TALKING POINTS

The Gift of Prophecy
Quarter 4, Lesson 7
"Now Hear This!"

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MEMORY VERSE: "Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come." 1 Corinthians 10:11, NKJV

LESSON STUDY INTRO

This lesson looks at how God's people regard His messages and the messengers He sends to them.

1. God's prophets speak *the* truth, not *their* truth (Sab, Sun)

- Though prophets are fallen humans, they still only share the message the Lord gives them and not necessarily what they would personally prefer.
    - Moses (Ex. 4:12; Num. 20:10-12)
    - Balaam (Num. 22:35, 38)
    - Jonah (Jonah 3:1-4)
    - Jeremiah (Jer. 1:9)
- Regardless, the recipients of God's instruction still often blame and persecute the messenger.
    - Micaiah (1 Ki. 22:8; 12, 14; 19-23)
    - Moses and Aaron (Ex. 14:11; 16:2-6; Num. 14:4-11)

> When men yield their hearts to unbelief they place themselves under the control of Satan, and none can tell to what lengths he will lead them. PP 389.1 (Qtly, Sun, par 3)

2. "The Word of our God stands forever" (Mon, Tue)

- This assurance from Isaiah 40:8 is repeatedly emphasized in the Bible (see Ps. 119:89; Mt. 5:18; Mt. 24:35; 1 Pet. 1:23-25).
    - Regardless, many have sought to alter, deny, or even destroy God's Word.
        - Jehoiakim burning the scroll of Jeremiah (Jer. 36:20-32).
        - Nebuchadnezzar's golden image (Dan. 3).
        - The attempts of the "little horn" to "change times and law" (Dan. 7:24-27).
    - Such open defiance of God and rejection of His prophetic Word always fails (see Qtly, Mon, par 4).

3. Sophisticated rejection is *still rejection* (Thu, Fri)

- The enemies of Christ were hypocrites—claiming to honor the persecuted prophets, yet practicing the same rejection (Mt. 23:29-39).
    - "In burnishing the tombs and sepulchers of God's servants, they reasoned to themselves that they would never have shed the blood of God's messengers. Yet, at that very time they were planning the murder of Someone much more than a prophet—the Messiah Himself." Qtly, Wed, par 4
    - Such hypocrisy was also evident when they held their traditions above the law of God, thus making "the commandment of God of none effect" (Mt. 15:1-9).
- The behavior of God's people in the past is recorded as a warning for those of us living in the last days (1 Cor. 10:11).
- Contemporary rejection of Ellen White's prophetic ministry can be brazen (like Jehoiakim) or sophisticated (like the Pharisees), but it is rejection nonetheless.

> The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God… Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony. LDE 177.5

> It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the Testimonies. Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the Testimonies, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction. LDE 178.2

CONCLUSION

God's prophets in all times were entrusted with messages that were often unappreciated or even resulted in their own persecution. Nonetheless, they would doubtless concur with Ellen White that

> God has set me as a reprover of His people; and just so surely as He has laid upon me the heavy burden, He will make those to whom this message is given responsible for the manner in which they treat it. 4T 231.3 (Qtly, Fri, par 3)