Quarter Four: *The Gift of Prophecy*

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Lesson 1—The Creator Speaks

Sunday: Communication in Eden

September 27, 2026

- **Last Quarter:** 1 & 2 Corinthians: "Grace, Love & Fellowship"
    - 2 Cor 13

- **This Quarter:** *The Gift of Prophecy*
    - Importance of communication:
        - Any relationship is based on communication
        - *Neuroscientists understand the ability of human infants for language acquisition
            - 6 months old, baby can understand sounds the comprise any language
                - Can even learn a second language, if exposed to it at that age
            - One caveat: babies must be spoken to
                - "voice lessons for newborns"
        - God wants to speak to us
        - Memory Text: Heb 1:1, 2 – "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds."
            - Study this week, "The Creator Speaks"
        - Most basic level, prophecy is based in God's desire to communicate with us

    - Gift of Prophecy / last quarter (1 Cor 12 & 14):
        - Prophecy = a gift of the Spirit
            - 1 Cor 12:11 – "…distributing to each one individually as He wills"
            - The gift of prophecy is not something studied or self-created – it's a gift from the Holy Spirit
        - Prophecy = is given for the edification of others
            - 1 Cor 12:7 – "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all"
            - The gift of prophecy is not for the holder of that gift – it's intended for the edification of others

        - Prophesy – *prof-ay-tyoo'-o* = (1 Cor 14:1) Strongs: "prophesy; to foretell events, speak under inspiration"
            - Divinely empowered forthtelling or foretelling
                - **Forthtelling** – say something on behalf of someone else
                - **Foretelling** – say something in advance

            - **The gift of prophecy has a two-fold application:**
                - Forthtelling: Present day message on behalf of God
                - Foretelling: Future prediction on behalf of God
        - 1 Cor 14:3 – "but he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

- Present day message on behalf of God: **forth tellers**
    - **3-fold purpose today:**
    - **Edification** – build up the church (can indicate constructive criticism / instruction that builds up a person in Christ)
    - **Exhortation** – from *par-ak'-lay-sis* – entreaty, urgent counsel, caution (personal, intimate call)
    - **Comfort** – involves tenderness, comfort, speaking closely to someone

- Gift of Prophecy / this quarter:
    - God's desire to communicate with us
    - Divine call of a prophet
    - OT & NT prophets
    - How the divine message is communicated to humanity – written, oral, other means
    - Call of a prophet & tests of a true prophet
    - Prophetic authority & relevance
    - Interpretation of prophetic writings
    - Focus on prophecy & how God communicates with us as His people

- Friday's lesson:
    - Different focus this quarter on Friday's lesson – focus on ministry of EGW, and how her prophetic role is understand / interpreted in context of that lesson's week
    - One panelist each week will spend time on Friday's portion of the lesson

- **Author:** The Ellen G. White estate

- **This Week:** "The Creator Speaks"
    - Gen 1 – 3; Ex 19 & John 10 & Luke 15
    - Humanity was created for communication with our Creator
        - Sin brought a disconnect:
            - Gen 3 – Adam & Eve – separation from God
                - God to Adam: where are you?
        - 1st Messianic promise: Gen 3:15
            - Prophecy points to Jesus
            - Prophecy is one of the ways God communicates with us

Memory Text: "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds" (Heb 1:1, 2, NKJV).

The week in brief:

- **1. Sunday:** Communication in Eden (Jill)
    - Gen 1 & 2 – communication between God & Adam & Eve in the Garden b4 sin
- **2. Monday:** Hiding from God (Ryan J)
    - Gen 3 – entrance of sin & consequences in severed relationship between God & humanity
- **3. Tuesday:** God Seeks Humanity (John D)
    - Luke 15 / Gen 3 – God's desire to restore connection with humanity & to save us

- **4. Wednesday:** Expelled from the Garden (SQ)
    - Gen 3 & Ex 19 – ways that sin changed our communication with God & promise of coming Messiah to restore us to Himself
- **5. Thursday:** God's Spokespeople (John L)
    - Multiple Scriptures – ways that God communicates with us after sin: prophets (God's spokespeople); Nature / creation; the Bible (containing the prophet's words); Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit
- **6. Friday:** Ellen G. White (John D)
    - History of EGW, and her conversion experience

Sunday: Communication in Eden

Gen 1:27, 28; Gen 2:**15 – 17**, 18 – 23; Gen **3:9;** Gen 2:2, 3; Ex 20:8 - 11

- God's perfect world
    - 7 takeaways of God's perfect world

God's perfect world:

- **1. Humanity was created to represent Him**
    - Gen 1:26, 27 – "Then **God** said, 'Let Us make man in **Our image**… (27) So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."
        - God = *Elohim* = God as Creator & Ruler of the universe; cosmic authority & majesty
            - Plural noun, used with singular verbs & adjectives (2,500+ times)
            - Emphasis the Godhead (3 in one), while still be only one God (monotheism)
            - Transcendence = God's majesty, power, sovereignty
            - Also used for "gods" in the ordinary sense or magistrates
        - Our image = *tseh'-lem* = used 17 x's – used for both God's image in humanity & tragic corruption of that in idol worship
            - Humanity – in God's image – is God's living image
            - Idols are dead distortions
        - Humanity represents the Godhead: Father, Son, Holy Spirit
        - Both male & female represent the Godhead
            - God is our Protector & Strong Tower – we are safe with Him
            - God is our Nurturer

- **2. Humanity was created for community**
    - Gen 2:18 – "And the LORD God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.'"
        - LORD = *Yahweh*
            - 6,220 x's; God's most common designation (stooped & made man out of the dust of the ground
            - The name *yah-weh* = most relational name for God in the OT; the sacred, covenantal name of God in the Heb Bible

        - He is a personal God, the God of the covenant, who makes Himself known through the act of redemption (He demonstrates His power by His love & care)

    - Immanence = God's personal presence, closeness, covenant relationship
        - God over all creation is also present within it

- God = *Elohim*
- God created us for community
    - Loneliness is not part of God's world
    - Fear of others or friction between others is not part of His world
    - Being ostracized or left out is not part of His world
    - Being unwanted or unloved is not part of His world

- **3. Humanity was created in families**
    - Gen 2:21 – 24 – "And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. (22) Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. (23) And Adam said: 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called **Woman**, because she was taken out of **Man**.' (24) Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be **joined** to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."
        - First anesthesia & surgery performed by God
        - Taken from rib
            - Not head to rule over him
            - Not feet to be ruled by him
            - But side, to be loved, cherished, protected & nurtured
                - This is God's design

        - Woman = *ish-shaw'*
        - Man = *eesh* – expresses close link between husband & wife
        - First social institution God provided for humanity = marriage
            - One man (one biological male)
            - One woman (one biological female)

        - Joined = Heb, *daw-bak'* = "to cling, cleave, adhere to" something or someone
            - Not just physical
            - Emotional / intellectual / spiritual
            - Covenant language: same word
                - Josh 23:8 – "But you shall **hold fast** to the LORD your God, as you have done this day." (KJV: = "cleave")

                - Deut 4:3, 4 – "our eyes have seen what the LORD did at Baal Peor; for the LORD your God has destroyed from among you all the men who followed Baal of Peor. (4) But you who **held fast** to the LORD your God are alive today, every one of you."
                    - Held fast – from *daw-bak'* = "cling, cleave, adhere to"

- **4. Humanity was created for communication with God**
    - Gen 3:9 – after sin, God called to Adam, "Where are you?"
    - Before sin, unbroken communion with God (in cool of the day, Vs 8)

        - God talked with Adam & Eve
        - They communicated openly, freely, without a mediator

- **5. Humanity was created for time for God**
    - Gen 3:8 – communication with God in the cool of the day (daily communication)
    - Gen 2:2, 3 – the Sabbath
        - Dedicated 24-hour period of communion with God

- **6. Humanity was created for stewardship**
    - Gen 1:28 – "Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it, have **dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"
        - Dominion = *raw-daw'* = "make to have dominion, prevail against, reign"
            - Dominion is not license for exploitation; it is stewardship that reflects God's own righteous governance

- **7. Humanity was created for multiplication**
    - Gen 1:28 – "Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be **fruitful** and **multiply**; fill the earth and subdue it, have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"
        - Fruitful = *paw-raw'* = "to bring forth fruit, branch out, or sprout"
        - Multiply = *raw-baw'* = "bring in abundance; become great"

God's perfect world:

- 1. Humanity was created to represent Him
    - Do we represent Him?
        - Often, our "image" is more of the distorted idol worship
- 2. Humanity was created for community
    - Do we live in community?
        - Often, we live broken, isolated, unloved lives
- 3. Humanity was created in families
    - Do we live in the family unit as God designed?
        - Often, we live in broken family units (divorce or death) or dysfunctional families (two men, two women)

- 4. Humanity was created for communication with God
    - Do we communicate with Him and He with us?
        - Often, we ignore His voice, or spurn His prophetic words to us
- 5. Humanity was created for time for God
    - Do we spend that time with Him?
        - Often, we don't take time for His Word for daily devotions or a weekly date with Him
- 6. Humanity was created for stewardship
    - Do we exercise that dominion?
        - Often, we either exercise dominion with hate or fear, or we neglect to stand up and exercise dominion, at all
- 7. Humanity was created for multiplication
    - Do we share the glories of Christ with others? (our own children – or with others)
        - Often, we don't know Him, so don't share Him; or maybe, we no longer care