

The Integrity of the Prophetic Gift



Teacher's Guide

Materials

clear cellophane plastic in a number of different colors cut into pieces big enough to cover a person's eyes, or pairs of sun glasses with blue lenses, yellow lenses, gray lenses; lined paper; pens/pencils

Surveying the Source

2 Sam. 7:1–7; 1 Kings 22:10–34; Dan. 8:27.

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Experience an expanded understanding of the prophetic gift.
- ▶ Realize that God speaks to each one personally, today.
- ▶ Explore the impact of culture and human perception when receiving communication from God.

Preparing to Lead

The gift of prophecy didn't die with the Bible writers or Ellen White. "Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. But now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son" (Heb. 1:1, 2, NLT). "Then after I have poured out my rains again, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see vi-

sions. In those days, I will pour out my Spirit even on servants, men and women alike" (Joel 2:28, 29, NLT).

These articles make good background reading: "Have You Heard" at <http://www.thequiethour.org/resources/2008have-you-heard.php>; "Insight for Living: The Voice of God" at http://www.insight.org/site/News2?page=NewsArticle&id=8969&news_iv_ctrl=1781.

Getting Started

A. Say: "Briefly share a time when you "prophesied," for example: ●you accurately "read" how a friend or child was feeling when he or she wasn't able to identify the feeling themselves; ●you said something like, "Just watch, [someone] is going to _____," and they did; ●you had an accurate impression about something and followed it (or didn't and wished you had); a time a hunch turned out to be false.

B. Provide "eye filters" for each class member. Invite the students to look through them at an object you will reveal shortly. Uncover a multi-colored object or piece of fabric and ask the students to describe how they see it viewing it through their filters only. Ask the students what "filters" might affect a prophet, or anyone receiving a message from God.

Delving Into the Word

(The following resources will be helpful for both sections A and B: *Life Appli-*

cation Study Bible, NLT by Tyndale; *The IVP Bible Background Commentary*:

New Testament, by Craig S. Keener; *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, by John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas.)

A. Give each class member a copy of the reproducible activity on page 39 entitled “The Context When Originally Written.” For each passage explored in the Logos section, study the context—what is happening before and after the specified texts. The following texts provide the context you will need: 2 Samuel 6, 7; 1 Kings 22:1–50; Daniel 8, 9.

For each text, write down: ●who the writer of the story is; who would have been the intended reader(s) at that time; ●what the prophet did, how well he did it, how he related with God; ●what God did and how He related with the prophet.

Talk about what you discover. Share any new insights into the prophetic process that you received.

B. Look at the story of Balaam in Numbers 22–24—especially 22:7–20; 22:21–35; 23:3–5; 15, 16; and 24:1, 2. Write down the different times of day, ways, places, etc., in which God communicated with and/or used Balaam. What does this information tell us about God, and also about His relationship with us?

Look at Jesus’ use of prophecy in John 4:1–39—especially 4:10, 16–18. What does Jesus prophetically see?

Compare and contrast these prophetic instances with the ones featured in this week’s lesson. What do these stories add to your understanding of the gift of prophecy?

Discussing the Ideas

1. How is the gift of prophecy looking to the future (Daniel’s visions, for example) different from the gift of prophecy looking in the present (Jesus seeing the heart and marital status of the woman at the well or the prophet Nathan with King David)?

2. What makes a “true prophet”?

3. What sorts of things in our hearts prevent us from hearing God’s voice

more clearly?

4. How are prophetic gifts used by people living today?

5. God Himself will write His law on our hearts and minds (Jer. 31:33; Heb. 8:10; 10:16). How should we interpret Ellen White’s writings in light of these Scriptures?

6. In what ways does God speak to each of us personally today?

Closing the Activity

Give each student lined paper and a pen or pencil. Then read Joel 2:28, 29. Invite the students to explore this question: How might God use me in a prophetic way?

There is no “right answer” to memorize for a quiz at the end of class. This is an exercise in relating directly with God.

Encourage each person to pray, to listen for God’s voice providing His answer, and to write what He says. For those who may be uncomfortable with this exercise, suggest they describe in writing the feelings this question provokes in their hearts.

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THE CONTEXT WHEN ORIGINALLY WRITTEN

Scripture	The Writer	The Audience	Meaning That Time	The Prophet's Words/ Actions	God's Words/ Actions
2 Samuel 6, 7					
1 Kings 22:1–50					
Daniel 8, 9					