

## ***The Spirit of Prophecy – Testing the Prophets***

**Purpose:** There are good reasons why SDAs believe Ellen White had the prophetic gift.  
**Focus:** The inspired words of a true prophet is the testimony of Jesus Himself.  
**Introduction** Today we will study the gift of prophecy: What is a prophet? How can we know the difference between a false and a true prophet? Are there biblical reasons for believing in the prophetic gift in our time?

*Let's begin with the question of what a prophet is...*

**Heb 1:1** How does God communicate to us? Bible = Prophet's writings (Matt 26:56).

*Being God's mouthpiece is one of the spiritual gifts...*

**1 Cor 12:7-11, 29** Who gives a person the gift of prophecy? Do all receive the gift?

*How do you know if you have the gift of prophecy?*

**Num 12:6** How can you tell if God calls you to be a prophet?

*The prophetic visions are often accompanied with supernatural signs to prove its supernatural origin.*

**Dan 10:8-10, 17** What happened to Daniel when he received visions from God? Answer: He fell down, he was dumb, did not breathe, received strength etc. (Numb 24:16)

*When does God send prophets to His people?*

**Amos 3:7** How much does God do without revealing it to His servants the prophet?

This has happened throughout the history of God's people:

IE: Noah – flood (Gen 6:13-14). IE: God's people – Abraham (Gen 12:1, 15:1).

Exodus – Moses (Hos 12:13). Captivity in Babylon – Jeremiah (Jer 1:2-3). Return from captivity – Haggai, Zechariah (Ezra 6:14). Birth of Jesus – Anna & Simeon (Luke 2:25-26, 36). Baptism of Christ – John the Baptist (Mark 1:1-4).

*Is it possible that God would send another prophet in our time, prior to the Second Coming?*

**Joel 2:28-32** Will God send prophets prior to the Day of the Lord? Can women be prophets?

*The end time remnant of verse 32 is the same one that is mentioned in Revelation 12:17...*

**Rev 12:17** Who is the dragon enraged with? What characteristics do they have?

*What is the testimony of Jesus? We will let the Bible explain itself...*

**Rev 19:10** What is the testimony of Jesus? Spirit of prophecy = the prophetic gift (**Rev 22:8-9**) It is Jesus that speaks through a true prophet (**1 Pet 1:10-11**). Was there a prophet in God's remnant church? IE: Ellen G. White biography – 2000+ visions and dreams. Wrote 40 books. Supernatural signs [see quotes].

*But these supernatural signs do not necessarily prove that her visions were from God...*

**Matt 24:24** Jesus warns us for false prophets, but not all who claim to be prophets.

*How can we tell the difference between a true and a false prophet?*

**1 John 4:1-2** What must we do with the spirits? **Test #1:** Uplifts Jesus as God in the flesh.

*The second test is very important...*

**Isa 8:20** **Test #2:** Does not contradict the Bible prophets (**1 John 4:6**)

*Let's look at the third test...*

**Matt 7:15-16** **Test #3:** Bears good fruit in their ministry and life. IE: No filthy lucre.

*The fourth test examines what the prophet says about obedience to God's law.*

**Deut 13:1-3** **Test #4:** Invokes obedience to God's Law (**Acts 5:32**)

*The final test deals with the prophet's ability to predict the future.*

**Jer 28:9** **Test #5:** Predictions come true (**Deut 18:22**)

*The Bible calls us to put prejudice aside and take an honest look at the claims of a prophet...*

**1 Thess 5:20-21** Should we despise prophets? What must we do with the prophets?

**APPEAL** Can you see that there are good reasons for why I and the SDA Church believe that Ellen G. White had the prophetic gift? Is it your desire to be led by Jesus' prophets? [Here is a book by EGW] Are you willing to investigate her writings and honestly test to see if they are in accordance with God's Word?

## APPENDIX – Quotes

### Visions

"1. She is utterly unconscious of everything transpiring around her... 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 day-time or a well-lighted room at night, all is total darkness." (James White, *Life Incidents*, s. 272, 1868)

"We were present when (in February, 1857) Sister E. G. White had a vision in Waldron's Hall, Hillsdale. Dr. Lord made an examination, and said, 'Her heart beats, but there is no breath. There is life, but no action of the lungs; I cannot account for this condition.'" Signed, "A. F. Fowler, Mrs. A. F. Fowler, Hillsdale, Mich., Jan. 1, 1891." ([whiteestate.org/issues/eyewitns.html](http://whiteestate.org/issues/eyewitns.html))

"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 story was documented by J. N. Loughborough who interviewed those who witnessed the vision, including Ellen's father, mother, and sister. The Bible (on display at the Ellen G. White Estate) weighs 18½ pounds (8 kilos)" ([www.whiteestate.org](http://www.whiteestate.org))

### Test #1

#### Uplifts Christ as God in the Flesh

"If Christ made all things, He existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore. The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father." (Ellen White, *1 Selected Message*, p. 247)

"He was equal with God, infinite and omnipotent. . . . He is the eternal, self-existent Son." (Ellen White, *Evangelism*, p. 615)

"In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. "He that hath the Son hath life." The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life." (Ellen White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 530)

"In all her works, Ellen G. White presents and uplifts Christ. ... Her little book *Steps to Christ* gives one of the best instructions in the way of salvation that has ever been written." (Raymond C. Holmes, *Stranger in my home*, p. 54)

### Test #2

#### Does not contradict the Scriptures

In order to test this, you would have to read her books. But what we can see here is what Ellen White said *about* the Scriptures and their authority.

"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." (Ellen White, *Great Controversy*, p. vii)

"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."

(Ellen White, *Early Writings*, p. 78)

### Test #3

#### **Bears Good Fruit**

"After reading the publications of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination and almost all the writings of Ellen G. White, including her *Testimonies*, the writer believes that Mrs. White was truly a regenerate Christian woman who loved the Lord Jesus Christ and dedicated herself unstintingly to the task of bearing witness for Him as she felt led. ... But no one can dispute the fact that her writings conform to the basic principles of the historic gospel, for they most certainly do. ... All that she wrote on such subjects as salvation or Christian living characterizes her as a Christian in every sense of the term."

(Critic Walter Martin, *Kingdom of the Cults*, 1985 revised edition, s. 445-446)

"Did she really receive divine visions, and was she really chosen by the Holy Spirit to be endued with the charisma of prophecy? Or was she the victim of an excited imagination? Why should we answer? One's doctrine of the Bible may affect the conclusion. At any rate, she was absolutely honest in her belief in her revelations. Her life was worthy of them. 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." (*New York Independent*, "An American Prophetess", August 23, 1915, quoted in 6BIO 444)

"The study indicates that readers have a closer relationship with Christ, more certainty of their standing with God, and are more likely to have identified their spiritual gifts. They are more in favor of spending for public evangelism and contribute more heavily to local missionary projects. They feel more prepared for witnessing and actually engage in more witnessing and outreach programs. They are more likely to study the Bible daily, to pray for specific people, to meet in fellowship groups, and to have daily family worship. They view their church more positively. They actually bring more people into the church." (Roger Dudley & Des Cummings Jr., *Ministry Magazine*, October 1982)

### Test #4

#### **Invokes Obedience to God's Law**

"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. Of that law of which the fourth commandment forms a part, Christ declares, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law." So long as the heavens and the earth endure, the Sabbath will continue as a sign of the Creator's power." (Ellen White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 283)

### Test #5

#### **Predicts the Future**

**The American Civil War:** On December 20, 1860, South Carolina demanded secession from the American Union, and rumors of rebellion and war began to arise. However, very few people took it seriously.

"A few old women with broom sticks could go down there and beat out all of the rebellion that there is in South Carolina." (Horace Greeley, *New York Tribune*, January, 1861, cited in J.N. Loughborough, *Heavenly visions*, p. 55)

Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1861: "I have felt all the while justified in concluding that the crisis, the panic, the anxiety of the country at this time is artificial." (*Works of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 103).

But in January 12, 1861, Ellen White received a vision that sharply contradicted public opinion: "People are making sport of the secession ordinance of South Carolina, but I have just been shown that a large number of States are going to

join that State, and there will be a most terrible war. In this vision I have seen large armies of both sides gathered on the field of battle. I heard the booming of the cannon, and saw the dead and dying on every hand. ... There are those in this house who will lose sons in that war." (*General Conference Daily Bulletin*, January 31, 1893). Soon 11 states had joined the secession and elected their own president. The American Civil War continued for four years and cost over 600 000 lives. It was the bloodiest war ever fought on American soil. At least 10 of the people present when Ellen White had her vision lost sons in the war.

**Health:** "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." (Ministry of Healing, p. 327-328, first written in 1864)

"Cancer, tumors, and all inflammatory diseases are largely caused by meat-eating. From the light which God has given me, the prevalence of cancers, and tumors is due to gross living on dead flesh." (Ellen White, Spalding and Magan Collections, p. 48)

"In 2005, Dr. T. Colin Campbell's *The China Study* — backed by the most extensive study of nutrition ever conducted and bolstered by dozens of additional studies and cases — gave us a simple but powerful answer: The key to good health is nutrition. By adopting a diet based on whole, plant-based food you can reduce your risk of degenerative diseases like heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. The *China Study* told us what to eat and provided the revolutionary, scientific proof for this answer."

([www.thechinastudy.com/whole/about](http://www.thechinastudy.com/whole/about))

"Our methods and specific conclusions differ from Dr. Campbell's in several ways, but our bottom-line message is the same: Diets that revolve around whole plant foods – vegetables, whole grains, fruits and beans – cut the risk of many cancers, and other diseases as well. This advice has been translated into AICR's 10 Recommendations for Cancer Prevention."

([www.aicr.org/about/advocacy/the-china-study.html](http://www.aicr.org/about/advocacy/the-china-study.html))

"In spite of the fact that the works of Mrs. White were written long before the advent of modern scientific nutrition, no better overall guide is available today." (Professor Clive McCay, Cornell University, *Review and Herald*, Feb. 26, 1959)

"I am not aware of anyone who was more on point than Ellen White... I am convinced that almost 100% of her statements are now substantially supported by the scientific evidence that has been developed during the past 2-3 decades." (Professor Colin Campbell, Cornell University, E-mail with Don Mackintosh, Feb. 24, 2005)

**Two World Wars:** "I was shown the inhabitants of the earth in the utmost confusion. War, bloodshed, privation, want, famine, and pestilence were abroad in the land. ... My attention was then called from the scene. There seemed to be a little time of peace. Once more the inhabitants of the earth were presented before me; and again everything was in the utmost confusion. Strife, war, and bloodshed, with famine and pestilence, raged everywhere. Other nations were engaged in this war and confusion. War caused famine. Want and bloodshed caused pestilence. And then men's hearts failed them for fear, "and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."" (*Testimonies for the Church 1*, p. 268)

"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." (*Signs of the Times*, April 21, 1890)

**Protestants unite with Catholics and disregard doctrinal differences:** "It was apostasy that led the early church to seek the aid of the civil government... before the coming of the Lord there will exist a state of religious declension similar to that in the first centuries. ... When this state of ungodliness shall be reached, the same results will follow as in the first centuries. The wide diversity of belief in the Protestant churches is regarded by many as decisive proof that no effort to secure a forced uniformity can ever be made. But there has been for years, in churches of the Protestant faith, a strong and growing sentiment in favor of a union based upon common points of doctrine. To secure such a union, the discussion of subjects upon which all were not agreed--however important they might be from a Bible standpoint--must necessarily be waived." (Ellen White, *Great Controversy*, p. 444)

"The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience." (Ellen White, *Great Controversy*, p. 588)

Many protestants have long since laid down their protests against Rome's doctrines and seek unity with Rome at the cost of truth.

**Rise of Spiritualism:** Spiritualism was almost unknown in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. But in 1848, mystical rappings started to take place in the home of the two sisters Kate and Margaret Fox. This was the beginning of modern spiritualism. Ellen White predicted that spiritualism would be one of the three greatest entities by which Satan would deceive the world in the end of time (see quote above). Today we see movements like the New Age and other spiritualistic manifestations have spread all over the world.

**Global influence of America:** At a time when America was a small, non-influential nation, in comparison with the mighty monarchies of Europe, Ellen White received visions showing that America would be a worldwide power that eventually would force the world into false worship. This was unthinkable in her days, but today we see that America is the only superpower that could be capable of such a thing.