

Deuteronomy 18

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[0 : 00] Deuteronomy chapter 18 is where we are at this evening. Before I get into the text, anybody have a word they want to share? Maybe something you just wanted to say. I don't give the opportunity much.

Okay. Alright. Deuteronomy 18. We'll read it in its entirety and then we'll hopefully dive into the text and be able to see the application it has for us.

Moses is still here. If you remember in the midst of this, he's kind of transitioned from, I don't want to say the spiritual realm because it's all spiritual, but he's began looking at the organizational structure of the nation.

As they're getting ready to go into the promised land, he has spoken to them of their judges, their kings, and now he's got the political offices handled. He's going to deal with the spiritual offices in Deuteronomy 18.

Chapter 17 dealt with judges and kings and rulership, and we've seen the reality that God is concerned about every detail of the life of his people. God is concerned about not just how they do church, but how they do life, how they make decisions, and here he is now.

[1 : 11] He's still in that same vein, speaking of leadership. These things matter because Moses is on his way out, literally. He's about to die. He knows he's about to die. He's been charged of the Lord to hand off those responsibilities.

He's been divinely instructed by the Lord God to declare to the people the law and to expound the law or to make the law clear and to help them understand what God is calling them to in that covenant relationship.

And he knows that the responsibilities which he carries is about to be divided up. You know, Moses has had some people around him helping him decide matters, but ultimately everything rested in Moses politically, spiritually.

When they moved, you know, economically, everything rested in Moses. And that's about to change. And he knows that. He understands that. And there's going to be this division of labor. Joshua doesn't concern himself with spiritual matters. Joshua is a political leader. He leads them in battle. He helps them divide up the land.

[2 : 14] But the political matters rest with the priest and the high priest and the tribe of Levi and those things. So it's really all about to change. And he's picking the rest of that side that what we would call the, we went from the secular now to the spiritual.

So we went from how government's going to work to how church life, what we would call church is going to work here in Deuteronomy 18. And he's just continuing on.

And he says there, The Levitical priests, the whole tribe of Levi, shall have no portion or inheritance with Israel. They shall eat the Lord's offerings by fire and his portion.

They shall have no inheritance among their countrymen, the Lord is their inheritance as he promised them. Now this shall be the priest's due from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice, either an ox or a sheep, of which they shall give to the priest the shoulder and the two cheeks and the stomach.

You shall give him the first fruits of your grain, your new wine, and your oil, and the first sharing of your sheep. For the Lord your God has chosen him and his sons from all your tribes to stand and serve in the name of the Lord forever.

[3 : 20] Now if a Levite comes from any of your towns throughout Israel, where he resides and comes whenever he desires to the place which the Lord chooses, then he shall serve in the name of the Lord his God, like all his fellow Levites who stand before the Lord.

They shall eat equal portions except what they receive from the cell of their father's estate. When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations.

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable things, the Lord your God will drive them out before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. For those nations which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft unto diviners, but as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you to do so. The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen.

[4 : 29] You shall listen to him. This is according to all that you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb, on the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, or I will die.

The Lord said to me, They have spoken well. I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. It shall come about whoever will not listen to my words, which he shall speak in my name. I myself will require it of him. But a prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die. You may say in your heart, How will we know the word which the prophet has not spoken? When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken.

The prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You shall not be afraid of him. Deuteronomy 18. We are now transitioning into the spiritual realm.

[5 : 36] I have to take those glasses off, because some of you have made me self-conscious. Now, when I meet you while wearing my glasses, some of you say I look intelligent, and I look sophisticated, which makes me wonder what I look like without it. But it's okay.

Hey, I can gather context clues, right, pretty well. So I'd rather just look like myself, I reckon, even though I have to have it on when I'm reading, because the words are getting smaller and smaller. Much like last night, Cascade had an alumni basketball game. It had a coach's game, and I coached in the league there, and Ethan, thankfully, is my assistant coach. And they asked, Is the coach's playing?

I said, Sure are. Ethan's playing for us. And people asked why I didn't play. I said, Listen, I played the other night with my sons, and the basketball court's gotten longer. I didn't realize how much longer it got until I, as a 41, almost 42-year-old, went and started running around with 20-year-olds. It's gotten a lot longer than it used to be, so I let the young guys have it. Now, the words on my Bible are getting smaller, but that's okay. The Lord is good to us. So we look at the spiritual realm here in Deuteronomy chapter 18, and what I want you to focus on is the interaction of God and His people.

[6 : 40] The interaction between God and His people, because this is what we're looking at in the spiritual realm. Not only are they living in covenant relationship with the Lord their God, and all throughout this passage in Deuteronomy 18 is this recognition of God as Yahweh, right?

He is covenant God. He is Yahweh. And throughout this, over and over, there's this repetitive covenant name of God. That God and His people live not only in covenant fellowship, but they also live in covenant interaction.

They relate to one another. They have this interaction. God is their God, and He is their leader and ruler and king. You remember the theocracy? And they are His people, and as His people, He not only just wants to rule them and leave them alone, He wants to interact with them on a daily level. And this is the beauty of all the sacrificial system. And, you know, there were sacrifices for when you mess up. There were sacrifices for when you wanted to celebrate. There were sacrifices for when you wanted to fellowship.

So the sacrifices did not necessarily imply something bad going on. Sometimes those sacrifices were great things. There were rejoicing and celebratory. As a matter of fact, the majority of the sacrifices were celebratory in nature.

[7 : 50] You were celebrating the harvest, or you were celebrating a remembrance, or you were recognizing what God had done for you and blessing you, and some of them were just fellowshiping together. God longs to interact with His people.

And it's astounding when we realize that, that God has this longing for interaction, but it's not a longing like man, right? I mean, God is not wanting the way man wants.

He doesn't... Man needs interaction. Man needs fellowship. One of the greatest tragedies for man is isolation, and we understand that, right?

We can see that in the tragic consequences of children when they were born in countries in which they were put in a baby bed, and they're left to lay there. A lack of interaction is detrimental to mankind.

Man needs that, and has to have that, and craves that. When we speak of God, God is not wanting for anything. Okay?

[8 : 52] And I know, I have to be careful how we say this, but I think a proper understanding of this helps us to understand it. If is a big word.

I know it's only two letters, but it's a big word, but we use it respectively. If God was not to have interaction with man, He still would not lack anything.

Okay? When man does not have interaction, He has a lack. If God did not have that, now this is not making a declaration.

This is making just a true assessment. God would not be lacking because He is God. Right? God does not need anything to make Him complete because He is God.

God. So when we realize that, that God, even in that state of existence, takes the initiative to interact with us and to fellowship with us, now we realize that that initiative is not because He needs it, but because He knows we need it.

[10 : 09] He's not seeking to make Himself better. He knows that our interaction with Him makes us better. Then we go, oh wow.

He's not seeking to meet His needs. God has no needs. He has no needs. And if He did, He could just create something to meet that need.

Think angels and cherubim and seraphim and all these holy creatures around Him. This is another one of those things that's always just kind of astounded me. And I know this is Sunday night and it's deep, but it's more teaching and conversing.

But God uses man, but He doesn't have to use man. We don't have to be used. We get to be used. When God wants something done in heaven, He declares to the angels and the cherubim and the seraphim to do it, and they do.

When they don't, they're cast out. They were cast out. A third of the hosts of heaven was cast out because they decided they didn't want to do what God told them to do. In heaven, when God declares it, it's done, right?

[11 : 12] Because He created a being that would do exactly what He wanted to do. And then when we realize we get to be used by Him, that's another one of those things where we go, oh wow.

And this interaction with man, God is not trying to fill a void that He has. He has no void. Because He is God. This is the supremacy of God that we speak of.

He is fully God. He has no void. He's not missing anything. But He longs for that in human terms, for lack of a better word, because He knows we miss it.

He knows that's what He created. He created us eternal. He set eternity in the heart of all men. Ecclesiastes chapter 3. He created man with an eternal desire so that man would not be able to meet that need without interaction with God.

And here we see it in Deuteronomy 18. In this chapter, there are four things we see. We will not look at them in order, but I will tell you what they are in order, and then we'll go back and look at them out of order so that we come to a better understanding.

[12 : 20] In order, we see the priest, the problems, the prophet, and the promise. Moses introduces us to the priest, to the problem, to the prophets, and to the promise.

I think, well, I don't have to say I think, we know, because the Word of God is divinely inspired, and we refer to it as inerrant, that is without error. Inerrant.

Divine inspiration sandwiches the problem of man between the priests and the prophets. Bookends. Okay, bookends. In Scripture, bookends matter, but the major problem that man has is bookended by the provisions to meet that problem.

Maybe you do a better job of understanding things, but I can only preach things the way I understand them. The very best way for me is to look at the problem first and then see how God addresses that problem.

So if it's okay, we'll look at the problem, then we'll look at the priest, the prophet, and the promise. First, we see the problem. The problem is that man has a spiritual need. All men were created

spiritual beings.

[13 : 31] We have both a body and a soul. Okay? Now that soul is a spiritual being because it says that when God created Adam and Eve, specifically when He created Adam, out of the dust of the ground He created him, He created Adam, and then He breathed into him.

And that word breathed is spirit. He breathed the same word that we use for the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. He breathed the spirit into him, right? And the same with Eve.

And we see it again in Ezekiel's vision of the valley of the dry bones. There's the dry bones, and He says, prophesy to the bones, and the bones are dry, exceedingly dry, which means they've been dead for a while, right? And He says, I heard this great sound, this rattling of bone coming to bone, and these bones are rattling and coming together, and then sinews and muscles and then skin.

And He said, and they rose up an exceedingly mighty army, but they were dead, right? And then He says, prophesy to the breath or to the spirit.

Prophesy to the spirit. So He prophesied, and the breath entered them. Another breath is spirit. It is soul. And I think in Genesis when God says, let us, by the way, plural, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, let us create man in our, again, plural, let us create man in our image.

[14 : 49] But then when we realize that later on that no one has ever seen God because God is not contained in the image of flesh, right? I'm still speaking of the problem here. God's not confined to physical beings.

He is not embodied. God says, don't make anything because you don't know what I look like because I am. What do I look like? Everything you see. That's what I am, right? He is all-encompassing. So He doesn't, we are not created physically as we see one another, where we reflect the image of God is the spiritual side.

Right? This is the breath. This is the spiritual realm. And then I think it's the thing that differentiates man from the animal realm because we don't read that God breathes into the animals.

He created them and they were. He created them and they were. He created them and they were.

Right? Um, but He didn't give them the spirit, the breath and that's the spiritual realm.

So man with this created spiritual realm, again Ecclesiastes 3, and not only in the spiritual realm, with eternity set in his heart because man inadvertently knows that he's created for eternal things.

[16 : 06] This is why no matter how old an individual is, death always bothers us. because we know we're created for eternity.

We know we are. And the major problem with that is is that all men all over the world know that. This is why Paul says in Romans chapter 2 that all men have at least a revealed knowledge of the holy.

That all men inadvertently know there is more than what they can see. There's, now some suppress that by trying to deny it and some suppress it in other ways. We're not trying to get into that, but here's where the problem arises.

The majority of men seek to fulfill the spiritual need in the wrong way. The majority of mankind seeks to meet the spiritual in a way in which they connive and think of on their own.

In our text in particular it says in verse 9, I told you we would jump over and then we would go back.

When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations.

[17 : 27] When you enter the land don't imitate the detestable things. Now he definitely was not talking about how they planted their crops or how they gathered water or how they maintained the land.

He didn't care about how they built houses because they're going to live in the houses that the Canaanites built, right? He could care less about how they dug wells because they're going to drink water from the wells which the Canaanites drank and they're going to eat from gardens which they did not plant and vineyards which they did not plant.

He is talking about the things they do in the spiritual realm because one thing that we have found all throughout the world is all men everywhere worship something.

The major, major problem is that that worship is wrong. And we see the atrocity of it is it says don't let your sons and your daughters pass through the fire.

Literally, don't sacrifice your children because this is one of the atrocities of the inhabitants of Canaan is child sacrifice in order to try to reach spiritual communion.

[18 : 34] To take their children and offer them as living sacrifices in order to try to reach fellowship with Baal and have communion with Baal. And then he gets into all these things which if you really address them still revolve around this one problem.

Man trying to communicate spiritually with something they know internally exists but they don't know how to get to it. And he says you shall not use divination or one who practices witchcraft or one who interprets omens or a sorcerer or one who casts a spell or a medium or a spiritus or one who calls up the dead.

Each one of these deal with the spiritual realm and he tells them not to do them. Don't fellowship or imitate or mess around with those who are trying to contact the spiritual realm the wrong way.

I would say today's time is worse than it has ever been in these areas. things. I had a high school teacher who is a very strong believer approach me.

As a matter of fact I believe I had two high school teachers come to me at separate times during the football season and ask me I wish that you would pray for the teachers because the halls of our schools are getting darker and darker and darker.

[20 : 06] and he wasn't talking about the physical things he was talking about the spiritual things. Even as a bus driver I see a lot of what comes on and off the bus and I understand this and while we may think that oh well it's just a phase they're going through God calls it more than a phase because anytime an individual attempts to do spiritual things in the wrong way it's dangerous ground.

And when society says that these things are acceptable and God says they're not then may we understand that the major problem is that our interaction with God must be based upon the statutes he has deemed acceptable or upon the mandates he has boldly declared to us not on the example that is set before us.

He says you're going to live in a world in which many people around you are going to try to meet their spiritual need in an unapproved way.

In a way that may seem right on the outside because they're just dealing with spiritual issues and you would have said the Canaanites with all let's remove the church influence off of this for just a moment they were spiritual people there are a lot of people that we could classify as spiritual people right but not all spiritual experiences are good experiences because evil spirits are spirits.

Demonic spirits are spirits and what God says and again to go along as Paul declares it to us when you begin to mess around in a realm which you do not know much about you need to be careful how you go there.

[21 : 57] the major problem that man has is that man was created to have fellowship with spiritual but yet he attempts to do it in ways he thinks is accessible.

We see the nation of Israel struggling with every one of these by the way. We see even in our churches today these issues arising.

things. This past October in one of our communities nearby here there was a night of calling up the dead that was going to take place from some local Wiccans and witches and was inviting it and it was a very public thing to invite it inviting people out to join them and you could buy tickets to this event.

The sad reality is is that the two ladies that were putting that on were members of the church in that community and when a fellow pastor that I know approached their pastor pertaining to this they said well we don't really understand the danger in that.

I'll just go ahead and tell you here that if that's something that you feel like you need to do then with all due respect I'll ask that you do not hang out with us while you do it. And I don't mean to be mean and hateful in that I just mean to be biblical.

[23 : 19] Because God says don't do the detestable when there isn't acceptable. So here's the problem. And then God's going to meet that problem because man has a desire to interact with the spiritual realm.

So God says I'll show you how we can do it. The first way he provides for that is through the priest. In the Old Testament it's through the priest and even in the New Testament so that moves us from the problem to the priest. God is so gracious here.

Look at what he does. God is so gracious. God sets apart an entire tribe among the nation of Israel and calls them priests. Right? An entire tribe. Not just a couple of people.

Not just a few here and there. He says the Levitical priests the whole tribe of Levi shall have no portion or inheritance with Israel. They shall eat of the Lord's offering by fire and his portion. So he says I'm sending apart a whole portion of the nation.

Right? One twelfth of the nation of Israel is going to be priests. This whole tribe of Levi over here they are completely committed to and dedicated to the Lord.

[24 : 24] They are so dedicated and so committed and so sold out that they have no inheritance in the land. Now they had cities. Right? Before you start saying well pastor see you're not supposed to be owning the house.

Pastor you're not supposed to. They had cities that they had. There was the 48 Levitical cities that belonged to the priests. And they also have farmland around those cities. Okay? So they had this portion of the land that went so long and we could look at the measurement of it and so many areas around that city that was their farm where they had you know they could keep their lives out and they had their houses.

But they didn't have this whole big chunk of region like this is Reuben's territory and this is Dan's territory and this is Judah's territory. They didn't have that. They kind of got absorbed because they were dispersed among the nation.

And they were to be throughout the nation and there God is setting apart the priest upon the nation of Israel to be wholly dedicated, wholly committed to him for the intended purpose of standing before the Lord on behalf of the nation.

Now to stand before the Lord literally means just to stand in his presence. It is really an imagery of slavery of the slave coming and standing before his master and sitting there and waiting for his master to give him instructions on what he should or should not do and giving him instruction as to how he should move.

[25 : 40] And what God is saying is I know that man has this desire to interact with me so I'm going to set apart this whole tribe of people who will stand before me for the sole purpose of interceding on behalf of everyone else.

I'm bridging the gap. You won't have to call up the dead. You won't have to go to spiritus or mediums. You won't have to have omens or curses or to read the liver. You know that make you liver quiver.

That was essentially a reading of the liver. They would take an animal's liver out right after they slaughtered an animal and they would see how the liver quivered and they would then dissect the liver and they would see how it moved around and whatever the liver quivered and that was how they made decisions.

I'm so thankful we don't do that anymore that when we got ready to make a church decision we had to kill an animal take its liver out right. And God says don't do that right. Don't do these things. And this is essentially what he's saying is I'm going to set these people apart for you.

Here are priests that are going to intercede on your behalf before me standing in my presence so that as you go throughout your daily life you know the interaction is possible because there's a priest who has given himself to live in my presence on your behalf.

[26 : 48] Now that's great. That's all well and good. But with that benefit comes also responsibility because he says he should eat of the best. He should eat of the best.

Now I don't consider stomach best but I mean evidently they did. You know the cheeks and the quarters and the stomach. He gets the best.

He gets your first fruit your first wine first shearing of your sheep. He gets the best. I'm not talking about pastors here. I'm talking about priests in the Old Testament right?

Keeping this in context. He says you have the responsibility to provide for him. And you're going to provide for them and he says and if this priest wants to go to where I've caused my name to dwell remember Shiloh first and then Jerusalem second and if he's in this local town maybe he just wants to go for a while to Shiloh and be at the temple or the tabernacle of Shiloh or maybe he wants to go to Jerusalem and he can go minister at the temple in Jerusalem.

He makes this declaration that when he goes there that priest should go and he'll be on equal standing with every other priest right? He'll eat what everybody else eats. There's no favor to him. So this is a kind of a warning to the other Levitical priests that you can't say well I'm a temple priest you're just a war trace priest you don't have any right fellowship with me.

[28 : 05] Because if you wanted to go from war trace to Jerusalem and hang out and minister there then you ate what everybody else ate. Equal ground. But the provisions of the priests were reliant

upon the faithfulness of God's people.

Go read the book of Nehemiah. Go read the book of Judges and you see priests moving around looking for a place of business right? You know there at the end of the book of Judges where it gets so bad and this man has his own priest well the problem is the priest was going around looking for work.

And he ended up being the priest of the tribe of Dan because they offered him more money. It wasn't ever supposed to happen that way. The reason it wasn't supposed to happen that way is because he was supposed to be ministering in his hometown and people would be providing for him.

So we see this benefit of the priest here. Now here's the application. 1 Peter chapter 3 I believe it is. It says that we are a holy priesthood.

For we get the priesthood of the believers. We don't have priests. We have a high priest over us according to the order of Melchizedek book of Hebrews who is Jesus Christ.

[29 : 18] But the beautiful thing is is that the church the church universal is the priest that had been provided to stand before the presence of the Lord on behalf of the world.

As a priesthood of the believer we are a holy priesthood being built up connected to one another stones being built into a spiritual household right? It is the believers the priesthood of the believers here.

We don't operate in a system where you know you have those over you standing at. We have this great benefit of being those people and we get to stand before the Lord and interact.

So it's a problem the priest. The second provision that God gives them is prophets. prophets.

Because they needed to know the word of God and this is before the word of God was the canonization of scripture we call it was complete or before all the word of God has been declared.

This is again still in the Old Testament age but not just in the early stages of the Old Testament age right? We haven't even got to the book of Joshua yet. We haven't got to the period of the judges. I mean we're in the patriarch age right?

[30 : 25] We're still hanging out just a little bit past this around 1400 BC I think it is that this is when these things are happening and transpiring right? So I mean we're still 1400 years before Christ comes and we're still a long ways away.

Isaiah prophesies around 500 BC so we're still a long way away from the major prophets right? And we're waiting and we're listening and he says okay so when you got to priest standing before the presence but sometimes people just want to know what God says.

Because isn't that what interaction is all about? Is me sitting before the Lord and hearing what God has to say to me? D. Martin Lloyd-Jones used to say that preaching is a spiritual exercise.

I told you this before and I couldn't agree with him more. That's a book I normally don't recommend to people preaching and preachers because unless you're a preacher it doesn't really have as much application to you but he told pastors that preaching is a spiritual exercise.

that when the man of God stands before the people of God and declares the word of God God speaks to his people and God declares to his people what he is saying through that avenue because interaction is about hearing God speak to you and it's about knowing what God's telling you to do.

[31 : 48] So God says not only will I have the priest to stand before me I'm going to have the prophet come make a declaration right. He says the Lord your God verse 15 the Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you from your countrymen you shall listen to him this is according to all that you'd asked of the Lord your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly saying let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God let me not see this great fire anymore or I will die.

The Lord said to me they have spoken well I will raise up a prophet from among your countrymen or among their countrymen like you and I will put listen to this I will put my words in his mouth and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

So now the interaction becomes real. Now God's going to speak to his people through the prophet right. And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to my words which he shall speak in my name I myself will require of him.

So God's going to raise up the prophet and the prophet's going to declare the word of God and the people of God now bear the responsibility if they had responsibility to provide for the priest now they

have responsibility to respond to the prophets.

Because when God speaks we cannot be unresponsive. We cannot go ah. Right?

[33 : 03] Sometimes when people speak we we give great words like mm-hmm mm-hmm yep yep mm-hmm yeah mm. If you want to vary the conversation a little bit if you're not really paying much attention to it you go mm. You know you just change the tone of your voice and you're just kind of letting it go in this ear and out the other you know we've all done it.

Come on we're zoning out. We're tuning out. And we're not responding even though we're responding. We can't do that when God talks to us. Because when God has risen up the individual to declare the word of God now it is the people's responsibility to respond to the word of God. This just as a side note is the great freedom you have as a pastor. My responsibility is to bring the word. It is your responsibility to respond to the word. Once I have fulfilled my obligation it is now off of me.

The onus is no longer on me. God told the prophet Ezekiel if judgment is coming and you fail to stand up and you warn and you fail to warn them you fail to sound the trumpet if you fail to declare to them watch out for the judgment then their blood is on your hands.

But if judgment is coming and you stand up and you declare to them judgment is coming judgment is coming and the people do not respond they will surely die in their sins but their blood is not on your hands.

[34 : 24] Because they heard the warning. Paul would say I am free from the blood of all men. For I have not failed to declare the gospel. Because God says you will have interaction with me.

You will hear my word. I will declare to you my word to the prophet. Think of all the prophets the major prophets the minor prophets not every one of them were professional prophets.

Amos and said I'm not a prophet. I'm not even the son of a prophet right. I'm just this guy who keeps trees. I tend trees for a living right. I'm a keeper of trees. I don't I just came to declare to you what God has said.

I'm neither a prophet nor a son of a prophet. Some of them like Isaiah great lineage Jeremiah great lineage some of them Malachi we know nothing about.

But they just come and they declare and they fade off. Some last for a long time. Some last for a very short time. Some of them are old.

[35 : 30] Some of them are young. Some of them are contemporaries with each other. Haggai and Zechariah. Prophesying at the same time around the same matters. Haggai is very quick. Zechariah takes a little bit longer.

He starts going into Zechariah was older. Haggai was younger. The people of God are required to respond to the word of God. That's the responsibility of the people. The responsibility of the prophet is to only say what God says to say.

Right. The onus on the prophet is only declare what God tells them. The prophet who speaks the word presumptuously. Which means he cannot presume to know what God is going to do.

Jeremiah dealt with this. Remember in Jeremiah's prophecies. Maybe you remember this. Jeremiah was called and he was brought before the king and he told the king that if you do this you're going to fall. And another reason is oh that's not what's going to happen.

There's all these false prophets right. And these false prophets are saying no no it's going to be fine. And Jeremiah said no it's not going to be fine. They struck Jeremiah and Jeremiah's like you're going to fall. All these other prophets you know they really liked the king and they wanted the king to like them.

[36 : 30] Oh king go you'll be successful. You'll never fall. You'll win every battle. God's going to give you. God's going to deliver you. And this false prophet came in with these horns and he made them. He's like running around like yeah God says you're going to take these horns and you're going to.

And Jeremiah breaks the horns. Right. He says no there's a yoke it's going to be taken. You're going to be led captive. And they told Jeremiah they said put Jeremiah in prison and give him very little to eat. And this is when they end up throwing him in the dung pit.

Remember that the well full of dung. And they put him down there and says until we come back Jeremiah says you're not coming back. You're going to die. And there's this constant battle.

So many people would raise up and presumptuously say I would. There are things. I would love to be able to say God says this. Because it sounds good.

But we can't. We are bound by what God has declared. Here's the test right. Here's the test. We stand in a great day. If someone raises.

[37 : 29] And I say this all the time. If someone rises up and says I have a word from the Lord God. You have the great benefit of checking that word based on what God has already said.

And if it is contrary to what he has already said. Then they are presumptuously speaking. And they are wrong. And God says well how will I know if it's a true prophet.

Well check what he says. If it comes true. If it does not come true he's not a prophet. That does not mean that if it does come true he is a true prophet. That is just the base test. Right. The full test is does it align with what God has said.

So there's the problem. The priest and the prophet. Now let's finish this where God finishes. In this text we see the great promise. And we don't see it because its application is far reaching.

Much like what we see in the Old Testament there are two fold fulfillments. So many times we see there is a partial fulfillment or something that takes place historically. And then there is the greater eternal fulfillment.

[38 : 32] Something which will happen later. The greatest text or the proof text for this is the prophecy of the young woman who would give birth to a child. We've looked at that in Isaiah 9. Right. Isaiah 7 and 9.

And all those prophecies that come out of that. And that had this partial fulfillment. But the full fulfillment or the eternal fulfillment of that Matthew highlights for us is the coming of Jesus Christ. Here again we see one that has a temporal historical fulfillment. It's going to happen just like God says. But it has a greater fulfillment. And it is this.

Verse 15. The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you from your countrymen. You shall listen to him. Now the historical partial fulfillment is this is exactly what God does.

God raises up prophets from among the nation of Israel throughout what we refer to as the prophetic age. And they declare to them the word of God. Right. We see that over and over again. John the Baptist is the last of those prophets.

[39 : 30] And over and over and over again. But if you open up the pages of the book of Acts. In Acts chapter 3 and in Acts chapter 7 you find both Peter and Stephen using this verse.

And they declare in this verse. This is pointing to Jesus Christ. This is pointing to the prophet like Moses that we must listen to.

This is a promise. one would arise that would have the full word of God and declare it to the people of God.

And that one would arise and make possible once for all interaction between God and his people. Peter says it.

Immediately following the healing outside the temple. The man who asked for alms but got legs instead someone once said. Begging for alms and he got legs and then he declares to them this is to fulfill what Moses said.

[40 : 39] And God would rise up a prophet like unto me from among his countrymen you shall listen to him. I think it's Acts chapter 3 verses 22 and 23. And he's pointing to Jesus Christ.

Stephen amazes me right. Stephen has one great message. Acts chapter 7. Stephen's defense before the council before he's stoned. But Stephen's one great message in Acts chapter 7 is such a great commentary on all of scripture.

It is here that we understand that when God called Abram out of the land of the earth of the Chaldeans the reason God held him up at Haran was because he had to wait on his dad to die. You know. It is here that we understand so many other truths right.

Because God did this. God did that. God did this. Stephen had it great. And let us never forget Stephen's a layman. He's a deacon. Right. Chosen to minister to the needs of the Hellenistic widows.

So he's not even pastor. But Stephen says in Acts chapter 7 that Jesus came to fulfill what Moses declared. God should arise up a prophet like unto me.

[41 : 51] You should listen to him. The great promise is this. One is coming who will ensure an interaction between God and his people.

And Moses says this is because of what you said at Horeb. Let us not hear the voice of God or see the splendor of his flame and his glory. Let us not do that or we will die.

So this is what the promise is. When man could not stand to be in the presence of God and his splendor and his glory and his holiness. When man was overwhelmed with being in the presence of God to the point that he feared to be that he would die.

When man could not stand in that glorious presence. God chose to come to man and stand in theirs.

And he did it through Jesus Christ. God's interaction with man is not based upon man's ability to stand in his presence but based upon the fact that he has come and stood in our presence.

[43 : 03] And by standing in our presence he has declared to us the word of God. Listen to him.

Hebrews chapter 1. In times past God spoke in various ways and various means but in these latter days he has spoken to us through Jesus Christ his son.

Listen to him. The interaction between God and his people. Let's pray. Lord we thank you so much for this evening. We thank you for the blessing of your word.

And we pray oh God that you would lead us this week for your glory. In Christ's name. Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[45 : 26] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[47 : 56] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.