



Believe His Prophets! The Bible and Prophets

“Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established;
believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.” (2 Chronicles 20:20 NKJV)

*Dear Andrew,**

Today, we think about prophets again, but from a different perspective this time:

Part 1: **Believe His prophets and you shall prosper.**

A great promise: “Believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.” This advice for our success in life is extremely important. As a young man, I read the book *The Ministry of Healing* by Ellen G. White. I found many valuable insights and good counsel, which protected me from many follies, for example, smoking, alcohol, premarital sex. It became clear to me that I should only marry a Christian, who shared my faith and life goals. The Adventist woman, who I married, shared the same biblical values. Our God gave us 55 years of a blessed marriage and also success in my career. When we trust God’s Word and His prophets, then God supplies a fulfilled life.

Why does God call us to trust His prophets?

God has given us essential instructions in His Word, which are valid at all times. Why should we in addition trust prophets?

The reason: at certain times circumstances in life change so dramatically that we need current directives from His messengers. Because God loves us, He wants to help us cope with the changed circumstances. The greatest changes in the lives of humanity have taken place in the last 200 years. Great changes ensued initially through the reformation, then through the enlightenment and then the French revolution in the intellectual realm. In addition, our practical lives were greatly influenced by the industrial revolution, digitalization and mass media.

*Andrew according to the biblical Andrew in John 1:41-42.

These changes in the last 200 years and especially those in the digital era have changed the faculty of thought in people. We are constantly being bombarded with new things and don't hardly have any time to think thoroughly through a process.

As a result, all the essential insights in God's Word are ignored.

Personal Implications

When we trust God's prophet, then we have the newest information – we are up to date. At the same time, we can prevent **deficiency symptoms**, which can possibly impair our whole life. True prophets of God don't convey their personal human beliefs and opinions, but rather act as God's ambassador. The apostle Peter wrote in his second letter in chapter 1:21:

“For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” (NKJV)

The gift of prophecy is a biblical sign for the church of the last days.

Revelation 12:17 (NKJV): *“And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, **who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.**”*

According to the Bible, the dragon is the devil. The pure woman is a symbol for God's church. Who are the rest of her offspring?

The leftovers of a meal are the rest that wasn't eaten. The remains of a roll of fabric is the last piece of cloth. This text talks about the rest of God's church, meaning from God's children at the end of time before Jesus returns. This rest of God's church is described in greater detail with two attributes:

1. Who keep the commandments of God.

Jesus summarized the ten commandments with the command to love God above all else and to love our neighbors as ourselves. This excludes every form of idol worship (1st commandment), but includes keeping the Sabbath holy (4th commandment). Naturally, it also includes the commission to spread the good news.

2. Have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 19:10 explains what the testimony of Jesus is: prophecy.

NKJV: *“... **the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.**”*

This means that the gift of prophecy has to exist in the church of the last days.

How was the doctrinal foundation of the Seventh-Day-Adventist church laid?

It is fascinating to me that God founded the church of the last days in a similar manner as the early church. The early church and the Adventist church both stem from two independent sources. In both cases, the Lord built in a double security.

How was the doctrinal foundation laid in the early church?

The first source: The early church was formed by the apostles, who had lived with Jesus. He had taught them from God's Word. This was the one source. I want to call this source, **Bible study, the normal way.**

But who was the great Bible teacher of the early church? That was the apostle Paul. He was not an eyewitness of Jesus' life. What was his source of information? He tells us in Galatians 1:11-12:

*"But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came **through the revelation of Jesus Christ.**"*

The second source, which God gave independently from the normal way of Bible study was **the way of direct revelation.**

God formed the early church through these two independent sources.

How did this develop in the Adventist church?

On one hand, through the "normal way" of Bible study by persons such as William Miller, Hiram Edson, Captain Bates, James White, John Loughborough, John Andrews and others. For 19 years they held Bible conferences, where they researched together, what we should believe according to the Bible and what are human teachings, which we shouldn't believe. – Only after that, in the year 1863, was the Seventh-Day-Adventist church officially founded.

However, God had already given again the gift of prophecy in 1844 for the formation of the church in the last days. Again, God formed the church through direct revelation to a prophet.

I can only discern this combination of two sources, the normal way of Bible study and the way of direct revelation, in the early church and the Adventist church.

I assume that in this way God wanted to build in a double security, so that His church would follow the right path.

In the early church a lot depended on them freeing themselves from the entanglement of the Jewish traditions, as well as from the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament, which had been fulfilled by Jesus and were thus no longer applicable. Our Lord wanted to lead the early church on the path of the pure and complete gospel.

And for the church in the last days a lot also depended on God freeing them from all the human traditions. He wanted the *"everlasting gospel"* (Revelation 14:6), the unaltered, pure, complete gospel, to be proclaimed to all people in the last days. We are told in Acts 3:21 (NKJV):

"Whom [Jesus] heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."

This means for the end-time church: Someone has to have the gift of prophecy in this church. In addition, God's Word shows us that in the closing phase of the earth that all believers will be entrusted with this gift (Joel chapter 3).

There is a war against Seventh-Day Adventists.

Revelation 12:17 shows us another important thought.

"And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring." (NKJV)

Satan is warring against the remnant church, who keep God's commandments and have the gift of prophecy in their midst, however **without a declaration of war**. Why? Because he works through deception.

(His strategies against the church are clearly outlined in *Letter to Andrew No. 23*: "God's Secret Service" – who revealed it to us.)

The same thing also happened in the apostle Paul's time. He wrote to the church in Corinth:

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works." (2 Corinthians 11:13-15 NKJV)

The church is being fought from within and from the outside. Can we already notice signs of this war behind the scenes? How will it progress? We need the Holy Spirit in order to recognize seduction. What does the prophetic voice in the church say about it?

"The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat." (Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages, Band 2*, p. 380.2)

What does the Bible say about prophets?

"Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7 NKJV)

During the great upheaval of the last days, God will give His church advice and guidance from a prophet. He reveals to us His solutions for the emerging new situations. In so doing, He is following His master plan. What plan does God have for our times?

Matthew 24:14 NKJV: *"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."*

What would God need to let us know, when He plans to proclaim the gospel to the world in our greatly changed times?

1. How the world's population can be reached with the gospel.
2. How our Lord will bring about the great finale.

3. How those, who do this work through God's power, can be healthy and productive under the changed circumstances.

Has God revealed this? He has indeed given us these guidelines. This is the actual content and purpose of the messages which God gave through Ellen G. White.

How did the prophets share the messages that God entrusted them with?

In written form: for example, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. In the New Testament John, Peter and Paul.

Orally: for example, Iddo, Nathan, Ahijah from Shiloh, Enoch, John the Baptist.

Unbeknownst to many, God also entrusted women with the gift of prophecy, for example, **Miriam**, the sister of Moses and Aaron, was a prophet (Exodus 15:20-21). **Deborah**, was a prophet and at the same time a judge in Israel. Then the prophet **Huldah** is also mentioned (2 Kings 22:14). There were also female prophets during the New Testament times, for example **Anna** (Luke 2:36), a highly talented woman and the **four young daughters of Philip** (Acts 21:8-9).

Jesus Warned against False Prophets

Jesus warned us about false prophets in his discourse on the last days. Therefore, we especially have to reckon with false prophets in our times. Jesus said: *“For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand.”* (Matthew 24:24-25 NKJV)

Signs and wonders are not the criterion by which we can differentiate between false and true prophets. Because false prophets will also do miracles. According to Exodus 7, the Egyptian magicians were also able to turn their staffs into snakes just like Moses – at least it looked that way.

How can we differentiate between a true and a false prophet?

The Bible gives us five test points. Everyone, who claims to be a prophet, has to be tested by all of these points. If he doesn't fulfill all the points, then he is a false prophet. The five points are:

1. Their lifestyle (Matthew 7:15-20).
2. Their prophecies are fulfilled (Deuteronomy 18:21-22), with the exception of conditional prophecies - for example Jonah.
3. Calling people to be loyal to God (Deuteronomy 13:2-5).
4. Recognition of the divine sonship of Jesus (1 John 4:1-3).
5. Conformity with the statements in the Bible (John 17:17).

When a prophet conforms with all five test points, then he is a true prophet. God Himself speaks to me through his messages. So, with a true prophet it only has to do ostensibly with his person, for example, Daniel, Paul or Ellen White. **In reality, we encounter God's word through the prophetic message.** Accordingly, our Lord says:

“And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.” (Deuteronomy 18:19 NKJV)

This is a clear word from God.

Disregarding prophetic messages means disregarding the Holy Spirit:

“Rejecting the prophets' words is rejecting the instruction of the Holy Spirit. The result ... the withdrawal of Christ's presence and the tyranny of evil.”¹

Part 2:

Now we will take a look at how the Spirit of prophecy/the gift of prophecy manifested itself in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

Overview of Ellen G. White's Life

In 1844 a girl named Ellen Harmon had several visions. She was 17 years old and a Christian. Because she believed in Jesus Christ and trusted the Bible, she was baptized. Later, she married a pastor, James White. She survived him by 34 years. She lived in the USA, was in Basel, Switzerland for two years and lived in Australia for 10 years. She died in 1915. In her 70 years of service, she had more than 2000 visions and prophetic dreams.

Based on her initiative many hospitals, sanatoriums, schools, mission stations, publishing houses, vegetarian restaurants and churches were founded. Although she was only able to

go to school for three years because of an accident, her writings consist of many thousands of manuscripts.

Ellen G. White is considered one of the most successful authors of world literature. “... The Smithsonian Magazine mentioned her in a list of the 100 most influential Americans that have ever lived. She is the most translated female author in the history of literature (150 languages) and the most translated American author, including both genders.” (*INFO VERO DE 09*, p. 71)

How should prophets and prophetic statements be checked for authenticity?

Prophetic statements should be tested by God's word – never the other way around! The Bible shouldn't be read through prophetic statements, but rather the other way around. Just like every other prophetic literature or statement, Ellen White's writings were thoroughly tested with God's Word. There were absolutely no contradictions found – quite the contrary!

She loved the Lord Jesus and His Word above everything else. Her extensive writings could be summarized with one of her last statements:

I recommend this book. (The Bible)

She never grew weary of pointing to God's Word in all things. That is why we can say that her literature leads people to Jesus and the Bible.

¹ *Adult Sabbath School Lesson Study Guide*, Philip G. Samaan, Lesson 2, response to question 8.

Naturally, the writings of Ellen White do not stand above the Bible and not even next to the Bible, but rather under the Bible. Her writings are – according to her own statement – not an addition to the Bible. But her writings do lead us to the Bible.

So, let us test her life story by the five criteria, which I mentioned and explained above.

1. Her Lifestyle

A secular newspaper, the *Detroit News Tribune*, wrote on July 25, 1915 concerning her death:

“Mrs. White was in many ways a remarkable woman. She was deeply religious and every-one, who knew her closely, never doubted her sincerity.”

The following quote comes from *American Biographical History*:

“Mrs. White is a woman of singularly well-balanced mental organization. Benevolence, spirituality, conscientiousness, and ideality are the predominating traits. Her personal qualities are such as to win for her the warmest friendship of all with whom she comes in contact, and to inspire them with the utmost confidence in her sincerity. ... Notwithstanding her many years of public labor, she has retained all the simplicity and honesty which characterized her early life.”

So, there is no doubt about her god-fearing lifestyle.

2. Prophecies

Did her prophecies come to pass or will they be fulfilled in the present or near future? I am taking only the key sentences from her prophecies and giving the year and source where the statement was made. I will mention the fulfillment in telegram style, since it is general knowledge.

1903, Book *Education*, p. 179.6, about war:

Prophecy: When God commands His angels to release the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture.

Fulfillment: 11 years later – in 1914 the first world war broke out and in 1939, the second world war. Since then more than 100 wars are raging around the world.

1903, *Education*, p. 228.2 about anarchy and riot:

Prophecy: The world-wide spread of the same teachings that led to the French Revolution – are tending to involve the whole world in a struggle similar to that which convulsed France.

Fulfillment: Modern atheism, communism, materialism and others theories developed on this base, and brought the whole world into turmoil.

**1908, *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 355
about urban lifestyle:**

Prophecy: It is Satan's purpose to attract men and women to the cities by inventing every kind of novelty, amusement and excitement. And the cities of the earth are becoming as were the cities before the Flood.

Fulfillment: The world population has grown from 2.5 billion people in 1950 to 8 billion in the year 2022. Today, there are three times as many people as 65 years ago. And yet, 29.6% of the world population lived in cities in 1950 and in 2015 it was 54%. According to an estimate made by the United Nations, **4.5 of the 7.9 billion people in the world lived in cities** in 2021. That is 57% of the world population. In the year 2030 the percentage will be around 60% (according to the Federal Office of Statistics).

**1905, book *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 365.1:
about earth and air pollution in the cities:**

Prophecy: Contact with disease, foul air, impure water, impure food – these are only a few of the dangers within the walls of a city.

Fulfillment: Today, most cities are fighting against these dangers and are hardly able to remedy the situation. In some cities, like New Delhi or Shanghai, a person can barely breathe.

**1890, *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 52.1
about the weather:**

Prophecy: Pay attention to the storms and tempests. Satan is working in the atmosphere to poison it.

Fulfillment: We are confronted with great climate changes today. The results in our area are still moderate, but in the south and in many countries in Asia and Africa the basis of existence is disappearing for many people.

**1891, book *Temperance*, p. 274 about the
developments amongst the youth:**

Prophecy: "Satan seeks to entice the youth into the path of perdition; and if he can once get their feet set in the way, he hurries them on in their downward course, leading them from one dissipation to another, until his victims lose their tenderness of conscience, and have no more the fear of God before their eyes. They exercise less and less self-restraint. They become addicted to the use of wine and alcohol, tobacco and opium, and go from one stage of debasement to another. They are slaves to appetite. Counsel which they once respected, they learn to despise. They put on swaggering airs, and boast of liberty when they are the servants of corruption. They mean by liberty that they are slaves to selfishness, debased appetite, and licentiousness."

Fulfillment: Result: today the youth are at great risk as never before. They need our intercessory prayers. The youth are only safe when they are in close contact with Jesus.

1902, *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 115.4 about catastrophes:

Prophecy: “Light has been given me that the cities will be filled with confusion, violence, and crime, and that these things will increase till the end of this earth's history.”

Fulfillment: Recently, shooting sprees and terrorist attacks have become more frequent.

1902, book *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 384.3 about animal disease:

Prophecy: “Animals are becoming more and more diseased, and it will not be long until animal food will be discarded by many besides Seventh-day Adventists.”

Fulfillment: Through industrial mass husbandry many animals have become ill. “The World Health Organization has openly declared since 2015 that meat poses the same cancer risk as smoking.” (Dr. Jorge Pamplona, *BE-Newsletter*, Austrian Union, Sept. 2018) In 2022 there were 10 million vegetarians in Germany and worldwide 1.5 billion. (Veganivore.de on 04.19.2023)

These were a few highlights for the second test point. Are her prophecies being fulfilled? Yes, very clearly.

3. Did she call people to loyalty to God and to follow Jesus?

We can hardly find anyone else, who did this with greater diligence and on a larger scale than this messenger of God. I just want to remind you of one of her books: *Steps to Christ*. After the Bible, this book is the most translated book in the world. It has already shown innumerable people the way to follow Jesus.

4. Acknowledgement of Jesus Christ according to the Bible – His divine sonship.

There are thousands of authors who have written books about the life of Jesus. The 300 most important ones are in the Library of Congress in Washington. The head librarian, who is acquainted with them all, said:

“We have about 300 books that describe the life of Jesus, but if you want to read the best description, then read the book *Desire of Ages* by Ellen G. White.”

This book attests very clearly the divine sonship of Jesus.

5. Conformity with the statements in the Holy Scriptures

She literally championed that all teachings must completely concur with the Bible. In the introduction of her book *The Great Controversy*, she revealed the principles by which everything has to harmonize with God's Word.

This book – *The Great Controversy* – is the most valuable and fascinating work on church history that I know of. It was written in 1888, so more than 135 years ago. This book is particularly interesting for present readers, because the development of the Christian churches up to the second coming of Christ is predicted.

What was still in the future 135 years ago, is in part now in the past. Hence, we have the opportunity of observing how the situation develops, which she predicted.

This book has opened the eyes of many people; they better understand why there is so much confusion in religious matters and where it comes from.

We should be very grateful to God that He has given us so many important insights through Ellen G. White. As a result, we can live a very fulfilled life even today.

Two examples of scientific facts that hadn't been discovered back then are:

1. “... **electricity must be conveyed to the buried seed.** The life which the Creator has implanted, He alone can call forth. Every seed grows, every plant develops, by the power of God.” (*Education*, p. 104.4)

She wrote this in 1903. At this time, science still had no knowledge that when a seed sprouts in the earth that electricity plays a role.

2. **Open Space in Orion**

32 years before the first vague astronomical discoveries, Ellen White spoke about an open space in Orion. How did she know about it? Doesn't this clearly show that she was inspired by God?

In the magazine *Info Vero* (Basista Media GmbH, DE 09, 71/72) it says: “Now to a fascinating quote from this remarkable author:

‘December 16, 1848, the Lord gave me a view of the shaking of the powers of the heavens. ...Dark, heavy clouds came up and clashed against each other. The atmosphere parted and rolled back; then we could look up through the **open space in Orion**, whence came the voice of God. The Holy City will come down through that open space.’” (*Early Writings*, p. 41.1-2)

The first weak photograph of the Orion Nebula was published in 1880 by Henry Draper and the next breakthrough was by Andrew A. Common in 1883. Ellen G. White knew about it through divine revelation 35 years before the scientists did.

To summarize:

It is wonderful that God has given us extremely valuable counsels also for the last days, which are in complete accordance with His Word. We want to thank Him for that with our whole hearts. God wants to give us security and success in life during these times.

God has given us fundamental advice in His Word, which is valid at all times. But at certain times, His followers are confronted with special situations. God gives us concrete information and advice for these. That means that when we trust a prophet of God, then we are “up to date”. This also means that we miss out on valuable knowledge, when we don’t trust God’s prophets. Thus, we have major disadvantages in practical life.

How can I benefit the most from this prophetic literature?

By reading it and regarding the context and the situation at the time.

One day, someone said to me: “I value Ellen G. White highly now.” I asked: “How did that come about?” Answer: “I now have read several of her books.”

I recommend you read the following books first: *Steps to Christ*, *The Desire of Ages* and *The Great Controversy*.

Whoever reads these books and implements the insights in them, will benefit greatly from it.

“Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.” (2 Chronicles 20:20 NKJV)

I hope you have a rich and fulfilled life stemming from a personal intimate relationship with God.

Kind regards,

Helmut

