



THE BIBLE STANDS

*The Bible stands though the hills may tumble,
It will firmly stand when the earth shall crumble;
I will plant my feet on its firm foundation,
For the Bible stands.*

Lesson 30: EXAMINING THE GIFTS

Name:

Date:

1. Why do we need to test all spiritual manifestations? 1 John 4:1.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

2. What will Jesus say to many who claimed the gift of prophecy? Matthew 7:22, 23.

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

3. What did He say would arise in the last days? Matthew 24:24.

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”

4. What four specific warnings does Paul give? 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21.

“Quench not the Spirit. 20 Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

5. How should we test all things? Isaiah 8:20.

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

The first and most important test of a prophet is that his message is in harmony with the law of God and the testimony of earlier prophets.

6. How does a false prophet's appearance deceive people? Matthew 7:15.

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

7. How then can we distinguish the genuine from the false? Matthew 7:16-20.

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

8. What does a false prophet do for the wicked? Ezekiel 13:22.

“Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life:”

The second test of a prophet is the fruit of his ministry. Does his own life reveal God’s character? Does his work bear the marks of the high and holy calling of God. Are people’s lives elevated through his influence?

9. What does the accuracy of a prophet’s predictions indicate? Jeremiah 28:9.

“The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.”

10. What would inaccuracy of prediction indicate? Deuteronomy 18:21, 22.

“And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.”

11. Yet even if a sign should come to pass, what in a prophet’s message would prove him to be false? Deuteronomy 13:1-5.

“If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; “Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.”

The third test of a prophet is the accuracy of his predictions. Predicting, however, is not the primary function of a prophet. A prophet’s work is to bear the messages which God gives, and those messages may or may not contain information about the future. But when God does reveal future events, we may be sure that it will happen just as He has foretold.

Sometimes God gives conditional prophecies. Jonah’s message of the fall of Nineveh, for example, was conditioned upon the response of the people. Because Satan can also foretell certain events before they happen, fulfilled predictions cannot be considered conclusive evidence of the genuine gift of prophecy. But Satan cannot predict with 100% accuracy as God does. For this reason, when a prophet’s predictions are consistently fulfilled throughout his entire career, we must take it as evidence of his authenticity. We should then look for the other tests to be met as well.

12. What is one key teaching that must be checked? 1 John 4:3.

“And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”

13. What two physical effects happened to Daniel in vision? Daniel 10:17.

“For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.”

The effects of Daniel's vision are described in detail in Daniel 10:7-19.

- a. He lost all his own strength.
- b. He lost consciousness.
- c. He became dumb.
- d. His lips were touched; he was able to speak.
- e. There was no breath in him.
- f. He was given strength.

14. What happened to Balaam when he was in vision? Numbers 24:4.

"He hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open:"

Although never a conclusive test of divine inspiration, supernatural phenomena accompanying a vision do lend credibility to a prophet's message. But because Satan can counterfeit such signs, we cannot base our confidence in a prophet solely upon physical manifestations.

Physical signs are not always present when a prophet receives a revelation. God has often spoken to His prophets in dreams while they were sleeping.

15. The church of God is one body, but do all have the same function? Romans 12:4.

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:"

16. What does each member have differently? Romans 12:6.

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;"

Please also read 1 Corinthians 12, especially verses 4-11, 14-19, 28-30. The Bible does not say that a true believer has to have any one particular gift. Neither does it say that the believer may choose his gift. The Holy Spirit gives different gifts to different people, "dividing them severally as He will."

17. What is one of the signs that Jesus said would follow them that believed? Mark 16:17.

"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;"

The word "tongue" (glossa) means "language."

18. How was this manifested on the day of Pentecost? Acts 2:4-11.

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? "And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."

A second manifestation of the gift of tongues took place at the house of Cornelius, a Roman centurion (Acts 10:46).

19. How did Peter explain that the gift of tongues at the house of Cornelius was no different from what was experienced at Pentecost? Acts 11:17.

“Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?”

The only other recorded instance of tongues in the Bible is Acts 19:6. And there is nothing in the passage to indicate that its manifestation was any different.

20. If a person speaks in tongues but doesn't have love what are they like? 1 Corinthians 13:1.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”

21. What is the only Biblically acceptable procedure for speaking in other tongues? 1 Corinthians 14:27, 28.

“If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. “But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.”

22. Let all things be done unto what? 1 Corinthians 14:26.

“How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.”

“Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air... Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me... If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?” 1 Corinthians 14:9, 11, 23.

23. Does confusion come from God? 1 Corinthians 14:33.

“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”

24. What is the purpose of tongues? 1 Corinthians 14:22.

“Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.”

25. How therefore should all things be done? 1 Corinthians 14:40.

“Let all things be done decently and in order.”

Thought Summary:

The Bible has set forth specific tests for determining the genuineness of prophets, and that spiritual gifts are distributed according to God's will, not ours. The purpose of the gift of tongues is to communicate the gospel, and would be useless where it is not needed for that purpose.