A Supernatural events

- ❖ The prophetic ministry is often accompanied by supernatural events, whether external (signs), or manifested in the prophet himself.
  - — External supernatural events
    - (1) Elijah vindicated his prophetic ministry by calling down fire to consume the unbelievers. (2 Kings 1:10)
    - (2) At the words of an anonymous prophet, the pagan altar of Bethel was destroyed (1 Kings 13:5)
  - — Supernatural events in the prophet
    - (1) Daniel became weak and breathless during a vision (Dan. 10:17)
    - (2) The apostle John fell to the ground as though dead upon receiving a vision (Rev. 1:17)
- ❖ These supernatural events, by themselves, do not authenticate a prophet. False prophets can also perform supernatural signs through the power of the enemy (Rev. 13:13).

B Harmony with the Bible

- ❖ Isaiah 8:20 presents a clear standard for testing the truthfulness of a prophet: he must be in accordance with the law, the Pentateuch; and with the testimony, the later revelations through the prophets.
- ❖ God has communicated His knowledge through the prophets according to His people's capacity to understand the messages. This is known as "progressive truth."
- ❖ Thus, each age has had its “present truth” (2 Peter 1:12). But, since God is the one who communicates this truth—and He does not change (James 1:17)—each new revelation is in harmony with the preceding revelations (Jeremiah 28:8).
- ❖ For this reason, any prophet whose message contradicts biblical teaching is a false prophet. (Deut. 13:1-3).

C Exaltation of Christ

- ❖ Any prophet who denies the historicity of Jesus, or does not make Him the center of his message, is a false prophet (1 John 4:3).
- ❖ In harmony with this, the true prophet accepts these realities of Jesus: his divinity; his incarnation; his sinless life; his atoning death; his resurrection; his intercessory ministry; his second coming.
- ❖ Prophets who are uplifting Jesus will not try to create their own following or promote themselves (Acts 4:12). They will be ready to serve and not to take advantage of those to whom they have been sent (Mark 9:35; John 13:16).

D Positive impact

- ❖ According to Jesus, prophets can be identified by their fruits (Mt. 7:15-16). These fruits are of two kinds, and both must be positive.
  - — *The fruit of the message:* The message of the true prophet edifies, comforts, and calls to repentance (1 Cor. 14:3).
  - — *The fruit of the messenger:* The life of the prophet must be consistent with sound doctrine. For example, he cannot live in clear contradiction with any of the Ten Commandments (Jude 1:16).
- ❖ As fallible human beings, prophets could make mistakes and commit sins: Jonah fled from God; Paul misjudged John Mark; Peter pretended to live as a Jew. But that was not their way of life.

E Fulfilled prophecies

- ❖ The prophet's role is associated with announcing future events (prophecies). Thus, a simple formula can be deduced to distinguish prophets: if the prophecy comes true, the prophet is true (Jer. 28:9); if the prophecy does not come true, the prophet is false (Deut . 18:22).
- ❖ However, this formula has exceptions that we must understand correctly.
  - — If a good thing is announced in the near future, it must always come to pass (Jer. 28:1-4, 15-17)
  - — If a good thing is announced in the distant future, it may not come to pass because it is conditional (like Isaiah's prophecies about the future well-being of Israel if it accepted the Messiah).
  - — Prophecies that foretell evil are always conditional. If there is repentance, fate changes (as happened with Nineveh after Jonah's preaching).

APPENDIX: ELLEN G. WHITE ACCEPTED AS A PROPHET

Before accepting Ellen G. White as a true prophet, Adventists compared her person and her message with the biblical guidelines that allow the identification of true prophets.

- **SUPERNATURAL EVENTS:** During her visions, Ellen displayed several supernatural events such as shortness of breath, or physical strength superior to normal (holding a heavy family Bible aloft for hours with one hand).
- **HARMONY WITH THE BIBLE:** We cannot find anything in her writings that contradicts the biblical message. She herself always urged the study of the Bible and asked that her writings be examined in its light.
- **EXALTATION OF CHRIST:** Its central message was from the beginning the same: Christ and Christ alone.
- **POSITIVE IMPACT:** Both those who were personally involved with her and those of us who have read her writings can confirm that her influence has been positive for our Christian experience.
- **FULFILLED PROPHECIES:** For example, the prolonged American Civil War (foretold in 1861); or the fire that destroyed the Review & Herald facilities (foretold in 1901 and fulfilled in 1902).