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God's Special Messenger

Key References: Revelation 12:17; Revelation 19:10; *Early Writings,* pp. vii-32; *The Acts of the Apostles,* chap. 5, pp. 47-56; Our Beliefs, nos. 18, 13, 1















Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 102.

powertext

"Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

powerpoint

God gave a special gift of prophecy for the church today.

Imagine you know that something bad is going to happen in your neighborhood. You know that if people follow some very simple rules, they will be safe. What would you do? God knows that sin is destroying the world. He has given a special gift of prophecy to the church. This helps His people get ready for His return when He will take them home.

Kevin was a visitor. He had just started to come to church and did not know much about the Bible. This Sabbath his teacher, Mrs. Cristobal, had promised that there would be time to ask any questions they wanted about the Bible.

Kevin could hardly wait until question time. As soon as Mrs. Cristobal asked, "Any questions?" Kevin called out, "I have one."

"OK, Kevin, let's hear it," said Mrs. Cristobal with a smile.

"I keep hearing people talk about 'Mrs. White.' I want to know who she is and how she fits in with the Bible."



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Sunday

READ Read Revelation 22:8, 9 and this week's story, "God's Special Messenger."

RESEARCH Find out how many books Ellen White wrote. Do you have any of her books at home?

LEARN Begin to learn the power text, Amos 3:7.

PRAY Pray that God will help you appreciate the gift of prophecy.

Monday

READ Read Revelation 12:17; Revelation 19:10.

LIST List all the Bible prophets that you can remember.

IMAGINE You are a reporter. In your Bible study journal, write interview questions for a prophet.

PRAY Pray that God will help you follow the guidance God gave through His prophets.

Tuesday

READ Read Joel 2:28-31.

RESEARCH How were Acts 2:2-21, Revelation 12:17, and Revelation 19:10 a fulfillment of Joel 2:28-31?

THINK Prophets often have to give tough messages. Have you ever had to give a message you knew someone wouldn't like? How did it feel?

PRAY Pray that the church will live by God's guidance given through the gift of prophecy.

"Good question, Kevin," replied Mrs. Cristobal. "Class, who can help Kevin with the answer?"

"I can," said Erica, waving her hand. "God gave her the gift of prophecy. In the early 1840s there was a group of people who believed that Jesus was going to come on October 22, 1844. Ellen was one of those people. When Jesus didn't come, she was really disappointed like everyone else. Lots of people stopped believing, but she did not. She studied the Bible with other believers and realized that no one could set a date for Jesus' return to earth."

"Yes, but what does that have to do with prophecy?" interrupted Simon.

"I was coming to that," continued Erica. "Jesus sent a vision for the disappointed believers to a man called Hazen Foss. But he was afraid to tell anyone about it. Then he had another vision. In the new vision he was warned that if he did not tell others, God would use the weakest of the weak to deliver His message. But Foss still refused to talk about it."

"So Ellen White was the weakest of the weak?" asked Kevin. "Why?"

"She was only 17 when God called her," answered Mrs. Cristobal. "When Ellen was a child, she was hit in the face by a stone, and that accident left her very weak for the rest of her life. She barely attended school, so she was definitely not the kind of person you would expect to deliver messages from God."

"Why did God need to send more messages to us? Was the Bible not enough?" asked Kevin.

"Let's see what the Bible says," replied Mrs. Cristobal. "Look at the last book of the Bible, in Revelation 12:17. The apostle John is describing God's church at the end of time. What are the two things that are

special about the church?" The sound of flipping pages stilled as the students found the text.

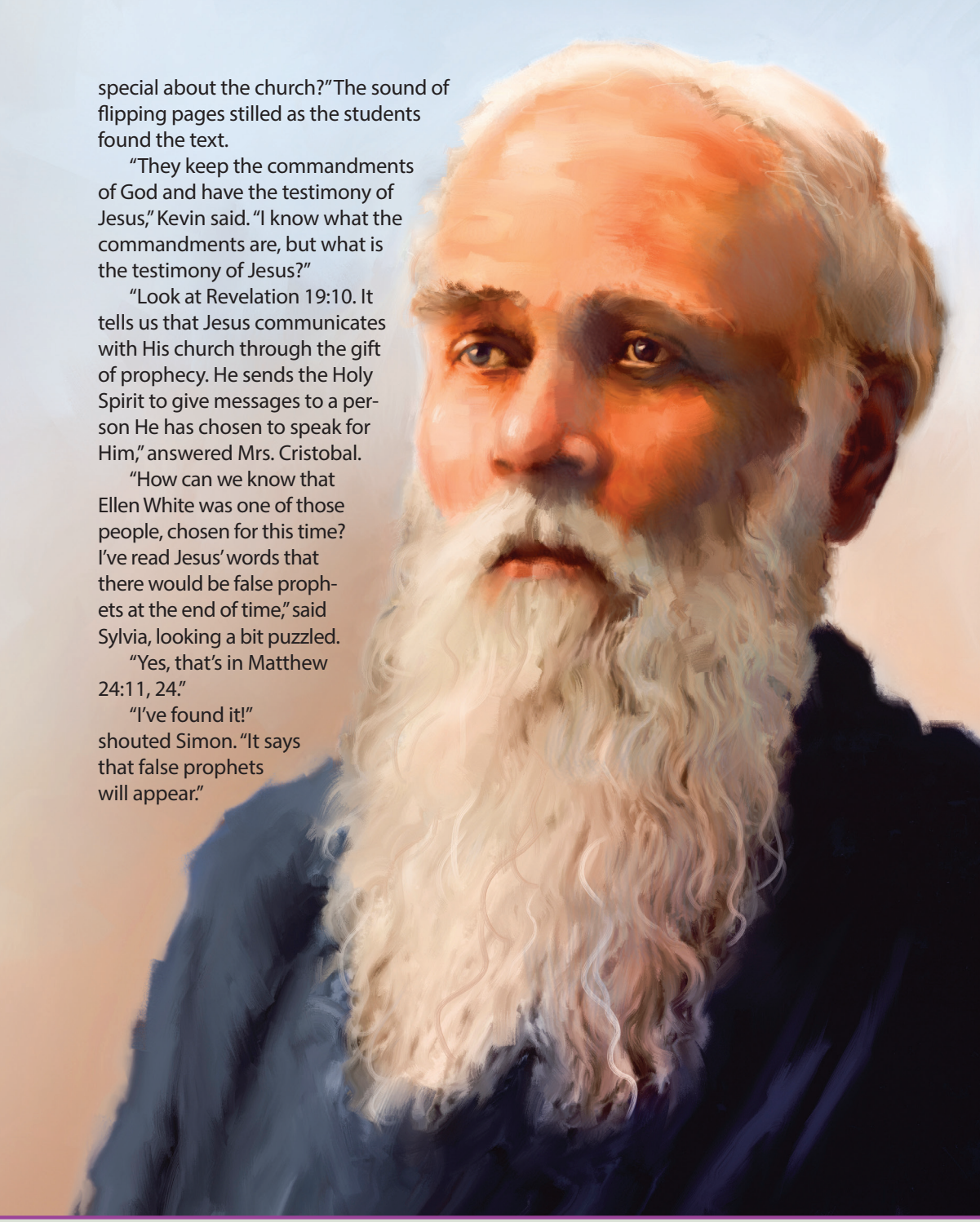
"They keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus," Kevin said. "I know what the commandments are, but what is the testimony of Jesus?"

"Look at Revelation 19:10. It tells us that Jesus communicates with His church through the gift of prophecy. He sends the Holy Spirit to give messages to a person He has chosen to speak for Him," answered Mrs. Cristobal.

"How can we know that Ellen White was one of those people, chosen for this time? I've read Jesus' words that there would be false prophets at the end of time," said Sylvia, looking a bit puzzled.

"Yes, that's in Matthew 24:11, 24."

"I've found it!" shouted Simon. "It says that false prophets will appear."



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Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 24:11, 24.

SEARCH Find Isaiah 8:20; Deuteronomy 18:21, 22; 1 John 4:2, 3; Matthew 7:16, 18-20 to discover the characteristics of a true prophet.

LIST List them in your Bible study journal.

PRAY Pray that you will know a true prophet from a false one.

Thursday

READ Read Acts 11:27-30; Acts 13:1, 2; Ephesians 2:20, 21.

THINK How did the gift of prophecy help the early church?

SING Sing a song in praise of God for all the ways He communicates with us.

LIST List the methods of communication God used to send prophetic messages.

PRAY Praise God that He is not limited by our methods of communication.

Friday

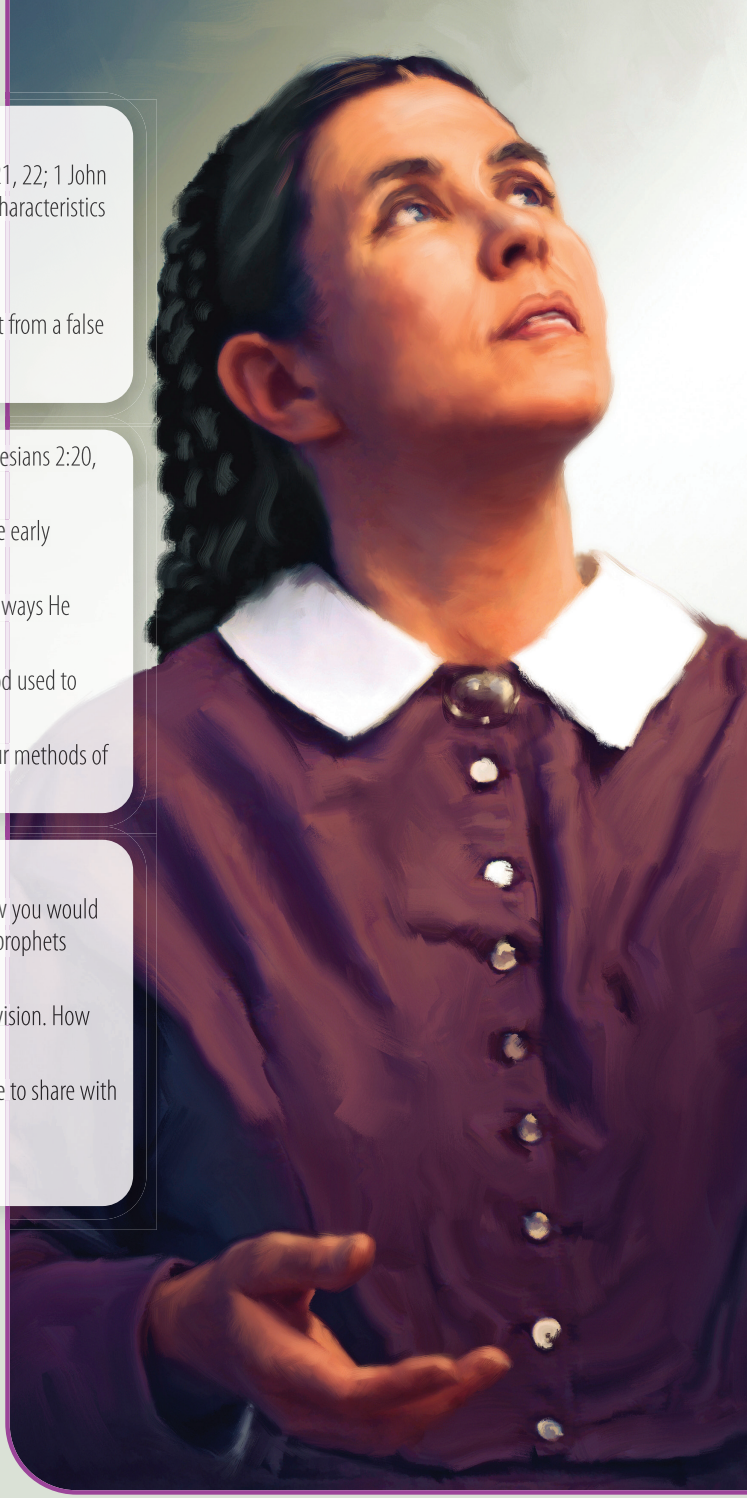
READ Read John 15:15.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write how you would answer someone who says that there are no prophets today.

THINK Ellen was 17 when she had her first vision. How would you feel if God gave you a vision now?

RESEARCH Find a new fact about Ellen White to share with your Sabbath School class.

PRAY Thank God for all His gifts.





Mrs. Cristobal continued, "The Bible gives four guidelines by which to test if someone is a true or a false prophet. Does anyone know what they are?"

"I guess what they say has to agree with the Bible," said Kevin.

"Their predictions should come true," added Francis.

"They must live a good life, or practice what they preach," said Sylvia. "H'mm, I have no idea what the fourth thing could be."

"Good, everyone!" said Mrs. Cristobal. "The fourth sign of a true prophet is that they must believe that Jesus is God and that He came and lived on earth as a man."

"Does Ellen White live up to all those things?" asked Kevin.

"Yes, she does," replied Mrs. Cristobal. "She always said that the things she wrote were not a replacement for the Bible but were to help people understand the Bible better. It's like having a flashlight in an unfamiliar dark room. It helps you find the light switch to turn on the main light. God wants all of us to be ready to live with Him in heaven. The gift of prophecy is just one of the ways He helps us."

"I'm beginning to understand," said Kevin.

PUZZLE
13

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

Instructions: Use the code shown below to find the Bible reference. The apostrophe, periods, commas, and quote marks within the code words are used only as punctuation. The six letters that should be capitalized are noted in red.

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