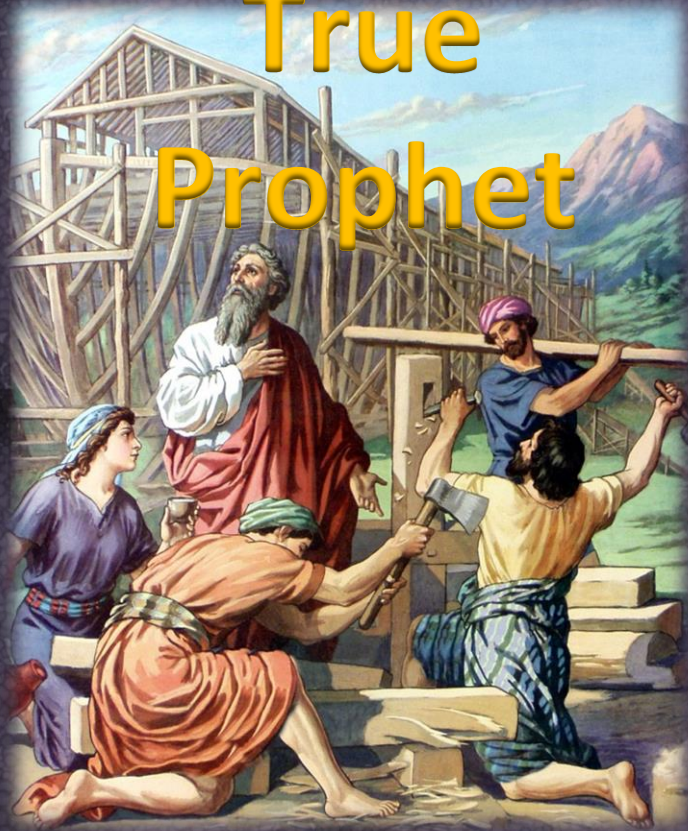


Tests of a True Prophet



Bible Study Pathways Lesson 29

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A Story to Ponder...

In the Detroit Bank Note Reporter

of April, 1863, a Mr. Preston gave five rules for detecting counterfeits, and declared that any person who would make a rigid inspection of every bill that came into possession, according to these rules, need never fear of being deceived.

There is no surer way to prove a prophetic gift than by comparing it with the description of such gifts as were manifested in Scripture times, and testing it by the rules therein given.

The Scriptures ... give a correct record of the manifestations of the gift of prophecy, and how the true work of the Spirit of God may be known from the workings of Satan, with his spurious gifts. {1905 JNL, GSAM 300.2}



Does the Bible suggest that there will be true prophets as part of the church in the last days? _____



Eph. 4:11,12 "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:" (Rev. 12:17;19:10)

Joel 2:28,29 "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."



We are cautioned both to "beware of false prophets" (Matt. 7:15) and to "despise not prophesyings" (1 Thess. 5:20) How does 1 Thess. 5:21 suggest we do this? _____



"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."



"True prophets will speak in harmony with the law of God and the testimony of his word."



Is. 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."(1 Cor. 14:32)



The prophet should, like Noah, believe his own message and act accordingly. Noah, not only preached, he built an ark. (Gen. 6:22)



A True prophet should walk close to God.



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

Gen. 5:24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." (James 5:10)

? What is one way we are to try the spirits of the prophets? _____



1 John 4:1-3 “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”

💡 Note carefully the foregoing scripture. It does not say that whosoever confesseth that Jesus Christ “did come in the flesh,” “but is come in the flesh,” that is, that He comes, by his Spirit, and dwells in us, in response to our faith. This, in fact, is the central truth of the gospel, “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

(1905 JNL, GSAM 303.1)

? Read the following scriptures and contrast the work of true prophets with that of false prophets. _____



Jer. 28:8,9 “The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.”

1 John 4:5,6 “They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” (Deut. 13:1-3, Deut. 18:20-22, Jer. 23:14-17)



Not only should the predictions of the prophet come to pass, but they should lead to the worship of the God of heaven--- not away from Him to other gods. (Note: False prophets may work miracles. (2 Thess. 2:9, Rev. 19:20) And true prophets do not always work miracles. (John 10:41; Luke 7:26, 28)



? Does the Bible record female prophetesses as well as male prophets?



Acts 21:8,9 “And the next day we that were of Paul's company ... entered into the house of Philip the evangelist... And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.” (2 Kings 22:14, Judges 4:4, Luke 2:36, Exodus 15:20; Also the previously referenced Joel 2:28, 29)

? Read three descriptions of visions under the spirit of God and list some of the characteristics. _____



Num. 24:2,4 "And Balaam lifted up his eyes...and the spirit of God came upon him. ... He hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open."
(Daniel 10:15-19, 2 Cor. 12:1,2)



Descriptions of visions under the Spirit of God include the following characteristic: eyes open, no breath, and a weakness before the prophet is then strengthened by God.

? What unfailing rule did Jesus give for distinguishing a true prophet from a false prophet? _____



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."



We believe that the Spirit of prophecy will be manifested among God's last day people. (Rev. 12:17; 19:10) And we believe it has been demonstrated in the life and writings of Ellen G. White. Many of her counsels on health and education were "before their time" and have now been proven to be scientifically accurate. We suggest reading *Steps to Christ*, *The Desire of Ages*, *Ministry of Healing* and more of her books to test them for yourself.



? What does God say will happen to those who believe his prophets? _____



2 Chronicles 20:20b "Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper."

CONCLUSION

True and false prophets must be distinguished by the Biblical rule. A true prophet's words will match the Bible testimony, come to pass, and lead people to follow God. Prophets may have dreams or visions, and their life should match their testimony. While prophets may be male or female, their "fruits" and not necessarily miracles will help distinguish whether or not they are of God. The words of a true prophet should lead a people to a love for the word of God and encourage them to put away sin and live godly lives.