

“Boost Your Prophets”

Presentation Handout

Want to Be A Seer-Prophet?

Years ago, I received this email announcement (see *graphic to the right*) that surprised me!

It offered an online “class” on being a seer-prophet, which means being in tune to God speaking to you.

Here were some of their “sales pitches”:

“Online Prophetic and Seer Exercises with Jim Driscoll. Get off the sidelines and begin to see and hear from God for yourself. These exercises are designed to help you begin to stop ignoring the spiritual activity around you and grow closer to God.”

Some of the benefits it offered for these “Prophetic and Seer Exercises:

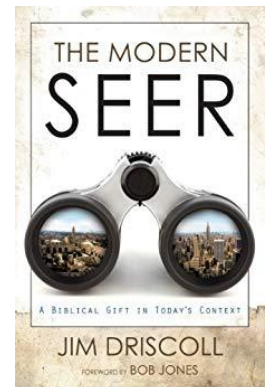
- Activate the seer gift
- Increase your level of spiritual understanding
- Enhance your ability to "see" and "hear"
- Grow in metaphorical understanding
- Bless, encourage and strengthen others

Here’s the seminar presenter, Jim Driscoll’s bio:



Jim Driscoll is the director and founder of StirtheWater.com, an online interactive ministry designed to help people grow in their prophetic and seer giftings. ...He operates in a strong prophetic and seer anointing and has a tremendous and developed gift for interpreting dreams. Jim teaches about dreams and visions and does dream interpretation classes....

{From an identitynetwork.net email advertisement received by the presenter [David] in February 2009}



TAKE-AWAY: May be your wondering what I wondered when I received this email flyer-announcement: *Is this legit or some “come-on?”* No, this is a very real religious mindset for people. And I believe those who espouse this, are very sincere! So, I’m not here to condemn. However, as we’ve learned in presentations Forever 02-05, Satan is a master “deceiver,” who is trying to fool everyone, including us, with his spiritual deceit.

So, how do we know who is true and who is false as a seer/prophet? And how can we tell the difference? What is the biblical role of a seer/prophet—to tantalize our curiosity or is there something more God would have us understand? Is this prophetic gift still operatable today in our world and God’s Church in particular? And, if so, how should we respond to it?

Let’s “dive in” to find out what God has to say in His Word, the Bible.

Seers/Prophets—True or False

- **The prophetic office of seer/prophet is biblical**
 - Seers in Old Testament spoke for God, letting the people know God's will {*1 Samuel 9:8-9, 19; 2 Samuel 24:11-13a*}.
 - Seers also were called prophets {*1 Samuel 9:8-(9); 1 Samuel 9:19 -> 1 Samuel 3:20; 1 Samuel 26:28a; 2 Samuel 24:11-12; 2 Kings 17:13a; [Amos 7:12-13]*}.
 - Prophets in the Old & New Testaments also spoke the truth from God—His entreaties for salvation or repentance, judgments, predicting what would happen in the future, etc. {*Numbers 12:4, (6); 1 Samuel 3:20-21; 1 Kings 22:6-7, 14; 2 Kings 17:22-(23); 2 Chronicles 18:6-7, 13; Ezra 5:1; 9:10-(11); Nehemiah 9:(26)-27, 30; Jeremiah 25:6; Daniel 9:6, 10; Hosea 12:9-10; Zechariah 1:1- (3, 6); Matthew 11:7, (9)-11; Luke 1:68-(70); Acts 21:10*}.
 - On the “flipside” there were also false prophets, who spoke what the people wanted to hear, not what God said {*Deuteronomy 13:1-3; 18:20-22; 1 Kings 22:6-7; 2 Chronicles 18:5-7; Isaiah 28:7; Jeremiah 2:4, 7-(8); 5:11-(13, 31); Ezekiel 13:2-4, 9, 16; 22:25, 28; Micah 3:5-6, 11; Zephaniah 3:3-4; Zechariah 13:1-(3, 6); 7:7, 12; Matthew 24, 11, 23-24; Mark 13:21-(22); Luke 6:26; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1*}.
- **Types of prophets**
 - Males
 - Abram/Abraham ~ *Genesis 20:(7), 9*
 - Samuel ~ *1 Samuel 3:20-21*
 - Nathan ~ *1 Kings 1:8*
 - Jeremiah ~ *Jeremiah 1:1-2, (5)*
 - Jonah ~ *Matthew 12:39*
 - Daniel ~ *Matthew 24:15*
 - King David ~ *Acts 2:29-30*
 - Females—prophetesses (*God is not a respecter of persons*)
 - Miriam (*Moses' sister*) ~ *Exodus 15:20a*
 - Deborah ~ *Judges 4:4*
 - Huldah ~ *2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chronicles 32:22*
 - Isaiah's wife ~ *Isaiah 8:3*
 - Anna ~ *Luke 2:36a*
 - Philip, the deacon-evangelist's, four daughters (*not called prophetesses though they prophesied*) ~ *Acts 21:8-(9)*
 - Canonical prophets—wrote books of the Bibles/writings canonized in the Bible.
 - Jeremiah ~ *2 Chronicles 32:32; 36:12; Jeremiah 1:5 -> 36:4, 10*
 - Malachi ~ *Mark 1:1-(2) -> Malachi 3:1*
 - Isaiah ~ *Acts 8:(30), 32-33*
 - Joel ~ *Acts 2:16-21 -> Joel 2:28-32; 2:29-31*
 - King David ~ *Acts 2:29-30, (34-35) -> Psalm 110:1*
 - Amos ~ *Acts 7:42-43 -> Amos 5:25-27 & Acts*
 - Habakkuk ~ *Acts 13:40-(41)*
 - Paul ~ *Acts 13:1 -> New Testament books he wrote -> 2 Peter 3:14-(16)*

- Non-canonical prophets—didn't write any books of the Bible/writings not canonized.
 - Abram/Abraham ~ Genesis 20:7, (9)
 - Miriam (*Moses' sister*) ~ *Exodus 15:20a*
 - Deborah ~ *Judges 4:4*
 - No-name prophets ~ *Judges 6:7-10 (8); 1 Kings 20:13, 22; Acts 11:27*
 - Gad ~ *1 Samuel 22:5*
 - Nathan ~ *1 Kings 1:8, 10, 22*
 - Ahijah ~ *1 Kings 11:29*
 - Jehu ~ *1 Kings 16:7, 12*
 - Elijah ~ *1 Kings 18:22, 36a*
 - Elisha ~ *1 Kings 19:16b*
 - Huldah ~ *2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chronicles 32:22*
 - Shemaiah ~ *2 Chronicles 12:5*
 - Iddo ~ *2 Chronicles 13:22*
 - Obed ~ *2 Chronicles 15:8*
 - Urijah ~ *Jeremiah 26:20-23*
 - Anna ~ *Luke 2:36a*
 - Agabus ~ *Acts 11:27-(28); 21:(10)-11*
 - ❖ *Acts 11:27* is the first mention of prophets and prophecy in the book of Acts.
 - ✓ Agabus is mentioned before Saul/Paul as a prophet/apostle in *Acts 13:1*.
 - ✓ Also, he is the one the Holy Spirit sent to Paul & the believers to share what would happen to Paul when he went to Jerusalem {*Acts 21:10-11*}.
 - ❖ Non-canonical prophets inspiration from the Holy Spirit is equal to canonical prophets though not with the same “authority.”
 - ✓ Biblical prophets writings—writings in the Bible—are the final rule for faith and belief. Their inspired writings are what one would use to determine if a non-canonical prophet is true or false.
 - Barnabas, Simeon/Niger, Lucius, Manaen & Saul/Paul ~ *Acts 13:1*
 - ❖ The Bible doesn't clarify which of these men were prophets other than Saul/Paul and may be Barnabas, or if some were just teachers, or if they were all prophet-teachers.
 - ❖ The point is: the Holy Spirit was inspiring many non-canonical prophets to further His Christian witness to the non-Jewish-Gentile world.
 - Judas & Silas ~ *Acts 15:32*
- **Who's a true prophet, who's not?**
 - Tests of a true prophet/prophetess {*1 Thessalonians 5:19-21; 1 John 4:1*}:
 - They lead others to God or back to God in a growing personal relationship with Him {*John 5:39, 46; 1 Peter 1:10-12*}.
 - He/she recognizes/teaches that Jesus is the divine-human Savior-Lord, who only can save and empower to live faithful to God {*Romans 1:1-4; 1 John 4:1-3*}.
 - He/she is biblically faithful—their message does not contradict what the Bible teaches {*Isaiah 8:20; John 5:39, 46*}.

- Their words/prophecies happen as prophesied {*1 Kings 22:7-8, 26-(28, 37); 2 Chronicles 18:6, 8, 25-(27,34); Jeremiah 28:8-(9)*}.
- Their life “fruit”—actions, attitudes, beliefs, etc.—reflect they are followers of Jesus in a growing faith-walk with Him {*Matthew 7:15-(20)*} .
- Identifying marks of a false prophet
 - They draw/lead others away from God, teaching contrary/distorting God’s Word—His biblical truth {*Deuteronomy 13:1-3*}.
 - He/she does not recognize Jesus as the divine-human Savior-Lord, who only can save and empower to live faithful to God {*1 John 4:1-3*}
 - They contradict/distort God’s Word/Bible—His biblical truth {*Isaiah 8:20*}.
 - Their words/prophecies do not happen as prophesied {*Deuteronomy 18:20-22*}.
 - His/her life “fruit” contradicts God’s Word/Bible {*Matthew 7:15-(20)*}.

TAKE-AWAY: Amazingly, the number of non-canonical prophets/prophetesses rivaled the number of the prophets (35-40) who wrote the different Old & New Testaments books, including many women, who God called and used, like their male prophet counterparts. God is not a respecter of persons—whether race, nationality, culture, social-economic status, or gender.

Yet, the bigger/backstory question that begs an answer is: ***Why all this prophetic activity in the Bible, especially when one considers all of the non-canonical prophets in addition to the canonical prophets?***

It reveals the amazing, beautiful truth: ***God loves to communicate with humans***—not wanting anyone of us to miss His messages to them and/or who He is in character and His love toward every human being who has ever lived or is now living!

God Loves to Communicate

- This is an amazing thought for some because they believe in the common idea that God is:
 - Holy, which He is, so they feel He is too holy to “hang” with sinful human beings, and/or too occupied with more important things.
 - In other words, God is distant—He can’t be concerned with sinful human beings.
 - These are all wrong/false assumptions “birthed” out of humanity’s sinful condition, which ruptured/destroyed God’s original longing to commune with human beings, beginning with Adam & Eve’s sin in the Garden of Eden. {*Genesis 3:8-10*}.
 - Now, human beings by nature, like Adam & Eve originally, tend to avoid God, like avoiding a person who they fear or annoys/irritates them.
- God’s communication—Old & New Testaments:
 - Backstory: **amazingly God doesn’t do anything/make a move involving human beings unless He first reveals it through His prophets** {*Amos 3:7*}.
 - Why would God “limit” Himself like this?
 - ❖ He doesn’t want us to be “in-the-dark” about who He is and what He is doing, so we can be informed, heart-connected, feel His comfort, experience His salvation, etc. {*Deuteronomy 29:29*}!
 - To His prophets & Bible writers

- Abraham {*Genesis 15*}
 - ❖ *V. 1* ~ comfort/peace in a time of fearfulness.
 - ❖ *Vv. 2-21* ~ encouragement, building faith in a time of doubt/belief struggle.
 - ❖ *Vv. 13, 18b-c* ~ assurance of the fulfillment of His (God's) promises.
- Samuel, Jeremiah & Urijah {*1 Samuel 3:10-18; Jeremiah 26:1-19, 20-23*}
 - ❖ Correction and reproof to prevent from hurt, judgment, suffering, etc.
- Nathan {*2 Samuel 7:4-17; 1 Chronicles 17:3-15*}
 - ❖ Direction, wisdom—what one should do next or what decision they should make.
- Elisha {*2 Kings 6:8-12*}
 - ❖ Protection against harm—physically, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually.
- Huldah {*2 Kings 22:11-20*}
 - ❖ Help to understand God's Word/Bible.
- Ezekiel {*Ezekiel 14:1-8*}
 - ❖ Warning against spiritual apostasy/estrangement from God and how to repent to be in a right spiritual relationship with Him again. There's hope!
- Daniel, Matthew, Mark/Peter, Luke & John the Revelator {*Daniel chps 7; 8-9; Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 17:20-37; 21:5-38; Revelation 1:1, 19; 4:1; 6:1; 7:1; 8:1-2; 10:1; 14:1; 15:1; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; 21:1*}
 - ❖ Insights into the prophetic future—what will happen throughout history and in the end-time, so human beings will be prepared and not deceived.
- Simeon & Anna {*Luke 2:25-38*}
 - ❖ Understand God's movements and to know Him better and walk in His ways.
- Matthew, Mark/Peter, Luke & John {*Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke & John*}
 - ❖ Understanding the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus so that one would believe in Him for salvation and life direction.
- Paul, Peter, James & Jude {*New Testament Epistles*}
 - ❖ The beauty of God, Jesus & Holy Spirit, salvation in the Godhead, the Christian life, the grace-power to live for God, etc.

TAKE-AWAY: God so desires sinful humanity's salvation He even spoke to non-prophets, non-Jews/non-Christians. God longs to communicate so no one will be lost or misunderstand.

- To *non*-prophets & Bible writers
 - Abimelech {*Genesis 20:3-7*}
 - ❖ His dream protected him from sinning against Sarai/Sarah and to protect her from Abram/Abraham's lying out of fear.
 - ❖ God even used Abimelech to reproof Abram/Abraham's lack of trust in God.
 - Pharaoh of Egypt {*Genesis 41:1-7, 14-32*}
 - ❖ God used these two dreams He gave to Pharaoh to communicate the severe famine that was about to happen in next five years.
 - ❖ Connect Pharaoh with his servant Joseph, which would give the Holy Spirit opportunity to share His salvation with the Egyptians.
 - ❖ Save His covenant people who would have starved without the abundance of food God would provide through the Egyptians.

- ❖ Reconnected Joseph with his family and gave opportunity for confession, repentance, and reconciliation.
- Nebuchadnezzar {*Daniel 2:1, 24-45; 4:4-5, 10-26*}
 - ❖ Revealed the fallacy of the Babylonian religion and particularly Satan’s deceptions through the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans.
 - ❖ God revealed to the king His future prophetic movements in history, particularly in the end-times.
 - ✓ This is amazing considering the *Daniel 2* dream is the foundational prophecy upon which rests all of prophetic prophecies throughout the books of Daniel & Revelation.
 - ❖ God used the *Daniel 2* dream to connect Nebuchadnezzar with God’s servants: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael & Azariah.
 - ❖ These dreams were God’s way to bring Nebuchadnezzar to salvation.
 - ❖ They show God’s concern for those who are not God-followers, who need His salvation!

TAKE-AWAY: We also see this longing of God to communicate/“hang out” with human beings so they will experience His presence, His salvation, and know His workings as He prophetically communicates through His prophets and/or prophetesses during the different salvation-prophetic movements-epochs in human history.

God’s Salvation-Prophetic Movements-Epochs

- Right before or the beginning of the Salvation-Prophetic Movements-Epochs we see God use the gift of prophecy—the appearance of prophets/prophetesses to announce what He is about to do or what is about to happen.
 - Remember, God doesn’t do something like these movements/epochs without first revealing it through His prophets/prophetesses {*Amos 3:7*}!
 - God is not trying to surprise/confuse human beings, so they’ll be spiritually lost. On the contrary, He is trying to communicate with them so they will make eternal, spiritual decisions to be saved and/or prepared for what is coming!
- God’s Salvation-Prophetic Movements-Epochs
 - **Creation**
 - In this first movement-epoch of God in human history, human beings were not present when He created.
 - This movement is only referred to as happening in the past through prophecy.
 - ❖ Human beings can only look back to learn and believe, not prepare for it as it’s about to happen, like with the rest of God’s movements-epochs.
 - Moses as the author of the book of Genesis would be the main prophet who spoke about God’s creation movement.
 - **Flood**
 - The Flood movement is one that humans could prepare for by accepting God’s warning and gracious gift of preservation-salvation.
 - ❖ Noah {*Genesis 6:13-14; Hebrews 11:7*}
 - ✓ Though Noah is not directly called a prophet he definitely acted in the manner of a prophet.

- **Exodus from Egypt**
 - Moses is the main prophet in preparing the Israelites for God’s exodus movement {*Exodus 3:7-(10); Deuteronomy 18:15a, 18a*}.
 - Also, Moses’ sister, Miriam, was a prophetess {*Exodus 15:20*} and the prophet Micah seems to hint God used her too in helping the Israelites in the Exodus {*Micah 6:4*}.
- **Babylonian Exile**
 - Here’s where God’s prophetic activity gets very interesting.
 - ❖ God used four to five prophets, at times overlapping each other’s ministry, before and during the Babylonian siege-exile of Jerusalem and Judah (*the southern two tribes of Israel—Judah & Benjamin*) to warn His people about their spiritual apostasy and pending doom and entreating them back to a true covenant, personal, faith relationship with Him.
 - ✓ Jeremiah {*Jeremiah 2:1-25:14 26:1-9; 29:1-20 34:1-6; 39:1-10*}
 - ✓ Zephaniah {*Zephaniah 3:1-7*}
 - ✓ Huldah {*2 Kings 22:11-20; 2 Chronicles 34:19-28*}
 - She was a non-canonical prophetess
 - ✓ Habakkuk {*Habakkuk 1:1-11 (6-11)*}
 - ✓ Joel {*Joel 1:2-12*}
 - Historically it’s not definite when Joel’s ministry occurred, but it could have happened around the time of the exile, based on this prophecy’s use of the word: “*lion*”—a word associated with Babylon and the words used to describe the spiritual condition of God’s people in comparison to other prophets of the time.
- **Birth & ministry of Jesus**—His 1st advent/coming
 - John the Baptist {*Matthew 3:1-3; Mark 1:1-8; Luke 3:1-6*}
 - ❖ Jesus calls John the greatest a prophet because he literally in historical time was the one the Holy Spirit used to announce the appearance and ministry of the Messiah/Jesus {*Matthew 11:7, 9-11, 14; Luke 7:24, 26-28a*}.
 - ✓ Interestingly, John the Baptist was a non-canonical prophet.

TAKE-AWAY: What we’ve discovered is: God is consistent in how He operates throughout the Bible and salvation history. If He provided prophets and/or prophetesses before every other salvation-prophetic movement-epoch, would He not then do it before one of the greatest ones at the end of time—Jesus’ Second Coming? Yes, I [*presenter: David*] believe He would! And, I think He has.

- **End of time & Jesus’ Second Coming**
 - *Revelation 12:17* gives us the backstory for God’s prophetic end-time communication in this salvation-prophetic movement-epoch.
 - ❖ God’s remnant Church/people would have in their midst the testimony of Jesus/the prophetic gift.
 - ❖ In *Revelation 1:1-(2), 9* John the Revelator uses this term “testimony of Jesus” in a way that separates it from God’s Word/Bible
 - ✓ It’s inspiration seems to be “in addition to” the Bible writers inspiration through non-canonical prophets/prophetesses.

- ✓ Though its Holy Spirit inspiration is equal to the Bible writers, the Bible supersedes it in authority for Christian faith and living {v. 1}.
 - Yet, it's still important or John the Revelator would not have suffered persecution because of both the word of God and this testimony of Jesus {v. 9}!
 - We're reminded by God, He wants us to embrace this non-canonical prophetic gift, not disregard it, just like the Old & New Testaments believers embraced it!
- ❖ **Revelation 19:10 & 22:8-9** gives further understanding to this concept the "testimony of Jesus."
 - ✓ **Revelation 19:10**
 - The "testimony of Jesus" = the "spirit of prophecy."
 - ✓ **Revelation 22:8-9** defines the brethren of **Revelation 19:10** who have the "testimony of Jesus" as prophets. See comparison chart below.

Revelation 19:10	Revelation 22:8-9
<p>"...I (<i>John</i>) fell at his feet to worship him (angel).</p> <p>But he said to me, 'See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of <u>your brethren</u> who <u>have</u> the <u>testimony of Jesus</u>.</p> <p>Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."</p>	<p>⁸ "...I (<i>John</i>) fell down to worship before he feet of the angel who showed me these things.</p> <p>⁹ Then he said to me, 'See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of <u>your brethren</u> the <u>prophets</u>, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."</p>

- God's remnant Church having the "testimony of Jesus" = having a prophet in their midst—a non-canonical prophet/prophetess.
- This does **NOT** mean God's end-time remnant Church/people disregard/reject the Bible and put this non-canonical prophetic gift above it in authority.
- No God's Word/Bible is what determines if this end-time prophet gift is truly genuine—from God!

TAKE-AWAY: The Seventh-day Adventist Church, which this presenter believes to be God's end-time remnant Church (see *Forever 06*), believes Ellen G. White exercised this end-time non-canonical prophetic gift through 70 years of ministry from late 1844 to 1915, with this prophetic voice continuing today in her published writings.

Ellen G. White—Who Was She?

- **Life**
 - Lived from 1827 to 1915, dying at age 87 in California

- Twin sister of Elizabeth
- Married in August 1846 to James White
- Mother of four boys with the youngest dying only after a few months of age
- During the early days of their married, the Whites suffered poverty and sometimes distress because the early Advent movement workers had to provide their own financial support, so husband, James, divided his time between preaching and writing and earning a living in the forest, on the railroad, or in the hayfield.
- **Prophetic ministry**
 - During her lifetime she authored 60,000 manuscript pages, including more than 4,600 periodical articles and 80 books.
 - Today, there are more than 100 titles of her writings available in English.
 - She is also the most translated woman writer in the entire history of literature, and the most translated American author of either gender.
 - Her writings cover a broad range of subjects—religion, education, social relationships, evangelism, prophecy, publishing, nutrition, and management.
 - Her life-changing masterpiece on successful Christian living, *Steps to Christ*, has been published in more than 140 languages.
 - Her prophetic ministry was to draw the world's attention to Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord, to the Bible as God's inspired Word for faith and living, and help prepare people for Christ's Second Coming.
 - From the time she was 17 years old until she died 70 years later, God gave her approximately 2,000 visions and dreams.
 - These visions varied in length from less than a minute to nearly four hours.
 - Ellen received her first vision in December 1844 at age 17 in Portland, ME, published later in the book *Early Writings*, pp. 13-20.
- **Test of Ellen G. White's prophetic ministry/calling—was it genuine?**
 - Lead others to God or back to God in a growing personal relationship with.

“Of all professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world. The proclamation of the third angel's message calls for the presentation of the Sabbath truth. This truth, with others included in the message, is to be proclaimed; but the great center of attraction, Christ Jesus, must not be left out. It is at the cross of Christ that mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other. The sinner must be led to look to Calvary; with the simple faith of a little child he must trust in the merits of the Savior, accepting His righteousness, believing in His mercy.” {*Gospel Workers*, p. 156.2}
 - Recognizes/teaches that Jesus is the divine-human Savior-Lord, who only can save and empower to live faithful to God {*Romans 1:1-4; 1 John 4:1-3*}.

“His name shall be called Immanuel, ... God with us.” “The light of the knowledge of the glory of God” is seen “in the face of Jesus Christ.” From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was “the image of God,” the image of His greatness and majesty, “the outshining of His glory.” It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world. To this sin-darkened earth He came to reveal the light of God's love,—to be “God with us.” {*Desire of Ages*, p. 19.1}

- Biblically faithful—their message does not contradict what the Bible teaches *{Isaiah 8:20; John 5:39, 46}*.
 - “I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the “last days”; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth. Thus God dealt with Peter when He was about to send him to preach to the Gentiles. (Acts 10).” *{Early Writings 78.1}*
 - I [presenter: David] have always found that her writings give me a better understanding of the Bible, not contradicting it, even with meanings of the original language, which she did not know.
- Their life “fruit”—actions, attitudes, beliefs, etc.—reflect they are followers of Jesus in a growing faith-walk with Him *{Matthew 7:15-(20)}*.
 - Here some interesting results from a study conducted by the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University that shows the fruits/results of Ellen G. White’s prophetic ministry when someone reads her Holy Spirit inspired writings:
 - ❖ Readers have a closer relationship with Christ and more assurance of their salvation in Jesus.
 - ❖ They more readily share their finances for ministry/evangelism.
 - ❖ Generally, they know their spiritual gifts and feel more prepared for witnessing.
 - ❖ Actually, they engage in more witnessing and outreach programs and generally see others come to Jesus and join His Church.
 - ❖ They are more likely to study the Bible daily, pray for specific people, meet in small groups, and have daily family worship.
 - ❖ Generally, they have a more favorable and supportive attitude towards God’s Church and leadership, even though there are imperfections.
- Words/prophecies happen as prophesied *{1 Kings 22:7-8, 26-(28, 37); 2 Chronicles 18:6, 8, 25-(27,34); Jeremiah 28:8-(9)}*.

Stephen Smith & The Unread Testimony from Ellen White

In late October of 1851, 75 Advent believers gathered in the Washington, New Hampshire church. It was only seven years since the great 1844 disappointment, and some who had been deeply upset by the disappointment criticized the leaders especially James and Ellen White. Among them was Brother Stephen Smith.

During one meeting, Ellen White, who was there with her husband, received a vision showing the spiritual state of the church members. In the following meeting she told her vision and all those present received it as a message from heaven and resolved to listen to its counsel...except...Stephen Smith and one other.

Yet God loved Stephen Smith, so He impressed Ellen White to encourage him to turn from his waywardness. With prayer and painstaking patience Ellen White wrote out the vision when she returned home, and mailed it to Brother Smith.

The following week Smith went to the post office to pick up his mail. He received a long, thick letter with Mrs. White’s name and address in the upper left-hand corner. Hot blood rushed to his face.

“So, she has written me a testimony now,” he muttered, glaring at the unwelcome letter. “I’ll not read it!” Jamming the unopened envelope into his coat pocket, he rushed home. Inside his home he spied a heavy trunk in one corner. At once he raised the lid, and thrust the letter to the bottom, and slammed down the lid. Then Stephen Smith went his own way doing his own thing.

People who knew him said he had the most withering, blighting, blistering tongue of any man in the neighborhood. Sadly, the Whites weren’t the only ones to receive his criticisms. His wife and children were often the objects of his sharp, cutting remarks too. The following years, which should have been the best and happiest of his life, were full of anger and unhappiness.

One day, 27 years later, Stephen Smith picked up a copy of the *Review and Herald* from his own parlor table. His wife had remained an Adventist Christian along with their children. And it was she who had continued to subscribe to the *Review*. As he opened the paper Stephen’s eyes fell on an article by Ellen White. Hastily he read it. Thoughtfully he laid it down. “That’s the truth,” he admitted to himself.

When the *Review* arrived the next week, again Stephen read another article by Ellen White. And again he had to admit, “That’s God’s truth.” From then on, he watched for Mrs. White’s articles weekly, and read them. His wife and children began to notice a change in his life and attitude. His words were softer, his comments less sarcastic. He began to wish he could see James and Ellen White again, but James had died four years earlier, and Ellen now lived in Michigan.

The next summer, in 1885, Eugene Farnsworth returned to his hometown of Washington, New Hampshire, to hold revival meetings. News of the coming revival reached Stephen Smith too. Remembering Eugene, he wanted to hear him speak. The sermon topic that Sabbath morning was the Seventh-day Adventist movement. Just as Elder Farnsworth finished speaking, old Stephen Smith struggled to his feet and signaled a desire to speak. Eugene hesitated. He wasn’t sure he wanted to allow this bitter, critical man to spoil the church service.

Stephen spoke up. “Don’t be afraid of me, Brethren,” he said. “I haven’t come to criticize. I’ve quit that business. I’ve been with many opposition groups over the years, and I see now that they have come to nothing. No honest man can help seeing that God is with the Advent movement and against us who have opposed it. I want to be in fellowship with this people in heart and in the church.”

When Stephen returned home, he began to think over his past life. Later that week, he remembered the letter at the bottom of the trunk. For the first time in 28 years, he wanted to know what was in that letter.

Finding the unsealed envelope, yellowed by this time, where he left it in the trunk, he opened it and slipped out the folded sheets, sitting down to read them.

In the letter he found an exact and accurate picture of what his life had been, for he had not changed his ways, nor had he returned to God. With terrible regret he realized how different his life might have been had he read and accepted this testimony 28 years earlier.

The following Sabbath Stephen Smith again returned to the Washington Church. As soon as the sermon had ended, he again rose to his feet to tell Elder Farnsworth and the congregation about the sealed letter.

“Every word of that testimony is true,” he declared. “I know now that all the testimonies from Ellen White are true. If I had followed the testimony she sent to me, my whole life would have been different. It would have saved me a world of trouble. Instead, I dismissed her writings as ‘old woman’s visions.’ I am too old now to undo what I’ve done, too feeble to get to our large meetings, but I want you to tell our people everywhere that another rebel has surrendered.”

{Adapted from *The Spirit of Prophecy Emphasis Stories*, vol. 2, pp. 168-170}

TAKE-AWAY: Some may be wondering, this is great, God is good to give us prophets & prophetesses, but didn’t the prophetic gift/spiritual gift of prophecy end with the canonization of the New Testament. Actually, no!

Continuation of the Prophetic Gift

- The spiritual gift of prophecy/gift of prophecy is from the Holy Spirit {*Romans 12:3-8 (6)*; *1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-11 (10)*; *Ephesians 4:(11)-16*}
 - Purpose
 - Enhance ministry to a variety of people who need to know Jesus and/or grow in Him {*Romans 12:4*; *1 Corinthians 12:4*}.
 - Benefit/profit others, not a me-focused emphasis {*1 Corinthians 12:6-(7)*}.
 - Equip/prepare God’s people (saints) for ministry/witness {*Ephesians 4:11-(12)*}.
 - Develop unity of God’s people and maturing faith-growth in Jesus {*Ephesians 4:13-15*}.
 - ❖ This includes a balanced, mature belief system that does not get into the “ditches” of extremism {*v. 14*}.
 - ❖ A Christ-like attitude of balance, graciousness, love, patience, etc. in how one relates/interacts with others when ministering/witnessing {*v. 15*}.
- The gift of prophecy continues unto the end of time when Jesus comes the second time.
 - If the other spiritual gifts continue until the end of time, then the gift of prophecy must be in operation too {*Ephesians 4:11-(13)*}.
 - Since there will be false prophets, especially before Jesus comes again, then there must be true ones too.
 - A counterfeit needs a true to counterfeit—\$4, \$9, & \$15 bills are of no use since there are no true bills of these denominations.
 - Satan would not try to deceive the inhabitants of the world with false prophets if there were no true ones that God working through in our world.
 - In *Joel 2:28-32* we’re told there will be a great outpouring of Holy Spirit’s power in the end-time/last days before Jesus’ Second Coming including the gift of prophecy that could “fall” on both genders and all ages }.

LIVING CHOICE: Will you by God’s grace open your heart to test God’s end-time gift of prophecy and by His grace surrender your life to it’s instruction?

RESOURCES:

- www.egwwritings.org
- www.whiteestate.org