another time she had cancer. Because of the cancer, she should have died. But the Lord healed her of that. To the world she was not supposed to live. She could not write. She was too weak. She was too timid. The Lord allowed these things to happen so men would find out that He was the One in charge. He chooses those that He wants. This person had a special message from God to His people. She said to the Lord, at first, *"I could never address anybody in public! I cannot write, my hand shakes. They won't believe me as the message is against what they currently believe."*

Now if at 17 years of age the Lord gave you a vision and told you to share it what would you do? You are a person that is weak, looked upon as weaker than weak and very young, how would you react? It's a big task, isn't it? It can be scary, right? Do you know how she reacted? She left her home and went to a friend's house so she could be away from the meeting in her home and not feel as though she had to share the vision. Like Jonah, she ran away for a short time. What would this 17-year-old girl who had been given a vision from the Creator decide to do—a vision that presented information contrary to her own thinking and contrary to what was now held by the Advent believers generally in the Portland Maine area?

In recounting the experience two years later in a letter she told of how God instructed her to deliver the message to the little band of people there. She also related her reaction. She said, *"I shrank from it. I was young, and I thought they would not receive it from me."* During that time, it seemed to her that God had forsaken her. Finally, she promised the Lord that if He would give her strength to ride home that night, she would at the first opportunity deliver the message He had given to her. And do you know what, God did give her strength. She did ride home that night, but it was late when she got there, and the meeting was over, and the people were gone.

At the next meeting held in her parents' home she shared in careful detail what had been shown to her in the vision. And the message brought relief to those Adventists in Portland! You see, they knew her; they knew her family. They had heard that a vision had been given to her, and when they heard it from her own lips, they accepted what she told them as a message from God. It met a need in their experience. You see the Lord knows our need and He fills it. The first telling of the vision in her parents' home in Portland took place within a few days of the vision itself, which she later pinpointed as having occurred in December 1844. Events then took off in rapid succession for her.

In her biographical account she says, *"About one week after this the Lord gave me another view, and showed me the trials I must pass through; that I must go and relate to others what He had revealed to me; that I should meet with great opposition, and suffer anguish of spirit. Said the angel, "The grace of God is sufficient for you; He will sustain you."* White, *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, p35. But this new vision troubled her very much, for in it she was commissioned to go out among the people and present the truths that God had revealed to her. Think about her situation: Her health was poor; she was in constant bodily suffering; tuberculosis ravaged her lungs and gave every appearance that she was *"marked for the grave,"* as the saying goes. Her family was without money; it was midwinter in Maine. She was timid and entertained serious misgivings about traveling and coming before the people with the claim to have had visions from God. For several days and far into the night she prayed that God would remove the burden from her and place it upon someone more capable of bearing it. But constantly the words of the angel sounded in her ears, *"Make known to others what I have revealed to you."* *Life Sketches of James White and Ellen G. White*, p194.

Recalling the experience, she wrote, *"It seemed impossible for me to accomplish this work that was presented before me; to attempt it seemed certain failure. The trials attending it seemed more than I could endure. How could I, a child in years, go forth from place to place unfolding to the people the holy truths of God? My heart shrank in terror from the thought."* *Life Sketches of James White and Ellen G. White*, p194. Like a young lady living at home should do, she talked with her father of her perplexities. He repeatedly assured her that if God had called her to labor in other places, He would not fail to open the way for her. But to her it seemed impossible to submit to the commission. Soon the peace of God that she had enjoyed left her; for a time, she even refused to attend the meetings held in her home.

One evening she was persuaded to be present. The attending Elder encouraged her to surrender her will to the will of God. In her distress she could not muster courage to bring her own will into play. But now her heart united with the petitions of her friends. She later recounted, *"While prayer was offered for me, that the Lord would give me strength and courage to bear the message, the thick darkness that had encompassed me rolled back, and a sudden light came upon me. Something that seemed to me like a ball of fire struck me right over the heart. My strength was taken away, and I fell to the floor. I seemed to be in the presence of the angels. One of these holy beings again repeated the words, "Make known to others what I have revealed to you."* *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p71. When she regained her consciousness, Elder Pearson who was present, stood and declared, *"I have seen a sight such as I never expected to see. A ball of fire came down from heaven, and struck her right on the heart. I saw it! I saw it! I can never forget it. It has changed my whole being. Sister ... have courage in the Lord. After this night I will never doubt again."* *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p71.

One reason she shrank from the call was that she remembered the experience of some entrusted by God with large responsibilities who became proud. She feared that this might be a danger to her. Isn't that amazing that she was concerned about that? It is actually reassuring to know that she had such a concern for her character. She discussed this with the angel one time while in vision. *"If I must go and relate what thou hast shown me," she pleaded, "preserve me from undue exaltation."* *Replied the angel: "Your prayers are heard and shall be answered. If this evil that you dread threatens you, the hand of God will be stretched out to save you; by affliction He will draw you to Himself and preserve your humility. "Deliver the message faithfully. Endure unto the end and you shall eat the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the water of life."* *Life Sketches of James White and Ellen G. White*, p196. With this assurance in her heart, she committed herself to the Lord, ready to do His bidding whatever that might be or whatever the cost. And with ill health and a shaky hand she wrote the messages of God to His people. How much did she write to God's people? She wrote more pages of manuscript than any other woman in recorded history—over 100,000 pages, over one million words! That came from

somebody who had a shaky hand, with a third-grade education, who, at the age of seventeen, was supposed to die in a few months from tuberculosis. God uses the weak to confound the mighty my friends!

In Matthew 24, Jesus said that there would be many false prophets and so we need to be careful. It is interesting that this young woman told people to check her out against the Word of God, as all good Christians should do. *"God is either teaching His church, reprovng their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil."* White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol.5, p671.

To obey the Lord, we must check out anyone who claims to be a prophet. Several years ago, when I was attending the trademark trial between the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and Raphael Perez in Miami Florida, a man came up to me and said, *"I am a prophet."* Now I am typically very skeptical, but I do not scoff at anybody who claims to be a prophet, because the Lord could send a prophet at any time. There is a text in the Bible that says not to quench the Spirit and to prove all things. It is 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21, *"Quench not the Spirit. ²⁰ Despise not prophesyings. ²¹ Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."* So, when this man told me that he was a prophet, I had some questions for him and after hearing his answers, doing a little research, I found that he was confused in his claim. Then there was a lady from France some years ago that said that she had the gift of prophecy and had messages for the remnant people of God, but she too didn't pass the tests. I do not scoff at their profession, but they must pass the Biblical tests. In fact, if you, or I or anybody said, *"I believe that the Lord has sent me the gift of prophecy,"* we should be checked out by seasoned and experienced brethren to see whether we meet all the tests of a prophet.

So, who is this weakest of the weak that the Lord called to give messages to His end time people that I have been talking about? Let me tell you. On November 26, 1827, twin girls were born in the home of Robert and Eunice Harmon. These girls were named Ellen and Elizabeth. Their farm was near the village of Gorham, Maine, which is west of Portland, Maine. You can Google it and see that it is still there. In the year 1840, at the age of twelve, Ellen gave her heart to God. At her insistence, she was baptized that same day in the Atlantic Ocean. During the next several years as she endeavored to heal from her health issues, she found enough strength to knit stockings to be sold to help support Christian missionaries. Her parents, who were both faithful Christians, were glad that she could be occupied, for they believed she did not have long to live.

One morning in late December of 1844, at the age of 17, Ellen Harmon went to the home of a fellow Christian in South Portland, Maine. There, together with four other Christian ladies, she bowed in prayer and prayed that souls would be helped to know Jesus better. As they were kneeling together in prayer, Ellen was taken off in vision. This was Ellen's first vision. It is documented that throughout her life, Ellen Harmon, known after her marriage to James White as Ellen White, received some 2000 visions from God! So, her first vision took place in December 1844 and her last known vision, concerning the welfare of youth, and was given on March 3, 1915. She averaged almost three visions each month in her 70 years of ministry! More than a prophet!

Ellen had two married sisters living in Poland, Maine, about thirty miles north of Portland. One, Mary, was married to a fellow named Samuel Foss. Maybe you have heard of his brother, Hazen Foss? In late January of 1845 he had business in Portland, and while he was in the city, he stopped in at the Harmon home. He told Ellen that her sister Mary was eager for her to come and visit her. *"I thought this was an opening from the Lord,"* she later wrote (Letter 37, 1890). She decided to go with him. In

the bitter cold and in spite of her feeble health, she made the thirty-mile journey with her brother-in-law—crouched on the bottom of the sleigh with a buffalo robe over her head. Can you imagine? When she reached Poland, Maine she learned that there would be a meeting of the Adventists at the little chapel on McGuire's Hill. Her sister Mary invited her to attend. She consented, and at the meeting stood to relate what God had shown her in vision. Her biography speaks about it and says that for five minutes she spoke in only a whisper, then her voice broke clear, and she addressed the audience for nearly two hours. This was the first occasion that she told of her first vision outside of Portland Maine. She said, *"In this meeting the power of the Lord came upon me and on the people... When my message was ended my voice was gone until I stood before the people again, when the same singular restoration was repeated. I felt a constant assurance that I was doing the will of God, and saw marked results attending my efforts."* Life Sketches of James White and Ellen G. White, p197.

Some time before the first vision was given to Ellen in December of 1844, the Lord had given just such a vision to her brother in law's brother, Hazen Foss. He had been instructed that he was to tell others what God had revealed to him. However, he felt he had been deceived in the disappointment of 1844 when Jesus had not returned like they had thought and taught. He knew that ridicule and scorn would come to anyone who claimed to have a vision from God, so he refused to obey the promptings of God's Spirit.

Again, the Lord came near to him in vision; he was instructed that if he refused to bear the message Heaven would have him give to the people, the Lord would reveal it to someone else, placing His Spirit on the weakest of the weak. But Hazen still felt that he could not bear the burden and the reproach of standing before the people to present a vision from God. He told the Lord that he would not do it. Then very strange feelings came over him, and *"a voice said, 'you have grieved away the Spirit of the Lord.'"* Ellen G. White, Letter 37, 1890. This frightened Hazen Foss and horrified at his own stubbornness and rebellion, he told the Lord that he would now relate the vision. He called a meeting of the Adventists and when the people came together, he recounted his experience. Then he tried to tell what was shown to him, but he could not bring it to mind. Even with the most concentrated effort he could not recall a word of it. He cried out in distress, *"It is gone from me; I can say nothing, and the Spirit of the Lord has left me."* Ellen G. White, Letter 37, 1890. Those who were present described the meeting as the most terrible meeting they ever were in. I have been in meetings that were terrible like I imagine this one to have been.

One time I was giving lectures on the prophecies of Daniel at a home church and came down with such a severe migraine that I could no longer think and had to lie down. There was a mother of a family attending the meeting that was very opposed to the messages I was presenting, and she seemed rather joyful about my sudden collapse. It was a terrible experience, at first, as I had a hard time understanding why this happened. After the family left, which was after lunch a couple of hours later, my migraine completely vanished! As we came together and prayed it became apparent that this lady was grieving away the Spirit and it was affecting the others that were attending. I recovered quickly and continued the lectures into the evening hours! We need to be very careful to listen to the Spirit of God and obey Him.

As Hazen Foss talked with Ellen that February morning, he told her that although he had not gone into the chapel where she had spoken the evening before, he had stood outside the door and heard every word that she had said. He declared that what the Lord had shown to her had first been shown to him. But, he said, I was proud; I was un-reconciled to the disappointment of October 22nd. That was just three months before, so it was very fresh to the Adventists. I murmured against God, and wished myself dead, he told her. Then I felt a strange feeling come over me. I shall be henceforth as

one dead to spiritual things.... I believe the visions are taken from me and given to you. He told her, *“Do not refuse to obey God, for it will be at the peril of your soul. I am a lost man. You are chosen of God; be faithful in doing your work, and the crown I might have had, you will receive.”* Ellen G. White, Letter 37, 1890. This unusual experience made an unforgettable impression upon Ellen. The biddings of God's Spirit are not to be trifled with my friends.

Now before Hazen Foss and Ellen Harmon had their visions there was another fellow named William Ellis Foy, a black American in his early twenties, who received several dramatic visions in 1842. Foy lived and ministered during the height of the Advent awakening. His visions consisted of lofty revelations of heaven, the judgment, events before Christ's second coming, and God's watch care over the Advent believers. Contrary to popular misconception, Ellen White did not later fill Foy's role. They stood at different moments in history, confronted with contrasting circumstances and challenges and called for differing purposes. William Foy served as a spokesman for God to the Advent movement in the pre-Disappointment period before 1844, whereas Ellen White became a post-Disappointment prophet after October 22, 1844. Foy received a limited number of visions, and his prophetic role did not extend past 1844. We may wonder why God contacted three people when seeking to convey His last-day messages. Maybe He wished to demonstrate that He does not limit His gifts to any favored group. Hence, he chose a Black man, a White man, and a young weak woman. God has His reasons, and we must trust Him. It doesn't change God's methods, nor the tests given in His word.

The Millerites and Ellen White centered their message on the prophecy of Daniel and the ministry of Christ in heaven to begin the Judgment of mankind. After the Great Disappointment in 1844 AD, God called and commissioned Ellen Harmon to fully explain this prophecy of Daniel 8:14. And we see that in her early visions. She was to explain the prophecy of the 2300 days and the reason for the Great Disappointment. She could have written about many subjects. Why did she have a burden to explain what happened at the end of the 2300 days? Simply because she was making the time prophecy that God had given 2300 years before to Daniel Present Truth for her day. This is fully in line with God's method of operation that we have learned! A remnant of faithful people were called out together because of that present truth message and with Ellen White's guidance a denomination was established. Again, right in line with God's method of operation we have seen in the Bible!

How can we be sure she is the one? We must evaluate Ellen G. White to see if she passes all Biblical tests of a true prophet of God. And if she does, then we cannot ignore her, or we will be guilty of *“quenching the Spirit.”* What does it mean to quench the Spirit? It means driving away the Holy Spirit by our unbelief, indifference, or presumption, especially with the gift of prophecy. We must assess all gifts of the Spirit, especially the gift of prophecy, against what the word of the Lord says in the Bible. And having discerned the difference between the true and the false, the good and the bad, we are to hold the good, to retain it, in spite of all temptations to dismiss it. So, what about Ellen White? Does she pass the tests? Well, my friends, let me tell you that I have studied this for many years, and I have compared her life, her teachings, beliefs, and predictions to the tests in the Bible and history and I continue to do so, and it is my conclusion that she passes each one. Remarkably so! But don't trust me, trust the evidence itself.

Satan has attempted to counterfeit everything God has done for the benefit of His people. Thus, some of the Lord's greatest blessings have been perverted into agencies of destruction. Presumption has been mistaken and substituted for faith. For most of the professed Christian world the day of worship originated by the deceiver has replaced the seventh day Sabbath of the Lord. Forms and ceremonies in worship have taken the place of genuine worship of God in spirit and in truth. Salvation through faith has been supplanted by an almost infinite variety of systems of salvation by works.

Some of the most healthful and nourishing of foods—grains and fruits—have been made into intoxicating drinks that destroy minds and bodies. Seldom does Satan deal in error unmixed with truth, for error alone would not be sufficiently deceptive. Many of his teachings contain much that is true and good, and the more truth they contain the more deceptive is the counterfeit. This is why what Jesus said in John 5:39 is so important, *"Search the scriptures...."* The word 'search' is a Greek word, which means *'to examine into.'*

The greatest way to uncover the counterfeit is to know the original. Therefore, the original must be examined, and it must be done using correct forms of study and interpretation. The great news is that God has provided the principles of study and way of interpreting and along with the aid of the Holy Spirit, we will know the truth if we are diligent and faithful.

Paul counsels in 2 Timothy 2:15, *"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* There is a fundamental difference between *'reading the Bible'* and *'studying'* the Scriptures. While it is good to read the word of God so that we can be familiar with it, this in itself does not give us the wisdom to correctly hear and decipher God's truth as revealed to the prophets.

The Sabbath and Sunday question is a good illustration of Satan's counterfeit methods and our laziness when it comes to discerning it. The Sabbath is a memorial of creation; Sunday is said to memorialize the resurrection of Christ. The Sabbath is a day of rest from the usual activities of the week, so that God may be worshiped and His work of bringing blessing to others may be done in a special way. Sunday, for the majority of professed Christians, is a day off from regular work so they might do whatever pleases them.

For some persons this includes a brief period of worship, but for most it does not. The Sabbath is the mark of God's authority in the individual life, the seal of Christian experience; but Satan has attempted to make it a mark of peculiar, accepted wisdom or fanaticism. The Sabbath, which was intended by God to be a sign of sanctification through faith, has been perverted by the enemy so that many persons delude themselves by saying that keeping it is an indication that one is attempting to be saved by legalism and good works. Someone who has diligently studied the original will see the counterfeit of Satan in this example.

In just this one example we can see that God's plan for reaching the minds of men through the messages of the prophets has been counterfeited by Satan, usually in the form of false prophets. These false witnesses have accomplished two major objectives in Satan's scheme:

- (1) They have turned men's minds away from God's messages and led them to accept error.
- (2) They have, through their misrepresentations, either in message or in life, caused reproach and discredit to be cast upon all prophets.

Satan cares little what attitude leads one to reject light, as long as the light is rejected. However, no one need be deceived as to whether a professed prophet is true or false. Why? Because standards have been established in the Bible that make it possible to determine which messengers have come with messages from God and which are the counterfeit. If the Bible tests are applied consistently and persistently to the life and teachings of any professed prophet, they will reveal the source of his communications. Ten tests of a prophet are mentioned in the Bible. It is essential that all of the tests be applied to anyone who claims to possess the gift of prophecy. All the requirements must be met.

I have previously stated these ten biblical tests of a true prophet that fall within three categories. These three categories are:

- (1) **The messages of the prophet.** These messages must be in full agreement with Biblical standards, promises, doctrines and laws. This category includes tests 1-6. Please remember that all prophets are human beings that are prone to make mistakes. So, if in their humanity a prophet of God errs, and the nature of that error is sufficiently serious to materially affect the direction of God's church, the eternal destiny of one person, or the purity of a doctrine, then (and only then) the Holy Spirit immediately moves the prophet to correct the error, so that no permanent damage is done.
- (2) **The personal life of the prophet.** The prophet must be dedicated to Jesus and living in obedience to and in harmony with Biblical principles. This category includes tests 7-9. We must be mindful that history and the Scriptures testify that the control of the Holy Spirit over the lives of the prophets did not preclude their freedom to sin; and yet, their sinful acts did not necessarily invalidate their prophetic gift! They were given repentance just like the rest of us who confess and turn away from our sin, asking forgiveness.
- (3) **The physical condition of the prophet when in vision.** There are seven physical conditions that will be evident when a true prophet is in vision. This category specifically deals with test 10.

The Lord has not made these physical evidences the only test of a professed prophet, but they must be taken into consideration as a sign of supernatural origin. So yes, a true prophet WILL have visions and dreams. Period. No, not all the physical phenomena will always accompany a prophet when in vision. These three categories of tests will settle the issue in each and every case of someone who professes to be God's prophet if they are administered correctly, consistently and without prejudice. Jesus warned us to beware of false prophets and has given us the tools and the Holy Spirit to do just that!

Now, we have abundant material to enable us to apply these tests to Ellen White. More than 40 books, 5000 articles and over 50,000 manuscript pages of her writings are available. Her writings cover virtually every phase of Christian living and Bible instruction. She has included tens of thousands of quotations of Bible verses in detailed expositions, as well as for illustration and clarification. Because the writings were spread over a ministry of seventy years, we have the opportunity to check the consistency and accuracy of the Scriptural passages used and the explanation of Bible teachings set forth. On the other hand, the vast number of books she has written poses a problem to the average reader as it takes so much time to read, digest them and compare to the Bible.

I began reading her books in 1985 and still have much more to look at. However, I do not have to read all her writings to conclude as to whether she was a prophet. We can get a good sampling in the books *Steps to Christ*, *The Desire of Ages* and *The Great Controversy*. Also, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessings* and *Christ's Object Lessons* are good too. The nine-volume set of *Testimonies for the Church* as well as her *Review and Herald* articles help to give a good, rounded sample source for evaluating her. I would recommend that you start with these sources and encourage you to get as in depth as you can. Assess her thoroughly with an open mind and willingness to accept God's direction. You can, and are expected to, do much more than I can in these limited notes. I have no doubt that if you do this with a teachable spirit and without prejudice that you will come to the same

conclusion that millions of others have, including myself... you will see that God has indeed sent the Elijah prophet that He promised.

Testing Ellen White

Let's start by checking Ellen White to the tests found in Category 1: *The Messages of a True Prophet*.

TEST 1: They will prophesy in the Lord's name, as they are His messengers.

The very first thing to consider about a prophet is whether or not they are a Christian—a follower of Christ. Makes sense does it not? In 1840, at age 12, Ellen and her family became involved with the Millerite movement. As she attended William Miller's lectures, she felt guilty for her sins and was filled with terror about being eternally lost. She describes herself as spending nights in tears and prayer and being in this condition for several months. On June 26, 1842, she was baptized by John Hobart in Casco Bay in Portland, Maine. In her later years, she referred to this as the happiest time of her life. *"I love Jesus. I tremble at the word of God. I am seeking to hide myself in the cleft of the rock, that I may behold his holiness of character. God has a people, and I want to be among them. I want, too, that you shall be among them. And if you will, without any reservation, give up your way and will to God, you may. The spirit calls today. There is hope still."* General Conference Bulletin, April 1, 1897.

It is overwhelmingly evident that she professed a love for Jesus, the Bible, people, and that she obeyed her calling and prophesied in the Lord's name. *"Many souls have been helped because they have believed that the messages given me were sent in mercy to the erring. When I have seen those who needed a different phase of Christian experience, I have told them so, for their present and eternal good. And so long as the Lord spares my life, I will do my work faithfully, whether or not men and women shall hear and receive and obey. My work is clearly given me to do, and I shall receive grace in being obedient. I love God. I love Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and I feel an intense interest in every soul who claims to be a child of God. I am determined to be a faithful steward so long as the Lord shall spare my life. I will not fail nor be discouraged."* Selected Messages, vol. 3, p71.

TEST 2: They will tell the truth.

Numbers 23:19 says, *"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"*

Titus 1:2, *"...God, that cannot lie..."* Hebrews 6:18 says that it is, *"...impossible for God to lie."*

We see this same character trait of God given in the ninth of the Ten Commandments that God gave and expected His people to keep. It is found in Exodus 20:16 and it says, *"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."*

"Those who profess to be followers of Christ, and who deal in an unrighteous manner, are bearing false witness against the character of a holy, just, and merciful God." The Desire of Ages, p556. Ellen White believed it a sin to bear false witness, so she made it a point to always tell the truth. A prophet that teaches others that it is okay to break the Ten Commandments, is no prophet of the God that cannot lie. A true prophet will tell the truth that God gives them to tell. Jeremiah 28:9, *"When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him."*

Prediction is not the major work of the prophet; but in many instances the prophets claimed that by divine inspiration they had been given insight into the future. Part of the testing of a prophet is

observing whether or not their predictions are fulfilled. Confidence is established in the word of God through the fulfillment of the many specific predictions that it contains. Confidence in the Bible would be destroyed should the prophecies prove to be incorrect. Examples of predictions fulfilled are numerous throughout the Bible. In some cases, the prophecies were not fulfilled in Bible times, but we find the fulfillments recorded in more recent history.

Most of the Old Testament books tell of the Messiah who was to come, and the New Testament verifies the accuracy of the prophecies. Daniel outlined the history of nations from the days of Babylon to the end of time, and it is a simple matter to trace through history the amazing foreknowledge of events that God gave him. Occasionally specific time periods were predicted. These, too, have been exactly fulfilled. All of a prophet's predictions must be carefully scrutinized and their fulfillments observed, although, because of the time involved, this may prove to span more than one lifetime. But the matter is not as simple as it might appear to be.

The Bible speaks of another principle that must be considered before final decisions are reached about a prophet. I am speaking about the principle of conditions. It is amazing to me the number of ministers that do not understand this simple Bible doctrine but are still teaching millions about Bible prophecy. As Paul said in Romans 10:3, *"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."*

It should be remembered that the promises and threatening of God are alike conditional. Notice what the Lord says in Jeremiah 18:7-10, *"At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; ⁸ If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. ⁹ And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; ¹⁰ If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them."*

This must be given careful consideration in dealing with the identification of a true prophet. In certain instances, conditional prophecy poses no real problem, for the conditions are stated, and it is easy to see that if the conditions are not met there is no reason for the fulfillment of the prediction. But in other cases, no conditions are stated. The Lord has said that when conditions change, He will act differently, either for reward or punishment. Does this create a loophole through which any false prophet may escape by proclaiming, *"That was a conditional prophecy I made, even though I did not state the conditions; now that the conditions have changed there is no reason why the prophecy should be fulfilled?"*

The Bible's best illustration of the principle set forth by Jeremiah is in the book of Jonah. In Jonah 3:4 the rebellious prophet proclaimed, *"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."* No mention is made of any conditions attached to this prediction. In fact, it seems obvious that no suggestion was made of a way of escape, for in his decree the king asked in verse 9, *"Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from His fierce anger, that we perish not?"* Had a condition been offered he would have known that there was the possibility of deliverance. The time passed, the city was not overthrown, and Jonah was angry with the Lord because he felt he would now be considered a false prophet. Was Jonah a false prophet? Jonah's word did not come to pass, and yet he had taken to Nineveh the exact message the Lord had given him.

In fact, it was because of his recognition of the principle that the Lord would withhold punishment if the people repented that he had not wanted to go to Nineveh in the first place. In his prayer to the

Lord after Nineveh had been spared, he complained in Jonah 4:2, *“Was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest Thee of the evil.”* Had he been permitted to enumerate the conditions on which punishment would be withheld, there would have been no problem in his mind on this particular point. But was he a false prophet? God did not consider him so, and as we study the case carefully, we conclude that he was a true prophet of God despite the fact that what may have been the most prominent prediction of his career was unfulfilled. What makes the difference? Why is one man whose prediction is not fulfilled called a false prophet, and another true? God has explained to us a principle governing all prophecy in which men's decisions and attitudes are involved. We understand on the basis of the Jeremiah 18 statement that all of God's promises of blessing or threatening's of punishment are made on condition, whether the conditions are stated or not, because their fulfillment depends upon man's relationship to God.

This understanding in no wise applies to the portions of God's plan that are not subject to modification by the decisions of men. For instance, Jesus Christ is going to return to this earth to gather the faithful and destroy the wicked. This is a part of God's unalterable purpose, and it will come to pass despite any decision that might be made by any individual or group. It is possible for us to hasten the day of His coming according to 2 Peter 3:12, and conversely, it is possible for us to delay the coming through the slowness of our preparation; but we cannot alter the fact that He is coming. So, it is obvious that the changed circumstances in Nineveh justified the Lord's decision to withhold the threatened destruction. Must we not recognize the same principle in judging any other case?

If it can be clearly seen that the circumstances which called forth a condemnation have been so altered that the condemnation is no longer warranted, then the Lord's alteration of His course of action is in full harmony with Jeremiah 18. When God has openly stated the circumstances under which this will be done, there is no reason why any prophet must declare all the specific details that might be attached to a conditional prophecy. A prophet whose prediction does not come to pass under these circumstances is not to be condemned as a false prophet, for we must always remember that the reasons for the change will be clearly evident. This procedure in no way leaves a way of escape for the false prophet; all of the tests are still to be applied to them and their teachings.

In the same way that the major portion of the Bible is devoted to matters other than prediction, so the writings of Ellen White contain a relatively small number of prophecies, other than those that pertain to the events connected with the second coming of Christ. However, her predictions should be scrutinized with the same care we give to those found in the Bible. I will give three examples. In 1890, Ellen White made this prediction: *“The Lord will arise to shake terribly the earth. We shall see troubles on all sides. Thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea. Navies will go down, and human lives will be sacrificed by millions. Fires will break out unexpectedly, and no human effort will be able to quench them. The palaces of earth will be swept away in the fury of the flames. Disasters by rail will become more and more frequent; confusion, collision, and death without a moment's warning will occur on the great lines of travel. The end is near, probation is closing. Oh, let us seek God while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near!”* Messages to Young People, pp. 89, 90.

No one needs to be a prophet to make a statement like that today. But it did require more than human foresight to make such a declaration in 1890. Those who watch the news know that the prediction is still in the process of fulfillment, but we have history to look back on that she did not. We know that the United States, Great Britain, their allies, and the neutral nations lost 4,770 ships, totaling more than 21,000,000 tons of shipping during World War II. These figures take no account of the loss of German, Italian, and Japanese merchant shipping and navies sunk. As for lives sacrificed by millions, we need only to check casualty figures for two world wars. Combined losses of lives of military

personnel in World War I were more than 8,500,000; and military and civilian losses totaled more than 22,000,000 in World War II. I don't need to comment upon the obvious regarding disasters, confusion, and collision on the highways, railroads, and airlines as they are tragic occurrences daily. It would hardly be possible for any prediction to be more literally and specifically fulfilled.

This next example I had mentioned earlier. Strange rapping noises began to occur in the bedroom of John Fox's young daughters, Margaret, and Katharine, at the Fox home in Hydesville, N.Y., March 31, 1848. The girls claimed the noises were communications from the departed spirit of a murdered peddler. They became stars and mediums of spiritualism to make money and spread the deception everywhere they went. Notice this prediction from Ellen White concerning the rapping and spiritualism: *"August 24, 1850, I saw that the 'mysterious rapping,' was the power of Satan; some of it was directly from him, and some indirectly, through his agents, but it all proceeded from Satan. It was his work that he accomplished in different ways; yet many in the churches and the world were so enveloped in gross darkness that they thought and held forth that it was the power of God.... I saw that soon it would be considered blasphemy to speak against the rapping, and that it would spread more and more, that Satan's power would increase and some of his devoted followers would have power to work miracles and even to bring down fire from heaven in the sight of men. I was shown that by the rapping and mesmerism these modern magicians would yet account for all the miracles wrought by our Lord Jesus Christ, and that many would believe that all the mighty works of the Son of God when on earth were accomplished by this same power."* Early Writings, p59.

The small beginnings of modern spiritualism gave little evidence of the great growth and influence that lay ahead, but God had foretold its expansion and deception so that Satan would not mislead God's people. Without going into a lengthy presentation of the beliefs of modern spiritualism, we can note the words of an official publication that shows how accurate Mrs. White's predictions were concerning its growth and erroneous teachings. The year 1948 was recognized by spiritualists as the one-hundredth anniversary of the rise of modern spiritualism. In honor of the occasion the leading spiritualist association in the United States at that time—The National Spiritualist Association of the United States—published the Centennial Book of Modern Spiritualism in America. Spiritualists before 1893 disliked associations and denominations but wanted some form of organization to weed out fraud. So, they formed this association. Sometime after 1948 they changed the name to National Spiritualist Association of Churches. I am not kidding. Friends, you can believe the Lord and His prophets!

The following quotations have been taken from that 1948 source. Note the parallels with the Early Writings statement.

"Spiritualism now encircles the world, embracing millions of sincere adherents from every walk of life."—Centennial Book of Modern Spiritualism in America, page 5.

"Neither priest nor press should uncharitably speak of, or touch this holy word Spiritualism, only with clean hands and pure hearts."—Ibid., p. 34.

"Spiritualists are the only religionists who have used the promised gifts of the Christ, by which gifts they heal the sick, and demonstrate a future conscious and progressive existence."—Ibid., p. 34.

"It gives you more knowledge of the Christian Bible than all the Commentaries combined. The Bible is a book of Spiritualism."—Ibid., p. 44.

“A medium foretold the birth of Jesus, whose brief life on earth was filled with the performance of many so-called miracles which in reality were spiritual phenomena.”—Ibid., p. 68.

“Born in humility and obscurity, persecuted and maligned in its infancy and youth, doubted, ridiculed and derided on every hand, it has steadily grown until it has many million adherents. It has crept silently into the pages of popular books, magazines, newspapers, as well as stage and screen, throughout the world, until unconsciously the public mind has been educated and molded into conformity therewith.”—Ibid., p. 69.

This Spiritualist Association has been seeking funding for what they call the The Hydesville Project. The project started in 1998 when the property was acquired by the NSAC and a memorial park was designed. This was home of the Fox family and the property in which Modern Spiritualism began with the rappings. The site of the Fox cottage in Hydesville, New York is considered a treasure for all Spiritualists and its restoration is supported by the descendants of the Fox sisters, pioneers of the beginning of Modern American Spiritualism.

To the present time we have seen only a partial fulfillment of the prediction concerning spiritualism; much more remains to be accomplished. But all that we know of modern spiritualism fits the picture drawn by Ellen White as she described it in her vision of 1850. And the number of people belonging to these spiritualist churches in no way indicates the number of spiritualists in the world. Its inroads may be seen in numerous church bodies of all denominations where belief in the natural immortality of the soul is held as a cardinal doctrine.

The third example concerns a prediction of a different nature that gave help to the advent believers and established their confidence. It was given in 1845, soon after Ellen Harmon's public ministry began. Among those who had passed through the advent disappointment of October 22, 1844, were many who had a firm conviction that Christ would return a year later. We have not been given an explanation of the basis for their expectation but in May 1847, notice what James White wrote: *“It is well known that many were expecting the Lord to come at the 7th month, 1845. That Christ would then come we firmly believed.”* James White, A Word to the Little Flock, p22.

A short time before the 1845 date, a message came from Ellen Harmon which spared those who accepted it from another severe disappointment. James White wrote further: *“A few days before the time passed, I was at Fairhaven, and Dartmouth, Massachusetts, with a message on this point of time. At this time, Ellen was with the band at Carver, Massachusetts, where she saw in vision, that we should be disappointed, and that the saints must pass through the ‘time of Jacob's trouble,’ which was future. Her view of Jacob's trouble was entirely new to us, as well as herself.”* James White, A Word to the Little Flock, p22. It was the first time that Adventists were given a message about having to go through the "time of Jacob's trouble" before the Lord would return. Those who believed her message to be from God avoided the disappointment in 1845. The examples of fulfilled prophecies that I have used are set forth in order to show the kind of statements that should be watched for as the individual makes a broad application of this Bible test.

Paul Harvey, who at one time was a noted syndicated writer and news reporter heard around the world on radio, spoke a number of times about the amazing predictions and scientific insights of Ellen White. Notice what he wrote:

“Once upon a time, a hundred years ago, there lived a young lady named Ellen White. She was frail as a child, completed only grammar school, had no technical training, and yet she lived to write scores of articles and many book's on the subject of healthful living. Perhaps we should reread what

she has taught: 'The oil, as eaten in the olive, is far preferable to animal oil or fat.' Today we know about cholesterol. She knew: 'Fine flour white bread is lacking in nutritive elements to be found in bread made from whole wheat. She wrote: 'Do not eat largely of salt.' Now we know we should keep the sodium intake low. We have come to accept the wisdom of such advice so completely that it is difficult for us to realize how revolutionary her theories were almost a century ago. She urged: 'Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise.' She wrote: 'Tobacco is a slow, insidious, but most malignant poison. It is all the more dangerous because its effects are slow and at first hardly perceptible.' Ellen White was indeed ahead of her time. Are there additional recommendations, which this remarkable woman urged upon us, which we have, so far, ignored? Speaking about the times in which she lived, Paul Harvey adds: *"Remember, this was in the days when doctors were still bloodletting and performing surgery with unwashed hands. This was in an era, of medical ignorance bordering on barbarism."* Paul Harvey, reprinted in "Today's Health" 1960.

TEST 3: They will not give a private interpretation of Scripture.

The Millerite movement was probably the most ecumenical movement of the entire nineteenth century and it is not surprising that the Adventist remnant of it comprised a group of people with widely divergent theological viewpoints. Most Seventh-day Adventist church historians would probably agree that the doctrinal framework of the denomination was largely hammered out during a series of long weekend gatherings that we call Bible conferences today, but which in earlier times were generally known as Sabbath conferences. Regarding the second of the Sabbath conferences, Ellen White, in describing the doctrinal positions of the attendees, wrote that *"hardly two agreed. Some were holding serious errors, and each strenuously urged his own views, declaring that they were according to the Scriptures."* Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p110.

The problems discussed did not center so much on whether a belief could be found in Scripture, but rather on what the Scripture *meant* by what it said. In other words, there was a whole lot of private interpretations going around! Yet, invariably, when the weekend was over, there was unity of belief. What happened to bring this unanimity out of such diversity? What was Ellen White's role in the conferences? Did those who were attending ask her opinion of what the Bible said, and she then gave her private interpretation? Or did she study the Bible and pray as they did? Concerning her own participation at these conferences, she states: *"I met with them, and we studied and prayed earnestly. Often we remained together until late at night, and sometimes through the entire night, praying for light and studying the Word. Again and again these brethren came together to study the Bible, in order that they might know its meaning, and be prepared to teach it with power."* Ellen White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p206.

But Bible study and prayer alone were not enough to convince the participants. These farmers and tradesmen held tenaciously to their pet theological theories, hardly budging an inch. Concerning this Mrs. White added: *"These strange differences of opinion rolled a heavy weight upon me. I saw that many errors were being presented as truth. It seemed to me that God was dishonored. Great grief pressed upon my spirits, and I fainted under the burden. Some feared that I was dying. Brethren Bates, Chamberlain, Gurney, Edson, and my husband prayed for me. The Lord heard the prayers of His servants, and I revived."* Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p111.

In addition to earnest and extended Bible study and prayer the conferences saw the direct intervention of the Holy Spirit; but this intervention did not come until the participants had gone as far as they could go with their understanding. Ellen White would then be given a vision.

The function of the visions given at the conferences appears to have been to:

- Correct the brethren if they were on the wrong track, or
- Confirm and corroborate if they were on the right track, but--and this gets to the test,
- Never to initiate doctrinal formulation.

In other words, the prophet never gave her own private interpretation in the formation of Biblical doctrines. *"When they came to the point in their study where they said, "We can do nothing more," the Spirit of the Lord would come upon me, I would be taken off in vision, and a clear explanation of the passages we had been studying would be given me, with instruction as to how we are to labor and teach effectively. Thus light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given to me."* Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, pp. 206, 207.

Speaking of the second Sabbath conference in particular, and of the work and place of the visions, Ellen White wrote in her autobiography: *"The light from heaven then rested upon me, and I was soon lost to earthly things. My accompanying angel presented before me some of the errors of those present, and also the truth in contrast with their errors. These discordant views, which they claimed were in harmony with the Scriptures, were only according to their opinion of Bible teaching; and I was bidden to tell them that they should yield their errors, and unite upon the truths of the third angel's message."* Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p111.

What caused those post-Millerite Adventists to accept the visions of this young prophet, hardly into her twenties, and not believe they were of a private interpretation? Three reasons were instrumental:

First, there was the content of the visions. They were relevant and helpful in solving the immediate problems the conferences were dealing with.

Second, there was the awesome physical phenomena accompanying an open vision. This was never a *test* of authenticity because Satan can and does counterfeit physical phenomena, but it surely was evidence of supernatural activity.

Third, there was the continuing phenomena of the prophet's mind being "locked" to understanding the doctrine when she was not in vision. This apparently lasted for a period of *"two to three years"*--concurrent with the Sabbath conferences--and during this time when *not* in vision. All that Ellen White could do was to report what she had seen in vision; she could not enter into the subsequent discussions of either the meaning of what she had seen or of Bible truth generally.

"My mind was locked, as it were and I could not comprehend the meaning of the scriptures we were studying." Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p207. And it remained thus *"locked"* until all of the principal points had been systematically developed. There could be no accusation of a private interpretation given to the people from the prophet Ellen White! Those who today say that Ellen White produced this or that Adventist doctrine are greatly mistaken! Remember, God uses the weak to astound the mighty! She went on to say: *"The brethren knew that when not in vision, I could not understand these matters, and they accepted as light direct from heaven the revelations given."* Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p207

Concerning her testimonies to God's people she states, *"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 to the Church, Vol. 2, p.605.

To her brethren in the ministry, she wrote: *"It is written" is the test that must be brought home to every soul. Let us go to the word of God for guidance. Let us seek for a "Thus saith the Lord."* Gospel Workers, p. 310.

"The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed." Testimonies for the Church, Vol.5, p665.

Ellen White passes this test, indeed!

TEST 4: A prophet will point out the sins of God's people.

Notice what it says in Isaiah 58:1, *"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins."* Leaders, including prophets, who fail to draw a clear line between right and wrong, that the people may understand the principles involved, are *"blind leaders of the blind,"* according to what Jesus said in Matthew 15:14.

Jesus is our greatest example in how to point out sin with compassion and even sometimes with passion. Notice the words of Christ in Matthew 23:27-28, *"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. ²⁸ Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."* This was Jesus' last day of teaching in the Temple, and the discourse was His concluding public address. He sought, by His scathing denunciations against the Scribes and Pharisees, to break the chains that bound the people to tradition and to those who perpetuated it. It was also a passionate plea to these leaders to open their eyes and realize their true condition as sinners. *"Our Saviour never turned away from the truly penitent, no matter how great their guilt. But he hates all hypocrisy and vain display."* Ellen White, Review and Herald, January 11, 1881.

Like Jesus, a true prophet will not just come to you with some lovey-dovey, sloppy *agape* message and never tell you about your sins and character defects, which need to be changed. God calls all to repentance and so will His prophets. Prophets who fail to draw a clear line between right and wrong, that the people may understand the principles involved, are false prophets. The writings of Ellen White are full of warnings to the church and its members concerning sin. She was known to always give a pointed testimony when warranted. Here is an example: *"The sin of those in Wisconsin who went into fanaticism rests more heavily upon you, Brother G, than upon any other one. You were an unfaithful watchman. You discerned not the evil, because you were unfaithful. God sent His faithful watchmen who stood in the light and could discern the evil to warn you and the erring flock. Had you then listened to the warning, a great amount of evil would have been saved. Your influence would have been preserved. You would have stood out of the way, that the testimony of the servants of God might reach the distracted flock."* Ellen White, Testimonies to the Church, Vol. 1, p.313. Ellen White warned God's people concerning their error so they could turn from their course and be saved. Many of the testimonies she was called to give were personal and very direct—like this one.

In order to save them from public embarrassment, the names of the people and locations of the church were often made blank or abbreviated in her writings. These personal testimonies are included in her writings not to embarrass the recipients, but to teach everyone the principles of

righteousness and warn them of God's judgment for such behavior. But pastor Joel, the Bible tells us that we are not to judge and pointing out sin is not our job. I hear that a lot today. Pointing out sin is hardly heard from the pulpit anymore. I heard a sermon not long ago from an Adventist preacher who was teaching that we are not to 'judge' anyone, ever, and I was disappointed that he did not make a clear distinction from God's word concerning righteous and unrighteous judgment. The sad thing is that these kinds of messages from the pulpits have brought nothing but confusion and enabled Satan to cast righteousness out the door of the church. If we, as ministers and leaders of God's faithful, do not stand up and call sin by its right name then we shouldn't be so shocked to see the church in the fallen condition it is in, and attendance dwindle.

While it is true that we cannot judge the motives and intents of the heart of anyone, we can judge their fruits according to Jesus. In Mathew 7:16 Jesus said, *"Ye shall know them by their fruits,"* so evidently, we have the ability to judge in some kind of way, right? In fact, don't we have to be able to judge whether or not a prophet is false or not? Their fruits will indicate this—it's actually one of the tests of a prophet! In John 7:24 Jesus said, *"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."* Jesus is telling us to stop judging by appearances for they don't give the whole picture, and rarely a true one. He says there is a time and place that we must exercise righteous judgment--on the Spirit of the law and not just the letter.

But I hear this "judge not" response all too often so let's look at arguably the most misunderstood scripture in the entire Bible. Matthew 7:1-2, *"Judge not, that ye be not judged. ² For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."* The word "Judge" in this verse is Strong's #2919 and is the Greek word "krino" {kree'-no} which primarily means: *to judge; to determine; to condemn*. So, what exactly does Christ's statement mean in here in Matthew 7? Does it mean that we are never to judge in any circumstance like that minister was teaching? That it doesn't matter what a person does in the church or out of the church? Are we never to judge any situation but just passively let people do whatever they are going to do and not say anything about it? Is that what this means? Absolutely Not! Jesus is here referring to judging another's motives, condemning them based upon our perception, not to judging the right or wrong of the behavior. God alone is competent to judge men's motives, because of the fact that He alone is able to read men's innermost thoughts. In love God will sometimes send a prophet a specific message about a specific person so that the person can be shown their sin and given the opportunity to repent. It is a supernatural act by God to the prophet in revealing the secret sin of a person. In many cases the recipient will testify that God could have only revealed it to the prophet, as it was indeed a secret sin!

Sometimes God will send a message of judgment for a secret sin of the heart like He did with Peter about Ananias and his wife Sapphira. Acts 5:1-5, *"But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, ² And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³ But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? ⁴ Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."* The Holy Spirit gave Peter the knowledge of this secret sin of Ananias and Sapphira and then had the apostle give them His judgment message before witnesses as an example to the early church. Peter could not read their hearts, but God did and dealt with it through Peter like He can all prophets.

We are able to discern only the "outward appearance" and not the heart, so we inevitably make mistakes. Jesus is not referring to discrimination by which a Christian is to distinguish between right and wrong, but rather to the habit of sharp, and usually unjust criticism and condemnation of another

person. Jesus is also telling us that the measure we give will be the measure we receive, for injustice usually provokes injustice. But more than that... the injustice of one man toward his fellow men provokes divine judgment, as Jesus taught in the parable of the Unforgiving Servant. We may condemn the offense, but, like God, we must ever be ready to forgive the offender. We can extend mercy to the offender without in any way condoning the evil they may have done. This is where the saying, "*hate the sin, love the sinner,*" comes from. The problem today is that rarely is the sin hated enough, or the sinner loved enough to compassionately rebuke their sinful behavior!

For seventy years Ellen White was diligent in her walk before God as a Christian and especially as a prophet. She was given insight on the condition of the church and its leaders, as well as members, like Peter was. With that insight she was told to point out the sin--to rebuke it--so that reconciliation to God may have a chance. Notice these words she penned in 1887: "*I am compelled to deal plainly, and rebuke sin, and then I have it in my heart, placed there by the Spirit of Christ, to labor in faith, in tender sympathy and compassion, for the erring. I will not let them alone; I will not leave them to become the sport of Satan's temptations.*" Ellen White, Manuscript Releases, vol. 16, p338. Written April 21, 1887, from Basel, Switzerland, to Elder G. I. Butler.

Her stand against sin in words and actions pass this test of a prophet.

TEST 5: A prophet will warn God's people of coming judgment.

Daniel 7:9-10, "*I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. ¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.*" Daniel, a prophet of God, saw the judgment of humanity in a vision and gave warning to God's people. He was told when this judgment process would begin. It is found in Daniel 8:14, "*And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.*"

Remember we talked about God's method of operation with prophecy? To be consistent with His method the gift of prophecy had to be found in the church in the mid-1800s with someone who passed the biblical tests of a prophet—which we are doing now, and this prophet must also:

- ❑ Impart the same message that God gave to Daniel.
- ❑ The message must be one of judgment--Daniel 8:14.
- ❑ The message explains that the time prophecy has come to an end--1844 AD.
- ❑ The message given to the original prophet then becomes Present Truth for that time--the Three Angels Messages found in Revelation 14.
- ❑ A remnant of God's people must be drawn out and guided by the mission of this prophet and the message given--a group forming a church.

Did Ellen White give the message of Daniel 8:14 and fulfill God's method of operating with prophecy? Notice just this one of many statements that answers the question:

*"We should be earnest students of prophecy; we should not rest until we become intelligent in regard to the subject of the sanctuary, which is brought out in the visions of **Daniel** [8:14] **and John** [Revelation 14:6-12]. This subject sheds great light on our **present position and work**, and gives us unmistakable proof that God has led us in our past experience. It explains our disappointment **in 1844**, showing us that the sanctuary to be cleansed was not the earth, as we had supposed, but that*

*Christ then entered into the most holy apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, and is there **performing the closing work of His priestly office**, in fulfillment of the words of the angel to the prophet Daniel. The 2300 days had been found to begin when the commandment of Artaxerxes for the restoration and building of Jerusalem went into effect, in the autumn of 457 B.C. Taking this as the starting point, there was perfect harmony in the application of all the events foretold in the explanation of that period in Daniel 9:25-27. . . . The seventy weeks, or 490 years, were to pertain especially to the Jews. At the expiration of this period, the nation sealed its rejection of Christ by the persecution of His disciples, and the apostles turned to the Gentiles, A.D. 34. The first 490 years of the 2300 having then ended, 1810 years would remain. From A.D. 34, 1810 years extend to 1844. "Then," said the angel, "shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Our faith in reference to **the messages of the first, second, and third angels** was correct. The great waymarks we have passed are immovable. Although the hosts of hell may try to tear them from their foundation, and triumph in the thought that they have succeeded, yet they do not succeed. **These pillars of truth** stand firm as the eternal hills, unmoved by all the efforts of men combined with those of Satan and his host." Ellen White, The Faith I Live By, p208.*

In just this one quote we have found that Ellen White fulfilled God's method of operation in that she:

- ❑ Imparted the same message that God gave to Daniel.
- ❑ That message was one of judgment--Daniel 8:14 and Revelation 14:6-7.
- ❑ She explained that the time prophecy had come to an end in 1844 AD.
- ❑ The message of Daniel 8:14--coinciding with the Three Angels Messages found in Revelation 14-- became Present Truth for her time.

Not to get into detail at this time but she also helped form the remnant of people from that present truth message in 1844 into what is the second largest Christian denomination in the world today. I'll share more on that a bit later, but it fulfills God's method in dealing with prophecy to a tee!

This was not the only time that Ellen White warned God's people of coming judgment. She made a prediction in November 1901, concerning the destruction of the church publishing house because they had disregarded the counsels of God:

*"God...has a controversy with the managers of the publishing house. I have been almost afraid to open the Review, fearing to see that **God has cleansed the publishing house by fire.... Unless there is a reformation, calamity will overtake the publishing house, and the world will know the reason.**" Ellen White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 8, pp. 91, 96.*

Fulfillment: *"On December 30, 1902, the publishing house **was totally destroyed by fire of an unknown origin**. Within an hour of its discovery, at 7:25 p.m., by employees working the night shift, the entire four-story structure was a mass of blazing ruins. Nothing of value was saved. The machinery, furniture, printed books and periodicals, paper stock, and other materials were a total loss. The \$150,000 insurance did not fully cover the building and its contents."—Seventh Day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 10, p1213.*

September 1, 1902- Ellen White predicted judgments of God on Oakland and San Francisco California:

"Not long hence these cities will suffer under the judgments of God. San Francisco and Oakland are becoming as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Lord will visit them in wrath." Ellen White, Evangelism, pp. 403, 404.

Fulfillment: San Francisco earthquake, April 18, 1906; 28,000 buildings destroyed either by earthquake or fire in San Francisco alone. Area of destruction included surrounding cities also.

Ellen White passes Test 5 of a prophet. These predictions also came to pass and so this is more evidence that she passes test 2 that a prophet will tell the truth, fulfilling Jeremiah 18!

TEST 6: A prophet will recognize and teach that Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh.

1 John 4:1-3, *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."*

Now the Greek word translated here as *flesh* is "sarx," and it is a very interesting word that occurs many times in the New Testament. On almost every occasion it is translated "sinful flesh." The moment you have that understanding of this text, everything falls into place, because every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in our fallen humanity—our flesh is the spirit of antichrist. A true prophet will teach this. Of all the Bible tests, this is perhaps the easiest one to apply to the writings of Ellen White. She has written extensively on the life and ministry of Jesus. Since the great controversy between Christ and Satan is all about whether or not human beings with a fallen sinful nature can keep the Ten Commandments, don't you think it's extremely important to understand that Jesus also had a fallen sinful human nature like us? Let me share a couple of statements from Ellen White about this.

"Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature." White, Review and Herald, December 15, 1896.

"What love! What amazing condescension! The King of glory proposes to humble Himself to fallen humanity! He would place His feet in Adam's steps. He would take man's fallen nature, and engage to cope with the strong foe who triumphed over Adam." White, God's Amazing Grace, p23.

Jesus came down to our level by taking our fallen flesh, and if you believe otherwise, then you are under the delusion of the Spirit of antichrist. Let me give you Bible texts, just so you know that Ellen White passes Test 6.

Genesis 5:1, *"This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him."* Now that's pretty plain, isn't it? Is God fallen or unfallen? He's unfallen, and so was Adam when he was first created and until he sinned.

Now go to Romans 8:3 and compare what Paul said with what Moses said. *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son (how?) in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."* Again, when you read the word "flesh" it refers to fallen flesh except for the few times it speaks of animal flesh. Here it means *fallen human nature* with all its carnal hereditary tendencies. In verse six when Paul says, *"carnally minded"* the same Greek word "sarx" is used for "carnally." When Paul says that Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned sin in fallen flesh, that means that He lived life without sinning while being alive in sinful flesh, and that's exactly what He expects us to do, and that's possible for everyone who has partaken of His divine nature.

We read in Genesis that Moses said Adam was created in the likeness of God, which would be unfallen, and Paul says Jesus came *“in the likeness of sinful flesh,”* or fallen flesh. The words *“in the likeness of God”* and *“in the likeness of sinful flesh”* are not the same! The way Adam and Jesus came into the world was different, and I hope you see that because it will make a big difference in the way we live the Christian life, and whether or not we hate sin and have victory over it in our lives or excuse sin and live with the consequences. Hebrews 2:14-18, *“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; ¹⁵ And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. ¹⁶ For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. ¹⁷ Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”*

Now tell me, did Abraham have fallen flesh? Absolutely! Did Abraham’s descendants have fallen flesh? Absolutely! When the Bible says Jesus was *“made like unto His brethren,”* it means that He was made like you and me! And He was made like you and me so He could reconcile us back to God when He took our place by dying a death on the cross of Calvary that we deserved to die. Did Ellen White teach this Biblical truth about the nature of Jesus?

“The Lord Jesus came to our world, not to reveal what a God could do, but what a man could do, through faith in God’s power to help in every emergency. Man is, through faith, to be a partaker in the divine nature, and to overcome every temptation wherewith he is beset. The Lord now demands that every son and daughter of Adam through faith in Jesus Christ, serve Him in human nature which we now have.” Ellen White, Selected Messages, vol. 3, p140. Wouldn’t you agree that this is a wonderful and necessary truth to understand? Can you see that a prophet of God would teach this truth? In her books *The Desire of Ages*, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, *Steps to Christ*, and *Christ’s Object Lessons*, as well as hundreds of pages in her other volumes, we read a portrayal of the character and ministry of the Savior in a flesh like our flesh but never choosing to sin.

“Christ crucified, Christ risen, Christ ascended into the heavens, Christ coming again, should so soften, gladden, and fill the mind of the minister that he will present these truths to the people in love and deep earnestness. The minister will then be lost sight of and Jesus will be made manifest. Lift up Jesus, you that teach the people, lift Him up in sermon, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, to “the Lamb of God.” Ellen White, *Gospel Workers*,” pp. 159, 160. It’s sad but many religions teach that Jesus had a different nature than us--that He was all God in just the form of a man and so it is vitally important for a true prophet to stand upon what the Bible says concerning the nature of Christ and warn others of the devil’s deception.

“Jesus was one with the Father, and revealed the perfection of God, and yet he came to the world in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, and condemned sin in the flesh by his own life of perfect obedience to the law of God, showing that men may become partakers of the divine nature, and may through faith in Christ lay hold on moral power that has been brought within their reach through the love so abundantly expressed in their behalf. Human agents may form characters after the divine similitude, because of the great love wherewith Christ has loved us.” Ellen White, *Signs of the Times*, March 7, 1895.

“We are too much in the habit of thinking that the Son of God was a being so entirely exalted above us that it is an impossibility for him to enter into our trials and temptations, and that he can have no sympathy with us in our weakness and frailties. This is because we do not take in the fact of his

oneness with humanity. He took upon him the likeness of sinful flesh, and was made in all points like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God. He has engaged himself to save every son and daughter of Adam who will consent to be saved in God's appointed way." Ellen White, Signs of the Times, May 16, 1895.

And this next example from the pen of Ellen White really lines up with the Bible truth concerning the nature of the Savior and His humanity. *"For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity. Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation. Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam's position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured."* Ellen White, The Desire of Ages, p117.

TEST 6 is that a prophet will recognize and teach that Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh. Ellen White taught this Bible truth repeatedly throughout her 70 years of ministry through her books, articles, and manuscripts. She most definitely passes test six!

This ends our look at category one concerning the messages of the prophet. These messages must be in full agreement with Biblical standards, promises, doctrines and laws. This category includes tests 1-6, which we have looked at:

TEST 1: A prophet will prophesy in the Lord's name, as they are His messengers.

TEST 2: A prophet will tell the truth.

TEST 3: A prophet will not give a private interpretation of Scripture.

TEST 4: A prophet will point out the sins of God's people.

TEST 5: A prophet will warn God's people of coming judgment, and

TEST 6: A prophet will recognize and teach that Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh.

We have seen that Ellen White passes these six tests of a prophet, and remarkably so. Friends, I am sure that many of you are hearing these things for the first time or have not heard such evidence before and I want to encourage you to not just take my word for it but to study these things out on your own. I must also warn you to not brush this aside with indifference as you would be quenching the Spirit of God and that will lead to committing the unpardonable sin and losing the opportunity for eternal life. Psalms 119:2, *"Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart."*

If Ellen White had failed just one of these tests, then we would end our study and declare her to be a false prophet, and we could be confident in doing that because the tests are based upon the Word of God. But we are continuing to evaluate her. Why? Because we saw that Ellen White passed these six tests of a prophet, and remarkably so.

So now we move on to **Category 2, The personal life of the prophet.** The prophet must be dedicated to Jesus and *living* in obedience to and in harmony with Biblical principles. This category includes tests 7-9.

We must keep in mind that God calls human beings to serve Him, and He equips the called, but He does not make them superhuman. They remain human beings with the freedom to exercise their will.

Let us be very careful not to place them upon a pedestal to be worshiped or held to a standard above what can be attained by any one of us who calls upon the name of the Lord and chooses to serve Him. We saw previously that Ellen White was very much dedicated to Jesus and her seventy years of ministry testifies to her love for Him, but what about the fruit of her personal life?

TEST 7: A prophet will not lead people into fanaticism, as they will bear good fruit.

A true prophet won't teach some crazy idea that you find out too late has ruined your health, or your family, or something else in your life. When you listen to what a true prophet says, you will have good results in your life as a good tree produces good fruit. Did Ellen White lead people into fanaticism?

Let us get a definition of fanaticism. Webster's Dictionary, 1828 Edition, defines 'fanaticism' in this way: *Excessive enthusiasm; wild and extravagant notions of religion; religious frenzy.*

Fanaticism is taking God's word and saying you believe it, but you go beyond what it says--you either add to it or take away from its plain teachings for whatever reason and this leads into an *"Excessive enthusiasm; wild and extravagant notions of religion; religious frenzy."*

Now why would going beyond God's word lead to fanaticism? Because anything that is not of the Holy Spirit is of the unholy spirit. It is this unholy spirit that will give a person an extreme emotional high experience through their senses as proof of supernatural origin—thus they will believe that God has favored them and so they now have a superior righteousness than anyone else—their truth is the only truth. This unholy spirit bids them to share their "new light" experience with others. Some of Satan's most effective methods involve perversions of the gospel that is constantly leading some to proclaim a "new light" and testing truth that we are to receive if we are to be among God's people. Those of you who have had an experience with fanaticism know that the "new light" that is espoused is the only drumbeat. And they beat it and beat it and beat it!

Revelation 22:19, *"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."* It is not good to add to or take away from God's word for this puts you on Satan's ground. The question for us to consider in this test is whether or not Ellen White added to or took away from the word of God, which led people into fanaticism? Did she lead people into an *"Excessive enthusiasm; wild and extravagant notions of religion; religious frenzy"* or was her life spiritually balanced, well ordered, and obedient to God? Was she known to get into a frenzy? Was her life and her teachings extravagant? Did she ever show excessive enthusiasm? We can get an indication upon her disposition by looking at what she taught about "fanaticism" (the excessive enthusiasm, wild notions, and frenzy) and how to deal with such supposed "new light" at the heart of all fanaticism.

"We are living in perilous times, and it does not become us to accept everything claimed to be truth without examining it thoroughly; neither can we afford to reject anything that bears the fruits of the Spirit of God; but we should be teachable, meek and lowly of heart. There are those who oppose everything that is not in accordance with their own ideas, and by so doing they endanger their eternal interest as verily as did the Jewish nation in their rejection of Christ." Ellen White, Counsels to Writers and Editors, p35.

"There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for "in the multitude of

counselors there is safety.[Proverbs 11:14]” Ellen White, Testimonies for the Church, vol.5, pp. 291-293. Now that is a beautiful balance in the approach to "new light." While on one hand we should be open minded to prayerfully consider proposed new truth, on the other hand we are counseled to not receive it until *“brethren of experience”* have also examined it. Then we are told to be humble, yielding to the judgment of those leaders who evaluate it. A fanatical would never accept this course of action.

Notice this statement: *"As the end draws near, the enemy will work with all his power to bring in fanaticism among us."* White, Gospel Workers, p316. Ellen White is warning God's people to be prepared to deal with fanaticism and she gave a balanced and biblical way to do it involving more seasoned brethren to help. I have had my share of having to deal with fanaticism and it is a difficult path so her experience and counsel about it is wanted and very helpful.

We have seen that during the mid-1800s there were a number of false spiritual movements that arose and with them came a myriad of fanatical ideas that took extreme views of the Scriptures. The early Adventists were constantly dealing with fanaticisms of some kind so there is an abundance of material from Ellen White that can be used in applying this test, but I will use this one dealing with the nature of Christ. Because of a misunderstanding upon the nature of Christ, some believed—and still do—that when you are born again you receive ‘Holy flesh,’ and you will no longer sin. The bible does not teach this anywhere. It is an example of taking away from what God's word actually says so this is fanaticism. Ellen White rebuked fanaticism.

"Men and women, supposed to be guided by the Holy Spirit, held meetings in a state of nudity. They talked about holy flesh. They said they were beyond the power of temptation, and they sang, and shouted, and made all manner of noisy demonstrations. . . . Satan was moulding the work, and sensuality was the result. The cause of God was dishonored. Truth, sacred truth, was leveled in the dust by human agencies. . . . I bore my testimony, declaring that these fanatical movements, this din and noise, were inspired by the spirit of Satan, who was working miracles to deceive if possible the very elect. We need to be on our guard, to maintain a close connection with Christ, that we be not deceived by Satan's devices. The Lord desires to have in His service order and discipline, not excitement and confusion." Ellen White, Maranatha, p234.

"Fanaticism, once started and left unchecked, is as hard to quench as a fire which has obtained hold of a building. Those who have entered into and sustained this fanaticism [holy flesh] might far better be engaged in secular labor, for by their inconsistent course of action they are dishonoring the Lord and imperiling His people. Many such movements will arise at this time when the Lord's work should stand elevated, pure, unadulterated with superstition and fables." Ellen White, Selected Messages, vol.2, p35.

"True religion does not demand great bodily demonstrations. . . . These are no evidence of the presence of the Spirit of God. In 1843 and 1844 we were called to meet just such fanaticism. Men would say, I have the Holy Spirit of God, and they would come into the meeting and roll just like a hoop; and because some would not receive this as evidence of the working of the Spirit of God, they were looked upon as wicked people. The Lord sent me into the midst of this fanaticism. . . . Some would come to me and ask, Why do you not join with them? I said, I have another Leader than this, One who is meek and lowly in heart, One who made no such demonstrations as you are making here, nor such boasts. These demonstrations are not of Christ but of the devil." Ellen White, Selected Messages, vol.2, p26.

Over and over throughout her ministry of seventy years, Ellen White stood against fanaticism and pointed to Jesus and the Bible as the truth. If we look at how she viewed the Bible compared to her writings I think we will get a clearer picture of how Ellen White passes this test. I have developed a list with some of the comments from Ellen White's position on Scripture, and then how she saw her writings in relation to the Bible.

"The truth of God is found in His word. Those who feel that they must seek elsewhere for present truth need to be converted anew... As the Spirit of God becomes better known, the Bible will be accepted as the only foundation of faith." Ellen White, Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 8, p192.

"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. The ingenuity of men has been exercised for ages to measure the Word of God by their finite minds and limited comprehension. If the Lord, the Author of the living oracles, would throw back the curtain and reveal His wisdom and His glory before them, they would shrink into nothingness and exclaim as did Isaiah, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of people of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5). Simplicity and plain utterance are comprehended by the illiterate, by the peasant, and the child as well as by the full-grown man or the giant in intellect. If the individual is possessed of large talents of mental powers, he will find in the oracles of God treasures of truth, beautiful and valuable, which he can appropriate. He will also find difficulties, and secrets and wonders which will give him the highest satisfaction to study during a long lifetime, and yet there is an infinity beyond. Men of humble acquirements, possessing but limited capabilities and opportunities to become conversant in the Scriptures, find in the living oracles comfort, guidance, counsel, and the plan of salvation as clear as a sunbeam. No one need be lost for want of knowledge, unless he is willfully blind. We thank God that the Bible is prepared for the poor man as well as for the learned man. It is fitted for all ages and all classes." Ellen White, Selected Messages, Vol. 1, p18.

"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. 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..... Yet the fact that God has revealed His will to men through His word, has not rendered needless the continued presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, the Spirit was promised by our Saviour, to open the word to His servants, to illuminate and apply its teachings. And since it was the Spirit of God that inspired the Bible, it is impossible that the teaching of the Spirit should ever be contrary to that of the word. 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. Says the apostle John, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1. And Isaiah declares, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20. Great reproach has been cast upon the work of the Holy Spirit by the errors of a class that, claiming its enlightenment, profess to have no further need of guidance from the word of God. They are governed by impressions which they regard as the voice of God in the soul. But the spirit that controls them is not the Spirit of God. This following of impressions, to the neglect of the Scriptures, can lead only to confusion, to deception and ruin. It serves only to further the designs of the evil one. Since the ministry of the Holy Spirit is of vital importance to the church of Christ, it is one of the devices of Satan, through the errors of extremists and fanatics, to

cast contempt upon the work of the Spirit and cause the people of God to neglect this source of strength which our Lord Himself has provided." Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, p7.

Considering these comments, this is Ellen White's position concerning:

A. Nature of the Bible

1. The entire Bible is the inspired word of God.
2. The *"truth of God is found in His word."* No one need *"seek elsewhere for present truth."*

B. Purpose of the Bible

1. The Bible sets the pattern for Christian living.
2. It contains *"comfort, guidance, counsel, and the plan of salvation as clear as a sunbeam."*
3. It is fitted for the needs of all--rich and poor, learned and illiterate, *"all ages and all classes."*
4. It contains all the knowledge that is *"necessary for salvation."* Therefore, men should *"cling"* to their Bibles, believe and obey them; and then *"not one"* of them would be lost.

C. Primacy of the Bible

1. It is to be accepted *"as an authoritative, infallible revelation"* of God's will.
2. As such, it is *"the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of experience."*

D. Role of Spiritual Gifts (Spirit of Prophecy)

1. The existence of the Bible *"has not rendered needless the continual presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit."*
2. Rather, Jesus promised His followers the gift of the Holy Spirit to *"open the word to His servants"* and *"to illumine and apply its teachings."*
3. Since consistency is an attribute of Deity, and since it was the Holy Spirit who originally inspired the Bible, it is impossible that the teaching of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of the Spirit would be contrary to what the Bible says.
4. The Holy Spirit was not, is not, and never will be given *"to supercede the Bible"* because *"the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested."*
5. The *Testimonies* were given only because man has neglected his Bible; and these are given to direct him back to the Bible.
 - They are not given as an addition to the Word of God.
 - They are not to take the place of the Word of God.

In an "open letter" to her fellow church members, written December 6, 1902, and published in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* of January 20, 1903, Ellen White was looking ahead to the New Year and was especially burdened about the colporteur work, which was languishing at the time. *"I have been instructed that the canvassing work [door-to-door sales of church literature] is to be revived, and that it is to be carried forward with increasing success."* Ellen White, "An Open Letter from Mrs. E. G. White to All Who Love the Blessed Hope," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, January 20, 1903, p.15.

She expresses appreciation for the united efforts of the laity and literature evangelists in promoting the book, *Christ's Object Lessons*, the royalties from which she dedicated toward lifting the indebtedness of Battle Creek Bible College, and urges giving greater attention to the circulation of her other works. Highlighting the importance of this missionary endeavor, she adds: *"Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her life-work God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given his servant to be given to the world. From their pages this light is to shine into the hearts of men and women, leading them to the Saviour. The Lord has declared that these books are to be scattered throughout the world."*

Then, by way of amplifying this idea that *"light is to shine"* from her writings, and to demonstrate the relationship between those books and the writings of Scripture, she employed an oft-quoted metaphor: *"The Lord has sent his people much instruction, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light."* Ellen White makes incidental reference to Genesis 1:16, *"And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night."* She didn't say "New Light." She said *"...the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light."* What did she mean by this expression, greater/lesser light and why does it matter? You see, a fanatical would call their "new light" the greater light. Is this what Ellen White was doing using this analogy?

In order to come to a right understanding of her expression we must be acquainted with the difference between canonical and literary prophets, and this matters as it helps us to determine if she passes this test of a prophet. Christians generally believe that the sacred canon of Scripture was closed with the inclusion of the Apocalypse of John—the book of Revelation. And the canon—the Bible, therefore, is both complete and sufficient in itself. In other words, it is possible for an individual to find Jesus Christ, to obtain salvation and eternal life, without ever having heard of Ellen G. White or ever having read one word of her writings. It is clearly evident from Scripture that God used a number of prophetic messengers, many of whom were contemporaries of the Bible writers, but whose utterances do not form a part of the canon—the Bible itself. Some of them did their work during Old Testament times, some during New Testament times. It seems evident that their prophetic ministries involved the same kinds of work as that of the Bible writers. And this list of non-canonical prophets included women as well as men—five such are mentioned in each of the Testaments.

The first prophet mentioned in Scripture was Enoch, *"the seventh from Adam"* (Jude 14); thus the "spiritual gift" of prophecy was among the earliest of the so-called *"gifts of the Holy Spirit"* to be given to the human family. During the first 2,500 years of human history all prophetic utterances were oral--word of mouth. Moses marks the transition point, as he was the first literary prophet. From his time onward both varieties of prophet, canonical and literary, flourished. Not all of the literary prophets found themselves as authors of works that would later be gathered together in the canons of the Old or New Testaments. At least eight literary but non-canonical prophets are mentioned by name in the Old Testament. The messages of these literary but non-canonical prophetic writers were usually of a local nature: They were written to meet an immediate situation in their own day. The Holy Spirit in His infinitely superior wisdom felt that some of these messages were unnecessary to preserve for later periods of history.

Ellen White is best understood in the role of the literary but non-canonical prophets of the Bible. As such, the Holy Spirit inspired her writings in the same way and to the same degree as the writings that were incorporated into the Bible; yet they are neither a second Bible, nor an addition to the sacred canon of Scripture... though they could be if directed by God to be. The Bible is God's universal message for all people for all time. Its sixty-six books were written by approximately 40 literary, canonical prophets over a period of approximately 1,500 years, and the Bible has represented the will of God for all mankind for between two and three thousand years.

These canonical prophets can be seen as *"the greater light"* in the analogy. And the literary but non-canonical prophets—and Ellen White falls into this category—may be seen in this narrow distinction to be the *"lesser light."* By analogy she is saying that the Bible is the *"greater light,"* and her writings are the *"lesser light."* This is exactly how Ellen White saw her writings in comparison to the Bible. By definition, fanaticism adds to or takes away from God's word. It does not point to it as the greater

light, but instead it points to its "new light" as the greater light! Ellen White always pointed to the Word of God as *"...the only foundation of faith."* Ellen White most definitely passes test seven!

TEST 8: A prophet will build up and edify, the church, they will not tear it apart.

1 Corinthians 14:3-4, *"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. ⁴ He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.* The prophet receives divine revelations, but he is merely the agent by whom these revelations are to be imparted to the church so that it may be built up. Test eight strikes at the heart of a prophet's mission—to edify the church. Can it be shown that Ellen G. White built up the church or did she tear it apart?

In the early days of her ministry, she traveled around the country with her husband organizing groups into churches, churches into unions, unions into conferences. Records indicate that church membership grew 3800% (3500 members to 137,000 members) during her 70-year ministry; churches increased from 1 to 3870 in number during that time. In 1863 she was given a vision about health reform. Within two years comprehensive articles and pamphlets on health were published and distributed. In 1866 the denominations first Health institute was opened, Battle Creek Sanitarium, and by the time she passed away 41 Sanitariums had been erected all over the world.

While at Rocky Hill, Connecticut, in the summer of 1849, James White began publication of *The Present Truth*, an eight-page semi-monthly paper. The later numbers carried articles from Ellen White's pen setting forth prophetic views of the future of the church and sounding notes of warning and counsel. In November 1855, the Review and Herald Publishing Association, with the hand press and other printing equipment, was moved from rented quarters in Rochester, New York, to the newly erected building in Battle Creek, Michigan. By the time her pen was silenced the church had forty publishing houses around the world.

In the fall of 1874, the Whites were in Michigan, assisting with the Biblical Institute, leading out in Sabbath services, and taking a prominent part in the dedication of Battle Creek College on January 4, 1875. As Ellen White stood before the group who had gathered from a number of states to dedicate the denomination's first educational institution, she related what had been shown to her the day before in a vision. The picture she presented of the international work that must be accomplished impressed the assembled workers and believers with the importance and need of the college. In her lifetime she helped to found 759 church schools and colleges.

For some time, the church had been asking Mrs. White and her son, W. C. White, to visit the European missions. As she prepared for the journey, it seemed to those close to her that her physical condition would make the trip impossible. Obedient, however, to what she deemed her duty, she embarked on the journey, was given the necessary health, and spent the time from the fall of 1885 to the summer of 1887 in the European countries. From Basel, Switzerland, then the headquarters of the church's European work, Mrs. White made trips to England, Germany, France, Italy, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. Over one hundred Missions were started with over 1500 Missionaries in the worldwide field by the time she was laid to rest in 1915.

(For these statistics please see:

<http://www.adventistarchives.org/docs/ASR/ASR1915.pdf>).

Friends, the evidence is overwhelming that Ellen G. White was instrumental in the edification and advancement of the church. The church grew, it was not torn apart under her ministry. I find it

understandable why many periodicals describe Ellen White as a founder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church! Notice what the Encyclopedia Britannica states about Ellen G. White: *"American religious leader who was one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and whose prophecies and other guidance were central to that denomination's early growth."* www.britannica.com, Article: *Ellen G. White*.

Her years in ministry were filled with exhaustive traveling and writing. In 1881 her husband, James, passed away but Ellen kept at her work and the years continued on. And the years brought article after article, book after book that taught righteous principles and pointed to Christ and His word. Thousands of personal letters were written to members with pointed and encouraging testimonies just for them from the Lord to call them to His side as Savior and Lord. Gradually, 100,000 pages of handwritten manuscripts were produced: This amounted to twenty-five million handwritten words, as she never used a typewriter or shorthand.

She wrote 4,500 magazine articles. Over one hundred books were published. Her writings cover a broad range of subjects, including religion, education, social relationships, evangelism, prophecy, publishing, nutrition, and management. Included in the books of Ellen White is a nine-volume set of Testimonies for the Church. The nine volumes of testimonies for the church, containing 4,738 pages of text, consist of articles and letters of instruction to, and pertaining to the welfare of, the church. God sends a prophet to edify the church and there is a minimum of 4700 pages of edification right there!

Many of her books were translated into foreign languages. Her book "Steps to Christ," telling the simple story of how to come to Christ and remain close by His side, has been translated into 117 languages. She wrote more than any other woman in history. According to Roger Coon: *"She is the fourth most translated author [man or woman] in the history of literature, its most translated woman writer, and the most translated American author of either sex."* Roger W. Coon, *A Gift of Light*, page 21. How did he know this? By careful research at the Library of Congress, in Washington D.C., Roger Coon was able to tentatively identify the ten most translated authors in the history of literature and he lists them:

- [1] Vladimir I. Lenin (Russian communist leader)—222 languages.
- [2] Georges Simenon (Franco Belgian detective-story writer)—143 languages.
- [3] Leo Tolstoy (Russian novelist)—122 languages.
- [4] Ellen G. White (American religious figure and writer)—117 languages.
- [5] Karl Marx (German socialist philosopher)—114.
- [6] William Shakespeare (English playwright)—111.
- [7] Agatha Christie (English mystery writer)—99.
- [8] Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm (German fairy-tale writers)—97.
- [9] Ian Fleming (British author of "James Bond" novels)—95.
- [10] Earnest Hemingway (American novelist)—91.

See Roger Coon, *A Gift of Light*, page 30-31, 1983.

With confidence I can say that Ellen G. White passes test eight of a true prophet!

I want to remind everyone that the counsel from the apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5 is not a suggestion, he says in verses 19-21, *"Quench not the Spirit. ²⁰ Despise not prophesyings. ²¹ Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."* When the Creator sends a prophet to His people do you think it matters to Him how His prophet is received? What about the message of the prophet, do you think it matters to God how that message is received? Remember, it is the Holy Spirit that gives the gift of

prophecy and inspires those prophets with the messages for the people. Paul is warning us not to despise prophesying for doing so would quench the Spirit of God. The Greek word used here for *despise* means: *to make of no account, to set at naught*. *Quench* here in this verse means: *to extinguish, suppress, stifle or put out, as in putting out a fire*. The Holy Spirit is depicted at times in the Bible as a flame of fire, such as at Pentecost when the disciples were given the gift of speaking in tongues.

Is it really so dangerous to extinguish or quench the Holy Spirit? Jesus said in Matthew 12:31-32, *"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. ³² And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."* Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the unpardonable sin. It consists of progressive resistance to truth that culminates in a final and irrevocable decision against it, whether realized or not, and that by so doing one is choosing to pursue his own course of action in opposition to the divine will. So, friends, please check out what I am sharing with you and do not quench the Spirit. Now let's finish category 2 by looking at test 9:

TEST 9: A prophet will live and teach in harmony with preceding prophets and with the Law of God—the Ten Commandments.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:20, *"Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."* Remember the fig tree that Jesus cursed? It looked attractive and showed promise of bearing fruit, but no fruit could be found. A prophet must bear fruit and it must be good fruit. What kind of fruit is brought forth in their lives? What influence do their life and teachings have on others? Sometimes the life and influence of the professed prophet is so completely out of harmony with the Scriptures that it is easy to classify them as false. But ordinarily this is not the case. Satan disguises himself as an angel of light and so do his ministers. So, it will take patience and a consistent looking for the fruit in the life of a prophet. Generally speaking, the application of this test requires more time and is harder to check than the other tests. There are several factors to be considered in determining whether the fruit of a prophet is good or bad:

A. The life of the prophet must be worthy of God's personal messenger to His people.

There must be no question about the trend of his or her thinking and actions. They should be recognized as different from others only because in vision they have seen and talked with God and angels. On the other hand, receiving the prophetic gift does not make them infallible; it does not ensure that they will never make a mistake. After nearly forty years as the Lord's messenger, Moses lost his temper on the borders of the Promised Land and was denied entrance to it. In other instances recorded in the Bible, we have seen even more disastrous consequences as the result of the actions of those who possessed the prophetic gift. None should be recognized as having met this test because of a few outstandingly good traits of character, and none should be labeled a failure because they have made some mistakes. Like I said, it takes patience and a consistent searching out for the fruits. It is the trend of the life as a whole that must be considered, rather than any occasional good deed or misdeed. What kind of person are they really—good or bad?

B. The influence of the prophet's life upon individuals and the church as a whole must be good.

Frequently the Lord has had to use prophets to tear down before they could build up, but the net result of the work of a true prophet will be constructive rather than destructive. Jesus found it

necessary to unmask some of the sins of the Jewish leaders and to tear down their traditions, but He tore down only that He might build again; He wounded that He might heal. Again, there is a problem to be faced before final conclusions are reached. There were times in the history of God's people when with one or more prophets among them they became progressively worse. Was this the fault of the prophet? Did this mean that his or her messages were not from heaven? God did not regard it that way.

In Ezekiel 33:30-31 God told Ezekiel, *“Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD. ³¹ And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.”* People listened, they urged others to come and hear the words of the prophet; but no one put into practice what he heard from the prophet. Could this be charged as bad fruit against the prophet? There were those among the followers of Christ who continued in their evil ways even though they claimed allegiance to Him. Sometimes it is necessary to study what the influence of the prophet's life would have been if their messages had been heeded. Does their life and messages lead to godliness, or do they turn the mind away from right living and heavenly things?

C. A man may live a good life and have an excellent influence on others, but this does not necessarily prove that he is a prophet. All the other tests of a true prophet must be met. I have heard some proclaim a minister to be a really nice and humble person and yet this same minister teaches error. Too often the error is overlooked because the preacher is so nice a person. Be very careful about that my friends!

The Bible says in Isaiah 8:20, *“To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, there is no light in them.”* The Law of God—the Ten Commandments and the testimony of His prophets as revealed in inspiration—in the Bible. The Hebrew word used here for Law is *Torah* and means all inspiration—the Law and the prophets! The prophets of God were His witnesses, or spokesmen, and the “testimony” they bore was His message of wisdom and life. God has revealed Himself in His Word. Isaiah is saying that a man that speaks contrary to the revealed Word has “no light” in them. Any person who purports to be a prophet must be in full harmony with the testimony of all the previous Biblical prophets. That is, a true prophet will live, speak, and write *“to the law and to the testimony.”*

True prophets do not change or revoke previous revelations given by God, but they may expand upon them. As the apostle Paul expressed it, prophets must be subject to the prophets. 1 Corinthians 14:32-33, *“And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. ³³ For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”* Prophets spoke as the Holy Spirit moved them, and the Spirit never contradicts His former instruction. It is not difficult to trace through the Bible what its writers have said on many subjects. Though words, methods of expression, and emphasis vary, you will find that the testimony of each writer dealing with the same subject is substantially the same. Let me give you an example by looking at the teaching regarding the condition of man in death. Please note the harmony of the Bible writers as recorded in their books:

Job. *“So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.”* Job 14:12.

Psalmist—David. *“The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.”* Psalm 115:17.

Solomon. *"The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything."* Ecclesiastes 9:5.

Isaiah. *"For the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth."* Isaiah 38:18.

Ezekiel. *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."* Ezekiel 18:20.

Jesus. *"Lazarus sleepeth.... Lazarus is dead."* John 11: 11-14.

Paul. *"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."* 1 Thessalonians 4:13.

The same consistency runs through all other Bible teachings because it was the same Holy Spirit that inspired these prophets. As Paul said, *"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."*

It was not difficult for God's people in ancient times to apply this test to the messages of anyone who professed to possess the gift of prophecy for the Holy Spirit is consistent and does not lie. As the saying goes, *"O consistency, thou art a jewel!"* Ellen White, Letter 11, 1890. It was this same Holy Spirit who gave Ellen White guidance in preparing letters, articles, and books that would meet the needs of people. It is extremely significant that over 78,000 Bible references and quotations are to be found in her writings and they are consistent with each other. In other words, she did not give a private interpretation in regard to them. That which she wrote not only agreed with Scripture; it was filled with Scripture. She was doctrinally consistent with all previous prophets before her. And over the years, her writings were discovered by many people, who found in them that for which they had been searching.

The late Clive McCay, Ph.D., professor of nutrition at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, discovered her health writings quite by accident, and was astounded by them. In a Review & Herald interview with Mr. McCay he made these comments:

"Every modern specialist in nutrition whose life is dedicated to human welfare must be impressed in four respects by the writings and leadership of Ellen G. White: In the first place, her basic concepts about the relation between diet and health have been verified to an unusual degree by scientific advances of the past decades. Someone may attempt to explain this remarkable fact by saying: 'Mrs. White simply borrowed her ideas from others.' But how would she know which ideas to borrow and which to reject out of the bewildering array of theories and health teachings current in the nineteenth century? She would have had to be a most amazing person, with knowledge beyond her times, in order to do this successfully! In the second place, everyone who attempts to teach nutrition can hardly conceive of a leadership such as that of Mrs. White that was able to induce a substantial number of people to improve their diets. In the third place, one can only speculate about the large number of sufferers during the past century who could have had improved health if they had accepted the teachings of Mrs. White. Finally, one can wonder how to make her teachings more widely known in order to benefit the overcrowded earth that seems inevitable tomorrow with the present rate of increase of the world's population. 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." Clive M. McCay, Review and Herald, February 26, 1969.

Did Ellen White live what she preached on health reform? Ellen White's growth in health principles and her application of these principles show how she, a dying consumptive at 17 years old, went on

to outlive her contemporaries after a remarkably rigorous life. She embraced the health message as it came to her in 1863, some of which cut straight across her personal habits and pleasures. She occasionally departed from her habitual practice of abstaining from flesh food for a time, just as each of us do when making such changes in our habits, but eventually cut it out completely. In 1870 she claimed that she had acted according to principle ever since receiving the health vision in 1863: *"I have not changed my course a particle since I adopted the health reform. I have not taken one step back since the light from heaven upon this subject first shone upon my pathway. . . . I left off these things from principle. And since that time, brethren, you have not heard me advance an extreme view of health reform that I had to take back. I have advocated nothing but what I stand to today."* Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 371, 372.

In 1904, at the age of seventy-six, she said that she was healthier than *"in my younger days,"* attributing her improvement to the *"principles of health reform."* Ellen White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 482.

In 1908 she reacted to those who were stating that she had not been following the principles of health reform as she had *"advocated them with my pen."* Frankly she wrote in response: *"As far as my knowledge goes, I have not departed from those principles."* Ellen White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 491, 492, 494.

In a *Review and Herald*, March 17, 1868, editorial James White addressed those who were more rigid than they should have been with health principles.

(See <http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Periodicals/RH/RH18680317-V31-14.pdf>)

You see, these people were teaching their personal policies as if they were Biblical principles and James White was correcting that error. This teaching of policy as principle is exactly what the Scribes and Pharisees did with God's principles, the Sabbath being a prime example. They took the fourth commandment and added policies to it and over time the policies were taught as commandments. As Jesus said in Mark 7:7, *"Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."* It was this same rigidity by with health reform that James White was addressing in his editorial. What were the basic principles of health reform that Ellen White believed she had faithfully followed?

- ❑ Do the best one can under circumstances that may be beyond one's control.
- ❑ Avoid everything hurtful, such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and certain flesh food.
- ❑ Use self-control.
- ❑ Do not define a personal specific diet that everyone must follow, because not everyone has the same physical needs or opportunities to find the best food.
- ❑ Follow health practices to improve one's mind for spiritual purposes, not to earn God's acceptance and,
- ❑ Reason from cause to effect.

Health reform policies are choices that flow from those principles that Ellen White wrote about and followed! What do I mean about policies and principles? What is the difference? What does principle mean? Webster defines principle as: *A general truth; a law comprehending many subordinate truths; as the principles of morality, of law, of government, etc.* Whenever prophets speak, they are either conveying truth as a principle or as a policy. Principles are universal, in the sense that they apply to men and women everywhere; they are eternal, in the sense that they are always relevant, always applicable.

Policy is defined as: *the art, prudence or wisdom of individuals in the management of their private or social concerns*. Scripturally speaking, policies are the timely applications of eternal, universal principles. Principles never change but policies can and often do, depending on circumstances. Thus, policies may apply a principle in a way that the prophet never envisioned in their time. Ellen White was well aware of the difference between universal principles and policies that are determined by changing circumstances: *"That which can be said of men under certain circumstances, cannot be said of them under other circumstances."* Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 470.

Her contemporaries recognized that Mrs. White appealed to the intelligence of her readers more often by citing principles than by spelling out the answers to local issues involving local policies. Understanding the basic difference between principles and policies will help one avoid misusing either the Bible or the writings of Ellen White and will aid us to better determine and understand the fruit of her life. Those who have said that Ellen White did not keep the Biblical health principles that she taught are usually those who confuse principles with policies. So, we need to understand the difference and then apply them correctly and consistently.

More than once in her ministry, Ellen White was confronted by reports that she was accumulating great wealth because of her book royalties, insinuating that she broke the eighth commandment against stealing and worshipped mammon. In Matthew 6:24 Jesus said, *"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."* Mammon is a Syriac word, a name given to an idol worshipped as the god of riches. The Jews used the word to denote wealth. The meaning is, ye cannot serve the true God, and at the same time be supremely engaged in obtaining the riches of this world. Ellen White was being accused of worshipping mammon in the selling her books and keeping the proceeds for herself. If this is true, then we can clearly say that she fails test nine of a prophet. But is this true?

Here is Ellen White's direct response to this accuser, written in 1897 while she lived in Australia: *"You have made reports in reference to me being rich. How did you know I was? For about ten years I have been working on borrowed property. Should I sell all that I have in my possession, I would not have sufficient to pay my outstanding debts. Where have I invested this money? You well know where. I have been the bank from which to draw to carry forward the work in this country. . . . I have borrowed money to do the work which must be done. Not one shilling of the donations sent me, from the least sum to larger amounts, has been used for myself..... I see debts on our meetinghouses and it hurts my soul. I cannot but feel distress over the matter. I have invested money in the Parramatta church, in the Prospect church, in the Napier church, in the Ormondville church, in the Gisborne church, and in the education of students. I have sent persons to America that they might be fitted to return and do work in this country. If this is the way to become rich, I think it would be well for others to try it..... All the royalty on my foreign books sold in America is sacredly dedicated to God for the education of students, that they may be fitted for the ministry. Thousands of dollars have been thus expended. Is this the way to accumulate money? The old story that Canright and others have circulated, that I was worth thirty thousand dollars, all fiction. It has increased to thirty thousand pounds, by report, since I came to Australia. I do not know where it is. I am using up my means, just as fast as it comes in, to carry forward the work in this country. If I had thirty thousand pounds, I would not have sent to Africa for the loan of one thousand pounds on which I am paying interest. If I could, I would get a loan of another thousand pounds, so that we might be able to put up the main school building. I have not thirty thousand pounds. I only wish I had a million dollars. I would do as I did in Sydney. I would put men in the field to labor, defraying their expenses from my own funds. We need one hundred men where we now have one in the field."* Ellen White, "Sunnyside," Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia, Letter 98a, 1897.

Six years later, in a private letter dated October 19, 1903, Ellen White wrote, *"I have done all I could to help the cause of God with my means. I am paying interest on twenty thousand dollars, all of which I have invested in the work of God. And I shall continue to do all in my power to help to forward His work."* Ellen White, "Elmshaven," St. Helena, CA., Letter 218, October 19, 1903.

It is clear that Ellen White walked the walk in supporting the Gospel that she preached by pouring into it all her means. John O. Corliss, an Adventist missionary preacher who was an associate of James White, wrote this about Ellen White in 1923: *"She [Ellen White] was most careful to carry out in her own course the things she taught to others. For instance, she frequently dwelt in her public talks upon the duty of caring for widows and orphans, citing her hearers to Isaiah 58:7-10, she exemplified her exhortations by taking the needy to her own home for shelter, food, and raiment. I well remember her having at one time, as members of her family, a boy and girl and a widow and her two daughters. I have, moreover, known her to distribute to poor people hundreds of dollars' worth of new clothes, which she bought for that purpose."* John O. Corliss, Review and Herald, Aug. 30, 1923.

Looking back in 1906 on her experience, she explained: *"After my marriage I was instructed that I must show a special interest in motherless and fatherless children, taking some under my own charge for a time, and then finding homes for them. Thus I would be giving others an example of what they could do. Although called to travel often, and having much writing to do, I have taken children of 3 and 5 years of age, and have cared for them, educated them, and trained them for responsible positions. I have taken into my home from time to time boys from 10 to 16 years of age, giving them motherly care, and a training for service."* Ellen White, Review and Herald, July 26, 1906.

Again, did Ellen G. White live what she preached? Did her life produce good fruit? Since she is not living today, it is only fair that we take a look at what other credible witnesses have to say about this remarkable woman. *"Not only did she foretell the future, but she also gave wise counsel in the present. Certainly she was a spokesman for God. Like the prophets of old, her life was marked by humility, simplicity, austerity, divine learning, and devotion. And like them, she turned to God for healing and help. In all her books which reached a circulation running into millions, she represents the Bible as the Book of all books, the supreme guide for the whole human family."* Edith Deen, *Great Women of the Christian Faith*, 1959 edition, pages 230-236.

A few days after the death of Ellen White in 1915, an article appeared in the local newspaper of the California town, Saint Helena, near which she had lived for fifteen years. Here is a part of that article: *"Mrs. White was probably one of the best-known women in the world. She had traveled extensively, had lectured to large audiences in many countries, and her writings had been published in various languages carrying to people of nearly all tongues the message she felt called upon by God to deliver. The life of Mrs. White is an example worthy of emulation by all. Though of limited education, for the greater part of her long life in poor health, she never faltered, but for seventy-two years carried and preached the message of Jesus Christ, as understood by her, to the furthest corners of the earth. She was a humble, devout disciple of Christ and ever went about doing good. Her writings have been published in books, papers and periodicals and from her prolific pen has come writings on many religious topics. She was revered by all the members of the Seventh Day Adventist church and honored and respected by all who appreciate noble womanhood consecrated to unselfish labor for the uplifting and betterment of mankind. Her death marks the calling of another noted leader of religious thought and one whose almost ninety years were full to overflowing with good deeds, kind words and earnest prayers for all mankind. This good Samaritan will surely be greatly missed. Her reward will be commensurate with the great good she has done."* Saint Helena, California, Star, July 23, 1915.

An editorial in the Detroit News-Tribune commented: *“Mrs. White was a remarkable woman in many ways. She was deeply religious, and none who knew her intimately had any doubt as to her sincerity.”* Editorial, Detroit "News Tribune," July 25, 1915.

Brief statements by two men within the church who knew Mrs. White well reveal the attitude of members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church all over the world.

“Now she is at rest. Her voice is silent; her pen is laid aside. But the mighty influence of that active, positive, forceful life will continue. That life was linked with the eternal; it was wrought in God.” Arthur G. Daniels, in Review and Herald, July 29, 1915.

“Her Christian life was marked by deep personal piety; she had great faith in prayer, and was zealous in her spiritual devotions. Her charities were liberal beyond her means; she was ever impoverishing herself by her gifts to the cause she loved and by her care for the poor and needy. She believed in the divine inspiration of the Bible. Of this word she was a constant student all her life; to her it was the voice of God.... She exalted Christ as the sinner's only hope. She loved this Saviour, and did what she could to bring others to a knowledge of Him.” I. H. Evans, in Review and Herald, July 29, 1915.

Even though Ellen White was seen as a powerful and sought-after preacher, her diaries reveal that not all her time was devoted to writing and public work. Household duties, friendly contacts with neighbors, especially those in need, claimed her attention. She loved people as Jesus does. While she has been perceived as having a strict and serious personality, perhaps due to her lifestyle standards, numerous sources describe her as a very friendly and kind person. Those who knew her well had only good to speak of Ellen White's personal life and Christian experience. Even one of her most severe critics, a former co-worker, attended her funeral, and, while viewing her body, said, *“A noble Christian woman gone.”* Comment of D. M. Canright. See Arthur W. Spalding, Captains of the Host, page 581.

The New York Independent, a weekly journal of the time, devoted a little more than a full column in noticing her life and death. Here is a quote from that article: *“She showed no spiritual pride and she sought no filthy lucre. She lived the life and did the work of a worthy prophetess the most admirable of the American succession.”* Editorial, "The New York Independent" August 23, 1915.

S.N. Haskell was an associate of Ellen White and had carefully observed the fruitage of her ministry. He testified: *“The testimony of every true prophet will agree with the testimony of the prophets of God before him, and it may be a further development of the same truth uttered by them. The words of God are definite and pure, “as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever.” Psalms 12:6, 7. The words of God are represented as being refined. . . . No one can add anything to the revelation we have in the Bible, but every prophet who is inspired will develop the subject, or the words spoken by prophets before him. . . . and any prophet who does not make other scriptures seem broader and more wonderful, does not bear the right kind of fruit. After over sixty years’ study of Mrs. White's writings with the Bible, we can truthfully say that we know not of one Bible test of a true prophet but has been most literally fulfilled in her writings and in her character.”* S. N. Haskell, quoted in F. C. Gilbert, Divine Predictions Fulfilled, p33.

More recent testimony is seen in the November 17th, 2014, edition of Smithsonian Magazine where they listed Ellen G. White as one of the 100 most significant Americans of all time.

See: www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonianmag/meet-100-most-significant-americans-all-time-180953341/

These are all testimonies from contemporaries, those who were influenced by her writings or familiar with her life. She touched millions with her writing and still does to this day! Take a look at her writings and read her comments in her diary to get a good feel about this dear lady. Now Test 9 also says that a true prophet will live and teach in harmony with the law of God—the Ten Commandments. This has been true of every prophet of God in any generation. Notice what these prophets said about the Law of God:

Moses: *"And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them."* Exodus 24:12.

Joshua: *"But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul."* Joshua 22:5.

"...But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Joshua 24:15

Ezra: *"For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."* Ezra 7:10

David: *"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple."* Psalms 19:7.

Solomon: *"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."* Proverbs 28:9.

Isaiah: *"To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, there is no light in them."* Isaiah 8:20.

Daniel: *"Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets."* Daniel 9:10

Jesus: *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. ¹⁸ For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."* Matthew 5:17-18.

Paul: *"For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."* Romans 2:13.

James: *"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."* James 2:10.

John: *"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."* 1 John 3:4.

And you can search and search, but you will not find one prophet of God that has said that the Law of God, the Ten Commandments has been changed or done away with.... seriously think on that. So, what did Ellen White say about the Law of God?

"The law of God is the foundation of all enduring reformation. We are to present to the world in clear, distinct lines the need of obedience to His law. The great reformatory movement must begin in the home. Obedience to God's law is the great incentive to industry, economy, truthfulness, and just dealing between man and man." Ellen White, Child Guidance, p489.

"Obedience to the law of God is sanctification." Ellen White, Faith and Works, p85.

"The law of God is the only true standard of moral perfection. That law was practically exemplified in the life of Christ. He says of Himself, "I have kept my Father's commandments." The law is an expression of the thought of God; when received in Christ, it becomes our thought. . . . God desires us to be happy, and He gave us the precepts of the law that in obeying them we might have joy." Ellen White, The Faith I Live By, p85.

"When, through faith in Jesus Christ, man does according to the very best of his ability, and seeks to keep the way of the Lord by obedience to the ten commandments, the perfection of Christ is imputed to cover the transgression of the repentant and obedient soul." Ellen White, Christian Education, p112.

"What a God is our God! He rules over His kingdom with diligence and care, and He has built a hedge-- the Ten Commandments--about His subjects to preserve them from the results of transgression. In requiring obedience to the laws of His kingdom, God gives His people health and happiness, peace and joy. He teaches them that the perfection of character He requires can be attained only by becoming familiar with His word." Ellen White, Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students, p454.

At the heart of the Law is the fourth commandment, which reminds us to keep the Sabbath day holy. It tells us that the seventh day is the Sabbath, and any true prophet of God will know this truth and uphold it by teaching it and keeping it. Prophets such as Moses, Nehemiah, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, John, and Paul all uplift the Law of God and mention especially the significance of the fourth one concerning the keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath. Isaiah 56:2 says, *"Blessed is the man... that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil."*

There is not one word from any of God's prophets concerning a change to God's Ten Commandments. There isn't even a hint of a change suggested. Any prophet that teaches that the Ten Commandments have been changed, especially the fourth concerning the seventh-day Sabbath, is a false prophet.

I gave you a few snippets of what Ellen White says about the Law of God but what did she have to say about the fourth commandment? Quite a lot actually and here are a few examples...

"God's remnant people, standing before the world as reformers, are to show that the law of God is the foundation of all enduring reform and that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to stand as a memorial of creation, a constant reminder of the power of God." Ellen White, Conflict and Courage, p.269.

"The Sabbath was not for Israel merely, but for the world. It had been made known to man in Eden, and, like the other precepts of the Decalogue, it is of imperishable obligation." Ellen White, The Desire of Ages, p283.

"Wherefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." These words are full of instruction and comfort. Because the Sabbath was made for man, it is the Lord's day. It belongs to Christ. For "all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3. Since He made all things, He made the Sabbath. By Him it was set apart as a memorial of the work of creation. It points to Him as both the Creator and the Sanctifier. It declares that He who created all things in heaven and in earth, and by whom all things hold together, is the head of the church, and that by His power we are reconciled to God. For, speaking of Israel, He said, "I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them,"--make them holy. Ezek. 20:12. Then the Sabbath is a sign of Christ's power to make us holy. And it is given to all whom Christ makes holy. As a sign of His sanctifying power, the Sabbath is given to all who through Christ become a part of the Israel of God." Ellen White, The Desire of Ages, p288

Scripture does not sanction the teaching that the Sabbath was changed from the seventh day to the first day or Sunday and Ellen G. White has written extensively on this point. Here is just one example:

"During the Christian dispensation the great enemy of man's happiness has made the Sabbath of the fourth commandment an object of special attack. Satan says, "I will work at cross purposes with God. I will empower my followers to set aside God's memorial, the seventh-day Sabbath. Thus I will show the world that the day sanctified and blessed by God has been changed. That day shall not live in the minds of the people. I will obliterate the memory of it. I will place in its stead a day that does not bear the credentials of God, a day that cannot be a sign between God and His people. I will lead those who accept this day to place upon it the sanctity that God placed upon the seventh day." Ellen White, Prophets and Kings, pp.183, 184.

Here is an example of just such an attack upon the Sabbath:

"An experience that some of us had some years ago at Battle Creek comes to my mind. There were several ministers who were very much disturbed because we kept the Sabbath and worked on Sunday. They went to the officers of the law, and said, "We have a petition to place before you. We want you to arrest these people who are keeping Saturday, and working on Sunday." The officer said, "I have heard that these people are quiet, law-abiding, honest, and religious people, and I see no occasion for interfering with them." Then the minister showed him a petition that pleaded for a law to prohibit Sabbath-keepers from working on Sunday. The officer took the paper, and tore it to pieces, and said, "Get out, you bigots!" Ellen White, Review and Herald, June 11, 1889.

So, we can see that Ellen G. White uplifts the entire Law of God, all Ten Commandments, which include the seventh day Sabbath of the fourth. She does not endorse a change of the Sabbath day; thus, she agrees with preceding prophets in this regard. An uplifting of Christ, a concern for the salvation of souls, warnings against sin, a pointing to Scripture, helping the needy, a faithful spouse, good parent, a kind and generous neighbor, a trusted friend: this was the work of Ellen G. White, as it had been the work of all the prophets before her time.

I could spend every Sabbath for the rest of my life laying out evidence upon evidence that Ellen White passes these tests of a prophet, but I must leave that for you to search for yourself. I am giving you a good taste of the evidence. A careful and consistent look at her words and life indicate overwhelmingly that Ellen White does indeed pass tests 1-9 of a prophet.

If Ellen G. White fails the tenth test, even while passing the first nine tests, we can be assured that she is a fraud; a 'false prophet' and if so, we must beware of her.

Now we are going to look at Category 3 of Tests of a prophet, which contains one test, though the test has several conditions stated within it:

3. The physical condition of the prophet when in vision. There are seven physical conditions that can be evident when a true prophet is in vision.

It is important to know that the Lord has not made these physical evidences the only test of a prophet, but they must be taken into consideration as a sign of supernatural origin thus there is some kind of contact with the spiritual world—whether light or darkness, righteous or unrighteous. So yes, a true prophet WILL have visions and dreams from God. Period. No, not all the supernatural physical phenomena will always accompany a prophet when in vision. Remember what it says in Numbers 12:6, *"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."*

Now if it is seen that Ellen G. White never received a vision or dream from God, or that her visions and dreams were communications that were contrary to the Word of God in some way—as God would not contradict Himself, then she fails this tenth test. But if she had visions and dreams from God, well friends, we must accept her as that 'Elijah' prophet that was promised to us and regard her inspired counsels as the testimony of Jesus to each of us.

TEST 10: A prophet must have visions and dreams.

This is the supernatural physical phenomena that may be present when a prophet is in vision:

- ❑ A loss of strength and falling down in a deep sleep.
- ❑ Despite the sleep, can hear a voice speaking to them.
- ❑ In the vision, they will arise to their feet when the being touches them.
- ❑ At first, they cannot speak; but when the being touches their lips, they are enabled to speak.
- ❑ Throughout the vision they are without breath of any kind. Their breathing totally ceases.
- ❑ Strength is given them during the vision.
- ❑ During the vision, their eyes are open.

Now I want to clarify a bit about test ten so that there is no confusion. A true prophet WILL have visions and dreams but there is no evidence in the Bible that all of these physical phenomena always accompanied the visions of every prophet. Daniel mentions six of these when he recounted the vision he was given. In fact, they probably did not go through all of these like Daniel did, except maybe not breathing as God is actually breathing for the prophet while in that kind of supernatural communication. Some of these characteristics are not needed when a prophet has a dream from God for no one is there to see the physical phenomena.

However, the presence of some of these characteristics serve as compelling evidence that his communications are of supernatural origin. It is unwise for us to place great emphasis on the physical manifestations in attempting to demonstrate whether or not any individual is a true prophet, for these may be more easily counterfeited by Satan and his false prophets than the other nine tests. God has given us these tests so that Satan may not deceive us. We are to use these tests in determining who has the gift of prophecy and who does not thus being able to tell the false from the true.

I think it is interesting to know how the visions seemed to Ellen White herself. Describing her experience at the time of her first vision, Ellen White said, *"While we were praying, the power of God came upon me as I had never felt it before. I seemed to be surrounded with light, and to be rising higher and higher from the earth. I turned to look for the advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me: 'Look again, and look a little higher.'"* Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 1, p58.

She continued the description of the things she saw in the vision, telling of the path before the advent people, the coming of Christ, heaven, and the new earth. *"Then an angel bore me gently down to this dark world. Sometimes I think I can stay here no longer; all things of earth look so dreary. I feel very lonely here, for I have seen a better land. Oh, that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest! After I came out of vision, everything looked changed; a gloom was spread over all that I beheld. Oh, how dark this world looked to me. I wept when I found myself here, and felt homesick. I had seen a better world, and it had spoiled this for me."* Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p20.

During the time of the vision, she was unconscious of her earthly surroundings, and it seemed to her that she was transported bodily to the place revealed in vision, as had been the case with Ezekiel and Paul. Notice...

Ezekiel 8:3, *"And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy."*

2 Corinthians 12:2-4, *"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. ³ And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) ⁴ How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."*

That Paul is speaking here of himself is evident from (1) the fact that this reference to visions is in the midst of an account of events connected with his own life and ministry; (2) the fact that in v. 7 he designates these visions and revelations as made directly to himself; and (3) the fact that he uses the third person in order to avoid the appearance of boasting. Take note too that the first "heaven" of Scripture is the atmosphere above us, the second is that of the stars, and the third the abode of God and heavenly beings. Here we are being told that Paul was "caught up" to the presence of God like Ezekiel was.

So like Ezekiel and Paul, Ellen White seemed to be viewing or taking part in the activities being shown to her. All her senses seemed to be employed as in the ordinary activities of life, but none were being used in the ordinary way. The fact that she was shut away from her immediate surroundings during the time of the vision made all that she saw the more vivid and impressive to her. I think we have all had a very vivid dream that was so real that we just knew we were actually there and involved in the activity. Never a thought enters our mind that it is not real, and we are actually in our bed and having a dream. This is what I imagine a vision or dream from God would be like. This was an intensely vivid experience for Ellen White; so real, in fact, that it was painful for her to have to return to a consciousness of earthly things after having been given a view of heaven. This is believable is it not? How many of us, after seeing heaven as if we were there, would want to come back to earth? The vision was, however, purely an enlightenment of the mind, and not an actual experience. Therefore, she could be shown things past and future as well as present.

James White observed his wife in vision more frequently than did anyone else, and many of her visions came when she was in public meetings. His description of her condition coincides with that given by others. Notice what he says:

1. **“She is utterly unconscious of everything transpiring around her, as has been proved by the most rigid tests, but views herself as removed from this world, and in the presence of heavenly beings.**
2. **She does not breathe.** During the entire period of her continuance in vision, which has at different times ranged from fifteen minutes to three hours, there is no breath, as has been repeatedly proved by pressing upon the chest, and by closing the mouth and nostrils.
3. **Immediately on entering vision, her muscles become rigid, and joints fixed, so far as any external force can influence them.** At the same time her movements and gestures, which are frequent, are free and graceful, and cannot be hindered nor controlled by the strongest person.
4. **On coming out of vision, whether in the daytime or a well-lighted room at night, all is total darkness.** Her power to distinguish even the most brilliant objects, held within a few inches of the eyes, returns but gradually, sometimes not being fully established for three hours. This has continued for the past twenty years; yet her eyesight is not in the least impaired, few persons having better than she now possesses.”

James White, *Life Incidents in Connection With the Great Advent Movement*, p272.

Numerous additional descriptions of her condition in vision can be read in J. N. Loughborough's book, *The Great Second Advent Movement*, pages 204-210. I'm not going to share each account he includes, as you can read it for yourself, but I will summarize their testimonies:

1. Frequently, just prior to a vision, there was a deep sense of the presence of God, both by Ellen White and by others in the room.
2. Often, as the vision began, Ellen White spoke the words, “Glory,” or “Glory to God,” and at times repeated it three times or more.
3. There was a loss of her physical strength.
4. Then followed a supernatural strength.
5. There was no breathing, although her heartbeat was normal and her color was natural. There was no discernible disturbance in her circulatory system.
6. At times there would be brief statements or exclamations telling something of the scene being presented to her. On a few occasions longer statements were made by her.
7. Her eyes were open, and she appeared to be watching something in the distance. She rarely blinked if at all.
8. Her position was not always the same; she might be seated, reclining, or walking around the room.
9. She was unconscious of surroundings or of the presence of other individuals.
10. Observers became aware that a vision was ended when a deep breath was taken. This was followed in a minute or two by another; regular breathing was then resumed.
11. For a time after she was in vision all seemed dark to her.
12. Normal sight, and natural strength and abilities were restored within a time--sometimes a few hours. There was no drain upon the physical system as the result of the visions. In fact, on some occasions, healing from illness took place.

These characteristics marked many of her visions, but all were not given in this exact manner. On numerous occasions visions were given during periods when Ellen White was praying or writing.

These were not what was called an "open" vision, which was in public. At such times she seemed cut off from her immediate surroundings, but the other indications that she was in vision were not present as they didn't need to be for there were few, if any, witnesses. Such presentations were brief, and frequently had to do with current situations and problems for which immediate guidance was needed.

What I have shared so far sounds right in line with test ten, doesn't it? Well, let's compare the physical condition of Ellen G. White while in vision to this biblical test. Tests performed upon Ellen White while she was in vision, which could last for several hours, included closing her mouth and nostrils. Her movements while in vision were free and graceful as she would speak and describe some of what she saw. And yet her gestures could not be controlled or stopped as some tried to physically keep her from moving. Imagine that. Here is a weak petite woman that you would think could easily be physically controlled and yet it was impossible! And although normally a frail individual, the vision never sapped her strength or made her ill. In fact, at times she was healed of sickness while in vision.

Those who personally witnessed the visions carefully observed what took place as a testimony for the ages—for us who live decades later. And these witnesses were given the freedom to examine Ellen while she remained in vision. At times physicians were called to do a more thorough and critical examination of her. George I. Butler witnessed public visions by Ellen White on many occasions and here is his account published in a Review and Herald article in 1874:

"The time Mrs. White is in this condition [in vision] has varied from fifteen minutes to one hundred and eighty [3 hours]. 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. The brightest light may be suddenly brought near her eyes, or feints made as if to thrust something into the eye, and there is never the slightest wink or change in expression on that account...; and it is sometimes hours and even days after she comes out of this condition before she recovers her natural sight. She says it seems to her that she comes back into a dark world, yet her eyesight is in nowise injured by her visions..."

So, notice that the test found in Numbers 24:4 is testified as being fulfilled by Ellen White. Her eyes remained wide open for up to several hours and never blinked, even when attempts were made to thrust at her eyes or shine a light into them. Mr. Butler continues...

"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. It has been proved many times by tightly holding the nostrils and mouth with the hand, and by putting a looking glass before them so close that any escape of the moisture of the breath would be detected. In this condition she often speaks words and short sentences, yet not the slightest breath escapes. 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. Persons may pinch her flesh, and do things, which would cause great and sudden pain in her ordinary condition, and she will not notice it by the slightest tremor..."

So far Mr. Butler has testified that Ellen G White has visions and all seven conditions while a prophet is in vision were met... her eyes are wide open and never blink, her breathing ceases, she loses strength, she gains strength to rise, she experiences supernatural strength to withstand pain, and she has a conversation with someone that is not present thus hearing a voice and speaking to that person herself... all seven conditions met! Mr. Butler continues...

"There are none of the disgusting grimaces or contortions which usually attend spiritualist mediums, but calm, dignified, and impressive, her very appearance strikes the beholder with reverence and solemnity. There is nothing fanatical in her appearance. When she comes out of this condition she speaks and writes from time to time what she has seen while in vision; and the supernatural character of these visions is seen even more clearly in what she thus reveals than in her appearance and condition while in vision, for many things have thus been related which it was impossible for her to know in any other way... Peculiar circumstances in the lives of individuals, whom she never before had seen in the flesh, and secrets hidden from the nearest acquaintances have been made known by her when she had no personal knowledge of the parties other than by vision. Often has she been in an audience where she was wholly unacquainted with the individuals composing it, when she would get up and point out person after person whom she never had seen before, in the flesh, and tell them what they had done, and reprove their sins. I might mention many other items of like nature, but space forbids. These things can be proved by any amount of testimony, and we confidently affirm that they are of such a character that they could not be accomplished by deception." George I. Butler, Review and Herald, June 9, 1874.

(See <http://www.documents.adventistarchives.org/Periodicals/RH/RH18740609-V43-26.pdf>)

Butler's description is very accurate. Ellen White had many visions that were for particular people that she had never met before. It reminds me of the incident with N.D. Faulkhead in Australia who had become an Adventist but was also a member of the Free Masons. The Lord gave Ellen White a message for him that took fifty written pages. You can read all about the account by doing a search for Ellen White and N.D. Faulkhead online. She summarizes their meeting in one of the manuscript releases:

"The Lord also revealed to me Brother Faulkhead's connection with the Free Masons, and plainly stated that unless he severed every tie that bound him to these associations he would lose his soul. He said, "I accept the light the Lord has sent me through you. I will act upon it. I am a member of five lodges, and three other lodges are under my control. I transact all of their business. Now I shall attend no more of their meetings, and shall close my business relations with them as fast as possible." I repeated to him the words spoken by my guide in reference to these associations. Giving a certain movement that was made by my guide, I said, "I cannot relate all that was given to me." Brother Faulkhead told Elder Daniells and others that I gave the particular sign known only by the highest order of Masons, which he had just entered. He said that I did not know the sign, and that I was not aware that I was giving the sign to him. This was special evidence to him that the Lord was working through me to save his soul." Ellen White, Manuscript Releases, vol. 5, pps.148, 149. (See <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/742.2>).

As mentioned by George Butler, many physicians carefully examined Ellen White while in vision. One was Dr. Brown of Parkville, Michigan, a medical doctor who was also a practicing spiritualist. Hearing about her visions, he declared confidently that they were from spiritualism and that if he could examine her while she was in vision, he would be able to prove it—for he would quickly contact the "floating spirit" guiding her, and then directly control her himself. January 12, 1861, Ellen White spoke at a meeting in Parkville. As it was concluding, she was taken off in vision. Those present mentioned

Dr. Brown, so he was asked to come and examine her. J.N. Loughborough, a witness who was present, recorded what happened:

“An invitation was given for any who desired to do so to come forward, and by examination satisfy themselves as to her condition while in vision. The doctor came forward, but before he had half completed his examination, he [Dr. Brown] turned deathly pale, and shook like an aspen leaf. Elder White said, ‘Will the doctor report her condition?’ He replied, ‘She does not breathe,’ and rapidly made his way to the door... Those at the door who knew of his boasting, said, ‘Go back, and do as you said you would; bring that woman out of the vision.’ In great agitation he grasped the knob of the door, but was not permitted to open it until inquiry was made by those near the door, ‘Doctor, what is it?’ He replied ‘God only knows; let me out of this house;’ and out he went. It was evident that the spirit that influenced him as a medium was no more at rest in the presence of the power that controlled Mrs. White in vision than were the demoniacs in the days of the Saviour, who inquired, ‘Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?’” J.N. Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement: Its Rise and Progress*, p211.

Dr. Merritt G Kellogg mentions a similar experience that took place before this one. It was at Tyrone, Michigan on May 29, 1853:

*“Sister White was in vision about twenty minutes or half an hour. As she went into vision every one present seemed to feel the power and presence of God, and some of us did indeed feel the Spirit of God resting upon us mightily. We were engaged in prayer and social meeting Sabbath morning at about nine o’clock. Brother White, my father, and Sister White had prayed, and I was praying at the time. There had been no excitement, no demonstrations. We did plead earnestly with God, however, that He would bless the meeting with His presence, and that He would bless the work in Michigan. As Sister White gave that triumphant shout of ‘Glory! G-I-o-r-y! G-I-o-r-y!’ which you have heard her give so often as she goes into vision, Brother White arose and informed the audience that his wife was in vision. After stating the manner of her visions, and that she did not breathe while in vision, he invited anyone who wished to do so to come forward and examine her. Dr. Drummond, a physician who (before he saw her in vision) had declared her visions to be of mesmeric origin, and that he could give her a vision, stepped forward, and after a thorough examination; turned very pale, and remarked, ‘**She doesn’t breathe!**’ I am quite certain that she did not breathe at that time while in vision, nor in any of several others which she has had when I was present. The coming out of the vision was as marked as her going into it. The first indication we had that the vision was ended, was in her again beginning to breathe. She drew her first breath deep, long, and full, in a manner showing that her lungs had been entirely empty of air. After drawing the first breath, several minutes passed before she drew the second, which filled the lungs precisely as did the first; then a pause of two minutes, and a third inhalation, after which the breathing became normal.--M.G. Kellogg, M.D., Statement dated December 28, 1890 at Battle Creek, Michigan.”* J.N. Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement: Its Rise and Progress*, p206.

Testimonies to Ellen Whites visions consistently give the same description and say that the experience of having a vision never weakened or debilitated Ellen White. Instead, each one was usually followed by increased natural strength and improved health. Twice, in vision, Ellen White held large open Bibles for prolonged periods of time outstretched in one hand. Early in 1845, while in vision at her parents' home in Portland, Maine, 17-year-old Ellen Harmon (later White) picked up their large family Bible and held it on her outstretched left arm for 20 to 30 minutes. The Bible, which is on display at the Ellen G. White Estate, weighs 18½ pounds and was printed by Joseph Teal in 1822. There are other reports of Ellen White holding large Bibles while in vision, including an eye-witness

account printed in *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, pp. 77-79. I encourage you to read the entire encounter but notice this excerpt:

"Mr. Thayer, the owner of the house, was not fully satisfied that her vision was of the Devil, as R. declared it to be. He wanted it tested in some way. He had heard that visions of satanic power were arrested by opening the Bible and laying it on the person in vision, and asked S. if he would test it in this way, which he declined to do. Then Thayer took a heavy, large quarto family Bible [a quarto Bible was approx. 9" x 12"] which was laying on the table, and seldom used, opened it, and laid it open upon the breast of E. while in vision, as she was then inclined backward against the wall in the corner of the room. Immediately after the Bible was laid upon her, she arose upon her feet, and walked into the middle of the room, with the Bible open in one hand, and lifted up as high as she could reach, and with her eyes steadily looking upward, declared in a solemn manner, 'The inspired testimony from God,' or words of the same import. And then she continued for a long time, while the Bible was extended in one hand, and her eyes looking upwards, and not on the Bible, to turn over the leaves with her other hand, and place her finger upon certain passages, and correctly utter their words with a solemn voice. Many present looked at the passages where her finger was pointed, to see if she spoke them correctly, for her eyes at the same time were looking upwards. Some of the passages referred to were judgments against the wicked and blasphemers; and others were admonitions and instructions relative to our present condition." Ellen White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p78.

Her first vision took place in December 1844; her last known vision concerned the welfare of youth and was given on March 3, 1915. She received about two thousand visions and prophetic dreams during seventy years of public ministry (1844 to 1915). That averages to almost three visions each month for 70 years! Beloved, these testimonies confirm that Ellen White passed all seven conditions of a prophet while in vision!

Now I have shared Ten Tests of a true prophet but there are some additional evidence that can be considered. You could call them minor tests or maybe quizzes of a prophet.

A Prophet will give a Timely Message. Ordinarily we think of messages being given years, or even centuries before their full significance is realized; but many have been given at exactly the time they were needed. We saw this with Ellen White and N.D. Faulkhead. There is the fascinating story of Elisha and the king of Syria, recorded in 2 Kings 6:8-23. The king of Syria had marched against Israel. As a wise military leader, he took counsel with his associates as to his plan of procedure. But every time an ambush was planned, or a move made, Elisha the prophet warned the king of Israel, *"Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down."* So accurate was Elisha's information that the king of Syria was certain there was a traitor in his camp. It is a part of God's plan to make available to His children, in any age, well-timed guidance to meet their needs.

A Prophet will Exhibit Holy Boldness. The certainty and the fearlessness with which the prophets gave their testimonies add weight to their claims to have God's messages. There was no hesitation, no hedging, no note of apology when Nathan stood before David and declared in 2 Samuel 12:7, *"Thou art the man."* Elijah, appearing before Ahab after the extended period of drought that had devastated Israel, was challenged in 1 Kings 18:17 by the king with the question, *"Art thou he that troubleth Israel?"* The response was certain and fearless, despite the personal danger faced by the prophet. *"I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou has followed Baalim."* Verse 18. No equivocation was permitted in the delivery of the messages of the prophets.

A Prophet's Messages are of a High Spiritual Plane. In the messages of true prophets there is nothing cheap or common or childish. While their writings deal with ordinary, everyday affairs of life, they do so in a dignified and fitting manner. The spiritual principles laid down are the loftiest known to the human mind. Both the theme of the Bible and its mode of expression are worthy of, and command the respect of, the most learned as well as the humblest.

A Prophet's Messages are of a Practical Nature. There are no weird fantasies or pointless ramblings in their communications. Though some messages are given in symbolic language, their intent can be ascertained by following clearly discernible rules of interpretation. We can testify to Paul's statement that all Scripture is profitable.

The Bible tells us that Satan is a liar and a deceiver and that if it were possible, he will deceive the very elect before the end comes. This is true in dealing with prophets as well as every other human being. What he cannot do through false prophets, he will attempt to do by discrediting and counteracting the work of true prophets. In either case we need to be aware of the methods of testing prophets. Not only are we to detect and reject the false, but we must be diligent to discover and receive the true. No one test is a full and sufficient identification of a prophet. It is frequently easier to detect the false prophet than it is to be certain of the true, for if he obviously violates one of the major tests, we have no difficulty in knowing the source of his messages.

On the other hand, before it can be finally determined that one is a true prophet, all the tests must be painstakingly applied, and sufficient time permitted to make thorough investigation. The words of the Savior clearly point out that one of the spiritual problems of those who live in the days preceding His second advent is that of dealing with false Christ's and false prophets. These imposters will have little success among those who have been fortified with the truth and who know how to apply the tests. Every Christian should be so familiar with these criteria that they will automatically apply them in every instance where they are needed without having to ask, *"How can I tell whether this prophet is true or false?"*

God has promised in the Bible to give us information through His prophets. It is because of our special need at this time, and because we face the greatest crisis in history since the time of the flood—that God has sent this light to us. There is a pattern to history. And the pattern often repeats. When a crisis comes, God sends warnings. And Satan often sends counterfeits to turn eyes away from the warnings. Let us, as Peter says in 2 Peter 1:10-11, *"...give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: ¹¹ For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."*

Conclusions

Jesus Christ, in His talks with His disciples and with the people, did not declare specifically that the gift of prophecy would continue to the end and many teachers today use that supposed omission as proof that there are no more prophets—none beyond the apostle John. However, some of His other declarations and warnings can be understood only in the light of this truth that there most definitely will be the gift of prophecy until the time He returns. Sitting on the Mount of Olives, He described for His disciples the signs that would signify that His second advent was near.

One of the indications, He said, would be the rise of false Christ's and false prophets. Much earlier in His ministry He had given a general warning in Matthew 7:15, *"Beware of false prophets,"* but this time the warning was given in the setting of events to occur just preceding His second coming. If Christ had not anticipated that there would be the true manifestation of the gift of prophecy at the

same time that He warned of the false, He would no doubt have said something like: *“Beware of anyone who professes to be a prophet, for there will be no prophets in those days.”* Jesus made no such statement as that; He simply issued a warning for all to be careful about the kind of prophets they heeded. The implication is clear that the true gift would coexist with the false, and that it would be necessary for the remnant people to choose between good and evil prophets. Another important, although indirect, indication that Jesus recognized that the gift of prophecy would not end with the completion of the New Testament is found in His promise to His disciples that the Holy Spirit would be with them continually and teach them all things.

John 14:15-17, *“If ye love me, keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; ¹⁷ Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”*

John 14:26, *“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”*

It is through the ministry of the Holy Spirit that the gifts Christ bestowed on the church are made effective. It is the Holy Spirit who divides the gifts, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:11, *“...to every man severally as He will.”* (See also Ephesians 4:8, 11-13.) In Jesus' promise of the coming of the Spirit was wrapped up the promise of the gifts of the Spirit, even though they were not spelled out until later. Within the list of gifts of the Spirit is the gift of prophecy. Paul said that these gifts would continue to be evident in the church until Jesus returned, and then he says in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21, *“Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”*

The apostle to the Gentiles talks of the times and seasons, showing that the advent is near. He says the coming of the Lord will be as a thief in the night, that the peace-and-safety cry will come at a time of sudden destruction; he calls all Christians to be awake and sober, to comfort, edify, and admonish one another, to hold fast to the truth. Under these circumstances, he says they are not to despise prophesyings, but that they should test all things and hold fast the good. This is a positive statement of the same thought Christ stated negatively, when He warned, *“There shall arise ... false prophets.”* Thus, we see that Paul anticipated that the true prophetic voice would be heard in the days preceding the second coming of Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:5-8, *“That in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Notice that Paul expected the Corinthians to be enriched in all things by the Lord *“even as,”* or, to the extent that, *“the testimony of Christ was confirmed”* in them. *“The testimony of Christ”* referred to is the same as *“the testimony of Jesus”* mentioned in Revelation 19:10, and there defined as *“the spirit of prophecy.”*

Revelation 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.**”*

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 them to speak authoritatively as a representative of God when “moved by the Holy Ghost” to do so.

Paul is saying that the Corinthian church would grow spiritually to the extent that the messages of God through the prophets of all ages were established in their minds. These declarations were made with reference to the people who were *“waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* The apostle's desire for this group was that they should come behind in none of the gifts Christ had placed in the church. Listed prominently among the gifts is the gift of prophecy. This statement in 1 Corinthians is one of the strongest the apostle made foretelling that this gift was to remain in the church until the return of Jesus Christ. This means that the end time church will have the gift or spirit of prophecy. The church will have a prophet for the end times! The church of God in the time of the end, in our end time generation (which began in 1798 and lasts until Jesus returns), will have the gift of prophecy from the Holy Spirit. So, besides all the gifts of the Spirit it will have a prophet to guide and prepare the church for the decisive battle before the end of all things.

I have endeavored to share with you the many different ways that the Lord has given in His word how to identify a true prophet and in particular, how we are to know the prophet He has called into service for the end time church—for His people. God uses His prophets to communicate to His people and those who are living in the end times most definitely need counsel from the Almighty. The Bible defines inspiration as a process in which God uniquely imparts eternally important truths through *“his servants, the prophets,”* who *“at sundry times and in divers manners”* have spoken to their contemporaries and to those who would later follow to enable them to understand the divine will of God for their lives.

Prophets were also called seers. A seer is one who perceives things that do not lie in the realm of natural sight or hearing. Although used synonymously to indicate a person who possesses the prophetic gift, the two words illustrate basically separate phases of the experience of the prophet. As an individual the prophet was fundamentally no different from any other devout follower of God. There was something that set a prophet apart from the crowd, however, and that was their unique relationship with God. No person who had ever had a vision or dream of the throne of God, and had the privilege of conversing with the angels, or of hearing their name called by the divine voice to the prophetic office, would be the same as before. And maybe it is because of that uniqueness that we tend to esteem a prophet higher in our respect than most others. Which can make us vulnerable to being deceived by the same prophet if for some reason they were to stumble in their relationship and walk with God--like Balaam had done in betraying his trust.

So, Jesus gave us some insights and warnings about such deceptions. If a prophet is a teller of the word of God, then we can then see that the antithesis must be one who misrepresents God; one who told either his own words or the words of the devil or a demon, but certainly not a message from God. The Bible tells us a great deal about false prophets, they're familiar both in the Old Testament and in the New.

Notice what it says in Deuteronomy 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."

God is telling Israel here that it takes more than a vision or dream and a miracle to indicate someone as a prophet of God. Their message must be in harmony with previously revealed truth. If it was found that it was not in harmony then that person was to be put to death, as it was evident they were trying to lead God's people astray. It was extremely dangerous to be a false prophet in Israel.

We have learned from the Bible some of the attributes of a false prophet:

1. Outwardly look like sheep--Believers.
2. Inwardly are ravenous; they assume the appearance of holiness in order that they might the more readily get the property of the people. They are full of extortion and excess.
3. Are Hirelings--seek wealth and fame.
4. Cause division in the church. They are wolves that scatter the sheep.
5. Show signs and wonders.
6. Give peace and safety messages when there is no peace.
7. Do not warn God's people of coming danger.
8. Give messages that lead away from God and His word. Often speak "new light" that is not in harmony with old truth.
9. Deny that Jesus came in the flesh.
10. Encourage immoral practices. They do not always reprove sin.
11. Please the unconverted mind.
12. Are well spoken of by the world.

If you boil these down, you can say that false prophets lead God's people astray from God's commandments and they change what God says will occur. They will perform miracles to try and gain a trust that they are from God. The miracles appear to be real, and may well be real, but all that a false prophet does is a counterfeit of the true.

It is just as important to know the characteristics of a false prophet as to know them for a true prophet. Here are ten tests of a true prophet of God that we studied:

TEST 1: A prophet will prophesy in the Lord's name, as they are His messengers.

TEST 2: A prophet will tell the truth.

TEST 3: A prophet will not give a private interpretation of Scripture.

TEST 4: A prophet will point out the sins of God's people.

TEST 5: A prophet will warn God's people of coming judgment.

TEST 6: A prophet will recognize and teach that Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh.

TEST 7: A prophet will not lead people into fanaticism, as they will bear good fruit.

TEST 8: A prophet will build up and edify the church, they will not tear it apart.

TEST 9: A prophet will live and teach in harmony with preceding prophets and with the Law of God—the Ten Commandments.

TEST 10: A prophet must have visions and dreams.

This is the supernatural physical phenomena that may be present when a prophet is in vision:

- A loss of strength and falling down in a deep sleep.

- ❑ Despite the sleep, can hear a voice speaking to them.
- ❑ In the vision, they will arise to their feet when the being touches them.
- ❑ At first, they cannot speak; but when the being touches their lips, they are enabled to speak.
- ❑ Throughout the vision they are without breath of any kind. Their breathing totally ceases.
- ❑ Strength is given them during the vision.
- ❑ During the vision, their eyes are open.

Now there are some additional evidence that can be considered, and you could call them minor tests or maybe quizzes of a prophet.

A Prophet will give a Timely Message. Ordinarily we think of messages being given years, or even centuries before their full significance is realized; but many have been given at exactly the time they were needed.

A Prophet will Exhibit Holy Boldness. The certainty and the fearlessness with which the prophets gave their testimonies add weight to their claims to have God's messages.

A Prophet's Messages are of a High Spiritual Plane. In the messages of true prophets there is nothing cheap or common or childish. While their writings deal with ordinary, everyday affairs of life, they do so in a dignified and fitting manner.

A Prophet's Messages are of a Practical Nature. There are no weird fantasies or pointless ramblings in their communications. Though some messages are given in symbolic language, their intent can be ascertained by following clearly discernible rules of interpretation.

To help us even further in identifying the prophet for the end times we analyzed several time prophecies of the Bible to show that there is a pattern that God has used to help His people recognize a prophet. All of these time prophecies are found in the Old Testament. The first three pointed to events that transpired in Old Testament times. The last two pointed to events that occurred in New Testament times, but they are all found in the Old Testament.

The five significant time prophecies I shared were:

1. The calling of the first prophet and the global flood in the day of Noah.
2. The call of Abraham and The Exodus of Israel from Egypt.
3. The Babylonian captivity and Israel's restoration to her land.
4. The baptism and death of the Messiah and the close of probation for the Jewish theocracy.
5. The beginning of the final judgment.

In each of these time prophecies we detected that there was a common method of operation, which God uses to convey the reliability of His message through His prophet. It is one powerful way to help us in determining a false prophet, as well as revealing to us a prophet, even the end time prophet. We saw that the Bible described God's method of operation to be as follows:

- ❑ God calls a prophet.
- ❑ God imparts a message to that prophet.
- ❑ The message is one of judgment.
- ❑ Linked with the message is a time prophecy.
- ❑ The message is not present truth for that time but for a time in the future.

When the future time period is about to (or has) come to an end, God operates in like fashion again:

- ❑ He calls another prophet.
- ❑ He imparts the same message to this prophet as he gave to the first one.
- ❑ The message is one of judgment.
- ❑ The message explains that the time prophecy is coming (or has come) to an end.
- ❑ The message given to the original prophet then becomes Present Truth for that time of the new prophet.
- ❑ A remnant of God's people is always drawn out and guided by the mission and the message given by this prophet.

I want you to notice too that these time prophecies did not point to insignificant events but related to great markers of salvation history. So, this method of operation by God is not for every single prophecy found in the bible. So far, we know that God's end time church will have the gift of prophecy--a prophet; We have the attributes of false prophets and the tests of a prophet to help aid us in determining the true; and we have determined God's method of operation in communicating vital messages dealing with time prophecies concerning, among other things, His judgments. Following the biblical pattern that we learned with the other prophecies, there should be a prophet arise that:

- ❑ Has the same message as he gave to the first one--Daniel.
- ❑ The message is one of judgment--the "cleansing" of the sanctuary of sin.
- ❑ The message explains that the time prophecy is coming (or has come) to an end--the 2300 years ended in 1844 AD.
- ❑ The message given to the original prophet then becomes Present Truth--Daniel 8:14 reveals Revelation 14:6-12--present truth for the End Times.
- ❑ A remnant is always drawn out and guided by the mission of this prophet and the message--the remnant church for the End Times.

So, we looked for a Christian movement that had the gift of prophecy—a prophet, which did not have any attributes of a false prophet and as such passed the ten tests of a prophet, which fits the method of operation of God that we have seen in the five examples of prophecy that I shared. Now that would be enough to determine who the prophet for the end times is, but God wants to make it noticeably clear to us, so He has more ways to help us in determining who is His spokesperson for the end times.

We read that Elijah came with a message from God. It was a stern message, but it woke up a lot of people. There was a great reformation that went throughout the land and throughout the Children of Israel. It was a significant sign in the history of God's people. Ever since that time whenever a prophet arose who brought a great reformation, they would call them an Elijah prophet. God talked about this through the prophet Malachi.

Malachi 4:5-6, *"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: ⁶ And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."*

So, the Jews who read the scriptures in the book of Malachi began to look for the coming of Elijah the prophet. When Jesus came to this world, the Jews were still looking for the coming of Elijah the prophet. John the Baptist came to the children of Israel as a voice calling for repentance and they asked themselves whether he was the Elijah prophet. Was John the Baptist the Elijah prophet who was promised?

Matthew 11:9–15, *"But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. ¹¹ Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹² And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³ For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. ¹⁵ He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."*

Was John the Baptist the Elijah prophet? Yes, according to Jesus he was. And notice what Jesus said about the Elijah prophet. He said in verse nine that John was not only a prophet, but that he was *"more than a prophet."* John was the personal forerunner of the Messiah. He was the one to whom was given the most important task of all time, that of introducing the Messiah to the world. In John were combined all the great qualities of a true prophet. In character, conviction, and faithfulness no prophet had excelled more than John the Baptist. Before Jesus came, God sent His children somebody who was a prophet all right, but somebody who was more than a prophet because that was a crisis period and they needed it. Moses was the first time God sent more than a prophet to His people. John the Baptist was the second time God did this.

The third time God sent His children somebody who was more than a prophet, was in the time of the end, which began after 1798--we will learn this in a future study. In Malachi we read that before the coming of the *dreadful day of the Lord*, which is speaking about the second coming of Jesus, God said, *"I am going to send you Elijah the prophet."* Though John the Baptist partially fulfilled this prophecy, the *"great and dreadful day of the Lord"* is specifically speaking about the second coming of Jesus and finds its major fulfillment at that time (see Zephaniah 1; Isaiah 2, 13; Joel 2; Acts 2; 1 Thess. 5; 2 Peter 3). So, this 'Elijah' prophet would be no ordinary prophet, this would be a special prophet like that of Moses and John the Baptist.

When God chose to send His people in the last days a special messenger, He chose to send somebody who would not only be a prophet, but who would be more than a prophet. A special messenger who, if they would listen, would lead them back to the truths of the Bible, so they would be ready for the end times and the coming of Christ. We also learned from the Bible that God will often choose an instrument that would be so weak that we would be forced to recognize, if we were willing to recognize, that this was the power and the wisdom and the might of God. God would at times choose to send His message through the weakest of the weak. Who does the Bible say are the weak? 1 Peter 3:7, *"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."*

So, if God said He was going to send a messenger to His people living in the end times we should not be surprised that he would call the weakest of the weak so we would recognize that their calling was from the wisdom and might of God. They would have to be someone who wielded no great esteem or power in the eyes of the world. Peter spoke of a wife being the weaker vessel so it could be a woman, but it would not be just a woman. There are some women who are much stronger than other women. It would have to be a woman who was weak. Not just weak as a woman but a weak woman that God could call.

So, lets recall where we are...

---the gift of prophecy will be found in the church until Jesus returns,
---it has to be found in the end times or sometime after 1798,
---has to be in the mid-1800s as that is when the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 comes to an end,
---it has to be someone who passes the ten biblical tests of a prophet,
---they have to be more than a prophet as the Elijah prophet was promised before the great and dreadful day of the Lord—the second coming of Jesus,
---a prophet that must:

- ❑ Impart the same message that God gave to Daniel—Daniel 8:14.
- ❑ The message must be one of judgment—the cleansing of the sanctuary of sin.
- ❑ The message must explain that the time prophecy has come to an end—it ended on October 22, 1844, AD and the judgment began.
- ❑ The message given to the original prophet then becomes Present Truth for that time—and the remainder of time up to Christ's coming.
- ❑ A remnant of God's people must be drawn out and guided by the mission of this prophet and the message given—the movement formed a denomination.

In looking at documented history we saw that there were many movements around the time that Daniel's 2300-day prophecy came to an end in 1844 AD that caught the world's attention. Satan always counterfeits the actions and messages of God to His people as well as mixing pagan errors in to stir confusion. This particular movement in the mid-1800s became known as the Second Great Advent Awakening. And as I mentioned previously, New England became known as “*the burned over district*” because of the many movements that arose during this time in that area. The following are some of the movements and their champions that arose around this period both in the United States, Europe, and Asia:

- ❑ Mormonism: Joseph Smith
- ❑ Christian Science: Mary Baker Eddy
- ❑ Theosophy, New Age: Helena Blavatsky
- ❑ Baha'i: Abdul Baha
- ❑ Shakers: Ann Lee
- ❑ Spiritualism: Fox sisters, Andrew Jackson Davis
- ❑ Pentecostalism: Margaret McDonald, Charles Parham
- ❑ Jehovah's Witnesses: Charles Taze Russell
- ❑ Evolutionism: Charles Darwin
- ❑ Marxism: Karl Marx

When we used the criteria that God revealed to us, we found that none of these movements fit. But how can we be sure that none of these movements were the genuine manifestation of the prophetic gift? As we put these movements and their prophets to the test there are two main reasons they failed:

1. Each one shows characteristics of false prophets and thus failed the tests of a true prophet of God thus their movements were counterfeits to the true, and
2. None of them addressed or even showed any interest in Daniel's prophecy of the 2300 days thus each failed God's method of operation. They all had a central message, but it had nothing to do with the 2300 days being fulfilled in 1844 AD, or Christianity!

So who was the person whom God chose as a special messenger to His people in the end times to prepare the way for Christ's second coming, that passes all the tests of a prophet, gave the message of Daniel 8:14 in the mid-1800s making it present truth for the end times, the Elijah prophet that was to come before Jesus returned, who was more than a prophet, the weakest of the weak--a woman, whose ministry and messages helped to form a new denomination?

According to all the Bible has shown to us and as we looked at documented history, used all the tests and read the unbiased reliable witness testimony, we determined that it can only be one person and no other. And that is exactly how God, Who is not the author of confusion, would have it. And that woman was Ellen G. White. She fits every criterion and is the only one that does!

Friends, less than fifteen hundred years after the time of Adam and Eve, God saw that the world was becoming so corrupt that destruction was ahead. And He sent a warning through a prophet named Noah. And we can well expect that the religionists and scientists of the day did everything they could to block his message. They succeeded remarkably well. Only eight people were saved when the Flood came.

The First Advent of Christ was another crisis for everyone. Their acceptance or rejection of Him would decide their eternal destiny. We know that Jesus said in Matthew 11:14 that John was *"Elijah which was to come,"* reminding His hearers of the important prophecy in Malachi 4:5-6. We have learned that just as Christ sent a messenger to prepare the way before His First Advent, so a messenger would be sent before His Second. According to Bible prophecy, we are living at the end of time. A special threefold message is given in Revelation 14 for those living in this final hour of earth's history. These solemn messages of Revelation 14:6-12 are the last messages of warning that God is giving to the world. They are a part of Daniel's prophecy of Daniel 8:14 opened and revealed to us.

Revelation 14:6-12, *"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, ⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. ⁸ And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. ⁹ And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, ¹⁰ The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. ¹² Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."*

These messages are the last messages of warning to the world before Jesus returns and the understanding of them were first given in the summer of 1844 and it was in the same year that Ellen G. White received her first vision. This is not a coincidence—we have seen the evidence.

Uriah Smith, for many years the editor of the paper, *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, a friend of both James and Ellen White, in constant touch with Mrs. White and her work, sometimes the recipient of her testimonies and counsels, should be able to judge the fruit of her work. Please notice what he wrote in 1866:

“Every test which can be brought to bear upon such manifestations proves them genuine. The evidence which supports them, internal and external, is conclusive. They agree with the word of God and with themselves. They are given, unless those best qualified to judge are invariably deceived, when the Spirit of God is especially present. Calm, dignified, impressive, they commend themselves to every beholder as the very opposite of that which is false or fanatical. Their fruit is such as to show that the source from which they spring is the opposite of evil...”

*“1. **They tend to the purest morality.** They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They point out the perils through which we are to pass to the kingdom. They reveal the devices of satan. They warn us against his snares. They have nipped in the bud scheme after scheme of fanaticism which the enemy has tried to foist into our midst. They have exposed hidden iniquity, brought to light concealed wrongs, and laid bare the evil motives of the false-hearted. They have aroused and re-aroused us to greater consecration to God, more zealous efforts for holiness of heart, and greater diligence in the cause and service of our Master.*

*“2. **They lead us to Christ.** Like the Bible, they set Him forth as the only hope and only Saviour of mankind. They portray before us in living characters His holy life and His godly example, and with irresistible appeals they urge us to follow in His steps.*

*“3. **They lead us to the Bible.** They set forth that book as the inspired and unalterable word of God. They exhort us to take that word as the man of our counsel, and the rule of our faith and practice. And, with a compelling power, they entreat us to study long and diligently its pages, and become familiar with its teachings, for it is to judge us in the last day.*

*“4. **They have brought comfort and consolation to many hearts.** They have strengthened the weak, encouraged the feeble, raised up the despondent. They have brought order out of confusion, made crooked places straight, and thrown light on what was dark and obscure.*

*And no person with an unprejudiced mind can read their stirring appeals for a pure and lofty morality, their exaltation of God and the Saviour, their denunciations of every evil, and their exhortations to everything that is holy and of good report, without being compelled to say, **“these are not the words of him that hath a devil!”** Quoted in *Life and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, pps. 120-121.*

Ellen White was eighty-seven at the time of her death. A ministry of seventy years, since the first vision had been given to her, was ended. The lives of many thousands have been changed for the better because of that ministry. Even though dead yet she speaks—through her many books and papers which are available for us to read today.

It is not my job to convince anyone of the truth. That is the responsibility of the Holy Spirit. All I can do is share with you what I have learned... my individual experiences with Jesus and the knowledge of His word. It is given to each of us to test the prophets whether they are of God or not. I have done the best I can with the little time I have to share the truth about this prophet of God. The final decision to accept this prophet of God is up to you. Prayerfully study this out. Consider all the evidence with an unbiased mind. Determine not to quench the Spirit and despise not prophesyings. Trust God to lead you, as He has promised.

If you are unfamiliar with Ellen G. White, I would encourage you to start with her books: *The Desire of Ages*, *Steps to Christ*, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessings*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, and *The Great Controversy*.

There are many who will scoff at the words I have spoken and there are even some who will suggest that Ellen White fails to pass all the tests of a prophet but beloved you owe it to yourself, and your family and friends, to check this out on your own, asking the aid of the Holy Spirit. Do not take my word or anyone's word alone as your guide. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:15, *"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* Will you do this? Only those who are listening for the Master's voice will recognize it when spoken through someone He has called to be His messenger.

Jesus said in John 10:27, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."* Beloved, after applying all Biblical tests, it is up to us to listen to the gentle voice of Jesus, saying, *"follow Me."* Will you accept His invitation? Will you determine, with God's help, to walk so close to Jesus that you will be able to recognize, and be willing to accept, the voice of a messenger from Him—even a prophetic messenger such as Ellen White? I hope and pray that you do as to deny a true prophet would indeed quench the Spirit.

If there is somebody reading this who has never been exposed to this information before, or you have heard of Ellen G. White but are not sure, I am not trying to push something off on you. I was not raised in a church, and I learned all I know by sitting down at the feet of Jesus and studying. If I can be led to the truth, anyone can be led to it. All I am saying is, "Check it out. Check it out for yourself—prayerfully." Just get down on your knees and say, "Lord, is this really true? Have you really sent to us a special messenger? Please help me to see and understand the evidence." God will always answer the prayer of faith. Trust Him.

I want to tell you, friends, I have read her books for over thirty years, and I am still reading them, and I have checked them thousands of times with the Bible. The knowledge in her books has led me closer to Jesus, they have helped me to know Him better—that is a particularly good fruit, isn't it? The Bible says to prove all things. Hold fast that which is good. I have checked it out, and I found that it is good.

The Jews in the time of Christ missed what God wanted them to know because they did not accept the gift of prophecy that God sent to them just before Jesus came. They missed it! The most wonderful thing that God sent to them, and they missed it! That was part of the reason they rejected the Messiah—they rejected His prophet. Let us not do as they did. Let us not miss the Elijah prophet that God has sent to His people to prepare them for Christ's second coming. Let us accept God's gifts and prepare ourselves, and others for His soon return.

Revelation 22:21, *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."*

AMEN.

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