

What is the Spirit of Prophecy? SDA Edition

Description

What Is The Spirit Of Prophecy?

WITH COMMENTS FROM JAMES WHITE, ELLEN WHITE, A.T. JONES AND OTHERS

Can We Receive The Gift?

“The dragon grew angry with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep God’s commandments and *hold Jesus’ testimony*.
...for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy.”
– Revelation 12:17; 19:10 (WEB)

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” – Matthew 11:15 (WEB)

Introduction

The Revelation of Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:1-2) calls our attention to something it calls “the Spirit of Prophecy.” In order to discern the immense value of understanding the truth of what the Spirit of Prophecy is, we’ll consider a brief point from Revelation 12:17 (quoted above). The verse specifies that those who have the Spirit of Prophecy are a *remnant* (the *rest* of the woman’s offspring). It is widely acknowledged that the woman represents the church, and her offspring represent church members (Christians). Since a remnant is but a *part* of a whole, it should be clear that not all Christians hold the testimony of Jesus—the Spirit of Prophecy. Even on the surface, it should be obvious that all sincere Christians should make sure they are among those who the testimony of Jesus. And how can we do this unless we know what it is?

One thing that stands out clearly is that this testimony is His (Jesus’) testimony.

“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.” – Rev 1:1-2

What better way to learn *what* this testimony is, than to learn it from the one *whose* testimony it is. We have already learned from comparing Revelation 12:17 with Revelation 19:10 that “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” But now we must ask, “What is the spirit of prophecy?” Let scripture answer:

“And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See *thou do it* not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” – Rev. 19:10

“And I John saw these things, and heard *them*. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See *thou do it* not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.” – Rev. 22:8-9

Here are a few parallels in the above passages:

Rev. 19:10

1. And I fell at his feet to worship him
2. He said unto me, See *thou do it* not
3. I am thy fellowservant
4. And of thy brethren
5. That have the testimony of Jesus

Rev. 22:8-9

1. I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel
2. Then saith he unto me, See *thou do it* not
3. I am thy fellowservant
4. And of thy brethren
5. The prophets

While this is not the end of the parallels in these passages, it is enough to illustrate the point. According to this, who are the brethren that have the testimony of Jesus? And what is the testimony of Jesus? Ah, there we have it; those who have the spirit of prophecy are called “prophets.” Praise the Lord for the Word of Truth. This particular title (spirit of prophecy) is of course fitting since it is descriptive of what the Spirit does through the prophets, that is, prophesy.

“holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” – 2Pet. 1:21

Now many have different ideas as to when the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy began and how long it will last. Some believe that this gift is only a latter day manifestation of prophets in the church, while others hold that prophets ceased at the close of the New Testament scriptures. Still others contend that Malachi, John the Baptist, Jesus, or some other was the last true prophet. We must then look to the scriptures to find the truth amidst the rubble of private opinions on the subject. As we seek the Lord on these matters, we can be assured that He will reveal to us many more important truths; some relating to this subject and some as a result of understanding this subject.

Before we go on with the many scriptures on the topic, let us define the word prophet. The Hebrew word for prophet is נָבִיא (nâbîy') and means "spokesman" – *Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Definitions*. This is from the root נָבָא (nâbâ') which means "to speak by inspiration" – *Strongs*. In other words, a prophet is someone who speaks on behalf of another through the method of inspiration.

One may ask, "Why does God need a spokesperson? Can He not just communicate with each of us Himself?" This is a legitimate question, one whose answer is found in the beginning. In the beginning God walked in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:8) and spoke personally to Adam (Gen. 1:28); however, after they had sinned, mankind was driven from the Garden and was separated from God (Gen. 3:23-24). We were not though, abandoned.

"And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them *by his messengers*, rising up betimes, and sending; **because he had compassion on his people**, and on his dwelling place:" – 2Chron. 36:15

"*I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them*, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me." – Jer. 35:15

So it is out of Love that God sends prophets. Soon after the fall, we already have record of prophets among the people of God.

"And *Enoch* also, the seventh from Adam, *prophesied* of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints," – Jude 1:14

"And spared not the old world, but saved *Noah* the eighth *person*, a *preacher of righteousness*, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;" – 2Pet. 2:5

"Now therefore restore the man *his* wife; for he [*Abraham*] *is* a *prophet*, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore *her* not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that *are* thine." – Gen. 20:7

According to these passages, the Spirit of Prophecy was active in the days of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and the line of prophets goes on and on. By the time we get to Moses we see the Lord wanting to speak more directly to His people, but sadly they refuse Him.

"And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw *it*, *they removed, and stood afar off*. And they said unto Moses, **Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.**" – Ex. 20:18-19

So, why is it that the people did not want to hear the Lord directly? Could it be because the Lord is a consuming fire (Deut. 4:24) and in their sinful state they could not bear His presence? Are we today in any better a condition? And if the Lord should want to send us a message to help us out of this terrible state, how would He go about doing so?

The Spirit of Prophecy in The New Testament

Now that we see that the Spirit of Prophecy was around since the days of old, we shall turn to the New Testament prophets and see how long they say it will remain.

“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily **prophets**, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” – 1Cor. 12:28

“For we know in part, and *we prophesy in part*. But **when that which is perfect is come, then** that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but **then face to face**: *now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known....* Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but *rather that ye may prophesy.*” – 1Cor. 13:9-12; 14:1

Has that which is perfect come? Certainly not! Then if that is the truth, the Spirit of Prophecy must still be among us.

“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 fulness of Christ.*” – Eph. 4:11-13

So there we have it, that which is perfect (1Cor. 13:9) is the “perfect man”, even Jesus Christ. Are we all come into the unity of the faith? Are we come into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ? If we are not, then the Spirit of Prophecy must still be among us.

“I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and *in* all knowledge; Even as the testimony of Christ was *confirmed* in you: ***So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless*** in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.” – 1Cor. 1:4-8

How different is the testimony of scripture from the private ideas of men. It is no wonder then that we are told to:

“Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” – 1Thess. 5:19-21

We are naturally told to prove all things for the reason that not all things are true. Christ himself said,

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” – Matt. 24:24

Where there is a false, there must be a true. Can the Devil counterfeit something for which there is no truth?

The Spirit of Prophecy in The Old Testament

So far we have learned from the Scripture of Truth that the Spirit of Prophecy is the testimony of Jesus *by* the Holy Ghost and *through* the prophets in all generations, from the beginning till the end. What we shall see in this section is the testimony of Jesus through the Old Testament prophets concerning the role of prophets, as well as the perpetuity and necessity of this gift.

“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” – Amos 3:7

From this key text, we not only learn that the role of prophets is to reveal the secret things of God, but also that the Lord *will not do anything* unless he reveals these secrets to His prophets. Stated another way, “If the Lord is doing *anything*, He will reveal it through His prophets.” Or “If the Lord is revealing *anything* through His prophets, He is doing *something*.” Conversely “If the Lord is not revealing anything through His prophets, He is doing *nothing*.” For this reason:

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” – Prov. 29:18

Therefore, when the Lord is speaking, we know He is acting. What a comfort and a cause for rejoicing!

“Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day *I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them:*” – Jer. 7:25

“Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which *I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them;* but ye would not hear, saith the LORD.” – Jer 29:19

“*I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me.*” – Jer. 35:15

“And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; *Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.*” – 2Chron. 20:20

“And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them *by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people*, and on his dwelling place: But *they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets*, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till *there was no remedy*. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave *them* all into his hand.” – 2Chron. 36:15-17

The day that prophets cease from among us is the day that we perish for a lack of knowledge (Prov. 29:18; Hos. 4:6). Indeed it is by the prophets that the Lord speaks to us and thus preserves us.

“*I have also spoken by the prophets*, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, *by the ministry of the prophets*. And ***by a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.***” – Hos. 12:10,13

“Therefore have *I hewed them by the prophets*; I have slain them *by the words of my mouth*: and thy judgments are as the light *that goeth forth.*” – Hos. 6:5

We have now seen that the Lord speaking to us through His prophets is heaven's law and order. The Lord is very caring and wants to make sure there is no guess work for those of us in the last days who may doubt this truth. For this reason He made sure to make specific prophecies in addition to the general principles in His Word.

“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*: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days *will I pour out my spirit* .” – Joel 2:28-29

“Behold, *I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.*” – Mal. 3:1

“*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:*” – Mal. 4:5

The Spirit of Prophecy By Examples

“Now,” says one, “I have the spirit of prophecy. It’s right here in my Bible. That’s all the prophets I need.” Is that so? I suppose the Jews in the time of Christ could have easily said the same thing. “I have the Torah and the Prophets, what more could I need?” While at the same time not realizing

that they were “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Rev. 3:17) and in need of everything the Lord has to offer. If having the Bible is having the Spirit of Prophecy then why does Rev. 12:17 make a distinction between Christians who have the Spirit of Prophecy and those who do not? Don’t all Christians have the Bible? Furthermore, if it was just the written word then why is there need for anything beyond the writings of Moses? Yet he himself foretold of prophets to come (Deut. 18:18). We have also seen *from* the Bible that the Spirit of Prophecy started *before* the Bible and extends *beyond* the time of the Bible. What then makes the difference between having the Spirit of Prophecy and not having the Spirit of Prophecy? Let us see what the Bible has to say:

In the days of Jacob and his son Joseph (both prophets), Israel prospered in the land of Goshen. After a time though, they both died off and prophets ceased for a time among the children of Israel. As a result the people perished (Prov. 29:18) and suffered under the yoke of Pharaoh (Ex. 1:11). In His great mercy, the Lord rose up a prophet named Moses to deliver Israel out of Egypt and take them to the land that He promised their fathers. This story of perishing without prophets and deliverance with prophets is the story of God’s people from beginning to end. In fact, one may ask if there was ever a time in the Bible where the people had a successful revival and reformation with no living prophets among them. As we continue, we shall see the answer. Let us start with the period just after Moses, namely, the period of

The Judges

“And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. And *it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers*, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.” – Judg. 2:18-19

As we shall see this was the pattern in the time of the judges, and yes, throughout all time.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sin	Bondage	Crying Out	Prophet	Deliverance	Prosperity	Prophet Dies	Sin

Note: As you read through the book of Judges you will see that the judges are sometimes referred to as prophets or it will say that “The Spirit of the LORD came upon” so and so.

The question under consideration at the present is, “At which point in this cycle is the Spirit of Prophecy made manifest, and at which point does it become inactive?”

Othniel:

“And the children of *Israel did evil* in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves. Therefore the anger of *the LORD was hot against Israel*, and he sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushanrishathaim eight years. And when the children of *Israel cried unto the LORD*, the LORD raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of

Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. And *the Spirit of the LORD came upon him*, and he judged Israel, and went out to war: and *the LORD delivered Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand*; and his hand prevailed against Chushanrishathaim. And *the land had rest forty years*. And *Othniel the son of Kenaz died*. And *the children of Israel did evil again* in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD." – Judg. 3:7-12

Ehud:

"And *the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD*: and *the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel*, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.... But when the children of *Israel cried unto the LORD*, *the LORD raised them up a deliverer, Ehud* the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man lefthanded: and by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab.... And *the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead*." – Judg. 3:12,15; 4:1

Deborah:

"And the children of *Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead*. And *the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan*, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles. And the children of *Israel cried unto the LORD*: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel. And *Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time*.... So *God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel*. And the hand of the children of *Israel prospered*, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.... Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying, Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.... And the children of *Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD*: and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years." – Judg. 4:1-4, 23-5:2; 6:1

Gideon:

"And the children of *Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD*: and *the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian* seven years.... And it came to pass, when the children of *Israel cried unto the LORD* because of the Midianites, *That the LORD sent a prophet unto the children of Israel*, which said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage;... *Thus was Midian subdued* before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more. And *the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon*.... And it came to pass, **as soon as Gideon was dead**, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baalberith their god." – Judg. 6:1,7-8; 8:28,33

Jair:

"And after him arose *Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years*. And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havothjair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead. And *Jair died*, and was buried in Camon. And the children of *Israel did evil again* in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and

the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him.” – Judg. 10:3-6

Jephthah to Abdon:

“And the children of *Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD*, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him. And *the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon.... Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah*, and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over *unto the children of Ammon.... And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite*, and was buried in *one of the cities of Gilead*. And *after him Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel*. And he had thirty sons, and thirty daughters, *whom he sent abroad, and took in thirty daughters from abroad for his sons. And he judged Israel seven years. Then died Ibzan*, and was buried at Bethlehem. And *after him Elon, a Zebulonite, judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years. And Elon the Zebulonite died*, and was buried in Aijalon in the country of Zebulun. And *after him Abdon the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel*. And he had forty sons and thirty nephews, that rode on threescore and ten ass colts: and *he judged Israel eight years. And Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died*, and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the mount of the Amalekites. And the children of *Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD*; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.” – Judg. 10:6-7; 11:29; 12:7-13:1

Samuel:

“And *Samuel spake* unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, *then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only. So the Philistines were subdued*, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and *the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.... Now Samuel was dead*, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul *had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land. And the Philistines gathered themselves together*, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa. And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul *unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.*” – 1Sam 7:3-4,13; 28:3-7

This same pattern is also seen with the prophets after the judges:

Zechariah and Haggai:

“*Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.*” – Ezra 4:24

“In the eighth month, in *the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah*,

the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,... Your fathers, where *are* they? and *the prophets, do they live for ever?*" – Zech. 1:1,5

"In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying,... Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the LORD." Hag. 1:1,12

"Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them. Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them." – Ezra 5:1-2

Well, at which time was the Spirit of Prophecy made manifest in all these examples? When did the Spirit of Prophecy again become inactive (no longer manifest)? I'm sure you can see it was when the Lord raised up the prophet that it was manifested and when the prophet died that it became inactive. Can we honestly and scripturally say that the Spirit of Prophecy is a book or books of ink and paper? Can we see that it is anything but what it is in truth? So then, according to the scriptures, what does it mean to have the Spirit of Prophecy? Simply this, to have the Spirit of Prophecy is to have Jesus giving *His* testimony *by* the Holy Ghost *through* a *living* prophet.

Progressive Truth and Sanctification

The fact that the Bible teaches that we are to expect more prophets is letting us know that God has more to say to us.

"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." – Prov. 4:18

In some of the previously quoted scriptures we saw the purpose for the gift of prophecy in the church laid out. Please notice the following stated purposes.

*"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 fulness of Christ**."* – Eph. 4:11-13

*"I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, **that ye may be blameless** in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."* – 1Cor. 1:4-8

The coming to fruition of these things is also called *sanctification* in the scriptures.

“ To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are **sanctified by faith** that is in me.” – Acts 26:18

“So then ***faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.***” – Rom. 10:17

Since we are sanctified by faith, and faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word, and since the word of God comes through prophets it is easy to see how the Spirit of Prophecy being active in the church has a direct and inseparable connection to perfecting the saints, coming into unity, sanctification, and all things resulting therefrom. This truly is the “*everlasting gospel*” (Rev. 14:6). And what is the Gospel?

“For I am not ashamed of the *gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth*; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” – Rom. 1:16

How is the *power* of God revealed?

“For the invisible things of him ***from the creation of the world*** are *clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power* and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:” – Rom. 1:20

The truth that the power of God in relation to faith is revealed in creation is also spoken of in the Epistle to the Hebrews:

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God*, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” – Heb 3:1-3

We understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God because God speaks and it is so.

“And God *said*, Let there be light: and there was light.” – Gen. 1:3

“For he *spake, and it was done*; he commanded, and it stood fast.” – Ps. 33:9

“And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, ***saying***, I will; be thou clean. And ***immediately*** his leprosy was cleansed.” – Matt. 8:2-3

“And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but ***speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed***. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, *I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel...* And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and *as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee*. And his servant was healed ***in the selfsame hour***

.” – Matt. 8:5-11,13

What we are seeing is that the word of God is not at all like the word of man. God “callethe those things which be not as though they were.” (Rom. 4:17) If man does this, he is a liar, but when God does this, He is the Creator in the very act of creating. The reason for this is that it is impossible for God to lie (Tit. 1:1-2; Heb. 6:17-18). So when he speaks of those things which are not as though they were, they **are**.

“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, *when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it **not as the word of men**, but as it is in truth, the word of God, **which effectually worketh also in you that believe.***” – 1Thess. 2:13

To emphasize the point, it is the word of God *itself* which does the work. So why is this important in regards to the subject of the Spirit of Prophecy? Just this, we are sanctified (made righteous) by faith (Heb. 11:7) and faith is believing in the Word of God and depending on the Word *itself* to do that which it says. And since the word of God always comes through the Spirit of Prophecy, when we cut off the Spirit, we cut off the Word, and thus faith and righteousness, and are then left in our sins, as that which is not of faith is sin (Rom. 14:23). What a dark, miserable, and hopeless condition. But that is not what we want. We want the righteousness of Christ, and what is the righteousness of Christ?

“O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; *that ye may know the righteousness of the LORD.*” – Micah 6:5

“...And Balak said unto him, What hath the LORD spoken? And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor: *God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*” – Num. 23:19

The righteousness of the Lord is His inability to lie. In other words it is His Truth, His Word, His Law (Ps.119:172; Isa. 51:6-7; 1John 5:17; 3:4). They are Spirit (Rev. 19:10), they are Life (John 6:63). What stark contrast between the Word of God and the word of man.

“For Zion’s sake *will I not hold my peace*, and for Jerusalem’s sake *I will not rest, until the **righteousness** thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth...* I have set *watchmen* upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, *which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence,*” – Isa. 62:1,6

To “hold your peace” is to be silent. Here though, God says that He will not hold His peace, He will continue to speak. Why? So that our righteousness (Christ’s Righteousness) will go forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. To obtain a better understanding of this verse, we’ll take a quick look at Matthew 25. This chapter contains the parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five of whom were foolish. The five wise virgins had oil in their vessels as well as in their lamps (Matt. 25:4) whereas the foolish only had oil in their lamps. Without going into much detail we can see that the oil represents the Spirit/Truth (1Sam. 16:13; 1John 5:6). The oil in the lamps is the oil (truth) presently burning (presently lighting our way), whereas the oil in the vessels represents truth in reserve which is to lighten our way at some

future point. Bringing this back into the context of Isaiah 62:1 we see that the Lord will continue to speak to us so that we will always have present truth, “as a lamp that burneth.”

“Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and *be* established in ***the present truth***.” – 2Pet. 1:12

There *is* such a thing as “present *truth*” and it’s about time we all know what it is. And how are we to know save through the very method the Lord has used from the beginning; the Spirit of Prophecy. When we come to the place of realizing and admitting that we have repeated the errors of our forefathers and have done only that which is right in our own eyes (Judg. 17:6), that we truly are “wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked” (Rev. 3:17) and in need of everything. Then and only then will we exchange our righteousness for Christ’s righteousness, our word for His Word, and our fables for His ever-progressing Truth.

As we move forward in the truth we see more and more of the righteousness of Christ. Truth is what defines right and wrong for us and enables us to live in harmony with the law of God. Here is a little illustration to demonstrate the point: Suppose there was a man that lived a gluttonous life but did not know that it was wrong to do so. When this man comes to the faith and hears the truth that gluttony is sin, the Word then works in his life to free him of his sin and he then lives in harmony with the will of God. So, what was it that made the change? Was it not the Word of Truth? Now suppose this man should run out of truth, what would he then have to bring him more into the image of God? But you see, with an ever-unfolding, ever progressive truth, this man will never cease to be made more into the image of God! This is why it is so important to have the living Spirit of Prophecy active in our midst. This is how we exchange our filthy rags for His beautiful garments (Isa 52:1).

“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD*, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.” – Isa. 55:6-11

When we heed the above counsel and receive the straight testimony of the True Witness; when we receive the correct understanding of the Spirit of Prophecy, then we will see that our own righteousness is as filthy rags (Isa 64:6) and we will finally be saved from our private opinions of what constitutes truth.

Private Interpretation

“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:

Knowing this *first*, that *no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation*. 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*.” – 2Pet. 1:19-21

It goes by without much notice, but private interpretation is the one sin above all others in the church that perpetuates unrighteousness. Why is this? By beholding, we become changed (2Cor. 3:18). Therefore if we are beholding a perversion of the truth, rather than the truth itself, we become changed into that image. Our conception of truth, and thus righteousness, will define who we are and what decisions we make. Praise the Lord that He has decided to continue to send us His truth revealed through his prophets (Amos 3:7) so that we are not left to our own private opinions.

“And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and *there is* no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, ***Do not interpretations belong to God?*** tell me *them*, I pray you.” – Gen. 40:8

Some feel that we should all be able to interpret the Bible as we please, but...

“Are all apostles? *are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?*” – 1Cor. 12:29

We have all been given different roles in the church. One major aspect of a prophet's role is to reveal the hidden things of God (Amos 3:7). Should we follow our own devising, or should we follow the Word of the Lord through the Spirit of Prophecy? Consider the following passages:

“Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong *reasons*, saith the King of Jacob. *Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come*. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold *it* together. Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination *is he that chooseth you*. *I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name*: and he shall come upon princes as *upon* mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay. Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, *He is righteous?* yea, *there is none that sheweth, yea, there is none that declareth, yea, there is none that heareth your words*. The first *shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings*. For I beheld, *and there was no man; even among them, and there was no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word. Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion*.” – Isa. 41:21-29

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.” – Prov. 3:5

“Thus saith the LORD; Cursed *be* the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.” – Jer 17:5

Conclusions Thus Far

The preceding information can be summarized in the following points:

1. The Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy
2. The Spirit of Prophecy was in existence from the gates of Eden and will continue on until the second coming of Christ
3. Heaven's Law and Order is for God to speak through prophets
4. Without living prophets God's people perish
5. We are sanctified by truth and thus the continual unfolding of truth through the Spirit of prophecy is the method through which God designs to bring us to perfection.
6. Interpretations belong to God who reveals His secrets through His servants, the prophets

All of this leads us to the answer of our initial question, "What is the Spirit of Prophecy?"

1. The Spirit of Prophecy is the Testimony *of* Jesus *by* the Holy Ghost and *through* a *living* prophet. Or, the Holy Ghost speaking through a living prophet.

Now, the decision is up to you. Will you receive the love of the truth or will you turn a blind eye to the plain Word of God?

"Arise, shine; for *thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.*" – Isa. 60:1

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and *men loved darkness rather than light*, because their deeds were evil." – John 3:19

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; *because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.* And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned *who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*" – 2Thess. 2:10-12

"Ho, every one that **thirsteth**, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. *Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. **Incline your ear** , and come unto me: hear, and **your soul shall live**;* and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even the sure mercies of David.*" – Isa. 55:1-3

The Spirit of Prophecy In The Advent Movement

Adventists have long held that the two primary identifying characteristics of the remnant church are keeping the commandments of God, and having the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the Spirit of Prophecy (Rev. 12:17; 19:10). Now that we have seen the clear testimony of scripture as to *what* the Spirit of Prophecy is it seems fitting that we should also see what the pioneers of the Advent Movement had to say on this subject.

The majority of the following quotations are self-explanatory and therefore need but little comment if any.

J.N. Loughborough:

Great Second Advent Movement page 467

*The same objections that are raised against manifestations of the gift of prophecy at the present time, might have been urged with the same force in ancient times; i.e., we have the Scriptures, and therefore have no need of such gifts. These same Scriptures tell us, however, that Christ has placed these gifts in the church to do their work **until “that which is perfect [the perfect state] is come,”** and that the church is to “come behind **in no gift**, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

The Prophetic Gift in the Gospel Church page 33

To that people who are not in the dark concerning the coming of the Lord the apostle gives the following weighty exhortations: “Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. *Despise not prophesying.* Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” 1Thess.5:16-21.

It is evident from this language that if the Spirit of the Lord is left to work as God designs, *there will be among the believers of the second advent, good and true manifestations of the prophetic gift.* Murdock’s Syriac translation of this text reads: “Despise not prophesying.” Greenfield, in his Greek lexicon, gives as the meaning of the word here rendered “*prophesyings*,” “*the exercise of the gift of prophecy*, in this sense. 1 Thess.5:20.” With this also agree the lexicons of Parkhurst, Robinson, and Liddel and Scott.

Heavenly Visions page 28

Paul exhorts those who are called the “children of the light,” those who are looking for the second coming of Christ, to “despise not *prophesyings [the exercise of the prophetic gift]*. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” 1 Thess.5:20,21. The apostle well knew that in the last times there would be so much of Satan’s work, and spurious gifts, that *the people of God would be in danger of rejecting the genuine manifestations of the prophetic gift*, of “despising,” before duly considering, the gift; hence the exhortation, “Despise not prophesyings. . . . Hold fast that which is good,” which is equivalent to saying, *There is to be some good manifestations of the gift of prophecy connected with the last church. Do not allow prejudice to arise, and lead to a despising of such a gift before a candid and careful investigation.* Do not at once cast aside a genuine manifestation because you have met something bearing Satan’s mark. Exercise care; for there is to be a true work. Prove it, test it, that the good may be discovered.

Heavenly Visions page 119

Seeing that God had prophets in ancient days, prophets who were divinely commissioned, whose words found no place in the Sacred canon, *cannot God have prophets in these days? Can He not have divinely appointed messengers today with the prophetic gift*, whose writings form no part of the Sacred Scriptures?

Steven Haskell:

The Cross and It's Shadow pages 53-54

Zerubbabel was walking by faith in the words of the prophets who had foretold how and when, Jerusalem would be rebuilt; *but those prophets were dead*, and he now faced difficulties that he might be tempted to think the prophets never expected would arise. Then God sent a **living prophet** with a message of encouragement, *to keep the light burning, and enable Zerubbabel to press forward and complete the work prophesied of by the dead prophets*.

We can not comprehend the word of the Lord without the Spirit to enlighten our minds. The light shines to the degree in which we take the word and risk our all upon it: and *as we come into difficulties in following out the instruction given through the dead prophets, the Lord sends messages of strength and encouragement through the **living prophet**, to enable us to press forward to victory*.

"These are the two sons of oil (light-givers), that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." It is the Spirit of God accompanying the word which has been committed to the people, that will give light. Whatever the prophets of God have revealed to man in the past, is light; and those who have adhered strictly to the testimony of God by His prophets, although it may be hundreds of years after the testimony was given, are spoken of favorably by the **living prophet**, as Zechariah spoke to Zerubbabel.

Bible Hand Book pages 137-138

Spirit of Prophecy in the Remnant Church

- Rev. 12:17; 19:10. *The remnant keep the law of God and have the Spirit of prophecy.*
- 1 Cor. 12:28. **Prophets** in Christian Church.
- Eph. 4:11, 12. Christ left the gift of prophecy in the church.
- Ex. 7:1; 4:15,16. A prophet of the Lord is a spokesman for God.
- 1 Peter 1:10, 11; 2 Peter 1:20, 21. The Spirit from the Father and Christ speaks through the prophets. Heb. 1:1, 2; T., v. 5, p. 661.
- Rev. 1:1. *Steps by which revelation comes*; 1st , God; 2nd , Christ; 3rd , angel; 4th , **the prophet**; 5th , given the people.
- 2 Chron. 36:12; Eze. 3:17; 2 Sam. 23:2. Prophets speak from the mouth of the Lord. T., v. 5, p. 677.
- Rev. 1:2. These messages are called the word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ.
- 1 Cor. 14:1. The best gift.
- Eph. 4:11-14. It brings unity of the faith. Luther and Zwingli were both good men; but there

was not unity between them, *for there was no leading prophet* to give them counsel from God and each followed his own ideas. T., v. , p. 86.

- Joshua 1:2-9. The power of the *message* is not lessened by the death of the prophet.
- Acts 2:16-18. **Prophets** in the last days.
- 1 Cor. 1:4-8. The Spirit of prophecy confirmed in one gives efficiency, and prepares them for the coming of the Lord.

Roswell F. Cottrell:

The following selection was used by Ellen White as the introduction to *Spiritual Gifts Volume 1*.

Spiritual Gifts Volume 1 pages 5-16

The gift of prophecy was manifested in the church during the Jewish dispensation. If it disappeared for a few centuries, on account of the corrupt state of the church towards the close of that dispensation, it re-appeared at its close to usher in the Messiah. Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, "was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied." Simeon, a just and devout man who was "waiting for the consolation of Israel," came by the Spirit into the temple, and prophesied of Jesus as "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel;" and Anna a prophetess "spoke of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." And there was no greater prophet than John, who was chosen of God to introduce to Israel "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

The Christian age commenced with the out-pouring of the Spirit, and a great variety of spiritual gifts was manifested among the believers; and these were so abundant that Paul could say to the Corinthian church, "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." To every man in the church, not to every man in the world, as many have applied it.

Since the great apostasy these gifts have rarely been manifested; and this is probably the reason why professed Christians generally believe that they were limited to the period of the primitive church. *But* is it not on account of the errors and unbelief of the church that the gifts have ceased? And when the people of God shall attain to primitive faith and practice, as they certainly will by the proclamation of the Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus, will not "the latter rain" *again develop the gifts*? Reasoning from analogy *we should expect it*. Notwithstanding the apostasies of the Jewish age, it opened and closed with special manifestations of the Spirit of God. And it is unreasonable to suppose that the Christian age, the light of which, compared with the former dispensation, is as the light of the sun to the feeble rays of the moon, should commence in glory and close in obscurity. And since a special work of the Spirit was necessary to prepare a people for the first advent of Christ, *how much more so for the second*; especially, since the last days were to be perilous beyond all precedent, and false prophets were to have power to show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they should deceive the very elect! But to the Scriptures of truth.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with

new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. Mark 16:15-18.

Says Campbell's translation, "These miraculous powers shall attend the believers." The gifts were not confined to the apostles, but extended to the believers. Who will have them? Those that believe. *How long? There is no limitation; the promise seems to run parallel with the great commission to preach the gospel, and to reach the last believer.*

But it is objected that the promised aid was only to the apostles, and to those who believed through their preaching: that they fulfilled the commission, established the gospel, and that the gifts ceased with that generation. Let us see if the great commission ended with that generation. Matt. 28:19, 20. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.

That the preaching of the gospel under this commission did not end with the primitive church is evident from the promise, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world." He does not say, I am with you, apostles, everywhere, even to the ends of the earth; but it is always, to the end of the world, or age. It will not do to say that the Jewish age is meant, for that had already ended at the cross, I conclude then that the preaching and the belief of the primitive gospel will be attended with the same spiritual aid. The apostles commission belonged to the Christian age, and embraced the whole of it. *Consequently the gifts were only lost through apostasy, and will be revived with the revival of primitive faith and practice.*

In 1 Cor. 12:28, we are informed that God hath set, placed or fixed, certain spiritual gifts in the church. *In the absence of any scriptural proof that he has removed or abolished them, we must think they were intended to remain.* Where is the proof then that they were abolished? In the same chapter where the Jewish Sabbath is abolished, and the Christian Sabbath instituted-a chapter in the Acts of the Mystery of Iniquity, and the Man of Sin. But the objector claims Bible proof that the gifts were to cease, contained in the following text: Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly: but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. 1 Cor, 13:8-13.

Well, this text does foretell the cessation of spiritual gifts, also of faith and hope. *But when were they to cease? We still look forward to the time when*

"Hope shall change to glad fruition,

Faith to sight and prayer to praise."

They are to cease when that which is perfect is come-when we shall no longer see through a glass darkly, but face to face. The perfect day, when the just are made perfect; and see as they are seen, is yet in the future. It is true that the Man of Sin, when arrived at manhood, had put away

such “childish things” as prophecies, tongues and knowledge, and also the faith and hope and charity of the primitive Christians. But *there is nothing in the text to show that God designed to take away the gifts which he had set in the church, till the consummation of her faith and hope-till the surpassing glory of the immortal state should eclipse the most brilliant displays of spiritual power and knowledge, ever manifested in this mortal state.*

The objection founded upon 2 Tim. 3:16, which some have gravely presented, deserves no more than a passing remark. If Paul, in saying that the Scriptures were able to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, meant that nothing more should be written by inspiration, why was he, at that moment, adding to those Scriptures? At least, why did he not drop the pen as soon as that sentence was written? And why did John, thirty years afterwards, write the book of Revelation? This book contains another text which is quoted to prove the abolition of spiritual gifts.

For I testify to every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. Rev. 22:18, 19.

From this text it is claimed that God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, and, in the commencement of the gospel day, by Jesus and his apostles, hath hereby solemnly promised never to communicate anything more to man in that way. Hence all prophesying after this date must be false. This, say they, closes the canon of inspiration. *If so, why did John write his gospel after his return from Patmos to Ephesus?* In doing so did he add to the words of the prophecy of that book written in the isle of Patmos? It is evident from the text, that the caution against adding to or taking from, refers not to the Bible as we have the volume compiled, but to the separate book of Revelation, as it came from the hand of the Apostle. Yet no man has a right to add to or subtract from any other book written by inspiration of God. Did John, in writing the book of Revelation, add anything to the book of Daniel’s prophecy? Not at all. A prophet has no right to alter the word of God. But the visions of John corroborate those of Daniel, and give much additional light upon the subjects there introduced. *I conclude then that the Lord has not bound himself to keep silence, but is still at liberty to speak. Ever be it the language of my heart, Speak, Lord, through whom thou wilt; thy servant heareth.*

Thus *the attempt to prove from Scripture the abolition of spiritual gifts, proves a total failure.* And since the gates of hades have not prevailed against the church, but God still has a people on earth, *we may look for the development of the gifts in connection with the Third Angel’s Message-* a message which will bring back the church to apostolic ground, and make them indeed the light-not darkness-of the world.

Again, we are forewarned that there would be false prophets in the last days, and the Bible gives a test by which to try their teachings, in order that we may distinguish between the true and the false. The grand test is the law of God, which is applied both to the prophesyings and to the moral character of the prophets. If there were to be no true prophesyings in the last days, how much easier to have stated the fact, and thus cut off all chance for deception, then to give a test by which to try them, as though there would be the genuine as well as the false. In Isa. 8:19, 20, is a

prophecy of the familiar spirits of the present time, and the law is given as a test. To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Why say "if they speak not," if there was to be no true spiritual manifestation or prophesying at the same time? Jesus says, Beware of false prophets, . . . ye shall know them by their fruits. Matt. 7:15. This is a part of "the sermon on the mount," and all can see that this discourse has a general application to the church throughout the gospel age. False prophets are to be known by their fruits; in other words, by their moral character. The only standard by which to determine whether their fruits are good or bad, is the law of God. Hence we are brought to the law and to the testimony. True prophets will not only speak according to this word, but they must live according to it. One who speaks and lives thus I dare not condemn.

It always has been a characteristic of false prophets that they see visions of peace; and they will be saying peace and safety when sudden destruction comes upon them. The true will boldly reprove sin, and warn of coming wrath.

Prophesying which contradict the plain and positive declarations of the Word are to be rejected. An example is given in the manner of Christ's second coming. When Jesus ascended to heaven in the sight of his disciples, it was declared most explicitly by the angels, that this same Jesus should so come in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven. Hence Jesus in predicting the false prophets of the last days, says. If they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: Behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. All true prophesying on that point must recognize his visible coming from heaven. Why did not Jesus say, Reject all prophesying at that time, for there will be no true prophets then?

Eph 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.*"

We learn from a previous verse that when Christ ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men. Of these gifts are enumerated apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. *The object for which they were given was the perfecting of the saints in unity and knowledge.* Some, who profess to be pastors and teachers, at the present day, hold that these gifts fully accomplished their object some eighteen hundred years ago, and consequently ceased. Why not then throw aside their titles of pastors and teachers? *If the office of prophet is limited by this text to the primitive church, so is that of evangelist and all the rest; for there is no distinction made.*

Now let us reason a moment upon this point. ***All these gifts were given for the perfecting of the saints in unity, knowledge and spirit.*** Under their influence the primitive church enjoyed for a time that unity. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." And it seems a natural consequence of this state of unity, that "with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." Acts 4:31-33. How desirable such a state of things now! But apostasy with its dividing and blighting influence marred the beauty of the fair church, and clothed her in sackcloth. Division and disorder have been the result. Never was there so great a diversity of faith in Christendom as at the present day. If the gifts were necessary for the unity of the primitive church, *how much more so to restore unity now!* And that it is the purpose of God to restore the unity of the church in the last days, is abundantly evident from

the prophecies. We are assured that the watchmen shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Also, that in the time of the end the wise shall understand. When this is fulfilled, there will be unity of faith with all that God accounts wise; for those that do in reality understand aright, must, necessarily understand alike. *What is to effect this unity, but the gifts that were given for this very purpose?*

From considerations like these, *it is evident that the perfect state of the church here predicted is still in the future; consequently these gifts have not yet accomplished their end.* This letter to the Ephesians was written in a. d. 64, about two year before Paul told Timothy that he was ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand. The seeds of the apostasy were now germinating in the church; for Paul had said ten years before, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." Grievous wolves were now about to enter in, not sparing the flock. The church was not then rising and advancing to that perfection in unity contemplated in the text, but was about to be torn by factions, and districted by divisions. The Apostle knew this; consequently he must have looked beyond the great apostasy, to the period of the gathering of the remnant of God's people, when he said, "*Till we all come into the unity of the faith.*" *Hence the gifts that were set in the church have not yet served out their time.*

1 Thess. 5:19-21. "*Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.*"

In this epistle the Apostle introduces the subject of the second coming of the Lord. He then describes the state of the unbelieving world at that time, saying, "Peace and safety," when the day of the Lord is about to burst upon them, and sudden destruction come upon them as a thief in the night. He then exhorts the church, in view of these things, to keep awake, watch and be sober. Among the exhortations that follow are the words we have quoted, "Quench not the Spirit," etc. Some may think that these three verses are completely detached from each other in sense; but they have a natural connection in the order in which they stand. The person who quenches the Spirit will be left to despise prophesyings, which are the legitimate fruit of the Spirit. "I will pour out my Spirit, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." Joel 2:28. The expression, Prove all things, is limited to the subject of discourse-prophesyings-and we are to try the spirits by the tests which he has given us in his word. Spiritual deceptions and false prophesyings abound at the present time; and doubtless this text has a special application here. But mark, the Apostle does not say, Reject all things; but, Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.

Joel 2:28-32. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young man shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call."

This prophecy of Joel, which speaks of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the last days, *was not all fulfilled at the beginning of the gospel dispensation.* This is evident from the wonders in heaven and in earth, introduced in this text, which were to be precursors of "the great and the

terrible day of the Lord.” Though we have had the signs, that terrible day is still in the future. The whole gospel dispensation may be called the last days, but to say that the last days are all 1800 years in the past, is absurd. They reach to the day of the Lord, and to the deliverance of the remnant of God’s people. “For in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.”

This remnant, existing amid the signs and wonders that usher in the great and terrible day of the Lord, are, doubtless, the remnant of the seed of the woman spoken of in Rev. 12:17 – *the **last** generation of the church on earth*, “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.”

The remnant of the gospel church will have the gifts. War will be waged against them because they keep the commandments of God, and **have** the testimony of Jesus Christ. Rev. 12:17. In Rev. 19:10, *the testimony of Jesus is defined to be the spirit of prophecy.* Said the angel, “I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus.” In chap. 22:9, he repeats the same in substance, as follows: “I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren the prophets.” *From the comparison we see the force of the expression, The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.* But the testimony of Jesus includes all the gifts of that one Spirit. Says Paul, I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 1:4-7. The testimony of Christ was confirmed in the Corinthian church, and what was the result? They come behind in no gift. *Are we not justified then in the conclusion that when the remnant are fully confirmed in the testimony of Jesus, **they will come behind in no gift**, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ?*

R.F.C

J.N. Andrews:

The Review and Herald, Feb. 15, 1870

It is quite generally understood that the Seventh-day Adventists are believers in the **perpetuity** of spiritual gifts.

...

we do believe that the Scriptures plainly reveal the office and work of the Holy Spirit; **which office and work can never cease while man remains upon probation.**

...

Now, it is plain that those who reject the work of the Spirit of God under the plea that the Scriptures are sufficient, do deny and reject all that part of the Bible which reveals the office and work of the Holy Spirit.

...

The object of spiritual gifts is to maintain the *living* work of God in the church.

...

One of the chief gifts of the Spirit of God that He has placed in the New Testament church is the gift of prophecy. Joel 2:28; Acts 2:1-4, 17, 18; 1 Cor. 12:1-31; 14:1-5; Eph. 4:11-13. *This gift the Bible connects with the closing work of this dispensation.* Rev. 12:17; 14:12; 19:10. *Spiritual gifts do not, therefore, cease to be of importance in the sight of God, nor in that of His true people.* And that message which is to accomplish the perfecting of the saints and to fit them for translation, has the Spirit of God connected with it, and speaking out in the management of its work.

James White:

Commenting on Rev. 16:6, James White says:

Advent Review And Sabbath Herald December 2, 1862

It may be asked how the last generation of the wicked can be said to have shed the blood of saints *and prophets*, since the last generation of saints are not to be slain. A reference to Matt. 23:34, 35; 1John 3:15, will explain. These scriptures show that guilt attaches to motive no less than to action. And no generation ever formed a more determined purpose to give the saints to indiscriminate slaughter, than the present one will, not far in the future. See chap. 12:17; 13:15. In motive and purpose they do shed the blood of saints *and prophets*. *The term, **prophets**, shows that the spirit of prophecy will be revived, and that **there will be prophets in the remnant church.***

A Word To The 'Little Flock' page 13

“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 hand-maidens, I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come”. Acts 2:17-20.

“When the day of Pentecost was fully come,” and the disciples were “all with one accord in one place,” filled with the Holy Ghost, “Peter standing up with the eleven,” quoted the above scripture from the prophesy of Joel. His object was to show that the marvelous work which was wrought in the disciples at that time, was a subject of prophesy, and the work of God. I conclude that there is not one Second Advent believer who will take the ground, that all of the prophesy of Joel, quoted by Peter, was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost; *for there is not the least evidence that any part of it was then fulfilled, only that part which related to the pouring out of the Holy Ghost.* We cannot believe that the signs in the sun, and the moon, etc, were seen on that day, or that there were any having visions, or dreaming among them at that exciting hour; for there is no proof of any such thing. A part of this prophesy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost; and ALL of it is to be fulfilled

"IN THE LAST DAYS, SAITH GOD." Dreams and Visions are among the signs that *precede* the great and notable days of the Lord. And as the signs of that day have been, and still are fulfilling, it must be clear to every unprejudiced mind, that the time has fully come, when *the children of God may expect dreams and visions from the Lord*.

*I know that this is a very unpopular position to hold on this subject, even among Adventists; but I choose to believe the word of the Lord on this point, rather than the teachings of men. I am well aware of the prejudice in many minds on this subject; but as it has been caused principally by the preaching of popular Adventists, and the lack of a correct view of this subject; I have humbly hoped to cut it away, with the "sword of the Spirit," from some minds, at least. We will bear it in mind, that these dreams and visions, are to be in the "LAST DAYS". As there cannot be any days later than the last, it is certain that we may expect just such revelations, **until Christ appears in the clouds of heaven**.* I know that it is a very popular opinion among Adventists, that there was nothing more to be revealed by visions, after John closed up the revelation in A. D. 96. But if this opinion is correct, then the last days ended while John was on the isle of Patmos.

The bible is a perfect, and complete revelation. It is our only rule of faith and practice. But this is no reason, why God may not show the past, present, and future fulfillment of his word, in these last days, *by dreams and visions*; according to Peter's testimony. True visions are given to lead us to God, and his written word; but those that are given for a new rule of faith and practice, separate from the bible, cannot be from God, and should be rejected.

...

"Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." ... "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20.

Showing her support for the doctrine of the perpetuity of the gift of prophecy, Ellen White quoted the following passage as the introduction to *Spirit of Prophecy Volume 1*.

Life Sketches pages 330-346

THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY – PERPETUITY AND DESIGN OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

ONCE, man walked with God in Eden. With open face he beheld the glory of the Lord, and talked with God, and Christ, and angels, in Paradise, without a dimming veil between. Man fell from his moral rectitude and innocence, and was driven from the garden, from the tree of life, and from the visible presence of the Lord and his holy angels. Moral darkness, like the pall of death, has since cast its shadows everywhere, and everywhere the blight and mildew of sin have been seen. And amid the general gloom and moral wretchedness, man has wandered from the gates of Paradise for nearly six thousand years, subject to sickness, pain, sorrow, tears, and death. He has also been subject to the temptations and wiles of the devil, so much so that it is the sad history of man, throughout the entire period of his fallen state, that Satan has reigned with almost universal sway.

When all was lost in Adam, and the shades of night darkened the moral heavens, there soon appeared the star of hope in Christ, and with it was established a means of communication between God and man through the gift of prophecy. In his fallen state, man could not converse

face to face with God, and with Christ, and with angels, as when in his Eden purity. But through the ministration of holy angels could the great God speak to him in dreams and in visions. "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." Num.12:6.

*The manifestation of the spirit of prophecy was designed for **all** dispensations. The sacred Record nowhere restricts it to any particular period of time, from the fall to the final restitution.* The Bible recognizes its existence alike in the patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian ages. Through this medium God communed with holy men of old. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, and so extensive was the range of his prophetic vision, and so minute, that he could look down over long ages, and describe the coming of the Lord, and the execution of the last Judgment upon the ungodly. Jude, verses 14,15.

God spoke to his prophets in the Jewish dispensation in visions and in dreams, and opened before them the great things of the future, especially those connected with the first advent of his Son to suffer for sinners, and his second appearing in glory to destroy his enemies, and complete the redemption of his people. If the spirit of prophecy nearly disappeared from the Jewish church for a few centuries toward the close of that dispensation, on account of the corruptions in that church, it re-appeared at its close to usher in the Messiah. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, "was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied." Simeon, a just and devout man, who was "waiting for the consolation of Israel," came by the Spirit into the temple, and prophesied of Jesus as "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel." And Anna, a prophetess, "spoke of him to all them that look for redemption in Jerusalem." And there was no greater prophet than John, who was chosen of God to introduce to Israel "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

The Christian age commenced with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the manifestation of various spiritual gifts. Among these was the gift of prophecy. After commissioning his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel, Jesus says to them: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Mark 16:17,18. On the day of Pentecost, when the Christian dispensation was fully opened, some of these gifts were manifested in a most wonderful manner. Acts 2:1-11. Luke, in giving account of his travels with Paul and others, when a quarter of a century of the Christian age had already passed, after speaking of entering into the house of Philip the evangelist, says: "And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus." Acts 21:9,10. Again, still later, we see the beloved John in the Isle of Patmos, imbued with the spirit of prophecy in all its fullness. The wonderful Revelation was given unto him when more than half a century of the Christian age had passed. And *here the New Testament record leaves us, without a single intimation that the gifts of the Spirit should cease from the church **till the day of glory should be ushered in by the second appearing of Jesus Christ.***

Since the great apostasy, these gifts have rarely been manifested; and, for this reason, professed Christians generally suppose that they were designed to be limited to the period of the primitive church. But from the time of the primitive Christians to the present, there have been manifestations among the most devoted followers of Jesus, which have been recognized by

nearly all of the leading denominations as the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Then should not the errors and the unbelief of the church be assigned as reasons why these manifestations have been so seldom, rather than that God has taken these blessings from the church? When the people of God attain to primitive faith and practice, as they most certainly will under the last message, the latter rain will be poured out, and the gifts *will be revived*. The former rain was given at the commencement of the Christian age, in the time of sowing the gospel seed, to cause it to germinate and take good root. Then the church enjoyed the gifts. And when the latter rain shall be poured out at the close of this dispensation, to ripen the golden harvest for the garner of God, *then will the gifts of the Holy Spirit be manifested in all their fullness*.

To this agree the words of the prophet as quoted by Peter: "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; and I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come." Acts 2:17-20. Notice the following points:-

1. The spirit of prophecy is here mentioned as one of the especial signs of the last days. Its revival is to constitute one of the most noted signs of the approaching end.
2. *The term last days embraces **the very last day**; hence **the manifestations of the spirit of prophecy reach to the end***. To say that these words of the Lord by the prophet were all fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, is virtually saying that the last days ended eighteen centuries ago.
3. There can be no mistake as to the time of the fulfillment of these signs. Christ, in his prophetic discourse to his disciples, in answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world," mentions the darkening of the sun and moon as signs of the end. He locates these signs in these words: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." Matt.24:29. The tribulation here mentioned is that which was upon the church of Christ for 1260 years, from 538 to 1798. It does not read, after those days; but after the tribulation of those days. The days reached to 1798, eighteen years later than the dark day; but the tribulation of the days ceased before the dark day of 1780. The days of tribulation were shortened for the elect's sake. Mark 13:24 makes the matter perfectly plain. "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened." We are therefore shut up to the eighteenth century for the period of the fulfillment of the supernatural darkening of the sun and moon.
4. The same is a matter of prophecy in Rev.6:12. The first event under the sixth seal is the great earthquake of 1755. Then follow the signs in the sun and moon, of 1780, in these words: "The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood." The full moon appeared, through the darkness of the night which followed the dark day of May 19, 1780, as a ball of blood.
5. The prophet Joel describes the same in these words: "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood." This is in appearance only, as it would be absurd to suppose that the great center of light for our world would be actually turned into darkness, and the moon into literal blood. Classed with these signs of the approaching end is *the manifestation of the spirit of prophecy*.

Of all the blessings which God has bestowed upon his people, the gift of his Son excepted, none have been so sacred and so important to their welfare as the gifts of his holy law, and his Holy Spirit. And none have been so well calculated to thwart the plans of Satan, and consequently to stir his rage, as these. And when that people arise in the last generation of men, who shall observe all ten of the precepts of God's holy law, and recognize the revival of the spirit of prophecy, they may expect to feel that bitterness from their opponents which can arise only from the direct inspiration of Satan. "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." Rev.12:17.

The dragon is a symbol of the first great rebel against God's government. The woman is a symbol of the true church. The common and well-understood figure of the remnant represents a small body of Christians *in the last generation of men, just prior to the second coming of Christ*. This body of Christians, waiting for the coming and kingdom of the Redeemer, are keeping the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

We now inquire, What is the testimony of Jesus Christ? The angel gives John the answer to this question in its broadest signification. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev.19:10. The spirit, soul, and substance of prophecy, is the testimony of Jesus Christ. Or, the voice of the prophets relative to the plan and work of human redemption, is the voice of the Redeemer. Christ undertook the work of redemption, and who should inspire a book upon the subject but the Redeemer himself?

The Jewish age, notwithstanding its apostasies, opened and closed with special manifestations of the Spirit of God. And it is not reasonable to suppose that the Christian age, the light of which, compared with the former dispensation, is as the light of the sun to the feeble rays of the moon, should commence in glory, and close in obscurity. And since a special work of the Spirit was necessary to prepare a people for the first advent of Christ, how much more important the work of the Spirit to prepare a people for his second advent.

God has never manifested his power to his people simply for their gratification; but according to their necessities has he wrought for them. Then we may safely conclude that, as his people are passing the perils of the last days in the final struggle with the aroused powers of darkness, when false prophets shall have power to show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect, our gracious God will bless and strengthen his fainting people with the gifts, as well as the graces, of the Holy Spirit.

We have seen that *the manifestation of the spirit of prophecy became necessary* in consequence of man's being separated from the visible presence of God. But *when* the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he shall dwell with them, and God himself shall be with them; Rev.21:3; *when* Christ shall come again with all the holy angels, and receive his people unto himself, that where he shall be, there they may be also; John 14:3; and when man redeemed shall walk and talk with God, and Christ, and angels, in Eden restored; **then** *there will be no further need of the spirit of prophecy*.

When man in Eden stood in all the perfection of his manhood, before the blight of sin had touched anything that God had made for him, and with open face beheld the glory of the Lord, he could

have no need of the spirit of prophecy. But when Eden was lost in consequence of transgression, and man was doomed to grope his way from the gates of Paradise, enshrouded in the moral gloom that resulted from the curse and the reign of Satan, *he needed this light. And **his need in this respect will continue** more or less urgent **until** the restitution, when the redeemed shall walk and talk with God, and with Christ, and with the holy angels, in Eden restored.*

The apostle to the Corinthians clearly sustains this position. He introduces the subject by stating, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." 1Cor.12:1. He deemed the subject of too great importance to leave the church at Corinth in ignorance respecting it. He proposes to instruct them. We shall do well to avail ourselves of the benefit of his teachings.

In this chapter the apostle introduces the human body, with its several members acting in harmony, one dependent upon the other, as an illustration of the Christian church, with its members, and the several gifts God has set in the church. He then makes the application of the figure thus: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." Verses 27,28.

Let it be borne in mind that *God has set prophets*, miracles, and gifts of healings, in the Christian church as verily as he has teachers, helps, and governments. And this expression, "God hath set" them in the church, means more than that he would communicate with his people by his Holy Spirit in the Christian age the same as he had in former dispensations. It conveys the idea that God had especially endowed the Christian church with them. ***He had established them in the church, to remain until the return of her absent Lord.*** *This was done because the church needed them.* Did the primitive church need them? So did the true church need them to light her pathway during the dark period of her persecutions and martyrdom. And *much more does the church need the gifts in pressing her course through the perils of the last days, and in making ready to receive her soon-coming Lord.*

The design of the gifts, and also *the time of their **continuance** in the church*, are definitely expressed by the apostle to the Ephesians: "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.*" Chap.4:11-13.

It cannot be shown that the church did, in the lifetime of Paul, reach the state of unity, knowledge, and perfection, here mentioned. And certainly the church did not enjoy these during her apostasy, 2Thess.2:3, and the period of her flight into the wilderness. Rev.12:6. *Nor has she reached this state of unity, knowledge, and perfection, since the labors of Martin Luther. The church to-day is almost infinitely below this state of unity, knowledge, and perfection. And not until the Christians of the last generation of men shall be brought to the enjoyment of it by the last warning message, and all the means God may employ to prepare them to be translated to Heaven without tasting death, will the ultimate design of the gifts be realized.*

The gifts and callings of God, here mentioned by the apostle, were all given at the same time, for the same objects, and ***were all to reach to the same point of time.*** Were evangelists, pastors, and teachers to *continue to the end*? ***So was the gift of prophecy.*** *Did the period for the manifestation of the spirit of prophecy close with Christ's first apostles?*

Then the commission of evangelists, pastors, and religious teachers, became obsolete eighteen hundred years since.

But Paul, in 1Cor.13, has distinctly shown when the gifts would cease. In the first part of this chapter the apostle discourses upon the pre-eminence of love (improperly translated charity) over the gift of tongues, gift of prophecy, faith, liberality to the poor, and courage to give one's body to be burned. These, in the absence of love, are valueless. He then describes the virtues and riches of love, closing with these words: "Charity [love] never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." Verse 8. While love is the crowning Christian grace here, and will be the crowning glory of the redeemed to all eternity, the gifts will cease with faith and hope. ***At the glorious appearing of the Lord, faith will be lost in sight, hope in fruition, prophecies will fail to be any longer a light to the church,*** tongues will cease to be a sign, and the faint knowledge of the present dim night will vanish before the knowledge of the perfect day as the dim rays of the moon vanish before the light of the rising sun.

Next come the forcible words of verses 9 and 10: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." *We still wait for that which is perfect to come. And while we wait, may our dear, absent Lord manifest himself to his waiting people through the gifts.* "For," says Paul, speaking of the present imperfect state, "we know in part, and we prophesy in part." ***How long shall the spirit of prophecy serve the church? When will it be done away? Answer: "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."*** *This should settle the question of the perpetuity of the gifts in the Christian church.*

The popular view, however, is this: The gifts were given to the primitive church, to remain only during the lifetime of Christ's first apostles. At their death, the gifts were to be removed from the church. *But let it be remembered that a great change takes place when the gifts are to cease, and that change is from an imperfect state to that which is perfect; from the dimness of night to the glory of perfect day.* We need not inquire if such a change took place at the death of the first apostles; for all who have any knowledge of the history of the primitive church, know that whatever changes did take place in the church about the time of the death of the apostles, were not for the better, but decidedly for the worse. Even in Paul's day, the mystery of iniquity already worked in the church. 2Thess.2:7. And the apostle, addressing the elders of the church at Miletus, says: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Acts 20:29,30. But if we apply this great change to the *close* of the present dispensation, and the introduction of the eternal day of glory, all is plain. ***Here we have the clearest proof that the gifts were not to be done away until the second appearing of Christ.***

Paul continues with an illustration of the present imperfect state, and the future life of perfection and glory: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Verse 11. His childhood represents the present imperfect state; his manhood, the perfection of the immortal state. This is evident. Now suppose we are wrong, and that Paul's childhood represents the church in his day, endowed with the gifts; and that his manhood represents the church after his death, stripped of the gifts of the Holy Spirit,

and fast sinking away toward the great apostasy! Absurdity!

And still the apostle continues with another beautiful illustration of the change from the present dispensation, during which the church was to enjoy the comparatively dim light of the gifts, as she walked by faith and hope, to the open glories of the world to come, when the redeemed shall walk with God in Eden restored, and talk face to face with Christ and angels. He says, "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then, face to face." Verse 21. To the view that the gifts were to cease at the death of the first apostles, and that with their death came the glorious change illustrated by these words of the apostle, we need only repeat, Absurdity!

The truth of God upon this subject is consistent and harmonious with itself, and with all divine truth. *The spirit of prophecy, in consequence of the fall and man's separation from the visible presence of God, became a necessity. This necessity has not been obviated by any past change of dispensation. No dispensation needs the gifts of the Holy Spirit more than the Christian age; and at no time in the long period of man's separation from God's visible presence have they been so much needed as amid the perils of the raging tempests of the last days. But when the Redeemer shall come, the controversy be ended, the saints' rest given, and they, all immortal, meet around the throne with angels, and face to face behold the glory of God and the Lamb, the spirit of prophecy will be numbered among Heaven's choicest blessings of the past.*

But the skeptical objector inquires, "Where are the gifts? If your position is correct, why have they not been manifested in the church all along down ever since God set them in the church? Why are not the sick healed by faith now?" We are aware that this is the principal objection brought against the scriptural doctrine of the **perpetuity** of the gifts, therefore it demands especial notice. We reply as follows:-

1. The sick were not always healed by faith in Paul's day. He says (2Tim.4:20), "Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." Again he says to Timothy (1Tim.5:23), "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." God could have answered the prayers of his servant Paul, and raised up Trophimus, and healed Timothy's infirmities, if this had been best. We conclude that God has not designed in any age of the church to manifest his power so far that there should be no sick among Christians. But in cases where it would be for the good of the afflicted, and for his own glory, he has manifested his power, and will manifest it.
2. The unbelief of the professed followers of Christ in the manifestation of spiritual gifts is sufficient reason why they are not more fully manifested. It is said of Christ, "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Matt.13:58. There is an impious unbelief with many at this day, even of some who profess to take the Bible as their guide, which resembles that of those who, mockingly, said of Christ as he hung on the cross, "Let Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." It is sometimes said in reply to the Bible evidences of the **perpetuity** of spiritual gifts, "Just work a few miracles, and we will believe your doctrine." It is not God's plan to gratify such spirits; for should they see as powerful manifestations as were seen in the days of Christ, Paul, and Peter, they would scoffingly attribute it to the power of Satan, or some other cause besides the power of God.

It is humble, confiding faith that moves Omnipotence. Those only who have this faith may expect

the manifestation of the gifts. Mark 2:5: "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Chap.9:23: "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Matt.9:21,22: "For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour." Chap.15:28: "Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."

3. The object of the gifts, as stated by Paul, was "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*." But they have been superseded in the popular churches by human creeds, which have failed to secure scriptural unity. It has been truly said, "The American people are a nation of lords." In a land of boasted freedom of thought and of conscience, like ours, church force cannot produce unity; but has caused divisions, and has given rise to religious sects and parties almost innumerable. Creed and church force have been called to the rescue in vain.

The remedy, however, for this deplorable evil is found in the proper use of the simple organization and church order set forth in the New-Testament Scriptures, and in the means Christ has ordained for the unity and perfection of the church. We affirm that there is not a single apology in all the book of God for disharmony of sentiment or spirit in the church. The means are ample to secure the high standard of unity expressed in the New Testament. Christ prayed that his people might be one, as he was one with his Father. John 17. And Paul appeals to the church at Corinth in these emphatic words: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1Cor.1:10. "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom.15:5,6. The gifts were given to secure this state of unity.

But the popular churches have introduced another means of preserving unity, namely, human creeds. These creeds secure a sort of unity to each denomination; but they have all proved inefficient, as appears from the New Schools and Reformed of almost every creed-bound denomination under heaven. Hence the many kinds of Baptists, of Presbyterians, of Methodists, and of others. There is not an excuse for this state of things anywhere to be found in the book of God. These sects are not on the foundation of unity laid by Jesus Christ, and taught by Paul, the wise master-builder. And the smaller sects who reject human creeds, professing to take the Bible as their rule of faith and practice, yet rejecting the gifts, are not a whit better off. In these perilous times they shake to fragments, yet cry, The Bible! the Bible! We, too, would exalt the Bible, and would say to those who would represent us as taking the gifts instead of the Bible, that we are not satisfied with a part of the sacred volume, but claim as ours the Bible, the whole Bible, the gifts and all.

All the denominations cannot be right, and it may not be wrong to suppose that no one of them is right on all points of faith. To show that they cannot have their creeds and the gifts too, that creeds shut out the gifts, we will suppose that God, through chosen instruments taken from each sect, begins to show up the errors in the creeds of these different denominations. If they received the testimony as from Heaven, it would spoil their creeds. But would they throw them away and come

out on the platform of unity taught by Christ, Paul, and Peter? Never! They would a thousand times sooner reject the humble instruments of God's choice. It is evident that if the gifts were received, they would destroy human creeds; and that if creeds be received, they shut out the gifts.

4. When we consider the great apostasy of the church, the corruption of her pure doctrines, and her sojourn of 1260 years in the wilderness, we are not surprised that we do not find on the pages of her sad history any clearer records of the manifestations of spiritual gifts. We would here call attention to a work entitled "Miraculous Powers," published at the Office of the REVIEW AND HERALD, in which may be found testimonies from not only the eminently pious, but from many of the learned, and from some of the most reliable historians, fairly representing the faith of the church upon the subject of spiritual gifts. We do not rely upon the testimony of men as proof of our position; but after being established in the doctrine of the perpetuity of spiritual gifts from the plain testimony of God's word, it is a matter of unspeakable joy to find that on this vital doctrine our faith is in harmony with the good, the humble, and the prudent, ever since Christ said to his first ministers, "These signs shall follow them that believe."

Infinite wisdom has doubtless withheld the gifts to a great extent lest Satan take advantage of the ignorance and weakness of the people of God, and push them over into fanaticism. Many who have supposed that they were favored with manifestations of the Spirit of God, have regarded themselves as being quite out of danger. They soon became lifted up with pride in spiritual things, and were Satan's easy prey.

If it was necessary that Paul should have a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he become exalted through the abundance of revelations with which he was favored, it is a reasonable conclusion that all who seek to walk with God, and share all the spiritual blessings of the Christian age, are also in danger of exaltation and the wiles of the devil. If he can push one such to extremes and fanaticism, he disgraces the vital part of Christianity, and gains a greater victory than in holding a hundred souls in cold formality. The history of Luther, the Wesleys, and others, who by the power of a living faith led the church from the dark shades of error and formality to a clearer light, proves the necessity of the mind's being well balanced with caution. And he who sees no need of caution here is not far from some delusive snare of Satan. But in walking softly and humbly before God, in strict watchfulness and fervent prayer to be kept by the power of God from the wiles of Satan, there is safety. God has great blessings in store for his people, and will bestow them as fast as they can make a right use of them to their good and his glory.

This next quote was used by Ellen White as the introduction to *Spiritual Gifts Volume 3*.

Spiritual Gifts Volume 3 pages 9-32

IN approaching this subject we are aware that we shall be met with unbelief, and, by many, with settled prejudice. Popular opinion, and almost universal feeling, upon the subject, are against us. Many feel very strongly opposed to the doctrine that *the gifts were designed for the entire Christian dispensation, and they know not why*. There is a most singular propensity to unwarrantable liberality in the men of this generation to carry back those things which belong to them, and give them to the people of past ages. The Universalist gives all the threatened judgments of the Almighty to old Jerusalem, and most all are agreed in giving the Sabbath to the

Jews, and the gifts to the first generations of Christians. But it is a scriptural fact that God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world – not the Jews only, but the world, and that decree has not been revoked. Jesus announced the fact that the Sabbath was made for man – not the Jews alone, but for man, for the race. *It is also a **scriptural fact** that the gifts were put in the church, to **remain** in the church **till** the perfect day shall come, when hope shall be lost in fruition, and faith in sight.* We present as the ground-work of the scriptural doctrine of the **perpetuity** of spiritual gifts, the

ORIGINAL COMMISSION

Mark 16:15-20: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into Heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”

Matt. 28:18-20. “All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

This high commission relates to the gospel, to faith, to baptism, to salvation, and to spiritual gifts. The gospel was to be preached as long as there were sinners to hear it. Faith is equally requisite throughout the Christian age. Baptism is a perpetual ordinance in the church, and the ministers of the nineteenth century baptize “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” because the original commission requires it. The terms of salvation stated in this commission were to be held out as long as sinners might be saved. Running parallel with all these, we find in the same commission spiritual gifts. In absence of proof that the gifts were to be restricted to any particular age of the Christian church, *this commission alone is sufficient evidence of their **perpetuity**.*

Some make a distinction between the apostles, and those who should believe on their word, on this wise: The apostles had the gifts, the believers were not to have them; and they think they see this distinction between the two classes in our Lord’s prayer. John 17. We reply to this by quoting the words of our Lord in the original commission, as follows: “And these signs shall follow them that believe.” Or, as Dr. Geo. Campbell translates, “These miraculous powers shall attend the believers.” Or, as Wakefield renders, “These signs will accompany believers.” When it can be shown that to believe was required of the first Christians only, then it may be proved that the gifts were for them alone.

The gracious promise of our Lord in this commission, when he says, "And lo, I am with you alway, *even unto the end of the world*," is the strongest proof of the **perpetuity** of the gifts. He was not to be personally with his people, no; but how was he to be with them? The inspired record states that after the Lord was received up into Heaven, "they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following."

This promise cannot be restricted to the life-time of the chosen twelve, nor the Christians of the first century, *for it extends to the end of the world [aion] age*. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," to the end of the Christian age. If it be said that the Jewish age is here meant, we reply, That dispensation closed with the death of Christ, forty-two days before this commission was given. We give two passages as proof. Col.2:14. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Dan.9:27. "In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease." This prophecy was fulfilled at the death of the Messiah, in the middle of the last of the seventy weeks. There the Jewish typical sacrifices ceased to be of any virtue, when the great antitypical Sacrifice was offered. Christ gave this commission just before his ascension, Mark 16:19, which was at least forty-two days after his crucifixion.

Again, to suppose that the end of the world here means the close of the Jewish age, would be to carry back the gospel, with all the other specifications in the commission, to the Jewish age, to close with that dispensation, and leave the present without it. This view is too absurd to need any further comment.

We now come to the testimony of Paul. Eph.4:4-13. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 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."

The apostle first presents the subject of unity, in the declaration that there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. He then presents the gifts *as the means by which God designed to secure the unity of the church*. He refers to Christ's ascension, when he led up to Heaven a multitude of captives from their graves, as the time when the gifts were bestowed. He then mentions some of the gifts, given at the same time, for the same objects, and all to extend to the same point of time.

It will be admitted that evangelists, pastors, and teachers, were to extend to the end of the Christian age. Then why not the others? If it be said that the state of unity and perfection described by the apostle, is in the past history of the church, then we reply that evangelists, pastors, and teachers, ceased with that happy state of things. *But he who admits the perpetuity of these, must acknowledge the perpetuity of the others.*

It is worthy of notice that Paul's letter to the Ephesians was written A. D. 64, and that from that

point it looks to the future for that unity and perfection of the church to be accomplished by the gifts, “*till we all come in the unity of the faith,*” says the apostle. If Paul could not see this unity and perfection in his day, or in the past, certainly we cannot see it in the past history of the church; hence the **perpetuity** of the gifts, and *their revival in the last days* in great power to unite and perfect the church ready for translation to Heaven at the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, has spoken very definitely upon this subject of spiritual gifts. In 1Cor.12:1, he says: “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.” He regarded this subject as one of the *highest importance*, and urges an understanding of it. But in all he has said relative to it, *he has not once intimated that the gifts were to cease before the perfect day of glory should come*. The apostle proposes to instruct the Corinthians on the subject. He would not have them ignorant in regard to it. Therefore if the gifts were designed for the first Christians only, we might expect to find somewhere in his epistles to them, some instruction to the point. We affirm that there is not an intimation of the kind to be found in his letters to them. But *Paul does clearly point out the time when the gifts will cease*. 1Cor.13:8-12. “Charity [agapn- love,] never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But *when that which is perfect is come, then* that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

The apostle here contrasts the mortal state with the immortal; the present imperfect, with that which will be perfect; the cloudy present while we walk by faith, with the open glory of the life to come. Here, we only know in part, prophesy in part; there, that which is in part, will be done away. Here, we see through a glass darkly; there, face to face. Here, we know in part; there, we shall know, even as we are known. Charity, or love, will never end. Here, it is the highest Christian grace; there, it will be the crowning glory of immortals for ever and for ever. In this sense, love will never fail. But prophecies will fail, tongues will cease, and knowledge will vanish away. The light of Heaven through the dim medium of these, and the other gifts of the Holy Spirit, is represented as being only in part, and is to be superseded by the perfect day of glory *when we may talk face to face with God, Christ, and angels, as our first parents talked with God in Eden before sin entered*. But **when?** This is the vital question. **When** were the gifts to be done away? Let Paul answer: “But *when that which is perfect is come, then* that which is in part shall be done away.” “And let all the people say, Amen.”

The apostle presents the gifts more fully in 1Cor.12:28: “And God set some in the church; first, apostles; secondarily, *prophets*; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.”

God set them in the church. And where is the text that declares that they have been set out of the church? Here are eight gifts mentioned, and given in their order of importance. That “first,” “secondarily,” “thirdly,” and so on, refer to importance, and *not to time*, is evident from the fact that Paul in this connection dwells largely upon the relative value of some of the gifts, and in verse 31 says, “Covet earnestly the best gifts.”

1Cor.1:4-8. “I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by

Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; *even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who shall also confirm you *unto the end*, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

The gifts were planted in the Christian church. God set them there. And we judge that the Corinthians shared largely of their benefits, from the fact that Paul in his epistles to them, occupies much space in speaking definitely in regard to their proper exercise. In the above quotation the apostle thanks God on their behalf for the grace bestowed upon them by Jesus Christ; that they were enriched in all utterance and knowledge, *even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them*. If we turn to Rev. 19:10, for an inspired definition of the testimony of Jesus, we read, “*For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*” By *this* they were enriched in knowledge and utterance.

However applicable this testimony might have been to the church at Corinth at the time the apostle wrote, or to Christians from that day to this, certainly especial reference is made to the last days in the expressions, “*waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*,” “*the end*,” “*the day of our Lord Jesus Christ*.” Hence verse 7, “So that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,” teaches the **perpetuity** of the gifts, and the privilege of the waiting ones to enjoy them all. The end here mentioned is evidently the end of the age.

Here, in this very connection, the subject of perfect unity is introduced. Read verse 19. Paul taught the Ephesians, chap.4:11-14, that the gifts were given “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.” He exhorts the Corinthians to “all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment;” and this, too, in connection with the statement, “that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Then right here comes in *the restitution of the gifts* to unite and prepare the waiting ones for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

If an effort be made to carry this testimony back, and restrict it to the very members of the Corinthian church living when Paul wrote, then we inquire, Was that what the apostle calls the day of our Lord Jesus Christ? Did they scripturally wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ? Did “the end” then come? All well-instructed Adventists will answer these questions negatively. The present is the time to scripturally wait for the second coming of Christ, which event is associated in the New Testament with “the end.”

The epistles to the Corinthians were written for the benefit of the Christian church, not for those Christians only then living at Corinth, but for the church, and some portions have a special application to the present time. We will call attention to two passages where the apostle apparently, by the use of the word *we*, addresses only those then living, and yet the events of which he speaks are in the future. In chap.15:51,52, Paul says, “Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be

changed.” Shall we say that the word “we,” used three times in this quotation, embraces only Paul and the members of the church at Corinth then living? Circumstances will not admit of so narrow an application. Paul and his brethren at Corinth did sleep – die. The last trump did not then sound. And none of them were changed to immortality in the twinkling of an eye. *Hence this testimony has a special application to Christians who are alive on earth at the second coming of Christ.*

The apostle says, 1Thess.4:16,17, “For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words.” Here he again uses the word, we, but the events mentioned did not occur in Paul’s day. He and his brethren at Thessalonica were not translated to heaven without seeing death. The chapter closes with the above quotation, and the next opens with the continuation of the same subject.

Chap. 5:1-4. “But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For, when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.” The day of the Lord is the day of “sudden destruction.” It is the day of wrath which is in the Old and New Testaments associated with the second advent of Christ. This day is not in the past, hence the language is not applicable to the Christians of past generations. The Christians of the last generation – the very men and women who are to be living on the earth when the day of the Lord comes – are here addressed. Hence all true Adventists will regard themselves as the “brethren” Paul addresses, and his language especially applicable to the present time. He continues in this chapter without change, setting forth practical duties applicable to those who are watching for the approach of the day of the Lord, and in verses 19-21, says, “*Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings.* Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” Here are three very important injunctions:

1. “Quench not the Spirit.” We quench fire with water. And prominent among the means of quenching the Spirit of God is unbelief. Jesus in his own country did not many mighty works because of their unbelief. There is at the present time almost a universal state of unbelief in regard to the operations of the Holy Spirit, especially in the manifestation of the gifts. Unbelief shuts the Spirit of God away from the mind. It quenches the Spirit, and leaves the masses exposed to the delusions of these last days.

Again, those who by unbelief quench the Spirit in these last days will be illy prepared to share in the great blessings which God promises by the prophet Joel, quoted by Peter, 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 "former rain" was given on the day of pentecost, and enjoyed by the early Christians, to cause the gospel seed to germinate and take root. The "latter rain" is coming to ripen the golden harvest for the garner of God. Take care, dear reader, lest unbelief in you quench the Spirit, and shut you away from this great blessing designed for "them that believe."

2. "Despise not prophesyings." We are here warned of one of the dangers of the last days. The pretensions of Ann Lee, the mother of the Shakers, the corrupt prophets of Mormonism, and the one thousand and one of Satan's medium prophets, devoted to the cause of Spiritualism, with all its baseness, have struck the world with disgust at anything like the supernatural. The Devil got these things up to not only destroy many souls by them, but *to disgust and drive others as far as possible to unbelief in regard to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Hence the danger of indiscriminately despising all prophesyings.*
3. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." The three declarations, "Quench not the Spirit; Despise not prophesyings; Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," have a close relation to each other. Therefore the "all things" to be proved, do not mean every thing in the wide world, for this would be imposing an unreasonable tax upon believers; hence the expression must be limited to the subject of prophesying. Despise not prophesyings, but prove them, and separate the genuine from the counterfeit coin of the Devil, and that which is good, which is from the Spirit of God, which will stand the test, hold fast. We will here give three rules by which true and false prophesyings may be known:
4. Matt. 7:15-20. "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. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
5. Isa.8:19,20. "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."
6. False prophets speak smooth things, prophecy lies, and cry, Peace and safety, which has ever been pleasing to unconsecrated professors; hence the love of the peace and safety in the delusion of Spiritualism. Jer.14:14. "Then the Lord said unto me, The prophets prophecy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophecy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart." Chap.23:16,17. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts. Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophecy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you." Chap.8:10,11. "For every one

from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness. From the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.”

Chap. 5:30,31. “A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?”

Isa. 30:8-11. “Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever; that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.”

On the other hand the prophets of God have faithfully reproved sin, and borne a testimony which has called down upon their heads the wrath of the self-righteous deceived.

Joel 2:28-32, next claims our attention. “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; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.”

We call attention to the following points in this prophecy –

1. The manifestations of the Holy Spirit noted in this prophecy, are in connection with the signs of the near approach of the great and terrible day of the Lord. In fact, *they constitute one of those signs*.
2. The calling on the name of the Lord, and the deliverance of the remnant, spoken of in close relation to the great day of the Lord, evidently refer to the closing scenes of the history of the church in this mortal state. The oppressed people of God are yet to raise to heaven one united day and night cry for deliverance. Luke 28. This is symbolized by the message of prayer of the fourth angel of Rev.14:15. And in answer to this prayer, the remnant which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus, will find deliverance.
3. We object to that narrow-souled theology which will not allow the old ladies to have dreams because the prophecy says, “your old men shall dream dreams;” and that will not allow young women to have visions because the prophecy says, “your young men shall see visions.” These stingy critics seem to forget that “man,” and “men,” in the Scriptures generally mean both men and women. The Book says that it is “appointed unto men once to die.” Don’t women die? “Unto you, O man, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men.” Don’t the Lord call women? But the prophecy does say, “Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.”

On the day of Pentecost the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with

other tongues, to the great amazement of the multitude. Some, unacquainted with the operations of the Holy Spirit, said, "These men are full of new wine." Peter answered, "These men are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit," etc.

The prophecy of Joel applies to the Christian age. And we do not object to applying the term, "last days," here used by Peter, to this entire age, though it may have a more limited meaning. But let this fact be borne in mind, that the great events of the prophecy are in close connection with, and are signs of, the great and notable day of the Lord. The Spirit was given on the day of Pentecost; hence Peter, pointing to its influence upon believers on that occasion, could say, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." That was the early rain. Believers have ever since enjoyed a degree of the Holy Spirit, and from time to time God has wonderfully manifested his power. But, for the close of the dispensation, is reserved the latter rain, the pouring out of the Spirit. Here is the fulfillment of the burden of the prophecy.

We object to that stupid blindness which has the entire prophecy fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, and hence, the "last days" were past more than eighteen hundred years ago. We find in the record only the exercise of the gift of tongues. There is no account of dreams or visions on that day. Certainly the outsiders might well have been amazed on beholding old men asleep, dreaming in the midst of the excitement and uproar of the occasion. And well might they have supposed such to be stone drunk. Again, was the sun turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, on the day of Pentecost? And was that the great and terrible day of the Lord? No! no! The "last days" must embrace the last day. Should we say that the leaves of the New Testament were the last leaves of our Bible, we should speak correctly; yet they would embrace the last leaf. It would be equally correct to call the book of Revelation, or the two last leaves of the Bible, the last leaves. But in each case, the last leaves embrace the very last leaf. So with the last days. If we call the whole Christian age, or the last century, or the last thirty years, the last days, in each case the last days must embrace the very last day. With this view of the subject we read with delight the prophetic description, Joel 2:28-32, of the termination of the present age with gracious blessings upon the people of God. The Christian age will terminate with glory to the righteous; yet a severe conflict with the dragon host is just ahead.

Rev.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.*"

The woman is a symbol of the church, and the remnant of the church represents the Christians of *the last generation of men, living just prior to the second advent*. The dragon makes war on these for keeping the commandments of God, Sabbath and all, *and having the testimony of Jesus Christ, which, according to the inspired definition of chap.19:10, "is the spirit of prophecy."* Here, then, are the causes of the dragon's warfare upon the remnant. They teach the observance of the ten commandments, *and the revival of the gifts, and acknowledge the gift of prophecy among them*. When the Devil got one foot upon the fourth commandment, and the other upon the gifts planted in the Christian church by Jesus Christ, then his satanic majesty was filled with revengeful delight. But when the remnant, whom God designs to fit for translation to heaven without seeing death, "ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein," then the dragon is wroth, and makes war on them.

The true spirit of the dragonic host, which is already being somewhat developed, is vividly described in Isa. 30:8-13, as being manifested just prior to the sudden destruction of those who hate the pure testimony, and love smooth and deceitful things.

"Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come forever and ever [*margin, "the latter day"*]; that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits: get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us. Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon: therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant."

But the skeptical objector inquires, "Where are the gifts? If your position be correct, why have they not been manifested in the church all along down ever since God set them in the church? Why are not the sick healed by faith now?" We are aware that this is the principal objection brought against the scripture doctrine of the perpetuity of the gifts, therefore it demands especial notice. We reply to it as follows:

1. The sick were not always healed by faith in Paul's day. He says [2Tim. 4:20], "Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." Again he says to Timothy, [1Tim.5:23], "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." God could have answered the prayers of his servant Paul, and raised up Trophimus, and healed Timothy's infirmities, if this had been best. We conclude that God has not designed in any age of the church to manifest his power so far that there should be no sick among Christians. But in cases where it would be for the good of the afflicted, and for his own glory, he has manifested his power, and will manifest it.
2. The unbelief of the professed followers of Christ in the manifestation of spiritual gifts is sufficient reason why they are not more fully manifested. It is said of Christ, "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Matt. 13:58. There is an impious unbelief with many at this day who profess to take the Bible as their guide, which resembles that of those who, mockingly, said of Christ as he hung on the cross, "Let Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe." It is sometimes said in reply to the Bible evidences of the *perpetuity* of spiritual gifts, "Just work a few miracles, and

we will believe your doctrine.” It is not God’s plan to gratify such spirits; for should they see as powerful manifestations as were seen in the days of Christ, of Paul, and Peter, they would scoffingly attribute it to the power of Satan, or some other cause besides the power of God.

It is humble, confiding faith that moves Omnipotence. Those only who have this faith may expect the manifestation of the gifts. Mark 2:5. “When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.” Chap. 9:23. “Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” Matt. 9:21,22. “For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her he said, Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.” Chap. 15:28. “Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.”

3. The gifts have been superseded in the popular churches by human creeds. The object of the gifts, as stated by Paul, was “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.” These were Heaven’s appointed means to secure the unity of the church. Christ prayed that his people might be one, as he was one with his Father. Read John 17. Paul exhorted the Corinthians in the name of Christ to be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. Read 1Cor. 1:10; Rom. 15:5; Phil. 2:1,2; 1Pet. 3:8; 5:5. *The gifts were given to secure this state of unity.*

But the popular churches have introduced another means of preserving unity, namely, human creeds. These creeds secure a sort of unity to each denomination; but they have all proved inefficient, as appears from the “New Schools” and “Reformed” of almost every creed-bound denomination under heaven. Hence the many kinds of Baptists, of Presbyterians, and of Methodists, etc., etc. There is not an excuse for this state of things anywhere to be found in the Book of God. These sects are not on the foundation of unity laid by Jesus Christ, and taught by Paul, the wise master builder. And the smaller sects who reject human creeds, professing to take the Bible as their rule of faith and practice, yet reject the gifts, are not a whit better off. In these perilous times they shake to fragments, yet crying, the Bible! the Bible! We, too, would exalt the Bible, and would say to those who would represent us as taking the gifts instead of the Bible, that we are not satisfied with a part of the Sacred Volume, but claim as ours the Bible, and the whole Bible, gifts and all.

All the denominations cannot be right, and it may not be wrong to suppose that no one of them is right on all points of faith. To show that they cannot have their creeds and the gifts too, that *creeds shut out the gifts*, we will suppose that God, through chosen instruments taken from each sect begins to show up the errors in the creeds of these different denominations. If they receive the testimony as from Heaven, it would spoil their creeds. But would they throw them away and come out on the platform of unity taught by Christ, Paul, and Peter? Never! never! *They would a thousand times sooner trample the humble instruments of God's choice into the dust.* It is evident that if the gifts were received, they would destroy human creeds, and that if creeds be received, they shut out the gifts. The second angel's message brought the Adventists from the creed-bound churches, where they could be reached by the gifts, be united and prepared for the coming of the Lord.

4. When we consider the great apostasy of the church, the corruption of her pure doctrines and her sojourn of 1260 years in the wilderness, we are not surprised that we do not find on the pages of her sad history any clearer records of the manifestations of spiritual gifts.

Infinite wisdom has doubtless withheld them to a great extent lest Satan take advantage of the ignorance and weakness of the people of God, and push them over into fanaticism. Many who have supposed that they were favored with manifestations of the Spirit of God, have regarded themselves as being quite out of danger. They soon became lifted up with pride in spiritual things, and were Satan's easy prey.

If it was necessary that Paul should have a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet him, lest he become exalted through the abundance of revelations with which he was favored, it is a reasonable conclusion that all who seek to walk with God, and share all the spiritual blessings of the Christian age, are also in danger of exaltation and the wiles of the Devil. If he can push one such to extremes and fanaticism, he disgraces the vital part of Christianity, and gains a greater victory than in holding a hundred souls in cold formality. The history of Luther, the Wesleys, and others, who by the power of a *living* faith led the church from the dark shades of error and formality to a clearer light, proves the necessity of the mind's being well balanced with caution. And he who sees no need of caution here is not far from some delusive snare of Satan. But in walking softly and humbly before God, in strict watchfulness and fervent prayer to be kept by the power of God from the wiles of Satan, there is safety. *God has great blessings in store for his people, and will bestow them as fast as they can make a right use of them to their good, and his glory.* Amen.

1. W.

Ellen White:

Spirit of Prophecy Volume 4 page 221

It is the lot of God's servants to suffer opposition and reproach from their contemporaries. *Now, as in the time of our Saviour, men build the sepulchers and sound the praises of the dead prophets, while they persecute the **living messengers** of the Most High.*

The Great Controversy Introduction pages vii-x

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. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16, 17, R.V.

*Yet the fact that God has revealed His will to men through His word, has not rendered needless the **continued** presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit.* On the contrary, the Spirit was promised by our Saviour, to open the word to His servants, to illuminate and apply its teachings. And since it was the Spirit of God that inspired the Bible, it is impossible that the teaching of the Spirit should ever be contrary to that of the word.

The Spirit was not given—nor can it ever be bestowed—to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. Says the apostle John, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1. And Isaiah declares, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20.

Great reproach has been cast upon the work of the Holy Spirit by the errors of a class that, claiming its enlightenment, profess to have no further need of guidance from the word of God. They are governed by impressions which they regard as the voice of God in the soul. But the spirit that controls them is not the Spirit of God. This following of impressions, to the neglect of the Scriptures, can lead only to confusion, to deception and ruin. It serves only to further the designs of the evil one. Since the ministry of the Holy Spirit is of vital importance to the church of Christ, *it is one of the devices of Satan, through the errors of extremists and fanatics, to cast contempt upon the work of the Spirit and cause the people of God to neglect this source of strength which our Lord Himself has provided.*

In harmony with the word of God, *His Spirit was to **continue** its work throughout the period of the gospel dispensation.* During the ages while the Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament were being given, *the Holy Spirit did not cease to communicate light to individual minds, apart from the revelations to be embodied in the Sacred Canon.* The Bible itself relates how, through the Holy Spirit, men received warning, reproof, counsel, and instruction, in matters in no way relating to the giving of the Scriptures. And mention is made of *prophets* in different ages, of whose utterances nothing is recorded. *In like manner, **after** the close of the canon of the Scripture, the Holy Spirit was **still** to **continue** its work, to enlighten, warn, and comfort the children of God.*

Jesus promised His disciples, "The Comforter *which is the Holy Ghost*, whom the Father will send

in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "When He, *the Spirit of truth*, is come, He will guide you into all truth: . . . and He will show you things to come." John 14:26; 16:13. Scripture plainly teaches that these promises, *so far from being limited to apostolic days, extend to the church of Christ in all ages*. The Saviour assures His followers, "I am with you always, *even unto the end of the world*." Matthew 28:20. And Paul declares that the gifts and manifestations of the Spirit were set in the church "*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.*" Ephesians 4:12, 13.

For the believers at Ephesus the apostle prayed, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe." Ephesians 1:17-19. The ministry of the divine Spirit in enlightening the understanding and opening to the mind the deep things of God's holy word, was the blessing which Paul thus besought for the Ephesian church.

After the wonderful manifestation of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, Peter exhorted the people to repentance and baptism in the name of Christ, for the remission of their sins; and he said: "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 2:38, 39.

In immediate connection with the scenes of the great day of God, the Lord by the prophet Joel has promised a special manifestation of His Spirit. Joel 2:28. This prophecy received a partial fulfillment in the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; *but it will reach its full accomplishment in the manifestation of divine grace which will attend the closing work of the gospel*.

The great controversy between good and evil will increase in intensity to the very close of time. In all ages the wrath of Satan has been manifested against the church of Christ; *and God has bestowed His grace and Spirit* upon His people to strengthen them to stand against the power of the evil one. When the apostles of Christ were to bear His gospel to the world and to record it for all future ages, they were especially endowed with the enlightenment of the Spirit. But as the church approaches her final deliverance, Satan is to work with greater power. He comes down "having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Revelation 12:12. He will work "with all power and signs and lying wonders." 2 Thessalonians 2:9. For six thousand years that mastermind that once was highest among the angels of God has been wholly bent to the work of deception and ruin. And all the depths of satanic skill and subtlety acquired, all the cruelty developed, during these struggles of the ages, will be brought to bear against God's people in the final conflict. And in this time of peril the followers of Christ are to bear to the world the warning of the Lord's second advent; and a people are to be prepared to stand before Him at His coming, "without spot, and blameless." 2 Peter 3:14. *At this time the special endowment of divine grace and power is not less needful to the church than in apostolic days.*

Loma Linda Messages page 33

"Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper

.”

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.”

Two texts are here set before God’s people: two conditions for success. The law spoken by Jehovah himself, *and the spirit of prophecy*, are the two sources of wisdom to guide His people in every experience. Deuteronomy 4:6. “This is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, who shall say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.”

The law of God and *the Spirit of Prophecy* go hand in hand to guide and counsel the church, and *whenever* the church has recognized this by obeying His law, *the spirit of prophecy* has been sent to guide her in the way of truth.

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*.” This prophecy points out clearly that the remnant church will acknowledge God in His law *and will have the prophetic gift*. Obedience to the law of God, and *the spirit of prophecy* has always distinguished the true people of God, *and the test is usually given on present manifestations*.

In Jeremiah’s day the people had no question about the message of Moses, Elijah, or Elisha, but they did question and put aside the message sent of God to Jeremiah until its force and power was wasted and there was no remedy but for God to carry them away into captivity.

Likewise in the days of Christ the people had learned that Jeremiah’s message was true, and they persuaded themselves to believe that if they had lived in the days of their fathers they would have accepted his message, but at the same time they were rejecting Christ’s message, of whom all the prophets had written.

As the third angel’s message arose in the world, which is to reveal the law of God to the church in its fullness and power, *the prophetic gift was also immediately restored. This gift has acted a very prominent part in the development and carrying forward of this message.*

In the light of these statements we can better understand what Ellen White meant in the following well known quote:

Manuscript Releases Volume 10 page 311

The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18). Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God’s remnant people in the true testimony. He will bring in spurious visions to mislead, and will mingle the false with the true, and so disgust people that they will regard everything that bears the name of visions as a species of fanaticism; but honest souls, by contrasting false and true, will be enabled to distinguish between them.

Alonzo T. Jones:

The Home Missionary Articles November 1893

But you can see how we are coming face to face, and into close combat with the beast and his image. You can see that. Well then, brethren, that being so, *is it not important that you and I become thoroughly acquainted with the spirit of prophecy? Not simply acquainted with a person who has the spirit of prophecy. Not simply become thoroughly acquainted with a person who is a prophet, but become thoroughly acquainted with the spirit of prophecy itself.* There is a difference between having confidence in the spirit of prophecy. You may have confidence in a prophet because you are acquainted with that person and have confidence in the person, and have had opportunities to understand the claims of that particular person to be a prophet. But *if God should speak by **some other one***, to whom you had no opportunity to apply the physical tests that would satisfy you that that person was a genuine prophet, then how would you know whether that person was a prophet of the Lord or not?

*This is worth considering, because **there are going to be more prophets** before the third angel's message closes, and that you may see that, I will read a passage. Second chapter of Acts, 17th verse: "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"—O no; your *daughter* shall prophesy. **Is that it?** "*Your daughters*;" **plural number.** That is not all. "*Your sons.*" Whose sons?—Your **sons**, and your **daughters**. Is that so? Well now, suppose one of them should prophesy some day, how would you know whether it was true or false? That is the question. Suppose some one should write a testimony to you as from the Spirit of God, some day, how would you know whether that were true or false? You had no opportunity to see that person in vision, when the matter was given; you had no opportunity to apply the physical tests which the Bible has given.*

The Lord has given physical tests which, when they can be applied, are proper enough; we cannot do without them, it is all well enough; but suppose a testimony comes really from the Lord to me, from one whom I never knew to be a prophet or anything of the kind—we will say it is really from the Lord. How am I to know whether that is genuine or not, when I have never applied, and have had no chance to apply, any of the physical tests which the Bible gives? How can I tell? Before believing that testimony and acting upon it, am I to wait until I can see that person have a vision and apply all the physical tests that the Bible has given, in order to know whether it be a true testimony or not? The testimony might be very urgent. It might be some important duty laid upon me, but am I to wait to hear whether that person from which it comes has had a vision, or wait till I see that person in vision in order to tell whether it is true or false? *Brethren, there is a better way. "My sheep know my voice, and they follow me."*

Now that you may see that there may arise such occasions as that, I will read of one occasion that did arise. Turn to 2 Chron., 20th chapter and 11th verse. A great mass of heathen came up against Judah to destroy them, as they are massing the heathen against us now to destroy us. Jehoshaphat was king. He called all the people together, and they prayed unto the Lord and fasted. He said then, beginning with the 11th verse:—

"Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children."

They were in a strait; they wanted help from God, and nothing would answer but help from God. What then?—

"Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation; and he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's."

Did he have a vision there, and that whole multitude have a chance to come up and apply all the physical tests that the Bible gives in order to be sure whether that was from the Lord or not? *There is no evidence written there that he had a vision at all.* The Spirit of God came upon him in the midst of the congregation, and he prophesied in the name of the Lord, and it was true, and the people knew that it was from God. *How did they know it?—Ah, they knew his voice.*

I am not saying anything at all against the application of all the physical tests that God has given. I am only saying that when we have no opportunity to apply these, *you and I need to know his voice that we may answer when the Lord speaks*, and we may know what to do when he speaks, even though we have not the opportunity of applying these tests. Therefore, as God has promised that your sons and your daughters shall prophesy—remember *that is not all*. "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." *Sons, daughters, young men, old men, that is not all yet.* "And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." *Sons, daughters, young men, old men, servants, and handmaids*, God says that out from all these *he will call persons to be prophets*. Well, suppose he should! How are we going to know?—We are to become acquainted with his voice, so that when he speaks, we shall know the voice. "My sheep know my voice, and they follow me," and the devil cannot imitate the voice of Jesus Christ. No, sir. He cannot imitate the voice of Christ. He may speak in the very words that are in the Bible, but it is not the voice of Jesus. No, sir.

Therefore, *become acquainted with the voice of Jesus, brethren*. And that means to *get your hearts filled with the word of God, so that in your hearts and minds will be ringing the tones of his voice*. And then when any one speaks from him, the tones will combine and harmonize with the tones that are ringing in your hearts and minds already, and you know his voice. *Fill the whole heart with the words of the Lord. And this only brings to us afresh the importance of more diligent and earnest Bible study than we have ever engaged in before. That is what we must do or else we shall be deceived.* We shall certainly be deceived if we are not acquainted with the voice. If I am not acquainted with the voice of God, is there not danger of my rejecting the true word of God spoken to me, because I do not know the voice, and have not the opportunity of applying the physical tests that God has given? *If I do not know the voice, is there not danger that I might reject the true word of God and endanger my eternal salvation, cut myself off from ever having a knowledge of God and walking in his way? And we are in this danger to-day, because the time has come when God is pouring out his Spirit upon the people, and there will be more than one prophet.*

And when **another prophet** shall speak in the name of the Lord what he will speak, *you and I will be in danger of refusing him, and of rejecting the testimony of God, if we do not know his voice.*

General Conference Daily Bulletin February 5, 1893

“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!”

*Thank the Lord, He is not going to be content much longer with one prophet! **He will have more.*** He has done a wonderful work with one. And having done such a great work with one, what in the world will He do when He gets **a lot of them?**

As you can see, the Adventist pioneers rightly understood the Spirit of Prophecy to be the Holy Ghost working through a *living* prophet. Not only that, but they understood that this gift would not cease from the church until the second coming of Jesus and some even went as far as to say outright that we are to expect more prophets in the church. A natural question then is, when did this important truth get lost sight of? When did the church stop teaching the scriptural truth of the Spirit of Prophecy and start claiming that a set of books is “The Spirit of Prophecy”? The following article written in by Alonzo T. Jones in 1916 (the year after Ellen White’s death) answers this question.

THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

THE FALSE AND THE TRUE

1. T. Jones
2. 1916

In the Western Canadian Tidings of July 26, 1916, there is printed an official communication of the Seventh Day Adventist denomination by Elder F. W. Paap, Home Missions Secretary,

1. A. Division, that is of interest to many people beside those of that denomination.

This communication is in promotion of the purpose to have every S.D.A. family to buy a set of “the Testimonies.”

First there is quoted Rev. 12:17 and 19:10 thus:

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 bare the testimony of Jesus Christ.

For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Then upon that, there is said the following:

We wish to emphasize the words, “and have the spirit of prophecy.” Yes, they have the volumes of the spirit of prophecy in their homes for the purpose of getting the counsel into their hearts.

That word says that these people “have the spirit of prophecy” by having or because they “have the *volumes* of the spirit of prophecy in their homes.”

And even then this is not in order, or for the purpose, that they shall get *the spirit of prophecy* into their hearts; but only “for the purpose of getting the *counsel* into their hearts.”

And that is only plainly to say that these “*volumes*” are “the spirit of prophecy”: and that the people and that denomination “have the spirit of prophecy” by, and only by, having “*the volumes* of the spirit of prophecy in their homes.”

Above The Bible

If that be so, then what of the volumes of the Bible In their homes? Are not these the spirit of prophecy too? To this question the S.D.A.’s answer “No.” And they have always answered “No.”

Now it is indisputable that whatever is the spirit of prophecy, is of a higher order and character than anything that is not the spirit of prophecy.

Therefore, when they say that the volumes of the Bible are not the spirit of prophecy, and that these “*volumes*” are the spirit of prophecy, then in that, beyond all question, they give to the *volumes* of “the Testimonies” a higher order and character than they allow to the volumes of the Bible. *That fact they never can escape.*

They can not shift their hitherto always occupied ground, and now say that the volumes of the Bible are the spirit of prophecy; for that will be only to say that the volumes of the Bible always have been the spirit of prophecy.

And then by their own words it will be admitted that all through the ages those who had these volumes of the Bible, thereby and therein had the spirit of prophecy in their homes, for the purpose of getting its counsel into their hearts

But for them to take that ground would be to annihilate their claim in behalf of “the Testimonies”: which claim is, that this “spirit of prophecy” is a new and peculiar development that marks a specific time and work, and that distinguishes that denomination as the special and peculiar people of God.

Accordingly, by their own official printed words they are shut up to the fact that they do give to “*the volumes* of the spirit of prophecy” commonly called “*the Testimonies*” a higher standing and character than they allow to the volumes of the Bible.

Their Claim Nullified

Further: The basis of their claim that those *volumes* of “the Testimonies” are the spirit of prophecy, is that they were written by Mrs. E. G. White and that in these times “the spirit of prophecy was manifested through Mrs. E. G. White and through Mrs. E. G. White *alone*”: who was thereby “a prophetess.”

But in the autumn of 1915 Mrs. E. G. White died. Then even they could not claim that the spirit of prophecy is manifested through a person who is dead

Therefore they are now under the necessity of **shifting** the spirit of prophecy from that person to that person's writings: and even these writings only in a certain "set" of "volumes."

This *shift* then is assertive of the claim that whoever has the *writings* of a person who *while he lived had the spirit of prophecy, after that person is dead has in his writings still the spirit of prophecy.*

But that is again to say that whoever has the writings of the prophets of the Bible, has in those writings the spirit of prophecy; and that all through the ages this has been so. And this destroys the very foundation of their claim as a denomination that because of the spirit of prophecy as manifested through Mrs. E. G. White and now in these "volumes," that denomination has a specific and peculiar standing and character as the true church and people of God.

Their Dilemma

Again: *Till Mrs. E. G. White died **their constant claim** was that the Scriptures are not the spirit of prophecy, because the spirit of prophecy **must** be manifested through **a living person.***

And for them now to publish as in the official words above quoted that they have the spirit of prophecy in having "the volumes of the spirit of prophecy," is positively to *shift* ground and therein *deny what they have always formerly affirmed:* and is also to admit that the volumes of the Bible are and always have been the spirit of prophecy, or else still hold that the Scriptures are not the spirit of prophecy while these "volumes" are and thus give to these "volumes" a standing and character above the Bible.

*And if to them **another "prophet" should arise**, the spirit of prophecy would have to be shifted back to the **living person.** And then "the volumes" as the spirit of prophecy would be completely nullified and stranded. Yet in truth no more than now.*

Surer than the Bible

Again: Upon the Scripture "*Where there is no vision the people perish,*" their stock argument has been that in order that the people shall be safe and surely guided, so that they shall not perish, *there must be visions: and these the visions of a **living prophet.***

Now the person is dead in whom "alone" they centered all true or proper visions. And now to them where are the visions without which the people perish?

Will they say that these "volumes" are now the visions without which the people perish? Even this is actually implied, and in fact is almost said, in the following sentence of Elder Paap's article:

They are given us for a specific purpose and without their aid that purpose cannot or will not be attained.

And that again gives to these "volumes" a standing and character so far above the Bible that with the Bible alone the people perish: but with these "volumes" they cannot perish because in having "*the volumes*" they have "the spirit of prophecy in their homes" and so have the "visions" and are

safe!

What Now

Again: *While Mrs. White lived their claim and argument was, "We are the true people of God because we have a prophet."*

It mattered nothing to them nor to their argument that repeatedly in public and in private the one whom they claimed to be a prophet asserted that she was "not a prophet" and made "no such claim."

Against her own plain word repeated they insisted that she was a prophet, and that they were the true people of God because they had a prophet.

Now that person is dead: and *they themselves must admit that now they have no prophet*. And confessedly having no prophet, can they now claim upon that basis that they are the true people of God above any other Christians?

Or will they now claim that these "volumes" are a prophet as they claim that the "volumes" are the spirit of prophecy?

They can claim the one as fairly as the claim the other: and the one claim would be just as true as the other.

The "Infallible" Interpreter

Finally: Since they affirm that now these "*volumes*" are the spirit of prophecy, *above the Bible*, and as such spirit of prophecy are necessarily infallible, then it follows that these "*volumes*" must have an infallible interpreter.

They will not allow that the people are qualified to interpret and apply the "*volumes*" each one for himself. There is no right of private judgment there.

That final and infallible interpreter must be "the church." And this "the church" simply the few or the one in the church who can gain the position. And whether, this be on occasion or permanently, the principle is the same.

And so that church occupies exactly the corresponding position as to those "*volumes*," that the church of Rome occupies; as to the Bible.

And that church with these "*volumes*" stands to the Bible exactly as does the Mormon church with the Book of Mormon and the "Mother church" of Christian Science with the volume of Mrs. Eddy's.

The True Spirit of Prophecy

The Christian truth of the Spirit of prophecy *is far better* than and or all of that quicksand of error and delusion. And here is that truth: "When He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth:... and He will show you things to come."

Whoever from God shows things to come is a prophet. And that which is thus, shown is prophecy. Here is the personal Spirit of Truth given, "and He will show you things to come."

There is the Spirit of prophecy. There is the true Spirit of prophecy. And there alone is the true Spirit of prophecy. Whoever has Him showing to him things to come, has the Spirit of prophecy.

And He is the free gift of God to every believing soul. Receive ye Him, *the Spirit of Truth*: and when He is come to you He will show you things to come.

And He, and He alone, is ever and forever God's own and only given true and infallible Interpreter and Guide.

"My prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of ... revelation." Eph. 1:17.

Conclusion

Although more quotations from the Adventist pioneers could be presented here, there does not seem to be a need seeing as the information already given is sufficient to make the point. Now to conclude this subject we will summarize the main points of what we have learned from start to finish.

1. The Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy
2. The Spirit of Prophecy was in existence from the gates of Eden and will continue on until the second coming of Christ
3. Heaven's Law and Order is for God to speak through prophets
4. Without living prophets God's people perish
5. We are sanctified by truth and thus the continual unfolding of truth through the Spirit of Prophecy is the method through which God designs to bring us to perfection.
6. Interpretations belong to God who reveals His secrets through His servants, the prophets
7. The Spirit of Prophecy is the Testimony *of* Jesus *by* the Holy Ghost and *through* a *living* prophet. Or, the Holy Ghost speaking through a living prophet.
8. Keeping the commandments of God and having the Testimony of Jesus are the two primary identifying marks of God's remnant.
9. The Adventist Church understood, believed, and taught the Bible truth concerning the Spirit of Prophecy during the lifetime of Ellen White
10. After the death of Ellen White the denomination abandoned the scriptural teaching on this subject and began to claim that the Spirit of Prophecy is the *writings* of Ellen White

All this brings to mind the familiar words,

"We have nothing to fear for the future, *except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and his teaching in our past history.*" – *Review and Herald*, Oct. 12, 1905

How dreadful a thing indeed that we have forgotten. And as a result we have not kept pace with the light (5T80). It may well be said to us:

“Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers” – Acts 7:51-52

So, what is there for us to do now?

*“**Repent** ye therefore, and **be converted**, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord – Acts 3:19*

“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” – Isa. 55:6-9

That we may all come into “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” -Eph 4:13

by

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THE BRANCH

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