

MEMORY VERSE: "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all." 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, NKJV

LESSON STUDY INTRO

"This week we will examine the gift of prophecy in the New Testament, looking at who functioned as prophets, what prophets did, how prophets compared to apostles, and the danger of false prophets, as well." Qltly, Sab, par 3

1. Jesus is the ultimate prophet (Sun, Tue)

- All Old Testament prophets pointed forward to Jesus.
 - Moses foretold the coming of "a prophet like me," (Dt. 18:15) which Scripture affirms was Jesus (see Ac. 3:17-23).
 - The entire purpose of the Bible is to point people to Jesus. "...these are they which testify of Me" (Jn 5:39).
 - Beyond other prophets who merely had the Word of God, Jesus IS the Word of God! (Jn 1:1).
 - The Law *and the testimony* (Is. 8:20).
- Yet, even after Christ's ascension prophets were still called to bless the church.
 - "Much of what [New Testament prophets] did reflects what prophets in the Old Testament also had done, thus providing continuity with the prophetic gift." Qltly, Tue, par 1
 - As Old Testament prophets urged people to repent and prepare their hearts for the coming Christ, New Testament prophets similarly pointed people to what Jesus had accomplished and to His ongoing intercession. Such exhortation was a central feature of their work (1 Cor. 14:3, 31; Eph 4:11-13; Acts 15:32).

2. God is no respecter of persons (Mon, Wed)

- The Lord called apostles and prophets in the New Testament.
 - Apostles were eyewitnesses of Jesus who were specially sent (*apostolos*) to testify of Him (Mk 3:13-19).
 - Paul also met those criteria and was rightly regarded as an apostle (1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8).
 - Besides the apostles, there other prophets in the NT. All apostles were prophets, but not all prophets were apostles.

- In addition to the Apostles, God also called young men and even women to be prophets in the New Testament.
 - We see women prophets like Anna (Lk 2:37, 38) and the four daughters of Philip (Acts 21:9) fulfilling the work of non-canonical prophets in the New Testament.
 - These were literary, non-canonical prophets (2 Chr. 9:29; 21:12).

3. Prophets work to influence the church (Tue, Thu, Fri)

- True prophets edify the church
 - Prophecy is the only gift of the Spirit mentioned in every list of spiritual gifts in the New Testament (see 1 Cor. 12, 14; Rom. 12; Eph. 4).
 - These spiritual gifts were given not for personal benefit but “for the profit of all” (1 Cor. 12:7).
 - As already noted, God’s apostles and prophets were called to admonish, exhort, and encourage the church to faithfulness and service (see Eph. 4:11-16).
- False prophets work to “deceive, if possible, even the elect.”
 - Knowing the blessing prophets would be to the church, Satan raises up false prophets to deceive God’s people, especially in the last days (see Mt. 24:11, 23, 24).
 - “In the New Testament, false prophets are likened to ‘ravening wolves’ who are ‘in sheep’s clothing’ (Mt. 7:15, NKJV), and we are told that we will ‘know them by their fruits’ (Mt. 7:16, NKJV).” Q’tly, Thu, par 3
- Like biblical prophets, Ellen G. White’s prophetic ministry was to help keep people focused on Jesus and aligned with Bible truth.
 - “God called prophets... to bring people to a knowledge of God and a faithful relationship with Him. This was Ellen G. White’s guiding orientation. Her ministry had two primary functions: to lead people to Jesus and to point them to His Word—the Bible.” Q’tly, Fri, par 1

The Lord desires you to study your Bibles. He has not given any additional light to take the place of His Word... If eaten and digested, [His Word] is as the life-blood of the soul. Then good works will be seen as light shining in darkness. Ltr 130, 1901 (Q’tly, Fri, par 5)

CONCLUSION

God spoke through prophets in the Old and New Testaments, and the continuity and harmony in their messages is because the Holy Spirit—the Source, or “Engine,” of divine inspiration—has remained the same. The Holy Spirit always empowers true prophets through the gift of prophecy. He also places Christ at the center of the prophets’ messages.” Q’tly, Sab, par 2