

Foretold//”The Prophet”//Deut 18:9–22

Hello Summit Church... Send a special greeting out to our West Club and Cole Mill Campuses... and our BC campuses.

This is a really exciting time in our church. This past Tuesday our elders presented a plan to purchase 2 warehouses in the Brier Creek area, both the one I'm in and the even larger one adjacent to this one (we currently rent this little one)... and, if we do this, will lead to a massive renovation of these facilities; a permanent home; and a ramping up of our ministries. It could be an answer to prayer that saves us a lot of money. If you weren't there on Tuesday, go to our website and check it out and see how you can be a part of it... Believe project: you can see where we are and where we are going.

Before I start, let me give a little spoiler alert... If you have young kids (like I do) and they're still really into all the stories we tell at Christmas (if you know what I mean)... and they're in here right now, I just want to warn you that I might say a couple of things in this introduction that could challenge those stories a little bit (you catch my drift?)

It will only last a couple of minutes and then I'll be done... and I'm going to try and be very subtle, but still, *now* might be a really good time to for a quick, family bathroom break... We tracking? I'll only mention this stuff right in the introduction, and then after that you'll be safe.

Intro: OK... so, if you've been a Christian for a while, especially if you were raised as a Christian, there's a lot of things about the Christian faith that you just tend to take for granted. But then I'll hear myself explaining Christianity to somebody who doesn't believe, and I'll be like, "Yeah... wow... what we believe is weird."

Recently, it's been happening to me with my kids. As we go through the Christmas story I'll be like, "See that **little baby** laying in the hay... yeah, that's God! And yeah, millions of angels appeared to some shepherds and they sang through the night, even though nobody else could hear them. And a **woman with no husband** claimed that God made her pregnant... and we all believe her.

Fat guy coming down the chimney; not true. Jesus returning in the clouds on a white horse: that's true. ***Flying reindeer***? Be serious. Flying horsemen of the Apocalypse. Of course.

So, I know that Christianity appears to many on the outside "unbelievable;" sometimes it strikes me that way, too... So I want

to explain today one of the most important reasons why I believe that it is God Himself speaking to us in the Bible... **that the Bible is the very voice of God.** Of all the things that convince me Christianity is true, this is perhaps the most important to me.

Deuteronomy 18: Moses is giving his farewell speech to the nation of Israel. Moses had had a moral failure as a leader and because of that he's not going to be able to accompany Israel into the promised land they're about to go into.

And so, in chapter 18, he gives them this **important instruction** and then makes this **incredible prediction**:

Deut 18:9 "When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. **10** There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens (reads palms, horoscopes, fortune cookies) , or a sorcerer **11** or a charmer or a medium or a wizard (HP ☺) or a necromancer, **12** for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord.

And because of these abominations the Lord your God is driving them out before you. But... **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—

God is explaining to the Israelites that when they go into the land, they are not to try and access the divine the way that the people of the land do.

Every culture has its ways of connecting with the divine. Theirs did. I'd say there is basically 4 major views in our culture about how to connect with the divine. Let me outline them real quickly:

Major views in our culture about the divine and how to hear from Him

View 1: There is no voice of God to be heard in the world: 3 varieties.

- **Atheism (there is no God, so of course no reason to listen)** or
- **Agnosticism (we're not sure if there's a God and there's no way we can know) or**
- **Deism (that there probably is a God out there somewhere but He never gets involved with what is going on on the earth—no purpose in looking for Him.)**
- So, this view says that we should always look for perfectly natural explanations for whatever happens on earth. Science can always eventually explain whatever happens so we should entertain no hypotheses about God's intervention

in science or history.

- Science and the historical method are wonderful advancements but this view can actually *become* quite closed-minded. ***The purest form of the scientific method is that you will follow evidence wherever it leads, right?*** Even if it contradicts your preconceived theories... and, if from the outset you just decide that there can be no supernatural appearances on earth, then that makes you closed-minded. You are no longer open to evidence that challenges your presupposed theories: that's called prejudice.
- **Think of it like this: Say at our offices, someone was stealing money.** So we tell the po-po and they start making a list of suspects and I tell them that no men could be on the list of suspects, we would only entertain charges against women, no men. "Explain your bias."
- **For you to not be open at all to where God might have revealed Himself in history is not scientific, it can actually quite bigoted.**
- All I'm saying is that you should at least be open to where the evidence might lead! That's all I am pleading for...
- (Now, for those of you in science, let me make clear that I'm not talking about plugging God into the gaps... You know, whenever you don't know a scientific explanation you just plug God into it... "Who left the door open? You? You? No, oh... had to be God!")
- I'm just saying you ought to be open to a supernatural explanation where science is not able to give a satisfactory answer or where is not equipped to answer.
- For example, when naturalism has to conclude about the universe that **nothing x nobody = everything**, you say, "that's not satisfactory" ...
- or when you look at what birthed this incredible movement known as Christianity you at least be open to the fact that Jesus really might have been raised from the dead. I just want you to investigate the evidence on its own terms.

View 2: God is in everything so we can all access him equally.

- **Pantheism; (God is everything, or it's step-cousin...)**
- **Panentheism (God is in everything)**
- God is in you, you've just got to get in touch with your inner deity;
- This is Buddhism; "the force is strong with you, Young Skywalker"; Deepak Chopra; the Gospel according to Oprah.

View 3: There are multiple deities and spirits at work on the world (this is what you see here in this passage)

- **Polytheism** (many gods: Romans and Greeks or Hinduism)

- **Spiritism:** lot of spirits in the world we can tap into.
- the occult; horoscopes; superstitions; these people read the Twilight series and Harry Potter and they think, “I think this might be based on a true story.”
- Now, interestingly, a lot of Christians have their own version of spiritism and superstition:
 - Just go on Google and type in “Virgin Mary appearances” and you’ll see that poor Mary’s always showing up in bowls of soup and slices of bread as a way of guiding people in decisions. “That’s not how God speaks...”
 - Or Christians who think God is always giving them signs everywhere... *“I didn’t know if it was God’s will for me to ask her out. But on the way home from work I saw a billboard and the first letter on the billboard was the first letter of her name and the last two digits of the phone number were the same as her age and so I KNEW God was telling me to ask her out!”*

Now, let me point out a real quick irony: People who espouse view 1 (that there is no voice of God to be heard in the world, the natural world is all there is) end up gravitating toward one of views 2 or 3;

- Right toward the end of last century there was a set of books that came out called *Megatrends* that analyzed cultural developments in the 20th century: in the introduction the authors explained that one of the most surprising things in the 20th century was the growth of religion and spiritualism in the Western nations. They had expected that as technology/science explained more and more of the natural world, the desire for spirituality and religion would go down... what they found is that people at the end of the 20th century were more religious and spiritual than people at the beginning. As science and technology went up, so did religion.
 - Rodney Stark in his incredible book ***What Americans Really Believe*** points out that the percentage of atheists in our country has stayed consistent at 4% from 1944 through the end of 2007. He says, despite all the biological and technological advancements, “The predicted Godless Age has never dawned!”
 - That’s because God has created you for interaction with the divine!
 - Sociologist Peter Rozack said it would be like trying to like putting a cork in Old Faithful
 - If you don’t think there is no personal, Creating God behind creation, you end up turning the creation into God. You’ll worship something; you’ll turn something into an ultimate thing and give it the weight of divinity.
 - (Real quick: Interesting... studies show that atheists end up being some of the most superstitious people in the world! There was an article in the WSJ earlier this year did a study on what kinds of people were most prone to believe in paranormal activity...(stuff like Bigfoot, goblins, aliens, the Loch Ness monster, little sado-masichist dolls named “chucky”). The study showed that people who believed in God were 3x less likely to believe in that stuff than people who were agnostics or atheists. Guys like Bill Maher... they end up having the wackiest superstitions. *Get this:* The study showed that the least likely group to embrace weird paranormal beliefs: Born again Christian college students.

- Rodney Stark: *“For those concerned about shielding young people from the prevalent occult and paranormal beliefs in our society, the more certain ‘solution’ seems not to be to send them to college, but to a conservative Sunday school.”*)
- Again... you are created for a closeness with the divine. God has left an imprint in your heart for Him! When that is gone, we come up with some substitute. It’s a hunger in your heart!

All that to say... God says, “Don’t try to find me in spiritism; or by communing with yourself; the Jedi’s strength doesn’t really flow from the forest. I’m not found in the horoscope or by staring into your alphabet soup.”

- These ways that the Canaanites try and find God (vs. 14) he says is “abominable” (He says that 3x).
- He says, “No, don’t do that”: **15** “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—

(View 4: God gives His word through specially appointed prophets

- **“Special revelation”**)

God said He would give us His Word through His specially appointed prophets, or what we call “special revelation”.

15 “...it is to *him* you shall listen—

- I’ll speak to you through my appointed Prophets, when I do, you have to **listen**. You are going to have to be humble enough to listen to what I say about Myself, because, “undoubtedly,” He says, “what I say will challenge your views of me.”
- I’ve pointed this out before but we live this culture that likes to say, “We like certain parts of what Jesus says about Himself but the other parts we find offensive. So, we’ll take the parts we like and jettison the parts we don’t.”
- A lot of people like Christmas Jesus best... 8 lb. 6 oz newborn infant Jesus... don’t even know a word yet, just a little infant so cuddly; but still omnipotent; there you are in your golden fleece diapers...” Everybody likes little baby Jesus... This is a good time of the year for Jesus.
- *Y’all know the movie I’m quoting? I hope so...*
 - I like to think of Jesus as a figure skater who wears a white outfit and does interpretive ice dances of my life’s journey
 - I like to think of Jesus as wearing a tuxedo T-shirt... he’s formal, but he’s here to party
- So, parts of Jesus everybody likes. The Christmas parts. And we take the parts of God’s revelation we like and leave the others, as if we are now so enlightened that we can tell God what He ought to be like.

- God is not a salad bar!
- If you want to know God, you are going to have to let God speak for Himself.
- If God is really speaking through a prophet, then *our role, vs. 15, is to "listen to Him."*
- God says to them... your opinions of me; how you think I'm supposed to act... they're cut but pretty much irrelevant.
- You want to be God? Create your own universe... (out of nothing, by the way... you can't use anything I've already created) and then you can be God in it in whatever way you want.
- **Some of you, your whole life, you hear stuff about God and you think, "I don't like that... so you say "My God won't be like that." You have a hodge-podge deity that is your own pet God.** Here's my challenge to you (I've said this before: Go home and write down all the things you think God should be. Take a sheet of paper and just make a list. It's time to be a big boy and just quit shooting from the hip... make a list and go back and look over what you've written and you'll see that you want to be God!)
- If God is really speaking through a prophet, then *our role, is to "listen to Him."*
- Listen, God makes the rules, even if it goes against what we think about Him...

You say, WELL, THAT'S GREAT... but how do we know who really speaks for God? Lots of people say that represent God: Mohammad, Joseph Smith, the Pope, Tom Cruise... they all claim to speak for the divine. How do we know who is a fake?

(God's words are "proven" to us by prophecy)

Great question! Here's how I know it's a great question. It's exactly the one asked in vs. 21:²¹ 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.

- You don't have to be scared of Tom Cruise for this reason... other reasons to fear him...
- A very important way that God would show us that it was Him speaking was through the miracle of revealed prophecy. Declaring things that there was no way anybody could know and then having them come true.
- Part of the reason we believe the Bible to be true is the incredible specificity and amount of prophecies given about Jesus Christ.
- Did you notice, by the way, when God tells them how He would reveal Himself, he says "Prophet" in the singular? He is talking about one particular Prophet who would come, and one of the proofs that He was really from God would be that He would be substantiated by an incredible amount of prophecies!

- There are right around 322 direct prophecies given in the OT about Jesus. Not vague stuff... “there will be a great man who will do some scary stuff, and lots of people will like him, and then he’ll die tragically...”
- No, there were prophecies about specifically where he would be born: (Bethlehem, Micah 5:2) and that happened;
- That he would be crucified by having his hands and feet pierced (Ps 22:16) with criminals (Isa. 53:12)... and that happened.
- that the executioners who killed him would gamble for His clothes (Ps. 22:18); and that happened...
- that he would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver and that that silver would be used to purchase a potter’s field (Zechariah 11:13); and that happened.
- that He would be born 173,880 days from the decree of Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem (Dan 9:25); and that happened.
- that he would be buried with the rich (Isa 53:9) and rise again (Psalm 16:10) and that happened.
- And 312 or so others...
- Now, you say, “Well, he just got lucky.”
- Listen to this: Dr. Peter Stoner, Professor Emeritus of Science at Westmont College, did a study on the statistical probability that all the prophecies could have just happened to be fulfilled, luckily, in one man. He examined each Old Testament prophecy and used the most conservative probability that it could have come true in someone’s life. Then he crossed them all together and he found that, statistically speaking the odds that all 322 would come together in 1 man would be 1 in 10^{157} .
- You say, “Well... maybe he exaggerated the math.” He had his math checked by a peer review of the American Scientific Affiliation who didn’t necessarily agree with his conclusions that Jesus was the Son of God but they substantiated that his was statistical analysis was dead on, if not a little on the conservative side. (It’s all in his book, *Science Speaks*.)
- 1 in 10^{157} . Now, just to show you the size of that number...1 in 10^{16} . Cover Texas with silver dollars 2 feet deep, make a little mark on one of them... and then catapult a blind man randomly into Texas from somewhere in Mexico.. the odds of him picking the right silver dollar...
- Now, I know you say, “Well... I bet Jesus was some sort of an opportunist... He thought, I could make a lot of these come true and then people would think I am the Messiah... Jesus was like: “So, the next one says... ride a donkey into Jerusalem and get crucified... I can do that...check”
- **Doesn’t work for a few reasons:** First of all, the same man that rode onto the donkey also had to be from a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Jesse, David and have been born in Bethlehem, which he had no control over. He had to fulfill the hundreds that were out of His control before He could do the few that were in His control.

- Furthermore, a lot of these prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus' enemies, who would certainly not have cooperated with any self-promotion agenda of Jesus', or even after His death. Some of them were fulfilled by Judas and Jesus' enemies, who certainly would not have participated in some effort to manipulate opportunities to make Jesus seem like the Messiah.
- You say, "Well, maybe Jesus' followers doctored the prophecies after Jesus came to make them fit Jesus."
- *"Where was Jesus born? Bethlehem... OK, write that in."*
- One of the most amazing discoveries of the last centuries was the Dead Sea Scrolls—major portions of the OT that were discovered in a cave by the Dead Sea. These copies of the OT were written over 100 years before Jesus; we know that because of the kind of language used... a lot of secular scholars were excited because they thought this would show that Christians had "beefed" up the Jesus prophecies in the OT... but what they found is that the text in these copies is the same as what you have in your Bibles.
- So, there was no doctoring of prophecies after Jesus came... all these prophecies were intact just as we read them long before Jesus got here.

322 specific prophecies written hundreds of years before Jesus came that came true that show us Jesus really was from God.

That's impressive. But beyond these 322 specific prophecies there is something that I think that is even more remarkable than that.

And that is a number of pictures that are given in the Old Testament that Jesus fulfills. That's what happening here. Moses said, "The real Prophet, the ultimate Prophet, will be like me... but much more." It's like all the Old Testament characters are dim shadows of Jesus and then when Jesus comes you see the real version of what they were trying to show you.

How was Jesus "like Moses?"

- Both Moses and Jesus were mediators between God and man; both of them gave a law; both of them built a temple where God dwelt. (Moses' was a tent in the desert, Jesus' was His body.)
- **The Gospel of Matthew does an interesting thing. Of all the Gospels, it was the one most written to a Jewish audience; it chronicles a parallel between Jesus' life and Moses.**
 - **Matt 2: Just like Moses, Jesus was brought up out of Egypt.**
 - **Matt 3: Just like Moses, Jesus began his ministry by coming through water. (For Moses, it was the Red Sea. For Jesus, it was his baptism.)**
 - **Matthew 4, Just like Moses and Israel, Jesus wanders in the wilderness, where He is tempted for 40 days...**

- When Jesus comes out of the wilderness, Matthew 4:23 says that He healed all of their diseases. In the wilderness wandering one of the names God had taught the people to call Him was Jehovah Rapha, translated “the God who heals all our diseases.”
- Matthew 5, just like Moses, Jesus goes up to a mountain, and gives the people the Law.
- Matthew’s whole point is that Jesus is the “2nd Moses.” He is “the Prophet like Moses” that Moses predicts here.
- The Gospel of John also shows you this, which our small groups will be studying this week.

So, Jesus was like Moses.

But, notice, this passage indicates that this Prophet would have to be more than Moses, too.¹⁵ “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers...¹⁶ just 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.’¹⁷ And the Lord said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken.’¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers...

Here’s what happened: Israel was in presence of God. They caught a glimpse of God and said, ‘We can’t see God!’ and God said ‘they’re right.’ Moses was unable to bridge the gap between a sinful people and a holy God; in that sense he was a failure.

That’s mainly b/c Moses had his own sins to deal with. He lost his temper and was forbidden to lead Israel to the promised land.

Listen to this:

- Moses was sinful, and because of that he was unable to lead his people into the promised land. Jesus was sinless and because He died for our sins was able to lead us into the Promised eternity.
- Moses built a temple so the people could offer sacrifices and live near to God; Jesus became the Temple who put away our sins so God could live in us.
- Moses could only bring people to a place of fear in the presence of God; Jesus brought the presence of God into our hearts with a Spirit that sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts and tells us we are the precious sons and daughters of

God.

- Moses gave the law; the people couldn't keep it and 3000 people died in Exodus 33 at the foot of Mt. Sinai; Jesus gave the Spirit; He died for our transgressions and 3000 were saved in Acts 2 at the foot of Mt. Calvary.
- Moses was a prophet; Jesus was a Savior.
- Moses was created; Jesus was the Creator.
- Moses was a servant of God; Jesus was the son of God.
- Moses died for his sin and abandoned his people as they went into the promised land; Jesus died for our sin, and was raised to life so He could say "I will never leave you or forsake you."

Jesus was the true and better Moses.

And that's where the Bible really gets amazing... when you start to see that everything in the Old Testament was a shadow that Jesus fulfilled perfectly: (I didn't write this, not sure who did).

Jesus is the true and better **Adam**, who passed the test in the garden and whose obedience is imputed to us. The first Adam ate from a tree and we died; the second Adam died on a tree and we lived.

Jesus is the true and better **Abel** who, though innocently slain by his own family, has blood now that cries out, not for our condemnation, but for our forgiveness.

Jesus is the real **Ark**, who shielded us from the raining wrath of God and out of which God brought a new creation.

Jesus was the true and better **Isaac**, who was not just offered up by his father on the mount, but was truly sacrificed for us.

Jesus is the true and better **Joseph** who, at the right hand of the King, forgives those who betrayed and sold him and uses His new power to save them.

Jesus is the real **Rock** in the desert, which, struck with the rod of divine justice, now gives us water for our thirsty hearts.

Jesus is the true and better **Job**, the truly innocent sufferer, who then intercedes for and saves his stupid friends;

Jesus is the true and better **David**, whose victory over the giant becomes His people's victory, even though His people never lifted a stone to accomplish it themselves;

Jesus is the true and better **Esther**, who didn't just risk losing an earthly palace, but actually lost an ultimate and heavenly one; who didn't just risk His life but actually gave His life to save His people.

Jesus is the true and better **Jonah**, who was cast out into the storm so that we could be brought in.

Jesus is the real **Passover lamb**; innocent, perfect, helpless; slain so that the Angel of Death can pass over us;

Jesus is the true **temple**; He is the true **Prophet**; the true **Priest**; the true **King**; the true **sacrifice**; the true **Lamb**; the true **light**; the true **bread**;

Everything in the Bible pertains to Him; every verse in every chapter is about Him!

All of the religious heroes could only take us so far... but they couldn't restore us to God. They could inspire us but not save us. Because Jesus was man, he could die for our sins. Because he was perfect, he was sufficient as our substitute. Because He was God, He was able to overcome death and now save all who put their trust in Him.

If Jesus really is all that... if He really is the ultimate point of all the Bible, if all the fuss is about Him, then it makes sense: you have to listen to Him (v 15) (**15** "...it is to *him* you shall listen—)

- **Matthew 17:5**, Jesus appears on the mountain with the two greatest OT prophets, Moses and Elijah. And Peter says, "We should build 3 shrines, one for you, Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elijah..." and suddenly God thunders from heaven, basically saying, PETER! Shut up... "*This is my beloved Son, listen to Him!*" (**Matt 17:5**)
- If God is speaking to you, can you really afford not to listen to Him? *Listen, Do you realize who this is that we celebrate at Christmas? How majestic He is; that He is the Son of God... that all of the Bible has been talking about?*
- Look at vs. 19, **19** *And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.*
- You get to live in a time and a place where you get to hear what people for all of history have longed to hear! God,

coming to earth to befriend and save us and live inside of us! **And you look at God and say, "Your majestic Son... yeah... not interested."**

- **And why wouldn't you want to?**
- If this is your Creator God coming to you... your Father, running to you... after you had rejected Him, dying for you... what else would He have to do to demonstrate His love for you?

OK... Last thing: You've been given Moseses in your life (or is that Mosi?)... things that show you need God.

- A feeling of dissatisfaction: you've got the job; good sex... but something is still not quite right
- Maybe it's been in having someone close to you dying and a voice whispering to you... are you ready to die?
- A feeling of guilt. An unsettled feeling when you look up at the stars, or maybe a longing...
- These are all Moseses... that have been whispering to you about your need for Jesus and pointing you Him. He is here!

Listen to Him.

Can I tell you how this works? How you listen to Him? Here's His message: "You are a sinner who has lived in rebellion to God. You've wanted to run your own life and call the shots. But I came to forgive and restore you." To listen to Him means you come to Him and say

"You are the Lord. I'm sorry for rebelling against you. I yield full control of my life to you right now. I believe that only you can save and forgive me, and I receive that gift right now."

Prayer: If you want to pray that prayer, from your heart, and you mean it, you say it to Him in your own words:

"You are the Lord. I'm sorry for rebelling against you. I yield full control of my life to you right now. I believe that only you can save and forgive me, and I receive that gift right now."

Bullpen:

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- 29 of the prophecies are about the DBR, spoken between 1000 and 500 years before Jesus' death by about 6 different people and were all fulfilled by Jesus in one 24 hour period.
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 - Guys like Bill Maher are some of the worst out there for superstitions... he told David Letterman to stop taking his heart pills that the doctor proscribed because Western medicine doesn't work. He also doesn't believe in vaccinations or Louis Pasteur's germ theory. He told Larry King on CNN he won't take aspirin and doesn't believe we've really found a vaccine for polio.
 - Jesus is the true and better **Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego**, who would not succumb to the temptations of a worldly ruler but chose rather to enter the fires of God's justice for us, and emerged victorious for us.
 - Jesus is the true and better **Abraham** who answered the call of God to leave the comfortable and familiar and to go out into the void, not knowing whether he went to create a new people of God.
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 - Before I start here, let me give a *slight warning... If you have young kids (like I do) and they're still really into all the stories we tell at Christmas (if you know what I mean)... and they're in here right now, I just want to warn you that I might say a couple of things in this introduction that could challenge those stories a little bit (you catch my drift?)*
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 - *I'm going to try and be very subtle, but still, now might be a really good time to for a quick, family bathroom break... We tracking? I'll only mention this stuff right in the introduction, and then after that you'll be safe.*
 -
 - He says "Come unto me, all you who labor and are laden down with burden, and I will give you rest.... Though your sins be as scarlet, I can make the white as snow." He that believes in Me, out of his heart will flow living water.
 - Jesus' love was so immense and His work on your behalf was so complete that you and I no longer have to pull away from God in fear; through Jesus the God that Moses showed to Israel; the God that terrified them; the holy God they knew they could never be good enough to stand before; in Jesus that God can
 - **Biography illustration:** Someone came up to you... "going to write a biography about you." In my biography of you, you are an astronaut; you're really, really bad at relationships and so you live with 18 cats because no one will date you.

Uhhh... I'm scared of heights, I consider myself a nice person, and I'm more of a dog person. But this is how I prefer to see you. That's not me! You'd be offended. Same way with Jesus. We can't just remake Him into what we want Him to be.

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- When God spoke to the people, they draw back from God and hid themselves because to see His presence would kill them. When Moses spoke with God his face shone so bright that the people had to make him cover it so they could be around him.
- I like to think of Jesus as a shapeshifter or changelink... like that guy... ever hear of that show Manimal?
- I also want you to see that all these things in your life: Jesus is the new and better BUSINESS PLAN, etc....all these things are like Moses, to bring you to God... spiritualism; religion; family... to bring you to the greater fulfillment.
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- Moses appointed priests who would offer sacrifices first for their sins and then for ours; Jesus became our High Priest who was Himself the sacrifice for our sin.

19 And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. **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.

There is actually one right here in this passage, vs. 15, "I will send... **15**... a prophet (see how it is singular? One prophet in particular; He'll be) like me (like Moses) from among you, from your brothers (He'll be a descendant of Israel)

- Our culture is not unique in that we find certain parts of God's revelation offensive. Every culture is challenged by God's self-revelation.
- Western culture hears the stuff God says about God punishing sin or that sex should only happen between a man and woman who are married for life, and they say, "we're offended by that." Muslim culture hears that and thinks, Of course. They're not offended at all. But then they hear about God dying on a cross and forgiving adulterers and they say, "No, people have to pay for their sins. You start just forgiving sinners and all of society will unravel."
- The Bible offends us all at different places; if not, you haven't read it right, but
- Moses was a mediator who offered sacrifices so the people could live near to God; Jesus was a mediator who was

Himself the sacrifice so God could live in us.

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- Among your brothers; mediator; temple
- John (small groups are studying)
- I met some Muslims who used to say that Moses here was talking about Mohammad... because Mohammad was like Moses... lawgiver, a warrior, he was married. That can't be because Jesus said it would be "from your brothers."
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- Islam—doctoral dissertation... (whenever I bring it up I feel smart so if you would acknowledge that by oohing...) amulets; Sufism
- There's just big gaping holes that the scientific method can't satisfactorily explain:
 - Naturalism basically leads you to conclude "Nothing x nobody = everything." Dawkins, Hawking... they have absolutely no answer for that and they admit it. In *God Delusion*, Dawkins says... "*Darwin's theory works for biology, but not for cosmology.*"
 - Hawking: That's the most important question!
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- Everybody has their own definition of God and to each his own.
- The Gospel according to Oprah.
- Subjective. God ends up looking just like you.
- Number one, He could not be our Savior. God could not forgive our sins, finally and eternally, until He became one of us, to become a sacrifice for us. We read, "Jesus upholds all things by the word of His power, and when He made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:3).
- Why couldn't the Angel of the Lord simply wipe out people's sins? Why the need for the incarnation? Because, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. And you could not take the Angel of the Lord and nail him to a cross, could you? And if you could, there would be no blood. There had to be someone who would become like us to redeem us. And blood had to be shed, and a sacrifice had to be made. And for that, Christ had to become one with us.
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- Notice, to become Israel's king He had to become a member of the human race. He had to come through the lineage that had been predicted - the lineage of David.
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- And then also, He had to become one of our brothers. In the book of Hebrews we read, "For both He who sanctifies, and those who are sanctified...," that's a reference to us, "...we are all from one Father, for which reason He...", that is, Christ, "is not ashamed to call them His brethren."

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- Isn't this astounding? Do you realize what benefits come to those who believe in Christ? We have God as our Father; we have Christ as our brother.
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- He also had to become man to become our high priest. Later on in the book of Hebrews it says that "we do not have a high priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities." No, we have somebody who partook of flesh and blood, somebody who was hungry and thirsty, who knew the power of rejection. Somebody who hurt when stones were thrown at Him. And Somebody who felt the full effect of the whippings and the beatings that He received on His way to the cross.
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- Appearances: Mysterious person who appears in the Bible called "the Angel of the Lord."
 - Like Moses at the burning bush. Says "the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses." (3:2) Big deal, it was an angel. "Holy ground." Vs. 14 the angel says, "My name is I AM."
 - In the first chapter of Zechariah, the prophet is having a vision and the Angel of the Lord appears. We read, "The Angel of the Lord answered and said, 'Oh Lord of Hosts, how long wilt Thou have no compassion for Jerusalem, and for the cities of Judah, with which Thou has been indignant these seventy years?'" And the Lord answered the Angel who was speaking with gracious words.
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- Relativism: God is a mountain. All religions are subjectively helpful, none are objectively true.
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- **4000 BC:** Adam and Eve receive the prophecy that the Messiah (Jesus) would be born of a woman.
 - **Promise:** Genesis 3:15 – "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."
 - **Fulfillment:** Galatians 4:4 – "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law . . ."
- **700 BC:** Isaiah prophesies that Jesus' mother would be a virgin who conceived by a miracle and that Jesus would be God who became a man.
 - **Promise:** Isaiah 7:14 – "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive

and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

○ **Fulfillment:** Matthew 1:18–23 – “Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’ All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ‘Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel’ (which means, God with us).”

● **700 BC:** Micah prophesies that Jesus would be born in the town of Bethlehem.

○ **Promise:** Micah 5:2 – “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days [eternity].”

○ **Fulfillment:** Luke 2:1–7 – “In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. . . . And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.”

● **400 BC:** Malachi prophesies that Jesus would enter the temple, which was destroyed in 70 AD, meaning the Messiah had to come before then.

○ **Promise:** Malachi 3:1 – “Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord whom you seek will come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.”

Fulfillment: Luke 2:25–27 – “Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law . . .”