Sabbath School Lesson #6 – The Prophetic Writings – 31 October-6 November 2026

Christ would have those who dare not venture out alone to obey the truth, have their faith strengthened by considering some cases that are on record. Thus, Paul says, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). The eleventh chapter of Hebrews contains a list of notable men. We are referred to Noah, who "walked with God" in an age when the "wickedness of man was great in the earth," and "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." It must have been no slight effort for Noah to face the world with such an unpopular truth as that the world was to be destroyed by a flood. No doubt he was jeered at in a most unmerciful manner, and considered a fool, but the event proved the wisdom of his course. Had he waited for people enough to accept the truth for that time to make it respectable, before commencing to build the ark, he would have been drowned with the rest. Abraham is another individual who is held up as an example of faith. We do not generally realise the full extent of the sacrifice that he made when he obeyed the command, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, and unto a land that I will show thee." His father's family, as we learn from Joshua 24:2-3, were idolaters. No doubt he had to endure much opposition and ridicule from his relatives, for thus leaving them and going away with apparently no object whatever, without even knowing where he was going. No one who starts out to obey God in these times can have a darker prospect to all outward appearances, than Abraham had. Had he drawn back, instead of becoming the father of all the faithful, his name might never have appeared among them. Other instances might be cited indefinitely. Do you wish to be like the heroes we read about in scripture, and be accounted worthy to share in their reward? Well, who is there that cannot? They were men, subject to weaknesses and temptations the same as men are nowadays. They lived in the world, associated with their fellow-men, and transacted business, the same as men do now. How, then, did they become so honoured of God? – simply because they were willing to be regarded as peculiar people; they thought more of God's approval than they did of the applause of men. For this we hold them in high esteem, yet we shrink from doing what we commend in them. We may, however, be like them if we will, for their cases are recorded, as Paul says, simply for our encouragement.

Sunday: The Call to Write – Read Exodus 17:14; was this the first mention of writing in the Bible? No, it is not. The Lesson writer is wrong to suggest that Exodus 17:4 was the first mention of writing in the Bible. The first mention of writing in the Bible was in Job before the book of Exodus was written, for the books of Genesis and Job were written before the book of Exodus. According to the best evidence and authorities, Job lived more than 500 years before Moses' time when the children of Israel left Egypt, and Job by inspiration made the call to write, as he exclaims, "Oh, that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!" (Job 19:23-24). Here we have the plain words "written," "book," and "pen" mentioned many years before the Exodus. This is not the only instance of it. In Job 31:35, he says, "My desire is, that ... mine adversary had written a book." Many years before the Exodus in the days of Job writing was not only mentioned but also familiar thing and to such an extent that books were written. By inspiration, Job made the call to write years before the time of Moses and the Exodus. Job's call to write his words into a book of Job was fulfilled before the Exodus from Egypt whilst Moses was in Midian desert living "with the priest of Midian, Jethro, a man who worshiped God" – Ellen G White {ST February 19, 1880, Art. A, par. 3}. Of the fact that the book of Job was written by Moses in Midian desert, we are reliably told in inspired writings: "The long years spent amid desert solitudes were not lost. Not only was Moses gaining a preparation for the great work before him, but during this time, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote the book of Genesis and also the book of Job, which would be read with the deepest interest by the people of God until the close of time" Ellen White {ibid, par. 14}.

Monday: Literary Genres and Styles – The Lesson writer rightly says that 'the Bible contains a variety of writing styles.' Indeed, Ellen White says, "The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it

presents the characteristics of the several writers" {21LtMs, Lt 206, 1906, par. 5}. But the Lesson writer wrongly says that 'the prophets also used common literary devices such as … hyperbole (exaggeration).' Ellen White says, "Instead of the expressions of the Bible being exaggerated, as many people suppose, the strong expressions break down before the magnificence of the thought, though the penman selected the most expressive language through which to convey the truths of higher education" {16LtMs, Lt 121, 1901, par. 35}.

Tuesday: Literary Assistants – Paul often used assistants to write letters; but how did he guard against doubts as to whether the letter correctly represented him or that it was not from him at all? We find that the danger of forgery of letters occurred in the days of Paul, and that his own name was used to give currency to false doctrine (see 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3) that was contrary to his first epistle (see 2 Thessalonians 2:5). Yet, notwithstanding the instruction which Paul had given them, these letters came so seemingly direct from Paul, that the Thessalonians were greatly disturbed. Paul cautions them against being deceived, and in closing this epistle, he gives them to understand how they may know that an epistle purporting to come from him is genuine. When he comes to the close, he says: "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle; so I write: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (2 Thessalonians 3:17-18). From this we learn that although Paul usually (except the epistle to the Galatians, see Galatians 6:11) employed an amanuensis, he always wrote the benediction and signed his name with his own hand, so, any letter bearing a signature other than his might be known to be spurious.

Wednesday: Literary Sources – Does the use of literary sources diminish the truth in the Bible? We should not pin our faith to literary sources, but there are occasions when a legitimate appeal can be made to them. Paul, in arguing with the heathen Athenians, he says: "For in him we live, move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring'" (Acts 18:28). Paul would not appeal to heathen poets for the proof of his doctrine. His proof he drew from Christ's inspiration; but in this case the words of the poet were in accordance with the truth; the Athenians held their poets in high repute, and attached great weight to them: Paul, here, brings in the testimony of the poet to give the greater weight to his testimony among those whom he was labouring to convince. A similar course he pursues writing to Titus in Crete (Titus 1:12). When in harmony with the truth, quote them in defence of the truth to those with whom they have such weight and authority.

Thursday: Divine Message and Human Imperfections – Can we trust Bible writers – Lesson writer says, "their writings were not exempt from the imperfections of human understanding"? Ellen White says: "Man is fallible, but God's word is infallible" {RH December 15, 1885, Art. A, par. 16}. "I take the Bible just as it is, as the Inspired Word. I believe its utterances in an entire Bible. Men arise who think they find something to criticize in God's Word. They lay it bare before others as evidence of superior wisdom. These men are, many of them, smart men, learned men; they have eloquence and talent, the whole lifework [of whom] is to unsettle minds in regard to the inspiration of the Scriptures. They influence many to see as they do. And the same work is passed on from one to another, just as Satan designed it should be, until we may see the full meaning of the words of Christ, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8" {5LtMs, Ms 16, 1888, par.11}. "I saw that God had especially guarded the Bible; yet when copies of it were few, learned men had in some instances changed the words, thinking that they were making it more plain, when in reality they were mystifying that which was plain, by causing it to lean to their established views, which were governed by tradition. But I saw that the Word of God, as a whole, is a perfect chain, one portion linking into and explaining another. True seekers for truth need not err; for not only is the Word of God plain and simple in declaring the way of life, but the Holy Spirit is given as a guide in understanding the way to life therein revealed" – EG White {EW 220.2}.