

Inspiration of the Prophets - Lesson 5 of "The Prophetic Gift"

January 17, 2009

inspiration

a: a divine influence or action on a person believed to qualify him or her to receive and communicate sacred revelation

b: the action or power of moving the intellect or emotions

c: the act of influencing or suggesting opinions

2: the act of drawing in ; specifically : the drawing of air into the lungs

3: a: the quality or state of being inspired

b: something that is inspired

<a scheme that was pure inspiration

4: an inspiring agent or influence

1. Read Memory Text: 2 Timothy 3:16

a. 2 Timothy 3:16 Every Scripture passage is inspired by God. All of them are useful for teaching, pointing out errors, correcting people, and training them for a life that has God's approval. (God's Word Translation)

b. 2 Timothy 3:16 Every holy Writing which comes from God is of profit for teaching, for training, for guiding, for education in righteousness: (BBE)

c. What questions need to be satisfied regarding this text?

i. What scripture is the apostle / prophet talking about?

(1) What did Paul have at this time for inspired writings? (The "old testament" - "Moses & the prophets" of Luke 24:27)

(2) To whom were these messages sent?

ii. 66 books

iii. Apocrypha

iv. Koran

v. Tao

vi. Talmud

vii. This will be discussed more in lesson #8

2. Read Sabbath Afternoon introduction: “Christians have long . . .”

a. Additional question for SDA’s?

i. Is Mrs. Ellen White inspired?

ii. Do we have any additional questions?

(1) What writings are inspired?

(2) How should I read a thought leading book?

iii. Are these not the same questions that everyone should have?

(1) Is what I am reading inspired of God?

(2) Is this not the same question I have to ask when I am reading EGW, Rick Warren, Chuck Swindol, Max Lucado, or Tim Jennings,

(3) There is a difference on what these persons claim to say. There is a general claim of more authority on the part of some than others. It is our responsibility to verify if those claims and assertions are true. (Next weeks lesson.)

(a) Acts 17:10, 11 Bereans were more open minded (fair-minded, noble character, better disposed)

b. What does it mean when we say the Bible (or EGW) or any other author is inspired?

i. God breathed

ii. God as the ultimate source

3. Potential Questions to Address

a. Are there varying degrees of inspiration?

i. Buy strong drink and celebrate (Deut 14:22 - 26)

(1) Eat the tithes

(2) Buy strong drink and celebrate with your family

ii. Kings shouldn’t drink alcoholic beverages; wine is for the dying, poor, & depressed , miserable (Prov 31:4 - 7)

- iii. Happy are those who pay you back for what you have done & throw your enemies babies against the rocks (Ps 137:8, 9)
 - (1) Do you see a lot of happiness right now in Gaza or in the border towns that are the target of rocket attacks?
- iv. 1 John 4:8, 16 “God is love. . .”
 - (1) Is this more inspired than the preceding texts?
 - (2) Do we obey and contemplate on one set and not the other?

4. Sunday’s Lesson:

- a. Read the two texts for Sunday’s lesson
 - i. 2 Tim 3:16 - Every holy writing comes from God (BBE)
 - ii. 2 Peter 1:20,21 - words of scripture were from movement by the Holy Spirit

- b. What is the impetus for writing messages down that we find recorded in the Bible?
 - i. The scriptures are a direct result of divine impetus
 - ii. The initial force for their message was God’s force

- c. What is the human element in divine writings?
 - i. The scriptures are a combination of Divine energy / movement / inspiration and human authorship
 - ii. Authors used human, individual pronouns, expressions, times of writing and culture
 - iii. Writings (messages) are for a specific time, place, person/group of people and purpose.
 - (1) We need to be wary as we apply something to a different time, place, person/group and purpose
 - (2) Examples:
 - (a) Problem texts read at beginning
 - (b) Prohibition of bicycles by EGW
 - (c) Health messages

- (d) Women in church
 - d. Is there a direct correlation between the amount of written records from a given prophet and the importance of that prophet.
 - i. John the Baptist was given the designation of the most important prophet, yet we have very little of his sayings and none of his sermons (Matt 11:9, Luke 7:26 - 28)
 - ii. What does that tell us about the importance we place on which prophetic messages we are to apply to our current time?
5. Monday's lesson: Dictation, Verbal and Thought Inspiration
- a. Monday's lesson speaks of three kinds of inspiration:
 - i. Dictation
 - ii. Verbal
 - iii. Thought inspiration
 - b. What difference does it make what kind of inspiration is used?
 - i. Translations no longer are inspired? If the words are different?
 - (1) Spanish / English translators in office
 - (2) Sudanese bible translator concerned regarding the consistency of the translations.
 - (a) Computer rules for amalgamation of multiple workers on the same text.
 - ii. Translations
 - (1) KJV
 - (2) NIV
 - (3) Eastern vs Western texts of Greek scriptures
 - (4) Some verses are not in different versions of the Bible due to inherent inconsistencies of texts and manuscripts
 - c. Is there evidence in God's word for all three?

- i. Dictation Inspiration
 - ii. Example: Exodus 20:1 - 17
 - (1) “Some look to us gravely and say, ‘Don’t you think there might have been some mistake in the copyist or in the translators?’ This is all probable, and the mind that is so narrow that it will hesitate and stumble over this possibility or probability would be just as ready to stumble over the mysteries of the Inspired Word, because their feeble minds cannot see through the purposes of God.”—Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, book 1, p. 16. (From the teachers quarterly.)
 - iii. Verbal Inspiration:
 - (1) Ezek. 36:16 - Word God was saying . . .
 - (2) 1 Cor 7:10 - 12, 39,40 What I say vs what the Lord says and what is good judgement
 - iv. Thought Inspiration:
 - (1) Isa 2:1,2 - This is what Isaiah saw . . .
- d. Is there any more kinds of inspiration?
- (1) 1 Thess 2:13 Spirit at work in you and you **heard it** as the word of God
 - (a) It appears that God is also active in the hearer as well as the speaker/writer.
 - (b) GC president filed a letter from EGW for 56 years because he did not know what to do with it and it did not fit into his perspective of God and salvation.
 - (c) Christ said, “He that hath ears, let him hear. . .” Matt 11:15; Matt 13:9, 15, 16, 43; Mark 4:23 (and more shall be given to you); Mark 8:18 (disciples were chastised for not having hearing in their ears); Acts 7:51 (Stephen chastised the Jews for

having hearts and ears unwilling to God);
1Peter 3:12 (ears described as the
attentiveness of God)

- (i) What inspires you?
- (ii) Our inspiration is just as critical as
the inspiration of the message,
because without “ears” we will not
hear.

ii. Four forms of Inspiration

- (1) Dictation
- (2) Verbal
- (3) Thought
 - (a) Thought inspiration **appears to be** more
common in the Bible
- (4) Hearing is most common of all (or should be)

6. Tuesday Lesson: Visions and Physical Phenomena

- a. Daniel (Dan 10:7 - 9)
- b. Saul/Paul (Acts 9:1-5)
 - i. Would you consider this a “typical” revelation of God
to one of the prophets
- c. John (Rev 1:17)
- d. Can you think of other times when God or an angel
appeared to human beings
 - i. Adam & Eve in the garden (Gen 3:8-19)
 - ii. Jacob on path of flight from home (Gen 28:12)
 - iii. Jacob on path back home (Gen 32:24-30)
 - iv. Abraham with three strangers (Gen 18)
 - v. Moses in the tent of meeting on the outskirts of the
camp (Ex 33:7 - 11)
 - vi. Angel to Balaam and his donkey
 - vii. Gideon (Judges 6:11 - 22)
 - viii. Elijah during flight from Jezebel (1Kings 19:5 - 8)
 - ix. Elijah in cave (1 Kings 19:)
 - x. Daniel prior to Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2)

- xi. Daniel in Chap 10
 - xii. Isaiah 6:1
 - xiii. Mary (Luke 1:26 - 29)
 - xiv. Angels to shepherds at birth of Jesus (Luke 2:8 - 14)
 - xv. Peter in Acts 10 (sheet and animals)
 - xvi. Peter in Acts 12 (Peter freed from jail)
 - xvii. Quite varied manner in which the Godly messenger was presented, perceived and affected the person receiving the message.
- e. EGW visions
- i. The visions and contacts by inspiration with Mrs White were not all the same either
- f. Is supernatural visions / revelations verification of divine inspiration and import to the message? If not, why were they given in the above illustrated cases?
- g. What is the purpose of these supernatural revelations?
- i. It appears that the presentation of the heavenly visitor is modulated based on:
 - (1) to whom the message is being sent
 - (a) including their culture
 - (b) identity
 - (c) relationship with peers / community
 - (2) why the human is being contacted
 - (3) the relationship of that person to God
 - (4) mental state of human at time of message
 - ii. Joel 2:28 - 32 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 prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: (29) And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. (30) And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. (31) The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. (32) 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.

- h. What are the tests of a divine revelation from God:
 - i. Whether the vision is in harmony with:
 - (1) Scripture
 - (2) God's principles of love and freedom
 - (3) Prior revelation
 - i. Read final question on bottom of page.
 - i. What is the test of Ellen White's prophetic calling?
 - ii. **Tests of a prophets covered in next week's lesson.**
- 7. Wednesday Lesson: Inspiration and Literary Assistants
 - a. Jeremiah 36:1-4 - Baruch, the son of Neriah was scribe
 - b. Romans 16:22 - Tertius, scribe for Paul in letter to Rome
 - c. 1 Corinth 16:21 & Colossians 4:18 & 2Thess 3:17 - Paul signs letter for authenticity
 - d. Ellen White made use of copyists, editors and 'bookmakers'
 - i. Marian Davis
 - (1) Marian Is My Bookmaker.--Marian's work is of a different order altogether. She is my bookmaker. Fanny [Bolton] [FANNY BOLTON, A NEWSPAPER WRITER, AFTER BECOMING A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST, WAS DRAWN INTO ELLEN WHITE'S LITERARY WORK AND SOON AFTER ACCOMPANIED HER TO AUSTRALIA.] never was my bookmaker. How are my books made? Marian does not put in her claim for recognition. {3SM 91.2} She does her work in this way: She takes my articles which are published in the papers, and

pastes them in blank books. She also has a copy of all the letters I write. In preparing a chapter for a book, Marian remembers that I have written something on that special point, which may make the matter more forcible. She begins to search for this, and if when she finds it, she sees that it will make the chapter more clear, she adds it. {3SM 91.3}

The books are not Marian's productions, but my own, gathered from all my writings. Marian has a large field from which to draw, and her ability to arrange the matter is of great value to me. It saves my poring over a mass of matter, which I have no time to do. {3SM 91.4}

So you understand that Marian is a most valuable help to me in bringing out my books. Fanny had none of this work to do. Marian has read chapters to her, and Fanny has sometimes made suggestions as to the arrangement of the matter. {3SM 91.5}

This is the difference between the workers. As I have stated, Fanny has been strictly forbidden to change my words for her words. As spoken by the heavenly agencies, the words are severe in their simplicity; and I try to put the thoughts into such simple language that a child can understand every word uttered. The words of someone else would not rightly represent me. {3SM 92.1}

I have written thus fully in order that you may understand the matter. Fanny may claim that she has made my books, but she has not done so. This has been Marian's field, and her work is far in advance of any work Fanny has done for me.--Letter 61a, 1900. {3SM 92.2}

ii. Fanny Bolton:

- (1) 1890 - 94
 - (a) had been writer for popular magazines of the time with demonstrated literary talent
 - (b) traveled with EGW during time of employment
 - (c) accompanied EGW to Australia
 - (d) made claims of authorship of Steps to Christ
 - (e) refuted and subsequent confession in 1901

8. Thursday Lesson: Inspiration and the Book of Luke

- a. Research for written inspirational books
- b. Use of other sources
- c. Plagiarism in prophetic messages
 - i. Bible copying
 - (1) Micah 4:1-4 vs Isaiah 2:1, 2
 - (2) Jude 4 - 18 vs 2 Peter 2:1 - 3:3
 - (3) Obadiah 1 - 9 vs Jeremiah 49:7 - 22
 - (4) Obadiah 11 - 12 vs Joel 3:3-6
 - (5) Joshua 21 vs 1 Chronicles 6
 - (6) 2 Samuel 23 vs 1 Chronicles 11
 - ii. Life of Christ Research Project
 - (1) Fred Veltman;
 - (2) Published in 1988
 - (3) Seven years of research
 - (4) Introduction: 200+ pages
 - (5) Summary & Conclusions: 100+ pages
 - (6) Looked at 15 or 87 chapters of Desire of Ages for sources used and percentage, type and character of use.
 - (a) Dependence on sources ranged from 1% in chapter 56 - 69% in chapter 84

9. Was any prophet separated from his audience? Was not the individual messages sent by God to His people? For needs of that time?
 - a. Why were miraculous or inspired messages sent?
 - i. The people had gone as far as they could go
 - (1) Luke 24:19 - 24 Disciples on way to Emmaus
 - (2) Daniel 9:2 - 4 Daniel reading Jeremiah
 - ii. There were questions they could not answer
 - iii. They needed symbolism to add weight to their message (Dedication of temple,
 - iv. To attract attention to what God was wanting to do (Moses & Rod tricks, Peter and healing of cripple at temple gate and in Antioch)
 - v. To give additional strength and resources they would need (Acts 2 - foreign languages, confidence, insight)

10. Inspiration is always given to the church 2 Peter 1:20, 21 and for the purposes of the community / church as a whole. It is for the building up of the saints (plural).
 - a. The circumstances connected with the separation of Paul and Barnabas by the Holy Spirit to a definite line of service show clearly that the Lord works through appointed agencies in His organized church. Years before, when the divine purpose concerning Paul was first revealed to him by the Saviour Himself, Paul was immediately afterward brought into contact with members of the newly organized church at Damascus. Furthermore, the church at that place was not long left in darkness as to the personal experience of the converted Pharisee. And now, when the divine commission given at that time was to be more fully carried out, the Holy Spirit, again bearing witness concerning Paul as a chosen vessel to bear the gospel to the Gentiles, laid upon the church the work of ordaining him and his fellow laborer. As the leaders of the church in Antioch "ministered

to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." {AA 162.3}

God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself. Neither does He give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church while the church--Christ's body --is left in darkness. In His providence He places His servants in close connection with His church in order that they may have less confidence in themselves and greater confidence in others whom He is leading out to advance His work. {AA 163.1}

There have ever been in the church those who are constantly inclined toward individual independence. They seem unable to realize that independence of spirit is liable to lead the human agent to have too much confidence in himself and to trust in his own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly esteem the judgment of his brethren, especially of those in the offices that God has appointed for the leadership of His people. God has invested His church with special authority and power which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising, for he who does this despises the voice of God. {AA 163.2}

Those who are inclined to regard their individual judgment as supreme are in grave peril. It is Satan's studied effort to separate such ones from those who are channels of light, through whom God has wrought to build up and extend His work in the earth. To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to bear the responsibilities of leadership in connection with the advancement of the truth, is to reject the means that He has ordained for the

help, encouragement, and strength of His people. For any worker in the Lord's cause to pass these by, and to think that his light must come through no other channel than directly from God, is to place himself in a position where he is liable to be deceived by the enemy and overthrown. The Lord in His wisdom has arranged that by means of the close relationship that should be maintained by all believers, Christian shall be united to Christian and church to church. Thus the human instrumentality will be enabled to **co-operate** with the divine. Every agency will be subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all the believers will be **united** in an organized and well-directed effort to give to the world the glad tidings of the grace of God. {AA 164.1} (Bold provided by Wendell Moses, class teacher and compiler)