Quarter Four: *The Gift of Prophecy*

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Lesson 3—Old Testament Prophets

Monday: Identifying True Prophets

October 12, 2026

- **Last Week:** "The Call of a Prophet"
  - A prophet's life & calling: prophets throughout Scripture
    - Called for a special time
    - Difficulties prophets encountered, fulfilling their calling

- **This Week:** "Old Testament Prophets"
  - 1 Kings 18, 19 & 22; 2 Kings 22; Jer 14; Ex 15; 1 Sam 8
  - Study of OT prophets: exploring how the gift of prophecy was manifested through them; how they communicated God's messages & what struggles they encountered

Memory Text: "Jehoshaphat stood and said, 'Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper'" (2 Chron 20:20, NKJV).

The week in brief:

- **1. Sunday:** The Humanity of Prophets (Pastor James)
  - 1 Kings 18 & 19 – Elijah's depression & struggle after the Mt Carmel experience
- **2. Monday:** Identifying True Prophets (Jill)
  - 1 Kings 22 – Micaiah's faithful testimony against much pressure; qualities of prophets
- **3. Tuesday:** Functions of Prophets (Pastor Ryan)
  - 1 Sam 8:4 – 22 – interactions of prophets with kings & priests; prophets provided exhortation, teaching, rebuke, calls to repentance, both verbally & in writing
- **4. Wednesday:** Women Prophets (SQ)
  - Multiple Scriptures – examples of female prophets throughout the OT & the roles they played & humanity they exhibited
- **5. Thursday:** False Prophets (Pastor John L)
  - Jer 14 & 1 Kings 22 –false prophets & how to identify them
- **6. Friday:** Not Perfect but Willing (Jill)
  - EGW's reluctant acceptance of the call of God to speak for Him
    - Her work with development of SDA Church, SDA health & education systems & writings

Monday: Identifying True Prophets

1 Kings 22:1 – 14; Deut 18:20; 1 Sam 9:3 - 14

- Sunday: humanity of prophets
- Monday: qualities of true prophets
- Not necessarily discussing tests of a true prophet / some overlap:

- **#1: Fulfilled prophecy (foretelling)**
  - Jer 28:8, 9 – prophecies of true prophets, when they are not conditional, always come to pass
  - Jer 18:7 – 10 – conditional nature of predictive prophecy
  - Deut 18:22

- **#2: Agreement with God's Word**
  - Isa 8:20 – "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."
    - Test everything a prophet says by the Word of God
  - Deut 13:1 – 4 – leads to obedience to God's Word

- **#3: Emphasis on the centrality of Jesus**
  - 1 John 4:1 – 3 – "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (2) By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, (3) and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God…"

- **#4: Fruits of the prophet's life and ministry**
  - Matt 7:15 – 20 – "… (20) Therefore by their fruits you will know them."
    - A prophet's fruit = the impact of his or her life & work

7 Takeaways of qualities of true prophets

- **History**: 1 Kings 22
  - Mt Carmel (1 Kings 18)
  - Elijah's discouragement & revelation of God (1 Kings 19)
  - King Ahab made a treaty with Ben-Haded, king of Syria, displeased God (1 Kings 20)
  - Jezebel orchestrated the murder of Naboth so Ahab could have his vineyard (1 Kings 21)
    - 1 Kings 20, Ahab spared the life of his bitter enemy
    - 1 Kings 21, Ahab is indifferent to the execution of an innocent Israelite
    - 1 Kings 21:25 – "But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up."

  - 3 years passed
    - Jehoshaphat, king of Judah (good king, followed God but didn't remove high places)
    - Visited Ahab, king of Israel

  - 1 Kings 22:3 – 5 – "And the king of Israel said to his servants, 'Do you know that Ramoth in Gilead is ours, but we hesitate to take it out of the hand of the king of Syria?' (4) So he said to Jehoshaphat, 'Will you go with me to fight at Ramoth Gilead?' Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, 'I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.' (5) Also Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, 'Please inquire for the word of the LORD today.'"
    - Stage is set: are they to go to war, or not?
      - Jehoshaphat: ask God whether we should go

- **1. True prophets are not always consulted first**

- 1 Kings 22:6 – "Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about 400 men and said to them, 'Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to fight, or shall I refrain?' So they said, 'Go up, for the LORD will deliver it into the hand of the king.' (7) And Jehoshaphat said, 'Is there not still a prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of Him?'"
  - They didn't consult the prophet of God: sought their own false prophets
  - Jer 2:13 – "For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, *And* hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water."
    - We turn our own way; seek our own solutions
  - Judges 17:6 – "In those days, there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

- **2. True prophets are not always popular**
  - Vs 8 – "So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, 'There is still one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD; but I hate him, because he does not **prophesy** good concerning me, but evil.'"
    - Prophesy = Strongs: "to prophesy; ie, speak (or sing) by inspiration (in prediction or simple discourse)
      - Prediction = foretelling
        - Future events
      - Simple discourse = forthtelling
        - Edification, exhortation, comfort (1 Cor 14:3)
      - Whether foretelling future events or forthtelling present truth,
        - Verb consistently implies that the speaker stands as Yahweh's appointed mouthpiece
    - Micaiah told the truth: and it earned him some enemies

- **3. True prophets are not perfect**
  - Vs 13 – "Then the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, 'Now listen, the words of the prophets with one accord encourage the king. Please, let your word be like the word of one of then, and speak encouragement.'"
    - True prophets experience great pressure to compromise
      - Say what everyone else did
      - Don't rock the boat
      - Don't ruffle any feathers
  - Vs 14, 15 – "And Micaiah said, 'As the LORD lives, whatever the LORD says to me, that I will speak.' (15) Then he came to the king; and the king said to him, 'Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall we refrain?'" And he answered him, 'Go and prosper, for the LORD will deliver it into the hand of the king!'"
    - If that was God's will, then it would be the right thing to say
    - However, it was not the word of the Lord
      - Micaiah momentarily falters
  - True prophets are not always perfect
    - **David**: Acts 2:29, 31 – "Men & brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead & buried, and his tomb is with us to this

day. … (31) he (David) forseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ…"

- Peter is forthtelling (providing a God-anointed, present day message of edification, exhortation & comfort)
- Peter is referring to King David who was a foreteller – prophet who predicted the future
  - David committed adultery / murder

- **Elijah**: predicted no rain to Ahab (foreteller), but primary work was forthtelling: calling the nation to repentance & preaching against idol worship (Ahab)
  - Yet, Elijah got discouraged (1 Kings 19)

- **Micaiah** momentarily faltered in giving the message
- **Paul** argued with Barnabas over John Mark (forthteller)
- **John the Baptist**
  - Foreteller – John 1:29 – he was not worthy to untie Jesus' sandals
  - Forth teller – call to repentance & reformation
  - Got discouraged – "are we to look for another?"

- **4. True prophets will speak the truth, regardless of peer pressure or the consequences**
  - Vs 16 – 18 – "So the king said to him, 'How many times shall I make you swear that you tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?' (17) Then he said, 'I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace.' (18) And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, 'Did I not tell you he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?'"
    - Micaiah faltered before; but tells the truth now, regardless of the consequences

- **5. True prophets endure persecution**
  - Vs 24 – Micaiah is struck on the face by Zedekiah
  - Vs 27 – "… 'thus says the king: "Put this fellow in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I come in peace."'"
    - Micaiah went to prison for being a true prophet of God

  - Isaiah sawed in half by order of King Manasseh
  - Jeremiah was beaten, put in stocks, locked in a dungeon, dropped into an abandoned, muddy cistern to starve
  - Uriah was executed with a sword by King Jehoiakim
  - Zechariah was stoned to death in the temple courtyard for confronting the disobedience of the people
  - Daniel was placed in the lion's den
  - John the Baptist was imprisoned and later beheaded
  - Stephen was stoned to death by order of the Sanhedrin
  - Paul suffered floggings, shipwreck, imprisonment, & execution in Rome
  - John was put in boiling oil and later exiled to Patmos

- **6. True prophets foretelling comes true**
  - Vs 35, 36 – The result of the battle, the King of Israel died & every man ran to his own city – exactly what Micaiah the prophet predicted (foretold)

- Jer 28:8, 9 – prophecies of true prophets, when they are not conditional, always come to pass
- Jer 18:7 – 10 – conditional nature of predictive prophecy
- Deut 18:22 – "When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him."

- 1 Sam 9:6 – "And he said to him, 'Look now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man; all that he says surely comes to pass.'"
    - Speaking of the prophet Samuel

- **7. True prophets receive a word / message from the Lord to deliver**
    - 1 Sam 9:15, 16 – "Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear the day before Saul came, saying, (16) 'Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines…"
        - The prophet speaks what the Lord instructs: never a human prediction
            - Always a divine message, whether forthtelling or foretelling

    - 2 Pet 1:20, 21 – "knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, (21) for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."
        - Foretelling or forthtelling always comes from God