

1- theme: False Christ's and False Prophets

2- OBJECTIVE: The child must identify in the words of Jesus regarding "false prophets" a warning for us not to let ourselves be deceived by those who claim to speak in the name of God, but instead they exploit and confuse the simple and humble ones, taking advantage of the situation for his benefit.

3- BIOGRAPHY:

Mt, 7:15; 1 Jo, 4:1; 1 Co, 12:10; 14:29

ESE, cap 21; LM, caps 20 e 24; LE, 624

The Book of Hope (Emmanuel/F.C. Xavier), caps 72 e 73, Britannic Encyclopedia, entry "Prophet".

4- CLASS:

a) Initial Incentive: eliciting

Suggestion of questions: "What does the word "prophet" mean?" "Who can name some of the prophets from the Old Testament?" "What do you think Jesus means when he says false prophets?" etc...

b) Development: Exposition

The word "prophet" originates from Greek "prophetes", which means, "a person who talks in the place of another", as a spokesman, and also means "a person who predicts the future". Generally,

People are curious about the future, and so the idea of future prediction became more linked to the mission of the prophet. However, the mission of the biblical prophets, unlike some may think, was not just to predict the future. Naturally, when warning

someone about a certain wrong behavior, the prophet also warns him of the future consequences he will suffer if he persists on not changing such behavior.

The prophets were highly respected by the kings and the people. The Kings of Israel had prophets in their courts who counseled and sometimes also passed on serious warnings from above. In the evangelic sense, says Kardec, the prophet is "The ones sent by God with the mission of educating men of revealing the unseen things and the mysteries of spiritual life". (ESE, cap.21, item 4). The biblical prophets were highly advanced (second sight) **mediuns**, and they were in charge of passing on new teachings intended for spiritual enlightenment. There were many prophets in ancient times, such as **Isaias (Isaiah), Jeremiah, Elias (Elijah), Miqueias**. Among many revelations, they announced the coming of Jesus centuries before it actually happened.

The prophets from the Old and New Testament had advanced mediumship. Their mission was to bring to Earth words from above with the intent of teaching men things of spiritual nature, warning them and showing them the path to follow according to God's will. However, the prophets were not only the ones linked to the courts of Israel, neither just the ones cited in the Bible. There were others who lived amongst the people and were regarded as Saint men. They would always teach, guide and enlighten the people.

However, in those times, there were already mediuns who would not follow the path of goodness. Those are the ones whom Jesus referred to as "false prophets": "Be aware, however, of false prophets, who come to you dressed looking like a sheep, but within, they are like wolves."(Mt, 7:15). There are also false prophets at the present time. They let themselves be influenced by spirits who are ignorant, mischievous, and who are known for even using their mediumship gift in evil ways.

Unfortunately, these prophet's actions exert an influence on beyond just personally the ones who have believed in them, for they do cause even more harm when the product of their actions leads to the publicity of pamphlets and books. The mediumship book which originates from a doubtful source is extremely harmful to the propagation of the Spiritist Doctrine. In publications, sometimes reaching thousands and thousands of people, and not rare, containing interesting, emotional and attractive stories which charm some people who don't have good analytical minds, hence carrying on erroneous information and even anti our doctrine. Therefore, it is necessary we study the codification work, so that we learn to properly evaluate all what is a product of mediumship.

Allan Kardec, in *The book of the Mediums*, provides information to whoever has the desire to study the subject with confidence. Chapter 20, deals with the moral aspect of the medium in the selection of the spirits who communicate through them. Chapter 24, focus precisely on how we can recognize the identity of the spirits and how to make the distinction between the good and the evil ones. It is an extensive study, however, necessary if one wishes to analyze such communications, whether it is in mediumship meetings, or for the purpose of evaluating these, previously mentioned, innumerable materials being published which contain doubtful information, yet at first sight, may appeal to so many.

We also find warnings in relation to the use of mediumship in the *Book of the Spirits*: "What is the character of the truthful prophet?" kardec asks. The spirits answer: "The truthful prophet is a good will man, inspired by God. You can recognize him through his words and actions. The impossible thing is that God would make use of a liar's mouth to teach the truth."(LE, 624).

Another Jesus' teaching which helps us evaluate a prophet is that which calls our attention to the result of his action: "Thus, every good tree produces good fruits and every bad tree produces bad fruits. You will then recognize it by its fruits." Therefore, we must evaluate the manner a medium acts. Is he making efforts to grow spiritually, to become more humble, benevolent, helpful, caring and not interested in receiving rewards of any kind for himself for his work? Furthermore, as far as rewards goes, we mean not only the value of the coin, or material things, but also in the sense of thanks, worshiping, and pampering for self etc. The mediums who do not safeguard themselves against this sort of rewards are regarded as false prophets.

The false prophet can be recognized when his actions are not in harmony with his words, in other words, his examples are not consistent with his words. Generally, they resort to use the name of God and Jesus, hoping this way they will get the attention of the simple and humble ones, and often taking from them their resources and money. False prophets can be found in all sectors of human activities and places. They cause disagreements by telling lies, thus confusing and exploiting people. Inside our Spiritist Centers, we must be careful with such unfortunate brothers and sisters, both incarnated and disincarnated, who would preach and carry on mystical types of communications, usually by advising us to follow extravagant rituals, with the objective

of damaging the purity of the doctrine's teachings and segregate the Spiritist movement, thus, harming the work of Jesus. We must pay attention to all these things and types of people as Christ have taught us: "real wolves who cover themselves with sheep skin".

"Spiritism reveal another category, even more dangerous, of false Christs and false prophets, who are not found amongst men, but amongst the disincarnated: deceiving, hypocrite, proud and pseudo-wise ones, who have passed on from Earth to erraticity (erraticidade). They use names that imply respect so that they can better masquerade themselves, and in this way facilitating the acceptance of the most absurd ideas."(ESE, cap 21.7). For this reason the disciple John warns us: "My beloved ones, do not believe in every spirit; but test if they are God spirits, for many false prophets have come to the world."(1 Jo, 4:1).

The apostle Paul, in his first epistle addressed to the "Corintheos", chapter 12, calls the reader's attention on the importance of identifying the spirit who is in communication with us. As he speaks about the various talents and types of mediumship, he mentions the faculty that a leader of a mediumship meeting must have, when he says: "the knack of discerning spirits."(12:10). Furthermore, in chapter 14 he alerts us to the importance of analyzing the communications, so that we do not accept all that is said by the disincarnated spirit: "and two or three prophets speak, and the others judge."(14:29).

The spirit Erasto, in communication, inserted by Kardec in cap.20 of the book of the Mediums, says: "it is preferable to reject ten truths than to admit one sole lie, an erroneous theory."

"It is not possible for a good tree to produce bad fruits, neither it is possible for a bad tree to produce good fruits", Jesus taught, thus we must be alert, and always analyse. If the medium is not the kind of person who is working towards his moral transformation, as Kardec teaches, it is not reasonable for us to expect he is a channel of level-headed spirits. Let us work and assure that the doctrine continues solid in pro of humanity, and discard "false prophets". In reality, these ones need our understanding and prayers, for they too are our brothers and sisters.

The book titled Didaque, teaches: " In order for a prophet to be worthy of respect and acceptance he must have indubitable compassion and his behavior dignified of God. Francisco Xavier, born in Brasil, is an example of a true prophet whose dedication and behavior is unquestionable.

Nota para D. jane: Acima usei a palavra compassion para traduzir piedade pois pity não parece ser a melhor escolha. Portanto, se houver outra palavra em mente, please let me know. :)