

Revealed
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Deuteronomy 18:15-22

How do you spot a fake? Whether it's artwork, antiques, or money, **what is the best way to know if something is a counterfeit?**

In this morning's text Moses declares to the Israelites, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me (Moses) from among you" listen to him. When you hear the word "prophet" what comes to mind? Have you studied the Old Testament prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elijah, Daniel? **What roles did prophets in Old Testament times play for the people of God? Do prophets exist in the modern world? How is it different now? How is it the same?**

Big Idea: God provides messengers to represent Him in this world. It's the responsibility of God's people to discern false teachers and false teaching from the real deal. Our defense against false teaching is knowing God's word. Our defense against "false prophets" is knowing what God's word says about them.

Deuteronomy 18:15–18 (ESV)

¹⁵“The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— ¹⁶just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.’ ¹⁷And the Lord said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

- Verse fifteen – **Do prophets apply for the job? What does it say?**
- Moses is about to die so God would raise up a replacement prophet like him. Why would the people even need prophets? Verses 16 and 17 say the people recognized their need of a prophet back on Mt. Horeb (Sinai.)

Exodus 20:18–19 (ESV)

¹⁸ Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off ¹⁹ and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.”

- God said, (verse 17) “They are right!” They needed a mediator to stand between them and the fiery holiness of God. So, do we!
- **Based on what you know about Moses, what would it mean for a prophet to be like him? What made Moses special? What roles did Moses play for the people?**
- In Numbers 12:6–8 (ESV) God described His relationship with Moses: *“Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. ⁷ Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. ⁸ With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the Lord.”*
- Exodus 33:11 (ESV) tells us, ¹¹ *“Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.”*
- Moses had a unique and special relationship with God.
- The Old Testament prophets after Moses served in some of the same ways he did, but Moses was special because of his “face to face” relationship with God.
- Raising up a “replacement” for Moses did indeed refer to the entire “system” of prophets God would raise up in the future, but there is a deeper meaning here. **Who is this verse really pointing to as the prophet God would raise up from among the people of Israel?**
- These verses are a *“Messianic prophecy” pointing to Christ. In Bible study we use the term Typology - the study of these foreglimpses of Christ and the Christian age.ⁱ Moses was a “type” or a picture of Christ.*
- *The MacArthur Study Bible: “Jesus was like Moses in several other ways: 1) He was spared death as a baby (Ex 2; Mt 2:13–23); 2) He renounced a royal court (Php 2:5–8; Heb 11:24–27); 3) He had compassion on His people (Nu 27:17; Mt 9:36); 4)*

He made intercession for the people (Dt 9:18; Heb 7:25); 5) He spoke with God face to face (Ex 34:29, 30; 2Co 3:7); and 6) He was the mediator of a covenant (Dt 29:1; Heb 8:6, 7).ⁱⁱⁱ

- Moses was God's chosen messenger and mediator between Him and the people. They were sinful, God is holy, there had to be a "go between."
- **Why do we need a mediator today? How does Jesus do that for us?**

Hebrews 8:1–2 (ESV)

Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, 2 a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.

Hebrews 8:6 (ESV)

6 But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.

Hebrews 8:10–13 (ESV)

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 11 And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." (Quoting Jeremiah 31:33-34)

13 In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

- The prophet God would raise up who was "like Moses" would be greater than Moses. He is our Prophet, and our Priest and King - Jesus!
- Based on that text, we no longer require an earthly priest between God and us because Jesus is our Heavenly priest (priesthood of the believer.)
- Back to Deuteronomy 18:18 and 19, God said:

Deuteronomy 18:18–22 (ESV)

¹⁸ ...I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. ¹⁹ And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.

- The Holman Christian Standard translation renders it: “¹⁹ *I will hold accountable whoever does not listen to My words that he speaks in My name.*”ⁱⁱⁱ We are accountable to listen to and obey God’s words.
- Though Christ is our ultimate prophet, God still uses messengers and we are to listen to them. In verses 20-22 God gave this warning about them:

²⁰ But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.’ ²¹ And if you say in your heart, ‘How may we know the word that the Lord has not spoken?’—²² when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.

- Verse 22 can be tricky because a false teacher might predict something claiming a word from God and it might come true. But what is their track record over time? I believe this is speaking especially about those who make grand predictions like the date Christ will return.
- Here’s a promise I can make: If God’s word is accurately taught, what it tells us will always be true!

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- God provides messengers to represent Him in this world.
- It’s the responsibility of God’s people to discern false teachers and false teaching from the real deal. **How do you spot a false teacher? What’s your method?**
- Our defense against false teaching is knowing God’s word. Our defense against “false prophets” is comparing their lives and teaching to His word.

- How do we apply this today? First, if any teacher claims to have a “new revelation” from God outside of scripture, they are a false teacher. We have no Moses, Elijah, Peter, or Paul today; we have God’s word.
- Secondly, do they teach the full message of the gospel as outlined in scripture. Paul warned us about this in “Galatians 1:7–8 (ESV) ⁷ *...there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.* ⁸ *But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.*”
- 2 Peter chapter two contains some great help in spotting false teachers.
 - 2:1 – *“They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them.”^v* – Is the focus always on Jesus? What do they say about Him? Does it square with scripture? 1 John 2:22 says, *“Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son.”*
 - 2:3 – ³ *In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money.”^w* – Is their teaching straight from scripture? Do they believe God’s word is inspired and inerrant or does it look and feel like they’re making up a message to get your money?
 - 2:18 – ¹⁸ *They brag about themselves with empty, foolish boasting. With an appeal to twisted sexual desires, they lure back into sin those who have barely escaped from a lifestyle of deception.”^{vi}* - Are they humble or braggarts about themselves? Is there any hint of sexual sin? Do they “guard their hearts” or play fast and loose?
 - 2:19 – ¹⁹ *They promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of sin and corruption. For you are a slave to whatever controls you.”^{vii}* – Look at their life. Is their conduct holy or are they slaves to sin? If their conduct breaks the commands of scripture and they never show repentance, that’s a problem!
- Bottom line: To spot false teaching, we have to know the real teaching of scripture. If we know what scripture teaches we can use it as a measuring stick against the teaching and lifestyle of any preacher or teacher.

- When you hear a new preacher or teacher, do what the Apostle John said in 1 John 4:1 (ESV) **4** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

ⁱ Smith, J. E. (1993). [*The Pentateuch*](#) (2nd ed., p. 243). Joplin, MO: College

ⁱⁱ MacArthur, John. *The MacArthur Study Bible: NASB*. Nelson Bibles, 1997.

ⁱⁱⁱ [*The Holy Bible: Holman Christian standard version*](#). (2009). (Dt 18:19).

Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers.

^{iv} Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [*Holy Bible: New Living Translation*](#) (2 Pe 2:1). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

^v *ibid*

^{vi} *ibid*

^{vii} *ibid*