

The Prophet

God's Great Plan

God's great plan made provision for people to learn God's commandments and judgments. Outside of Israel, the head of each family received dreams and visions from God to pass on to their family. God gave a written law to Israel from Mount Sinai and specified that the tribe of Levi would read the law and mediate between the Israelites and God. The people soon refused to listen to or obey the law. Therefore, God sent prophets to confront the people with their sins. Many say these prophets fulfilled the promise to Moses to provide another prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15-19). But what do the scriptures say?

To be "like Moses," the new prophet must meet specific criteria. (Deuteronomy:5:5) informs us that Moses "stood between" the Lord and the people. And "God spoke to Moses face-to-face as a friend" (Exodus 33:11). Notice the closeness of their relationship, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, shall make Myself known to him in a vision. I shall speak with him in a dream. "Not so, with My servant Moses, He is faithful in all My household; With him I speak mouth to mouth, Even openly, and not in dark sayings, And he beholds the form of the LORD" (Numbers 12:6-8). Not one of the Old Testament prophets talked to God nor heard His voice like Moses.

To be like Moses, the new prophet would need the authority to command. Moses delivered the law to the people with authority unmatched by any other Old Testament prophet. "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it" (Deuteronomy 30:15-16). The other prophets never claimed the same authority as Moses. Zechariah identified his message as "The word of the LORD concerning Israel. Thus declares the LORD" (Zechariah 12:1). And Malachi professes, "The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel" (Malachi 1:1). Part of Malachi's oracle mentions both the herald and the Messiah. "Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and **the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming,**" says the LORD of hosts" (Malachi 3:1). Malachi sees a messenger preparing the way, as Isaiah wrote in (Isiah 40:1-5). Then comes The Servant of whom Isaiah wrote in (Isiah 42:1-4), who is also the prophet of (Deuteronomy 18:18).

John the Baptist was a prophet but not The Prophet. When John was born, the Holy Spirit said through his father, "You, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; For you will go on before the Lord to prepare His ways" (Luke 1:76). And after John baptized Jesus, John testified that Jesus is the promised Lord (Luke 1:29-34). The herald testified that Jesus is the Messenger or Prophet of promise the people looked for and even desired. The irony is that when He appeared to Israel and began to teach, Israel rejected and crucified Him.

Moses' prophecy referred to Jesus Christ. New Testament writers point out that people recognized Him as the promised prophet. He also acknowledged their conclusion. "Philip found Nathanael and *said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1:45). Nathanael recognized Jesus as The Teacher, The Son of God, and Jesus did not deny it (John 1:47-51). Stephen pointed to Jesus as he quoted Moses (Acts 7:37). Peter expressly quotes Moses and applies it to Jesus (Acts 3:11-26).

Jesus referred to the prophecies of Moses and applied them to Himself "Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" (John 5:45-47). Jesus emphasized that His words must be heard and obeyed as He taught. "If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to

judge the world, but to save the world. "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak" (John 12:47-49). And the ultimate testimony that Jesus is "That Prophet" came from the Father when Jesus was transfigured. " While he (Peter) was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!" (Matthew 17:4-5).