

Test Questions – Lesson 4

1. Fill in the missing words:

God speaks to His Prophets in
..... and
.....
.....

2. Give references for two Bible proofs of
how God speaks to His prophets:

1.
2.



Supply the names
called for here:

1. Name 3 Bible characters who,
though prophets, received dreams
from God:

.....
.....
.....

2. Name 2 persons - not prophets -
in the early Advent Movement
who received personal guidance
from God:

.....
.....

3. Please check before each true
statement:

1. Physical phenomena alone
.....absolute
proof of divine inspiration.

2. Our only safety is
in.....
and.....
the true.....of
a prophet.

- ☐ Visions were given to Mrs. White
under many different circumstances.
☐ The physical phenomena were
observed by many reliable
witnesses.
☐ There were prophets in ancient
times who experienced similar
physical phenomena.

4. Answer the following questions:

1. Whom did Mrs. White identify as
often accompanying her while
she was in vision?

.....
.....

2. What was Mrs. White's
responsibility when she
came out of vision?

.....
.....

3. Was Mrs. White's reception of
visions limited as to time or
place?

.....
.....

5. Complete the following statements:

THINK ON THESE THINGS (No written
answer)

*Why was the light imparted to Mrs. White
by "open vision" in her earlier years?*

*Is it not a solemn thought that the Spirit of
Prophecy books on the shelves in your
home contain the revelations of God?*

How the Lord Instructs his Prophets

4



PROPHETIC GUIDANCE

GUIDING TEXT: I was in the Spirit of the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the . . . churches . . . And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw . . . one like unto the Son of man. – Revelation 1:10-13.

How the Lord Speaks to His Prophets

‘And he said, Hear now my words: 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**.’ – Numbers 12:6.

Visions and prophetic dreams have ever been the means by which God has revealed His secrets to His servants the prophets. But let us seek further. What does the Bible teach?

“I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have **multiple visions**, and used similtudes, by the ministry of the prophets.”– Hosea 12:10.

“God speaketh . . . in a dream, in a vision,” is the declaration of Job33:14-16. And in the book of Hebrews we read that “God . . . at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.” Hebrews 1:1.
Read the texts which follow, and you will observe that God used both visions and prophetic dreams in communicating His truth to the prophets.

Texts on Visions and Dreams.

Visions: Genesis 46:2, 3; 2 Chronicles 26:5;Dabiel 7:7, 13; 8:1, 2, 13, 14; 10:14-19; Revelation 1:10.
Prophetic Dreams: Genesis 28:10-17; 31:11; Daniel 7:1; Acts 18:9, 10.

QUESTION. What is the difference between the visions and the prophetic dreams of the prophet?

The answer is that God used both visions and prophetic dreams to impart light. It would seem that the **prophetic dream** was associated with natural sleep, the prophets mind being especially influenced by the Holy Spirit. In the **prophetic vision**, both mind and body were affected by the Spirit.

It does not seem possible to draw any very precise distinction between the prophetic **“dream”** and the prophetic **“vision.”** In the case of Abraham (Genesis 15:1) and of Daniel (Daniel 7:1), they seem to melt into each other. – McClintock and Strong, Cyclopedia, vol.VIII, article “Prophets,” p. 646; quoted in Messenger, p. 8.

QUESTION. How did God Speak to Ellen White?

In visions and prophetic dreams – as He did to the Bible prophets. During the pioneering years when the Advent Movement was developing, the Lord revealed truth to Mrs. White, as He did to Bible prophets, by frequent visions and prophetic dreams. Often in public meetings she was given **“open” visions**, in the presence of others, which paralleled Ezekiel’s experience when he was “taken away” in vision while in a meeting held in his own house, with the elders of Judah sitting before him. It must have been a solemn spectacle to behold the Lord’s prophet, ancient or modern, receiving instructions from the Almighty in an “open” vision! Ezekiel 8:1, 2.

Mrs. White was completely unaware of what was transpiring about her while she was in vision. She wrote concerning her remarkable physical state, as told to her by eyewitnesses: Sometimes while I was in vision, my friends would approach me, and exclaimed, “Why, she does not **breathe!**” Placing a mirror before my lips, they found that no moisture gathered on the glass. It was while there was no sign of any breathing, that I kept talking of the things that were being presented before me. – Review and Herald, June 14, 1906, p. 8. See Numbers 24:4 and Daniel 10:8, 17, 18 for evidence of similar physical phenomena in Bible Prophets.

QUESTION. How did the place and circumstances attending Mrs. White’s visions vary?

Elder James White wrote of this: She has been taken off in vision most frequently when bowed in **prayer**. Several time, while earnestly addressing he congregation, unexpectedly to herself and to all around her, she has been instantly **prostrated in visions**. This was the case June 12, 1868, in the presence of not less than two hundred Sabbath keepers, in the house of worship, in Battle Creek,

Michigan. On receiving baptism at my hands, at an early period of her experience, as I raised her up out of the water, immediately she was in vision. Several times, when prostrated by sickness, she has been relieved in answer to the prayer of faith, and taken off in vision. At such times her restoration to usual health has been wonderful. At another time, when walking with friends, in conversation upon the glories of the kingdom of God, as she was passing through the gate before her father’s house, the Spirit of God came upon her, and she was instantly taken off in vision. And what may be important to those who think the visions the result of mesmerism, she was a number of times been taken off in vision, when in prayer alone in the grove or in the closet. – Life Incidents, in Connection with the Great Advent Movement, pp. 272, 273.

These manifestations of God’s Spirit in connection with many of Mrs. White’s earlier visions, made a deep and sobering impression on all present. In many of the visions the following phenomena where prominent:

1. As the vision began, Mrs. White would exclaim, “Glory!” or “Glory to God!” sometimes repeated.
2. There was loss of physical strength.
3. Superhuman strength was then apparent.
4. There was no breathing, but the heartbeat continued normally, and the color in the cheeks was natural.
5. While some visions lasted for hours, the most critical test failed to reveal any disturbance of the circulatory system.
6. The eyes were open – not with a vacant stare, but as if she were intensely watching something.
7. The close of the vision was indicated by a deep inhalation, followed in about a minute by another, then very soon natural breathing was resumed.

About the miraculous element in physical manifestation and their purpose, Mrs. White wrote: These messages were thus given to substantiate the faith of all, that in these last days we might have confidence in the Spirit of Prophecy. – Review and Herald, June 14, 1906.

The “open” visions were not so plentiful after Mrs. White reached middle life. From then on, her work and mission having become established, God revealed His will to her more often through visions in the night seasons.

QUESTION. How Mrs. White Received Divine Illumination?

Some have supposed that Mrs. White wrote while in vision. This is not true. Some have concluded that when she wrote she was recording words which were dictated to her by an angel. This, too, is erroneous; except in rare instances when she was given short, direct quotations of what the attending angel said. Others have been of the opinion that a mechanical force guided the pen which she held in her hand. Such a view is also entirely out of harmony with the facts. The revelations consisted in the enlightening of the mind, and then, when not in vision, it was Mrs. White’s task, of course, with the aid of the Holy Spirit – to pass to others the instructions, admonition, and information which she had received by revelation. The visions covered a wide range of subjects. Matters revealed were often of general interest and concern; but frequently, too, specific messages were given for certain individuals.

A number of concrete illustrations drawn from the Ellen White books and manuscripts set forth typical instances in her experience.

EXAMPLES.

Seemingly Present, Participating in Events

While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Adventist people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, “Look again, and look a little higher.” At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path. – Early Writings, p. 14. Thus it seemed to her that she was seeing, feeling, hearing, obeying, and acting, employing her ordinary faculties; while in reality she was not. But it was in this vivid way, seemingly through the utilization of the ordinary organs of sense, that the truths and information were forcibly impressed upon her mind. These she later related or wrote out, in her own words.

Broad, Panoramic Views Give Past Present and Future

Past, present, and future events were sometimes opened up to Ellen White in panoramic view, and she seemed to witness in rapid succession the vivid enactment of the scenes of history. We quote here a few sentences which give us a glimpse of this means of enlightenment: Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of life, the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God’s holy law. . . . As the Spirit of God opened my mind the great truths of His Word, and the scenes of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has been thus revealed, - to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially to present it as it shed light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future. – Introduction, Great Controversy, pp. x, xi. Italics supplied.

Angel Explains Significance

At times instructions came not only through witnessing the occurring events, but also through the words of the accompanying angel, explaining the meaning of what was seen. Note this significant experience: While at Loma Linda, California, April 6, 1906, there passed before me a most wonderful representation. During a vision of the night, I stood on an eminence, from which I could see houses shaken like a reed in the wind. Buildings, great and small, were falling to the ground. Pleasure resorts, theaters, hotels, and homes of the wealthy were shaken and shattered. Many lives were blotted out of existence, and the air was filled with the shrieks of the injured and the terrified. . . . The awfulness of the scene that passed before me I cannot find words to describe. It seemed that the forbearance of God was exhausted, and that the judgment day had come. . . .

Terrible as was the representation that passed before me, that which impressed itself most vividly upon my mind was the instruction given in connection with it. The angel that stood by my side declared that God’s supreme ruler ship and the sacredness of His law must be revealed to those who persistently refused to render obedience to the King of kings. Those who choose to remain disloyal must be visited in mercy with judgment, in order that, if possible, they may be aroused to a realization of the sinfulness of their course. – Testimonies, vol. 9, pp. 92, 93. Italics supplied.

Perils Vividly Revealed

Oftentimes while in vision it seemed to Mrs. White that she was conveyed to an institution or a private home to observe what was transpiring there. At one time she was a guest at the home of one of our church members, but early during her stay she arose one morning at four o’clock to write out some things presented to her in a prophetic dream during the night: The angel of God said, “Follow me.” I seemed to be in a room in a rude building, and there were several young men playing cards. They seemed to be very intent upon the amusement in which they were engaged and were so engrossed that they did not seem to notice that anyone had entered the room. There were young girls present observing the players, and words were spoken not of the refined order. There was a spirit and influence that were sensibly felt in that room that was not of a character calculated to purify and uplift the mind and ennoble the character. . . . I inquired, “Who are these and what does this scene represent?” The word was spoken, “Wait.” I had another representation. There was the imbibing of the liquid poison, and words and actions under its influence were anything but favorable for serious thoughts, clear perception in business lines, pure morals, and the uplifting of the participants. . . . I asked again, “Who are these?”

The answer came, “A portion of the family where you are visiting. The great adversary souls, the great enemy of God and man, the head of principalities and powers, and the ruler of the darkness of this world is presiding here tonight. Satan and his angels are leading on with his temptations these poor souls to their ruin.” – E. G. White Letter 1, 1893; quoted in Messenger, p. 10.

In connection with these scenes Mrs. White heard the young men called by name as the heavenly visitor pointed out the dangers of card playing, gambling, and drinking. Much was said by the angel, which Mrs. White repeated in her earnest appeal to this family, as she placed before them that which had been revealed to her in this vivid way.

Symbolic Representations Given

Two consecutive paragraphs from a personal testimony addressed to a prominent worker of early years illustrated how far-reaching experiences of life may be made plane in just a brief symbolic view: Many other scenes connected with your case have been presented to me. At one time you were represented to me as trying to push a long car up a steep ascent. This car represents the food business as a commercial enterprise, which has been carried forward in a way that God does not commend.

At another time you were represented to me as a general mounted on a horse, and carrying a banner. One came and took out of your hand the banner bearing the words, “The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus,” and it was trampled in the dust. I saw you surrounded by men who were linking you up with the world.” – E. G. White Letter 239, 2903; quoted in Messenger, p. 11.

Contrasting Views Presented

There were times also when two different or divergent views were presented to Mrs. White – one illustrating what would take place if certain plans or policies were followed, and another view showing the outworking of other plans or policies. An excellent illustration of this may be cited in connection with the locating of the health and food factory at Loma Linda in the year 1906. The manager and his associates were planning for the erection of a large building very near the main sanitarium building. While plans were developing, Mrs. White, at her home in northern California, was one night given two visions. Of the first she wrote: I was shown a large building where many foods were made. There were also some smaller buildings near the bakery. As I stood by, I heard loud voices in dispute over the work that was being done. There was a lack of harmony among the workers, and confusion had come in. – E. G. White Letter 140, 1906; quoted in Messenger, p. 11.

She then saw J. A. Burden’s distress, and his attempts to reason with the disputants to bring them into harmony. She saw patients who overheard these disputes, and who were “expressing words of regret that a food factory should be established on these beautiful grounds,” so near the sanitarium. “Then One appeared on the scene, and said: ‘All this has been caused to pass before you as an object lesson, that you might see the results of carrying out certain plans.’” – Ibid.

Then the scene changed, and she saw the bakery “at a distance from the sanitarium buildings, on the road towards the railway.” Here the work was being conducted in a humble way and in harmony with God’s plan. The narration of this to the Loma Linda workers quickly settled the question of the site for the food factory. These illustrations give a good representation of the varied ways in which God imparted light to the mind of Ellen White.

To Mrs. White the visions were as real as life itself. So glorious were the scenes of the heavenly kingdom presented to her during her first vision that she expressed great amazement and disappointment when called back to the reality of our dark world. Turn back to Lesson2, Section 1, and reread her own testimony of this as she gave it to an attentive Australian audience in 1894. Like David, the seer and psalmist of Israel, she exclaimed, “Oh, that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest.” – Early Writings, p. 20.

Physical Phenomena Alone Not Absolute Proof

There are four principal Bible tests of a prophet, all of which will be considered in a later lesson. But the physical phenomena are not among these four tests. However, there are in the physical phenomena certain evidences of divine power that need to be understood and appreciated by the student. Among the reasons why physical phenomena cannot be taken as an absolute proof of prophetic inspiration are:

- (1)physical phenomena are not designated as a test in connection with the visions as set forth in the Bible;
- (2)these physical manifestations may, at least in part, be counterfeited by the devil, as in the manifestation of spiritualistic mediums and of certain so-called faith healers.

Over half a century ago Mrs. White warned of certain “strange” and “peculiar manifestations” which were “not of God”: I said. . .that before the end we should see strange manifestations by those professed to be led by the Holy Spirit. There are those who will treat as of great importance these peculiar manifestations, which are not of God, but which are calculated to divert the minds of many away from the teachings of the Word. Selected Messages, Book II, p. 41.

While physical signs of divine origin were manifest in many of Mrs. White’s visions, these were not in themselves absolute proof of the divine origin of the visions. What, then, were the proofs? How should the visions be tested? What is the standard by which to measure Mrs. White’s remarkable revelations? We can only answer, “In the four Bible tests. “our only safety is in knowing and applying the true Bible tests of a prophet, which will be explained in Lesson 7.