

Lesson 45 - CHRIST IS THAT PROPHET *Deuteronomy 18:15-22*

Read *John 1:19-28*. This is the Jewish priests and Levites questioning John the Baptist asking him, “*Who art thou?*” Notice that they asked him if he were the messiah, or Elijah come back from the dead, or if he were “*THAT PROPHET.*” John answered that he was only “*a voice of one crying in the wilderness*” as prophesied by another prophet, Isaiah. He then spoke of the Messiah as the only Savior of sinners. Their questions concerning “*THAT PROPHET*” was a direct reference to a prophecy God gave to Moses concerning a greater prophet to come who would be the fullness and the fulfillment of God’s Word for the salvation of His people. This is recorded in *Deuteronomy 18:15-22*. This is a prophecy of Christ Who is “*THAT PROPHET*” as He is Himself the embodiment of the Word of God (*John 1:1-14*) and the fullness and the fulfillment of God’s Word for the salvation of His people. The woman at the well had some notion of the messiah as that great prophet. She said to the Lord, “*I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things*” (*John 4:25*). Christ answered her by saying, “*I that speak unto thee am He*” (*John 4:26*). Christ was (and is) “*THAT PROPHET*” Who fulfilled that prophecy God gave to Moses (*cf. Acts 3:22-26; 7:37*). Christ fulfills all the requirements for a prophet in title, word, and deed. He is the ultimate prophet in that He is the very Word of God Himself. He is the subject and the fulfillment of all prophecies concerning the Messiah and salvation and righteousness (*Jer. 23:5-6*).

(Deut. 18:15-18) - As the one mediator between God and men, our Lord Jesus Christ has a three-fold office – PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING. Men who were types of Christ have held one (maybe two) of these offices, but no one has ever been prophet, priest, and king except Christ Himself. Christ, our Prophet, is “*the Son of God, Emmanuel, God with us*” (*Matt. 1:23; 17:5*). He came from heaven, above all, having the Spirit without measure, declaring the whole counsel of God, and bringing life and immortality to light through His Gospel (*John 3:31-35; 2 Tim. 1:8-10*). We see the absolute necessity of such a prophet, without whom we would sit in darkness and be left in blindness (*2 Cor. 4:3-6*). But His words are true and faithful, and to hear Him is to hear God (*John 12:48-50; Heb. 1:1-2*). How blessed are those who hear and believe Him (*John 5:24*), and how inexcusable will be those who refuse to hear Him (*John 3:18*). He is the one great prophet, of whom Moses was but a type (*Heb. 3:3-6*). He is the one great eternal High Priest, of whom Aaron was but a type (*Heb. 7:21-25*). He is the one great King of kings, of whom David was but a type (*Luke 1:30-33*).

The promise declares that the Lord God will raise up this one great Prophet! All of the true prophets and faithful priests were ordained and sent of God. But this promise is of one Person - one Prophet who is the Messiah and is actually the Word of God Himself. He who has seen Him has seen the Father (*John 14:9*), and he who has heard Him has heard the Father (*John 3: 33-36*). The promise declares that God would raise up this prophet “*from the midst of thee; of thy brethren.*” He is of Israel, according to the flesh, of the tribe of Judah and the household of David (*Rom. 1:1-3; Rom. 9:4-5; Matt. 1:1*). He was “*like unto Moses*” in that He is a man, He is God’s prophet, He is a mediator between God and the people, He performed great miracles, and He delivered His people from bondage. But He is infinitely superior to Moses and to all other prophets, for He is the Son of God, and the deliverance He accomplished is eternal salvation for all whom the Father had given Him (*Heb. 3:1-4; Heb. 1:8*). Unlike Moses who led a rebellious and unbelieving people through the wilderness, Christ, THAT PROPHET, has the power, not only to save His people from their sins, but also to give them spiritual life and bring them to faith in Him as the only way of salvation (*John 6:37-45*).

God declares, *“I will put my words in His mouth”* (John 7:16; John 8:28; John 17:6-8). His words are the words of life, because when He speaks in power sinners live spiritually (John 5: 21, 24; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23), even as He spoke and Lazarus came forth. His words are the words of truth (John 1:14-17; John 14:6; John 18:37). His words are the words of grace. He is full of grace and truth. His words bring peace, pardon, life, and salvation from sin. That Prophet came not to condemn the world, for the world stood condemned; but He came that we might have life more abundantly. His word is the doctrine of grace, the Gospel which is the *“power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth”* (Rom. 1:16). His word is the word of righteousness which He Himself worked out on the cross for His people and which God has imputed to them for their justification (Rom. 1:17; 3:21-26; 2 Cor. 5:21). His word is the words of life by which the Spirit gives life from Christ to spiritually dead sinners and brings them to faith in Christ and repentance of dead works (John 6:63-68; Rom. 6:17-18; 1 Pet. 1:22-25). No one can call on Him who does not believe Him, and no one can believe Him who has not heard Him (John 5:24; John 20:31; Rom. 10:13-17).

(Deut. 18:19-20) - Here is also a promise given to those who refuse to hear that prophet - the promise of judgment! All who will not hearken to the Gospel spoken by Christ and His ministers who are ambassadors of Christ, in the name of the Father Who sent Him, will experience the wrath and judgment of God. To despise the words of Christ is to despise Christ, and to despise Christ is to deny and despise the Father. There is no remedy for rebellion against the Redeemer (John 3:35-36). To summarize all these points, consider the following -

(1) All other prophets were inspired by Christ and sent by Christ. Christ Himself is more than a prophet - He is *“God with us”* (Matt. 1:23), and He is the Word. All true prophets speak HIS Word.

(2) All other prophets pointed to Christ and spoke of Christ (Acts 10:43). Christ is the sum and substance of their prophecies. He fulfilled and completed all that they foretold (John 1:45; Col. 2:9-10). For example, Jeremiah prophesied of Christ as *“the LORD our Righteousness”* (Jer. 23:5-6; 33:15-16). Christ IS *“the LORD our Righteousness.”*

(3) All other prophets began the holy books and the message of grace. Christ finished and completed the books, the message, and the work (Heb. 1:1-3). All Scripture speaks of and points to Him as the one and only way of salvation (John 5:39).

(4) All other prophets spoke of God by inspiration and learning, but Christ spoke of the Father as being with Him and by Him (Prov. 8:29-30; John 1:18; Matt. 11:27).

(5) All other prophets have left their work and are gone. Jesus Christ abides in all His offices continually. As He is a Priest forever, so He is the Prophet and the King forever and ever!

(Deut. 18:21-22) - How shall we know? When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if what he prophesies does not come true, then you can know that he is not speaking the Word of God. God's prophets do not speak things which may or may not come true. God's Word is a sure word of prophecy and always comes true (2 Pet. 1:19-21). There is no doubt or question about it. So, a self-proclaimed prophet who claims to speak a word from the Lord, but that word does not come true, that person is a false prophet. We do not have to respect him or listen to his word. We can apply this to the Gospel Word of salvation by God's grace in Christ. IT IS THE WORD OF GOD and originally comes from THAT PROPHET, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. We can be sure of the fulfillment of every word spoken by Him and His Word that comes through His preachers as they are tested by the written Word of God.