

February 23, 2020

REVEALED

DEUTERONOMY 18:15-22

God is not doing a new thing, despite the fact that so many think He is. There is no new message and certainly no new *revelation*. People often say that God has given them a revelation or that He has revealed such and such to them. This talk of *revelation* is problematic in our day when God's final Word is the Bible, Genesis-Revelation. So how can we know who represents God and why is representation needed to begin with?

THE NEED (Deuteronomy 18:15-17)

The people stood in need of someone standing between them and the Lord. His voice, unmediated, was too much and, as a result they requested, *'Let us not continue to hear the voice of the Lord our God or see this great fire any longer, so that we will not die!'* (Deuteronomy 18:16). Arriving at Mt. Sinai was a terrifying thing, seeing the mountain burning and shaking with lightening all about, they were not going near this awesome sight. Yet, their request for a mediator was not something that would be for this moment only. The mediator would be a permanent fixture and reality for the people and their relating to the Lord. Moses said *"The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him"* (Deuteronomy 18:15). While every other prophet would fulfill this role none, apart from Christ, would be as unique as Moses. The other prophets heard from the Lord, but God spoke with Moses face to face as a man to his friend (Exodus 33:11). Whoever Moses spoke of would need to be greater than the prophets that would follow. That one would be Jesus, the Christ. He did not need to meet with God, He was God in the flesh to the people. He did not need any dreams or revelations, but was Himself, the revelation of God (John 1:18) and would speak the Word of God. Jesus was more than a friend, He was the Son (Hebrews 3:5-6). With all of these qualities Christ is the perfect and, thus the only true Mediator between God and man (1st Timothy 2:5). The holiness of God still demands mediation. Our sin still reveals our eternal plight. None can behold glory without dying and none can stand before it with sin. In Christ, we do not come to a mountain of wrath and dread (Hebrews 12:18-19), but to the mountain full of the grace of God (Hebrews 12:22).

THE PROVISION (Deuteronomy 18:18-19)

This mediator will speak the Word of God placed within His mouth and will tell the people all that the Lord commanded (Deuteronomy 18:19). Everyone who did not listen to Him God, Himself, would hold them accountable (Deuteronomy 18:19). What is most remarkable about these verses is verse 18: *"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers"* (Deuteronomy 18:18). The prophet was not to be a foreigner, one who had joined the people of Israel throughout their journey. He had to be one who was of the people – like them. Who better to know how to lead as the Lord commands but one who understand the history and the struggles of the children of Israel. Who could stand in the gap for a people if they did not know the origin of their relationship with the Lord or the great struggle to remain true and faithful to Him amid temptation? No one. Yet, in this we find a remarkable picture regarding the ministry of Christ and the power of His mediation. Christ came as a man, not as an angel or as exclusively the divine Son. He was God, for sure, but He was also man and it is in this fashion as man that His mediation is powerful. Who could understand a battle with being humble before God and man but one who, as a man, learned this (Philippians 2:5-11)? Who could understand the struggle to obey as a human being except one who, while as a human, battled to obey the Lord (Hebrews 5:7)

THE TEST (Deuteronomy 18:20-22)

How was Israel to know if a prophet was actually sent by God? There were so many who were making predictions about what the future held for the nation! Who was actually representing the Lord. In these verses, we find the God given parameters to make such a determination. If the prophet speaks in the name of another God they must die (Deuteronomy 18:20) or if their prophecy does not come to pass they have “spoken it presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). For us it is different. We do not live in the age of prophets since we have the complete Bible to which none can add or subtract (Revelation 22:18). The ways in which we can determine truthfully called preachers of the word are through their life and their doctrine (their teaching). Jesus said you know a tree by the fruit it bears (Matthew 7:16). Paul said that if one preaches a message that mixes grace with effort, such a one is worthy of damnation; even if it is an angel from heaven (Galatians 1:6-9). Therefore, Paul calls true preachers of the gospel to study (2 Timothy 2:15) and to watch their life and their doctrine (1 Timothy 4:16). Therefore, we can conclude that ungodly preachers – those whose lives bear consistent fruit of disobedience to the Lord – as well as those who are no sound in doctrine are to be rejected as representatives of God because God, Himself, has and will reject them as His children. In our day where preachers abound on both radio and television we must give great care and discernment to whose voice we give our attention to.