



# My Bible School Lessons

Exploring the Word of God

## Lesson #28: "The Gift of Prophecy"

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 CHRONICLES 20:20 REVELATION 12:17

***Memory Verse: "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:" Joel 2:28.***

Adam and Eve had the joy of talking face to face with their Maker. Sin abruptly ended that privilege, but we can all have that privilege, when we get to heaven, if now we will prepare our lives for eternal life with God and Christ.

After Adam and Eve sinned and could no longer commune with God face to face, God promised them a Saviour (Genesis 3:15) and deliverance from the consequences that they had chosen.

But how were they, with the face-to-face communion broken, to learn of God's plans for them and find His will? This was a problem they could not solve. God chose to solve the problem of instructing mankind by giving them inspired messages by inspired prophets—such as Moses, Daniel, Amos, and the Apostles.

This special guidance is often called "the gift of prophecy," or "prophetic guidance. In this lesson, we will examine this important gift of God to man, through which He seeks to lead all men to eternal life.

### THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

The gift of prophecy is a blessing from God to mankind, and it will remain in the church until the final unifying of the faith.

***Ephesians 4:11-13: "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."***

Paul compares the church to the body; the various parts of which are parts of the body.

***1 Corinthians 12:1-17, 28: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. . Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. . For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit, To another prophecy. . But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body. . For the body is not one***

**member, but many. . And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers:'**

The prophets are the eyes of this spiritual body.

**1 Samuel 9:9: "Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer; for he that is now called a prophet (speaker for God) was beforetime called a Seer" [see-er for God] compare Luke 11:34 and Proverbs 29:18].**

### 1: WILL THERE BE PROPHETS IN THE LAST DAYS?

The apostle Peter predicted that there would be prophets in the last days.

**Acts 2:17-18: "And it shall come to pass in the last days saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy:'**

The above statement by Peter is based on a prediction in the Old Testament by Joel (*Joel 2:28*).

The warning that Christ gave against false prophets indicates that there will also be true ones. Satan will use counterfeits to divert attention from the genuine.

**Matthew 7:15: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."**

God's law and God's prophets tend to be found together. If His people do not obey His law, then they will not have the guidance of His prophet.

**Lamentations 2:9: "The law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the Lord:'**

**Ezekiel 7:26: "Then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients" (compare 20:3, 12, 13, 16),**

**Jeremiah 26:4-6: "Thus saith the Lord: If ye will not hearken to Me, to walk in My law, which I have set before you, to hearken to the words of My servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them, but ye have not hearkened; Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make of this city a curse to all the nations of the earth."**

**Proverbs 29:18: "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."**

The true church, Just before Jesus returns, will again have the gift of prophecy, because it keeps the law of God by faith in Christ,

**Revelation 12:17: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman. and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."**

**Revelation 19:10: "For the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy."**

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Just before Christ's return, His people will again be obeying His moral law through His empowering grace.

**Revelation 14:12, 14:** *"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. . And I looked, and behold a white cloud. and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of man. having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle."*

### 2: HOW DOES PROPHECY COME TO US?

It comes to us from God through His prophets.

**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."*

**Revelation 1:1-2:** *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John: Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw:"*

### 3: WHAT ARE THE MARKS OF A TRUE PROPHET?

A true prophet will speak in harmony with the Bible.

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

**Deuteronomy 13:1-3:** *"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, 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; 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."*

A true prophet will exalt God and Christ rather than himself.

**Jeremiah 1:4-9:** *"Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou earnest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put My words in thy mouth."*

**2 Corinthians 10:5:** *"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."*

A true prophet will reprove men of sin.

**Ezekiel 3:17-19:** *"Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say*

***unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if you warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. "***

A true prophet will emphasize the necessity of Jesus in the heart.

***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. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."***

A true prophet will live a godly life and will produce good fruit.

***Matthew 7:15-18, 20: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. . Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."***

The predictions of a true prophet will come to pass.

***Deuteronomy 18:21-22: "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath spoken? 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 28:9: "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."***

A true prophet will have visions and dreams.

***Numbers 12:6: "And he said, Hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak to him in a dream."***

Both men and women can be called as prophets of God.

Examples of men who were called to be prophets: Enoch (*Jude 14*), Moses (*Exodus 3:9-10*), Elijah (*1 Kings 17:1-3*), John the Baptist (*Luke 1:13-17*), John the Revelator (*Revelation 1:10*).

Examples of women who were called to be prophets: Miriam (*Exodus 15:20*), Deborah (*Judges 4:4*), Huldah (*2 Kings 22:14*), Anna (*Luke 2:36*), Philip's daughters (*Acts 21:9*).

The weakest of the weak may be called to this work.

**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; That no flesh should glory in His presence."

**2 Corinthians 12:9:** "And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (also 13:4).

#### 4: WHAT ARE THE TESTS OF A TRUE PROPHET?

We are commanded not to despise prophets, but to test them.

**1 Thessalonians 5:20-21:** "Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 John 4:1).

We must test them by the Word of God.

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

While in vision, a prophet has no breath, and his natural strength is gone until the angel strengthens him.

**Daniel 10:17-18:** "As for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me."

While in Vision, a prophet can nevertheless speak.

**Daniel 10:15-16:** "And when he [the angel] had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb [unable to speak]. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake."

While in vision, a prophet keeps his eyes open.

**Numbers 24:16:** "He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open."

While in vision, a prophet is unconscious of his surroundings.

**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. . How that He was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

#### 5: HOW DOES THE GIFT OF PROPHECY HELP US?

The abiding gift of prophecy provides counsel and guidance before a crisis.

Noah, was sent with warnings before the Flood came (*Genesis 6:9-17*). Moses was sent to lead the people of God out of Egypt (*Exodus 3:4-12; 4:10-16; Deuteronomy 4:10-12*). Elijah called men back to obedience to God and warned of judgments because they refused to render obedience (*1 Kings 17:1*;

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18:20-41; 2 Kings 2:11-13). John the Baptist called all men to repentance and announced the soon coming of Christ (*Mark 1 :25; Luke 7:28*).

The messages of the prophet bring comfort and encouragement to the people of God.

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

***1 Corinthians 14:3: "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort."***

It is only as the people heed the words that God sends them through the prophet that they can have truest success.

***2 Chronicles 20:20: "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper."***

The counsel of the true prophet protects from unbiblical errors and enables the people of God to obey His Written Word.

***Ephesians 4:11-16: "And He gave. . prophets. . for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."***

We may expect the prophetic gift among the remnant of the true church, down in the time of the end:

***Revelation 12:17: "And the dragon [Satan, through his own agencies] was wroth with the woman [the true church], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."***

***Revelation 19:10: "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."***

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

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

"During the first twenty-five hundred years of human history, there was no written revelation, Those who had been taught of God, communicated their knowledge to others, and it was handed down from father to son, through successive generations. The preparation of the written Word began in the time of Moses, Inspired revelations were then embodied in an inspired book. This work continued during the long period of sixteen hundred years - from Moses, the historian of creation and the law, to John, the recorder of the most sublime truths of the gospel.

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"Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers; often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony,

"As presented through different individuals, the truth is brought out in its varied aspects, One writer is more strongly impressed with one phase of the subject; he grasps those points that harmonize with his experience or with his power of perception and appreciation; another seizes upon a different phase; and each, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, presents what is most forcibly impressed upon his own mind—a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all the circumstances and experiences of life.

"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," *Great Controversy*. 5-7