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2026 Q4 The Gift of Prophecy
Lesson 4: New Testament Prophets

by Russell Atkins

SABBATH

The lesson uses a car engine metaphor to describe what drives [Holy Spirit] both the Old and New Testament prophets. We often miss the movements of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, but it was just as active then, as now. [See Gen. 1: 2, Gen. 6: 3, Ex. 31: 3-5, Neh. 9: 20, Ps. 104: 29]. The Spirit will be withdrawn, in harmony with the Law of Liberty/Love, if resisted/rejected [See King Saul].

> The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them, but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden..."
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> ...The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. The Spirit is constantly seeking to draw the attention of men to the great offering that was made on the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things of the Scriptures. (Act of the Apostles, pg 52)

God lives outside of time and can apply what Christ achieved at any point in time, past, present, or future. Men and women are inspired by the Holy Spirit, then left free to put things in their own words.

SUNDAY

Jesus as Prophet

I'm happy the lesson started here. Jesus is The Prophet.

From the Lesson:

> Jesus, as the Christ, the Messiah, is the One to whom all the Old Testament prophets pointed. In the New Testament, Jesus is recognized as the fulfillment of their Messianic prophecies. In Luke 24:13–35, He presents Himself as the One to whom the Messianic prophecies pointed.

> In fact, in John 1:1–5, the description given of the Word here does not fit any human being or mere human prophet. The Word is identified as the Creator, for "all things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:3, NKJV). That is, He created all that was created, which is the entire cosmos, now estimated to be 93 billion light-years wide.
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> In every "and God said" of Genesis 1, we hear Jesus speaking. He who said, "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3) is also the "light of men" (John 1:4), and through the plan of salvation (John 1:4, 5), He was dispelling earth's darkness.
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> God's prophetic words are certain and confirmed. When heeded, they are "a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (2 Pet. 1:19, NKJV). Prophecy will continue to bring light to our sinful world until Jesus, "the Morning Star," and Source of that prophetic light, will usher in His eternal kingdom.
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> Until then, through His life, death, and resurrection, Christ offers us all eternal life. The only question is whether or not we will accept it. (Adult Sabbath School Quarterly, 2026, Q4, pg 45)

Jesus defines "eternal life" in John 17:3.

> And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

The lesson asks us to dwell on the fact that Jesus, the Creator, is also the one who died on the cross for our sins. Does it make a difference that the Designer of Life itself, also designed a Remedy for our condition??

The lesson includes the story of Simon in the additional reading section.

> By curing Simon of leprosy, Christ had saved him from a living death. But now Simon questioned whether the Saviour were a prophet. Because Christ allowed this woman to approach Him, because He did not indignantly spurn her as one whose sins were too great to be forgiven, because He did not show that He realized she had fallen, Simon was tempted to think that He was not a prophet. Jesus knows nothing of this woman who is so free in her demonstrations, he thought, or He would not allow her to touch Him.
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> But it was Simon's ignorance of God and of Christ that led him to think as he did. He did not realize that God's Son must act in God's way, with compassion, tenderness, and mercy. Simon's way was to take no notice of Mary's penitent service. Her act of kissing Christ's feet and anointing them with ointment was exasperating to his hardheartedness. He thought that if Christ were a prophet, He would recognize sinners and rebuke them.
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> To this unspoken thought the Saviour answered: "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. . . . There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the

other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell Me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged."

As did Nathan with David, Christ concealed His home thrust under the veil of a parable. He threw upon His host the burden of pronouncing sentence upon himself. Simon had led into sin the woman he now despised. She had been deeply wronged by him. By the two debtors of the parable, Simon and the woman were represented. Jesus did not design to teach that different degrees of obligation should be felt by the two persons, for each owed a debt of gratitude that never could be repaid. But Simon felt himself more righteous than Mary, and Jesus desired him to see how great his guilt really was. He would show him that his sin was greater than hers, as much greater as a debt of five hundred pence exceeds a debt of fifty pence.

Simon now began to see himself in a new light. He saw how Mary was regarded by One who was more than a prophet. He saw that with keen prophetic eye Christ read her heart of love and devotion. Shame seized upon him, and he realized that he was in the presence of One superior to himself.

"I entered into thine house," Christ continued, "thou gavest Me no water for My feet;" but with tears of repentance, prompted by love, Mary hath washed My feet, and wiped them with the hair of her head. "Thou gavest Me no kiss: but this woman," whom you despise, "since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss My feet." Christ recounted the opportunities Simon had had to show his love for his Lord, and his appreciation of what had been done for him. Plainly, yet with delicate politeness, the Saviour assured His disciples that His heart is grieved when His children neglect to show their gratitude to Him by words and deeds of love. (The Desire of Ages, pp 566, 567)

Any thoughts on this story??

MONDAY

Apostles and Prophets.

What's the difference between an Apostle and a Prophet??

According to the internet: An apostle is a "sent messenger" who pioneers and establishes new churches, while a prophet is a "spokesman" who delivers direct, spirit-led revelations and calls people to moral obedience.

Sounds reasonable. Are we missing anything??

From the Lesson:

> The Bible is the only official record we have of the words of the apostles and prophets about Jesus, His life, and works. What should this tell us about why the Bible must have final authority for what we believe about Jesus and His death for us? (Adult Sabbath School Quarterly, 2026, Q4, pg 46)

Does this make anyone [else] uncomfortable?? Is the Bible to be the only authority, or has God built in to Creation and the plan of redemption other means by which we may be won to trust and cooperate with our healing??

From the additional reading section on Monday's lesson:

> The Lord Jesus is making experiments on human hearts through the exhibition of His mercy and abundant grace. He is effecting transformations so amazing that Satan... stands viewing them as a fortress impregnable to his sophistries and delusions. They are to him an incomprehensible mystery. The angels of God... look on with astonishment and joy, that fallen men, once children of wrath, are through the training of Christ developing characters after the divine similitude, to be sons and daughters of God, to act an important part in the occupations and pleasures of heaven.
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> The Lord has provided His church with capabilities and blessings, that they may present to the world an image of His own sufficiency, and that His church may be complete in Him, a continual representation of another, even the eternal world, of laws that are higher than earthly laws. His church is to be a temple built after the divine similitude...
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> To His church, Christ has given ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. The declaration in His intercessory prayer, that the Father's love is as great toward us as toward Himself, the only-begotten Son, and that we shall be with Him where He is, forever one with Christ and the Father, is a marvel to the heavenly host, and it is their great joy. The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against. In their untainted purity and spotless perfection, Christ looks upon His people as the reward of all His suffering, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory—Christ, the great center from which radiates all glory. (In Heavenly Places, pg 282)
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> Through the ages that have passed since the days of the apostles, the building of God's temple has never ceased. We may look back through the centuries and see the living stones of which it is composed gleaming like jets of light through the darkness of error and superstition. Throughout eternity these precious jewels will shine with increasing luster, testifying to the power of the truth of God. The flashing light of these polished stones reveals the strong contrast between light and darkness, between the gold of truth and the dross of error. Paul and the other apostles, and all the righteous who have lived since then, have acted their part in the building of the temple. But the structure is not yet complete. We who are living in

> this age have a work to do, a part to act. We are to bring to the foundation material that will stand the test of fire—gold, silver, and precious stones, "polished after the similitude of a palace" (Psalm 144:12). To those who thus build for God, Paul speaks words of encouragement… "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward." … The Christian who faithfully presents the word of life, leading men and women into the way of holiness and peace, is bringing to the foundation material that will endure, and in the kingdom of God He will be honored as a wise builder. (Reflecting Christ, pg 224)

Do the above passages sound familiar? https://comeandreason.com/living-in-gods-eternal-house/

TUESDAY

Functions of New Testament Prophets

The lesson kind of transitions to the larger landscape of Spiritual Gifts, including prophecy as one of the gifts. Paul's writings are primarily encouragement and some rebuke of sin, while John's book of Revelation is a juggernaut of future predictions.

How did the prophetic need change pre / post incarnation?? Was there any need to predict a coming Messiah?? Was there any need to support Old Testament messianic prophecies with actual events that occured [aka "Reality"]??

WEDNESDAY

Female prophets and Young Pastoral Associates.

Women and young people can be prophets. The End.

THURSDAY

False Prophets in the New Testament

From the Lesson:

> Jesus Himself couldn't have been clearer: " 'For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect' " (Matt. 24:24, NKJV).
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> The deceptions that He warns about must be quite persuasive, if, indeed, "great signs and wonders" will be part of it. Supernatural events, in and of themselves, are not evidence of God's working, however persuasive they can appear. We have supernatural enemies. As Paul has warned us: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities,

> against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph 6:12, NKJV). And these powers work through false prophets.
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> In fact, false prophets are nothing new. The New Testament refers to the false prophets in Old Testament times (Luke 6:26). In the New Testament, false prophets are likened to " 'ravenous wolves' " who are " 'in sheep's clothing' " (Matt. 7:15, NKJV), and we are told that we will " 'know them by their fruits' " (Matt. 7:16, NKJV).
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> Their main work is deception (Matt. 7:17–20). Jesus Himself declared that " 'many false prophets will rise up and deceive many' " (Matt. 24:11, NKJV), and " 'if possible, even the elect' ". (Adult Sabbath School Quarterly, 2026, Q4, pg 49)

The lesson quotes Ephesians 6: 10-18 as a solution to guard against deception / false prophets:

> [10] Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. [11] Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. [12] For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. [13] Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. [14] Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, [15]and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; [16] in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. [17] And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. [18] With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.

What does this passage mean to you??

See for additional insights:
https://comeandreason.com/wearing-the-armor-of-god-1/
https://comeandreason.com/wearing-the-armor-of-god-2/

I have found, in my own experience, that the best way to discern between True and False is to compare the person / doctrine / theory with Jesus.

I have a new favorite word -- it's "Oneirataxia". Pron: Oh-neehr-uh-tax-ee-uh. It's defined as the inability to distinguish between fantasy and reality [some definitions - ... between dreams and reality.]

It's only by developing a mature understanding of how Reality functions, that we are able to discern differences between fantasy and Reality. Since Jesus designed and created Reality, we do ourselves a service to learn as much as we can about the Laws governing Reality, and educate ourselves about his Life / Death / Resurrection.