



## **My sheep hear My voice... (John 10:27)**

After discovering a copy of the following article in a volume of work known as “Dissertation on the Prophecies” by Thomas Newton (1817), we made a more friendly readable version by scanning each page singularly. We changed nothing in the article itself, which is listed as number 6 : “Moses’ Prophecy of a prophet like unto himself.”

We were impressed by this outstanding work which we believe to be foundational for true discipleship, for we are a people called according to the foreknowledge of God for obedience to Jesus Christ and the sprinkling of His blood ( 1 Peter: 1-2).

The Church’s divine mandate is to make disciples (Matt 28: 19-20). The divinely prescribed method is to teach them the commandments of Christ, or as Moses had earlier stated “when He comes, you must obey Him (Deut. 18:15-18).

Here then is a brand new beginning and we note that such was one of Peter’s first messages after Pentecost (Acts 3:22-23). Stephen likewise points to Christ being the fulfillment of Deuteronomy 18:15-18 (Acts 7:37). Jesus said that if we loved Him we would obey Him (John 14:15) and if we obeyed Him, then we were His disciples indeed (John 15:14). This of course refers to a loving obedience for Him Who endured such agony for us rather than a legalistic obedience to the Law.

### **MOSES’S PROPHECY OF A PROPHET LIKE UNTO HIMSELF.**

**MOSES** is a valuable writer, as upon many accounts so particularly upon this, that he hath not only preserved and transmitted to posterity several ancient pro-

phesies, but hath likewise shown himself a prophet, and inserted several predictions of his own. Among these none is more memorable, than that of another prophet to be raised like unto himself. He was now about to leave his people, and comforts them with the promise of another prophet. Deut. xviii. 15. *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.* The same is repeated at ver. 18, in the name of God, *I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.* It is farther added at ver. 19. *And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.* Plain as this prophecy is, it hath strangely been perverted and misapplied: but I conceive nothing will be wanting to the right understanding both of the prophecy and the completion, if we can show first what prophet was here particularly intended, if we show secondly that this prophet resembled Moses in more respects than any other person ever did, and if we show thirdly that the people have been and still are severely punished for their infidelity and disobedience to this prophet.

I. We will endeavour to show what prophet was here particularly intended. Some have been of opinion, (1) that Joshua was the person; because he is said in Ecclesiasticus (xlv. 1.) to have been *successor of Moses in prophecies*: and as the people were commanded to hearken unto this prophet, *unto him ye shall hearken*: so they said unto Joshua (i. 17.) *According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee.* Some again have imagined, (2) that Jeremiah was the person; because he frequently applies (say they) the words of Moses; and Abarbinel in his preface to his commentary upon Jeremiah reckons up fourteen particulars wherein they resemble each other, and observes

(1) See Munster, Drusius, Fagius, Calmet, &c.

(2) See Munster, Fagius, Patrick, Calmet, &c.

that Jeremiah prophesied forty years, as Moses also did. Others, and those many more in number, (3) understand this neither of Joshua, nor of Jeremiah, nor of any single person, but of a succession of prophets to be raised up like unto Moses; because (say they) the people being here forbidden to follow after *inchanters* and *diviners*, as other nations did, nothing would have secured them effectually from following after them, but having true prophets of their own, whom they might consult upon occasion; and the latter are opposed to the former. But still the propounders and favorers of these different opinions, I think, agree generally in this, that though Joshua, or Jeremiah, or a succession of prophets was primarily intended, yet the main end and ultimate scope of the prophecy was the Messiah: and indeed there appear some very good reasons for understanding it of him principally, if not of him solely, besides the preference of a literal to a typical interpretation.

There is a passage in the conclusion of this book of Deuteronomy, which plainly refers to this prophecy, and entirely refutes the notion of Joshua's being the prophet like unto Moses. *And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses. And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face: In all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do, &c.* We cannot be certain at what time, or by what hand this addition was made to the sacred volume: but it must have been made after the death of Moses; and consequently Joshua was not a prophet like unto Moses in the opinion of the Jewish church, both of those who made and of those who received this addition as canonical scripture. *There arose not a prophet since in Israel;* the manner of expression plainly implies, that this addition must have been made at some considerable distance of time after the death of Moses; and consequently the Jewish church had no conception of a perpetual succession of prophets to be raised up like unto

(3) See Fagius, Poole, Le Clerc, Calmet, &c.

Moses: and if this addition was made, as it is commonly believed to have been made, by Ezra after the Babylonish captivity, then it is evident, that neither Jeremiah nor any of the ancient prophets was esteemed like unto Moses. Consider what are the peculiar marks and characters, wherein it is said that none other prophet had ever resembled Moses. *There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do.* And which of the prophets ever conversed so frequently and familiarly with God, *face to face?* which of them ever wrought so many and so great miracles? No body was ever equal or comparable to Moses in these respects, but Jesus the Messiah.

God's declaration too, upon occasion of Miriam's and Aaron's sedition, plainly evinces that there was to be no prophet in the Jewish church, and much less a succession of prophets like unto Moses. Miriam and Aaron grew jealous of Moses, and mutinied against him, saying, *Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us?* (Numb. xii. 2.) The controversy was of such importance, that God himself interposed; and what was his determination of the case? *If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?* (ver. 6, 7, 8.)

We see here that a great difference was made between Moses and other prophets, and also wherein that difference lay. God revealed himself unto other prophets in *dreams* and *visions*, but with Moses he conversed more openly, *mouth to mouth*, or, as it is said elsewhere, *face to face*: and Moses *saw the similitude of the Lord*. These were singular privileges and prerogatives, which eminently distinguished Moses from all the other prophets of the Jewish dispensation: and yet there was a prophet to be

raised up like unto Moses: but who ever resembled Moses in these superior advantages, but Jesus the Messiah?

It is likewise no inconsiderable argument, that the letter of the text favours our interpretation. The word is in the singular number, *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet*; and why then should we understand it of a succession of prophets? why should we depart from the literal construction without any apparent necessity for it? Other nations hearkened unto enchanters and diviners, but the Lord would not suffer them so to do; he had given them a better guide already, and would raise up unto them another prophet superior to all the enchanters and diviners in the world: unto him they should hearken.

Moreover it is implied, that this prophet should be a lawgiver. *A prophet like unto thee*; not simply a prophet, but a prophet like unto Moses, that is a second lawgiver, as (4) Eusebius explains it. The reason too that is assigned for sending this prophet, will evince that he was to be vested with this character. The people had requested, that the divine laws might not be delivered to them in so terrible and awful a manner as they had been in Horeb. God approved their request, and promised therefore, that he would raise up unto them a prophet like unto Moses, a lawgiver who should speak unto them his commands in a familiar and gentle way. This prophet therefore was to be a lawgiver: but none of the Jewish prophets were lawgivers, in all the intermediate time between Moses and Christ.

If we further appeal unto fact, we shall find that there never was any prophet, and much less a succession of prophets, whom the Jews esteemed like unto Moses. The highest degree of inspiration they term the (5) Mosaical,

(4) Eusebii Demons. Evangel. Lib. 1. Cap. 3. p. 6. Lib. 9. Cap. 11. p. 443. Edit. Paris, 1628.

(5) See Smith's Discourse of Prophecy, Chap. 2, and 11, wherein it is shown from Maimonides, that Moses's inspiration excelled all others in four particulars. 1. All other prophets prophesied in a dream or vision, but Moses waking and standing. 2. All other prophets prophesied by the help or ministry of an angel, but Moses prophesied without the ministry of an angel. 3. All other prophets were afraid, and troubled, and fainted, but Moses was not so, for the scripture saith, that *God spake to him even as a man speaketh to his friend*. 4. None of the prophets did prophesy at what time they would, save Moses.

and enumerate several particulars, wherein that hath the præminence and advantage above all others. There was indeed, in consequence of this prophecy, a general expectation of some extraordinary prophet to arise, which prevailed particularly about the time of our Saviour. The Jews then, as well as (6) since, understood and applied this prophecy to the Messiah, the only prophet whom they will ever allow to be as great or greater than Moses. When our Saviour had fed five thousand men, by a miracle like that of Moses, who fed the Israelites in the wilderness, then those men said *This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.* (John vi. 14.) St. Peter and Stephen directly apply the prophecy to him: (Acts iii. 22, 23. vii. 37.) and they may very well be justified for so doing; for he fully answers all the marks and characters which are here given of the prophet like unto Moses. He had immediate communication with the deity, and God spake to him *face to face*, as he did to Moses. He performed *signs and wonders* as great or greater than those of Moses. He was a *lawgiver* as well as Moses. *I will raise them up a prophet*, saith God; and the people glorified God saying, *That a great prophet is risen up among us.* (Luke vii. 16.) *I will put my words in his mouth*, saith God, in Hebrew will give my words; and our Saviour saith, *I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me.* (John xvii. 8.) *He shall speak unto them all that I shall command him*, saith God; and our Saviour saith, *I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* (John xii. 49, 50.)

II. We shall be more and more confirmed in this opinion, when we consider the great and striking likeness between Moses and Jesus Christ, and that the latter resembled the former in more respects than any other person ever did. Notice hath been taken already of

(6) See authorities cited in Bishop's Chandler's Defence of Christianity, Chap. 6. Sect. 2. p. 307. Edit. 3d.

some instances, wherein they resemble each other, of God speaking to both *face to face*, of both performing *signs and wonders*, of both being *lawgivers*: and in these respects none of the ancient prophets were like unto Moses. None of them were lawgivers; they only interpreted and enforced the law of Moses. None of them performed so many and so great wonders. None of them had such clear communications with God; they all saw visions, and dreamed dreams. Moses and Jesus Christ are the only two who perfectly resemble each other in these respects. But a more exact and particular comparison may be drawn between them, and hath been drawn by two eminent hands, by one of the best and ablest of the ancient fathers, and by one of the most learned and ingenious of modern divines: and as we cannot pretend to add any thing to them, we must be content to copy from them.

Eusebius treating of the prophecies concerning Christ, (7) produceth first this of Moses: and then asketh, which of the prophets after Moses, Isaiah for instance, or Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, or Daniel, or any other of the twelve, was a lawgiver, and performed things like unto Moses? Moses first rescued the Jewish nation from Egyptian superstition and idolatry, and taught them the true theology; Jesus Christ in like manner was the first teacher of true religion and virtue to the Gentiles. Moses confirmed his religion by miracles; and so likewise did Christ. Moses delivered the Jewish nation from Egyptian servitude; and Jesus Christ all mankind from the power of evil demons. Moses promised a holy land, and therein a happy life to those who kept the law: and Jesus Christ a better country, that is a heavenly, to all righteous souls. Moses fasted forty days: and so likewise did Christ. Moses supplied the people with bread in the wilderness; and our Saviour fed five thousand at one time, and four thousand at another, with a few loaves. Moses went himself, and led the people thro' the midst of the sea; and Jesus Christ walked on the

(7) Eusebii Demons. Evangel. Lib. 3. Cap. 2. p. 90—94. Edit. Paris, 1628.

sea, and enabled Peter to walk likewise. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go backward; and our Saviour rebuked the wind and the sea, and there was a great calm. Moses's face shone, when he descended from the Mount, and our Saviour's did shine as the sun in his transfiguration. Moses by his prayers cured Miriam of her leprosy; and Christ with greater power by a word healed several lepers. Moses performed wonders by the finger of God; and Jesus Christ by the finger of God did cast out devils. Moses changed Oshea's name to Joshua; and our Saviour did Simon's to Peter. Moses constituted seventy rulers over the people; and our Saviour appointed seventy disciples. Moses sent forth twelve men to spy out the land; and our Saviour twelve apostles to visit all nations. Moses gave several excellent moral precepts; and our Saviour carried them to the highest perfection.

Dr. Jortin (8) hath enlarged upon these hints of Eusebius, and made several improvements, and additions to them. Moses in his infancy was wonderfully preserved from the destruction of all the male children; so was Christ. Moses fled from his country to escape the hands of the king; so did Christ, when his parents carried him into Egypt: afterwards *the Lord said to Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt; for all the men are dead which sought thy life;* (Exod. iv. 19.) so the angel of the Lord said to Joseph in almost the same words, *Arise, and take the young child, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young child's life;* (Matt. ii. 20.) pointing him out as it were for that prophet who should arise like unto Moses. Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction. Christ refused to be made king, choosing rather to suffer affliction. Moses, says St. Stephen, *was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,* and Josephus (Ant. Jud. ii. 9.) says that he was a very forward and accomplished youth, and had wisdom and knowledge

(8) Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, Vol. 1. p. 202--222.



beyond his years ; St. Luke observes of Christ, that *he increased* (betimes) *in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man*, and his discourses in the temple with the doctors, when he was twelve years old, were a proof of it. Moses contended with the magicians, who were forced to acknowledge the divine power by which he was assisted ; Christ ejected evil spirits, and received the same acknowledgements from them. Moses was not only a lawgiver, a prophet, and a worker of miracles, but a king and a priest : in all these offices the resemblance between Moses and Christ was singular. Moses brought darkness over the land ; the sun withdrew his light at Christ's crucifixion : And as the darkness which was spread over Egypt was followed by the destruction of their first born, and of Pharaoh and his host ; so the darkness at Christ's death was the forerunner of the destruction of the Jews. Moses foretold the calamities which would befall the nation for their disobedience ; so did Christ. The spirit which was in Moses was conferred in some degree upon the seventy elders, and they prophesied ; Christ conferred miraculous powers upon his seventy disciples. Moses was victorious over powerful kings and great nations ; so was Christ by the effects of his religion, and by the fall of those who persecuted his church. Moses conquered Amalec by holding up both his hands ; Christ overcame his and our enemies when his hands were fastened to the cross. Moses interceded for transgressors, and caused an atonement to be made for them, and stopped the wrath of God, so did Christ. Moses ratified a covenant between God and the people by sprinkling them with blood ; Christ with his own blood. Moses desired to die for the people, and prayed that God would forgive them, or blot him out of his book ; Christ did more, he died for sinners. Moses instituted the passover, when a lamb was sacrificed, none of whose bones were to be broken, and whose blood protected the people from destruction ; Christ was that paschal lamb. Moses lifted up the serpent, that they who looked upon him might be healed of their mortal wounds ; Christ was that serpent. All

Moses's affection towards the people, all his cares and toils on their account were repaid by them with ingratitude, murmuring, and rebellion; the same returns the Jews made to Christ for all his benefits. Moses was ill used by his own family, his brother and sister rebelled against him; there was a time when Christ's own brethren believed not in him. Moses had a very wicked and perverse generation committed to his care and conduct, and to enable him to rule them, miraculous powers were given to him, and he used his utmost endeavor to make the people obedient to God, and to save them from ruin; but in vain; in the space of forty years they all fell in the wilderness except two: Christ also was given to a generation not less wicked and perverse, his instructions and his miracles were lost upon them, and in about the same space of time, after they had rejected him, they were destroyed. Moses was very meek above all men that were on the face of the earth; so was Christ. The people could not enter into the land of promise, till Moses was dead; by the death of Christ the kingdom of heaven was open to believers: In the death of Moses and Christ there is also a resemblance of some circumstances: Moses died, in one sense, for the iniquities of the people; it was their rebellion which was the occasion of it, which drew down the displeasure of God upon them and upon him; Moses went up, in the sight of the people, to the top of mount Nebo, and there he died, when he was in perfect vigor, when *his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated*: Christ suffered for the sins of men, and was led up, in the presence of the people, to mount Calvary, where he died in the flower of his age, and when he was in his full natural strength. Neither Moses nor Christ, as far as we may collect from sacred history, were ever sick, or felt any bodily decay or infirmity, which would have rendered them unfit for the toils they underwent; their sufferings were of another kind. Moses was buried, and no man knew where his body lay; nor could the Jews find the body of Christ. Lastly, as Moses a little be-

fore death promised *another prophet* ; so Christ *another comforter*.

The great similitude consists in their both being *law-givers*, which no prophet ever was besides Moses and Christ. They may resemble each other in several other features, and a fruitful imagination may find out a likeness where there is none. But as the same excellent writer concludes, "Is this similitude and correspondence in so many things between Moses and Christ the effect of mere chance? Let us search all the records of universal history, and see if we can find a man who was so like to Moses as Christ was, and so like to Christ as Moses was. If we cannot find such a one, then have we found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God."

III. There is no want of many words to prove, for it is visible to all the world, that the people have been and still are severely punished for their infidelity and disobedience to this prophet. The prophecy is clear and express ; *Unto him ye shall hearken : And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him*, that is, I will severely punish him for it, as the phrase signifies elsewhere. The antecedent is put for the consequent: judges first inquired, then punished: and the Seventy translate it, (9) *I will take vengeance of him*. This prophecy, as we have proved at large, evidently relates to Jesus Christ. God himself in a manner applies it to him: for when he was transfigured, (Matt. xvii. 5.) there came a voice out of the cloud, which said, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him*: alluding plainly to the words of Moses, *Unto him ye shall hearken*, and so pointing him out for the prophet like unto Moses. St. Peter, as we noted before, directly applies it to our Saviour, (Acts iii. 22, 23.) *For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me;*

(9) *εγω εκδικησω εξ αυτου*. [I will take vengeance of him.] Sept.

him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you: And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people; which is the sense rather than the words of the prophecy. And hath not this terrible denunciation been fully executed upon the Jews? Was not the complete excision of that incredulous nation, soon after Jesus had finished his ministry among them, and his apostles had likewise preached in vain, the fulfilling of the threat upon them for not hearkening unto him? We may be the more certain of this application, as our Saviour himself not only denounced the same destruction, but also foretold the signs, the manner, and the circumstances of it, with a particularity and exactness that will amaze us, as we shall see in a proper place: and those of the Jews who believed in his name, by remembering the caution and following the advice which he had given them, escaped from the general ruin of their country, like firebrands plucked out of the fire. The main body of the nation either perished in their infidelity, or were carried captive into all nations: and have they not ever since persisted in the same infidelity, been obnoxious to the same punishment, and been a vagabond, distressed, and miserable people in the earth? The hand of God was scarce ever more visible in any of his dispensations. We must be blind not to see it: and seeing, we cannot but admire, and adore it. What other probable account can they themselves give of their long captivity, dispersion, and misery? Their former captivity for the punishment of all their wickedness and idolatry lasted only seventy years: but they have lived in their present dispersion, even tho' they have been no idolaters, now these seventeen hundred years, and yet without any immediate prospect of their restoration: and what enormous crime could have drawn down, and unrepented of still continues to draw down, these heavy judgments upon them? We say that they were cut off for their infidelity; and that when they shall turn to the faith, they will be grafted in again. One would think, it should be worth their while to try the experiment. Sure we are, that

they have long been monuments of God's justice ; we believe, that upon their faith and repentance they will become again objects of his mercy : and in the mean time with St. Paul, (Rom. x. 1.) *our hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they may be saved.*

Jesus drew a line between the old and the new when He said that the Law and the Prophets were up until John (Luke 16:16) and not to put the new wine into the old wineskin. His teaching or His doctrine, primarily found in His Sermon on the Mount is declared paramount toward discipleship in 2<sup>nd</sup> John verse 10.

When it comes to war or violence, we cannot find any license given by Jesus in our New Testament. There is however, a passage of scripture in Romans 13 where Paul declares that God has given the government a sword to punish evildoers. That particular sword was part of the terms of the Old Covenant (Deut. 28) which was still in effect when Paul was writing those words. In fact, Jesus wept on His way to the cross knowing that many would not let Him take the curse part of The Law (Deut 28:15-68) on their behalf (Luke 23:28), and knowing that He would have to prosecute the Old Covenant according to its terms before it could be completely moved out of the way. This, He did through the Roman army in 70 A.D.. We now live in the Kingdom of God's Son, the new Heaven and new earth, the New Covenant. Behold, now all things are made new.... (Isaiah 43:18-19; Rev 21:5; 2 Cor 5:17), for when He comes, "the government shall be upon His shoulder.....The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). He is come...

**"This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!"** (Luke 9:35)."

**"My sheep hear My voice and will not listen to anyone else"** (John 10:27)."

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