

**“LISTEN TO HIM!!”**

**A SERMON BASED ON THE OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY FROM THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY (18:15-20) AND PRESENTED FOR ORLEAN UMC ON APRIL 18, 2021-----THE SECOND SUNDAY FOLLOWING EASTER SUNDAY**

**THE WORD “DEUTERONOMY” IS A GREEK WORD THAT LITERALLY MEANS ‘SECOND LAW.’**

**THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY IS A SECOND TELLING OF THE LAW THAT WAS GIVEN TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD THROUGH THE PROPHET MOSES.**

**MOSES RETELLS WHAT GOD HAD SPOKEN THROUGH HIM AND CONNECTS IT ALL THE EXPERIENCES AND ALL THE LESSONS LEARNED OVER THE LAST 40 YEARS BEGINNING WITH THE GREAT EXODUS OUT OF EGYPT AND NOW ABOUT TO CULMINATE IN THE ENTRANCE INTO THE PROMISED LAND.**

**THE JOURNEY IS COMING TO ITS END AND MOSES RETELLS IT, NOT AS REMINISCENCE – SUCH AS “OH, REMEMBER THAT TIME WHEN THE SEA PARTED AND WE WALKED THROUGH IT ON DRY GROUND AND WE WATCHED THE WHOLE EGYPTIAN ARMY PERISH IN THE SAME. WASN’T THAT THE COOLEST THING YOU EVER SAW?”**

**NO-----NOT AS REMINISCENCE – BUT AS  
INSTRUCTION ON HOW YOU ARE TO LIVE AND  
REMINDER OF WHAT YOU ARE NEVER TO  
FORGET WHEN YOU COME INTO THE PROMISED  
LAND.**

**THE PARTICULAR POINT BEFORE US THIS  
MORNING HAS TO DO WITH THE ROLE OF THE  
PROPHET. THROUGH THE 40 YEARS IN THE  
WILDERNESS, MOSES WAS GOD’S PROPHET.  
GOD SPOKE TO MOSES AND MOSES SPOKE TO  
THE PEOPLE – MOSTLY BECAUSE THAT’S THE  
WAY THE PEOPLE WANTED IT.**

**THEY DIDN'T WANT GOD TO SPEAK TO THEM  
DIRECTLY. THAT WAS TOO FRIGHTENING.**

**IT WAS AT MT. SINAI THAT THEY HEARD GOD  
SPEAKING FROM THE MOUNTAIN..... AND TO  
THEM IT WAS "THUNDER AND FLASHES OF  
LIGHTENING AND THE SOUND OF THE TRUMPET,  
AND THE MOUNTAIN SMOKING, AND THE PEOPLE  
WERE AFRAID AND TREMBLED AND THEY STOOD  
FAR OFF AND SAID TO MOSES, -----'YOU SPEAK  
TO US, AND WE WILL LISTEN, BUT DO NOT LET  
GOD SPEAK TO US, LEST WE DIE.'" (EXODUS  
20:18-19)**

**THIS IS WHAT SIN HAS DONE TO US. IT'S NOT LIKE IT USED TO BE BACK IN THE GARDEN WHEN GOD WOULD SPEAK TO US 'FACE TO FACE' AND IT WAS LIKE TALKING TO YOUR BEST FRIEND. NOW TO HEAR GOD SPEAK TO US DIRECTLY IS TERRIFYING. EVEN WHEN IT'S JUST THE ANGELS SENT BY GOD WITH SOME IMPORTANT MESSAGE, THEY'VE GOT TO BEGIN WITH, "DON'T BE AFRAID." LISTEN, ANYONE WHO TELLS YOU THAT GOD SPEAKS TO THEM DIRECTLY AND IT WASN'T LIKE HOLDING ONTO THE END OF A HIGH VOLTAGE WIRE – DON'T BELIEVE THEM. IT PROBABLY WASN'T GOD SPEAKING TO THEM.**

**NOW HERE, IN THE ‘SECOND TELLING,’ MOSES TELLS ISRAEL, “...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... “THE LORD HAS SAID TO ME, ‘THEY ARE RIGHT IN WHAT THEY HAVE SPOKEN.’”**

**IT’S NOT VERY OFTEN THAT WE HEAR GOD COMMENDING HIS PEOPLE FOR ACTUALLY GETTING IT RIGHT. BUT HERE, THEY GET IT RIGHT. THEY NEED SOMEONE TO STAND BETWEEN THEM AND GOD – SOMEONE WHOM GOD WILL SPEAK TO THEM THROUGH.**

**AND IT'S RIGHT HERE THAT THE OFFICE OF  
PROPHET IS ESTABLISHED. THE OFFICE OF  
PROPHET IS NOT ESTABLISHED BY MAN – IT'S  
ESTABLISHED BY GOD. “NO PROPHECY WAS  
EVER PRODUCED BY THE WILL OF MAN, BUT  
MEN SPOKE FROM GOD AS THEY WERE CARRIED  
ALONG BY THE HOLY SPIRIT,” SAYS THE  
APOSTOLIC PROPHET, PETER. (2 PETER 1:21)**

**SO HERE, MOSES PROMISES ISRAEL THAT  
AFTER HE DIES, NOT TO WORRY, THEY'RE NOT  
GOING TO BE LEFT WITHOUT A PROPHET.**

**“I WILL RAISE UP A PROPHET FOR THEM LIKE  
YOU FROM AMONG THEIR BROTHERS.**

**AND I WILL PUT MY WORDS IN HIS MOUTH, AND HE SHALL SPEAK TO THEM ALL THAT I COMMAND HIM.” MARTIN LUTHER CALLS THIS “THE MOST IMPORTANT PASSAGE IN THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.”**

**AFTER MOSES, GOD WOULD ‘RAISE UP’ A SUCCESSION OF PROPHETS WITH NAMES LIKE JOSHUA AND SAMUEL, AND ELIJAH AND ELISHA, AND ISAIAH AND JEREMIAH, EZEKIEL AND DANIEL AND JOEL AND AMOS AND LOTS MORE. HE WOULD PUT HIS WORD INTO THEIR MOUTH IN THE VERY MYSTERIOUS WAY THAT WE CALL “HOLY INSPIRATION.”**



**AND THE 'HOLY INSPIRED' PROPHETS WOULD SPEAK GOD'S WORD TO THE PEOPLE.**

**THEY'D BEGIN BY SAYING, "THUS SAITH THE LORD..." AND THEY'D END BY SAYING, "DECLARES THE LORD." THEY'D ANNOUNCE GOD'S DIVINE FAVOR SAYING, "BLESSED ARE YOU..." AND THEY'D ANNOUNCE GOD'S DIVINE CURSE SAYING, "WOE TO YOU." -----AND THEY SAID "REPENT" A LOT.**

**THE PROPHETS WERE TO SPEAK "ALL THAT I COMMAND HIM," WHICH INCLUDED A WIDE VARIETY OF ISSUES FROM RELIGION AND THEOLOGY TO DOMESTIC AND ECONOMIC AND EVEN DIETARY ISSUES-----**

**AS WELL AS FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND  
INTERNATIONAL POLICY. SOME PROPHETS  
WOULD EMPHASIZE ONE ISSUE AND OTHERS  
WOULD EMPHASIZE ANOTHER, EACH AS GOD  
GAVE THEM HIS WORD TO SPEAK.**

**BUT ALL OF THE PROPHETS, IN EVERYTHING  
THAT THEY SAID, HAD THIS ONE THING IN  
COMMON – IN EVERYTHING THEY SPOKE AND  
TAUGHT, THEY POINTED TO A MESSIAH, A  
REDEEMER, WHO WOULD DELIVER HIS PEOPLE  
FROM THEIR SIN AND THE POWER OF SATAN.**

**HE WILL RECONCILE MANKIND TO GOD SO THAT WE MIGHT ONCE AGAIN, HEAR GOD SPEAK TO US DIRECTLY WITHOUT FEAR, IN PURE JOY AND PERFECT PEACE, LIKE BEING WITH A FRIEND.**

**HE WOULD BE A ‘PROPHET LIKE MOSES...’ NOT ONLY A MAN LIKE US – SOMEONE WE MIGHT CALL A ‘FRIEND’ AND WHO MIGHT ACTUALLY CALL US HIS FRIEND, BUT ALSO, A PROPHET LIKE MOSES WHO ‘DELIVERED’ HIS PEOPLE FROM CAPTIVITY AND DEATH IN EGYPT.**

**GOD WILL RAISE UP A PROPHET LIKE MOSES – WHO WILL DELIVER HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR CAPTIVITY TO SIN AND DEATH AND BRING THEM INTO THE PROMISED LAND CALLED ‘HEAVEN.’ “IT IS TO HIM YOU SHALL LISTEN.”**

**THE ‘FLIP-SIDE’ OF GOD’S PROMISE TO SPEAK THROUGH PROPHETS OF COURSE WAS THAT THE PEOPLE HAD TO AGREE TO LISTEN TO THEM. “AND WHOEVER WILL NOT LISTEN TO MY WORDS THAT HE SHALL SPEAK IN MY NAME, I MYSELF WILL REQUIRE IT OF HIM.”**

**TO LISTEN AND OBEY WHAT THE PROPHET SAID WAS TO LISTEN TO AND OBEY GOD HIMSELF. IT WAS ALL ONE AND THE SAME.**

**TO DISOBEY OR IGNORE THE PROPHET WAS TO DISOBEY OR IGNORE GOD HIMSELF – WHICH ALWAYS CARRIES GRAVE CONSEQUENCES.**

**THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY, THIS IS PRECISELY WHERE ISRAEL FAILS AND FALLS. THEY REFUSE TO LISTEN TO THE PROPHETS AND OBEY THEM. THE MESSIAH TO WHOM THE PROPHETS ALL POINTED WOULD ONE DAY LAMENT THAT FOR ALL HIS EFFORT TO WARN THEM, THEY “KILLED THE PROPHETS AND STONED THOSE SENT THEM.” (MATTHEW 23:37). AS OFTEN AS HE SENT HIS SERVANTS TO HIS VINEYARD, HIS TENANTS ‘BEAT ONE, KILLED ANOTHER AND STONED ANOTHER.’ (MATTHEW 21:35)**

**BUT GOD, IN HIS GREAT AND UNFAILING LOVE AND MERCY WOULD NOT GIVE UP. “I KNOW WHAT I’LL DO. I’LL SEND MY SON. SURELY THEY WILL LISTEN TO HIM.”**

**THEN ONE DAY, A 30 YEAR OLD MAN NAMED JESUS CAME TO THE JORDAN RIVER. AT HIS BAPTISM, HE IS ANOINTED INTO THE OFFICE OF PROPHET BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. AND AS HE IS ANOINTED, THE HEAVENS ARE RIPPED OPEN AND A VOICE IS HEARD. IT IS THE VOICE OF GOD HIMSELF WHO REPEATS THOSE WORDS THAT HE HAD ONCE SPOKEN THROUGH HIS PROPHET MOSES – “LISTEN TO HIM.”**

**WHEN YOU HEAR JESUS SPEAK, AND YOU LISTEN, AND YOU DO WHAT HE SAYS, YOU ARE HEARING AND OBEYING GOD HIMSELF. AND WHEN YOU IGNORE AND REFUSE TO FOLLOW HIM, YOU ARE IGNORING AND REFUSING GOD HIMSELF..... AND FOR THAT, YOU WILL HAVE TO FACE GOD DIRECTLY AND APART FROM JESUS – AND THAT IS ALWAYS A TERRIFYING THING.**

**JESUS CHRIST IS THE PROPHET OF THE LORD TO WHOM ALL THE PROPHETS OF THE LORD POINTED. HE IS NOT JUST A ‘GREAT PROPHET’ AS SOME OTHER RELIGIONS REFER TO HIM.....**

**HE IS 'MORE THAN A PROPHET.' FOR THIS IS NOT A MAN WHO IS GIVEN GOD'S WORD TO SPEAK FOR GOD. THIS IS GOD'S WORD – WHO TAKES ON HUMANITY AND DWELLS AMONG US, AS ONE OF US, AS OUR BROTHER.**

**THE WRITER TO THE HEBREWS OPENS HIS LETTER SAYING, "IN MANY AND VARIOUS WAYS, GOD HAS SPOKEN TO US BY THE PROPHETS, BUT NOW IN THESE LAST DAYS HE HAS SPOKEN TO US BY HIS SON..." (HEB. 1:1).**

**THE SON ALONE SPEAKS FACE TO FACE WITH GOD, NOT IN FEAR, BUT IN PERFECT JOY AND PEACE, FOR HE HAS NO SIN.**



**WHEN HE SPEAKS, HE NEVER SAYS, “THUS SAITH THE LORD” OR “DECLARES THE LORD,” BUT “TRULY, TRULY I SAY TO YOU,” AND “I AND THE FATHER ARE ONE” AND “WHOEVER HONORS THE SON HONORS THE FATHER AND WHOEVER DOES NOT HONOR THE SON DOES NOT HONOR THE FATHER WHO SENT HIM.”**

**(JOHN 5:23-24)**

**WHEN THE APOSTLES PETER AND JOHN ARE IN JERUSALEM, A CRIPPLED BEGGAR ASKS THEM FOR ALMS.**

**PETER DOES EVEN BETTER AND SAYS, “I HAVE NO SILVER OR GOLD, BUT IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST OF NAZARETH, RISE UP AND WALK!” AND LEAPING UP HE STOOD AND BEGAN TO WALK...” AND WHEN CROWDS DEMAND AN EXPLANATION, THE APOSTLE PETER, IN PERFECT HARMONY WITH THE PROPHETS OF OLD, POINTED THEM TO JESUS BY QUOTING MOSES, “MOSES SAID, ‘THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM AMONG YOUR BROTHERS. YOU SHALL LISTEN TO HIM IN WHATEVER HE TELLS YOU. AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERY SOUL WHO DOES NOT LISTEN TO THAT PROPHET SHALL BE DESTROYED FROM THE PEOPLE.’” (ACTS 3:22-23)**

**THIS IS THE PROPHET WHO ENTERS THE  
SYNAGOGUE IN CAPERNAUM AND BEGAN TO  
TEACH THE PEOPLE IN CHURCH THAT DAY. AND  
THEY LISTENED TO HIM. “AND THEY WERE  
ASTONISHED AT HIS TEACHING FOR HE TAUGHT  
AS ONE WHO HAD AUTHORITY, NOT AS THE  
SCRIBES.”**

**ONE MAN IN CHURCH THAT DAY WAS  
PARTICULARLY “ASTONISHED.” WHAT WAS  
HIDDEN FROM THE CONGREGATION UNDER THE  
FLESH AND BLOOD OF JESUS WAS PLAINLY  
SEEN BY THIS MAN, WHOM WE ARE TOLD HAD  
AN “UNCLEAN SPIRIT.”**

**“HE CRIED OUT, ‘WHAT HAVE YOU TO DO WITH US, JESUS OF NAZARETH? HAVE YOU COME TO DESTROY US?’ “US.” EITHER THERE WERE LOTS OF ‘UNCLEAN SPIRITS’ IN THIS MAN OR THIS MAN IS SPEAKING FOR THE WHOLE CONGREGATION WHEN HE SAYS, “HAVE YOU COME TO DESTROY US,” AS THOUGH MAYBE THIS MAN IS THE ‘HEAD ELDER’ OR THE ‘PRESIDENT OF THE CONGREGATION’ AND THE WHOLE CONGREGATION IS POSSESSED BY A ‘UNCLEAN SPIRITS.’**

**“I KNOW WHO YOU ARE – THE HOLY ONE OF GOD.” THE WAS AN OLD IDEA THAT YOU COULD GET POWER OVER AN ADVERSARY BY NAMING HIM. THE ‘UNCLEAN SPIRIT’ THINKS THAT DEMONSTRATING THAT IT “KNOWS WHO YOU ARE – JESUS OF NAZARETH – THE HOLY ONE OF GOD,” THAT IT WILL GET CONTROL OF JESUS BY THE WORD THAT IT SPEAKS.**

**BUT IN THIS CONGREGATION OF ‘UNCLEAN SPIRITS’ THERE IS ONE WHO POSSESSES THE HOLY SPIRIT – AND THAT IS JESUS. AND IN THIS CONTEST BETWEEN THE ONE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE ONES WITH THE UNCLEAN SPIRITS, IT’S NO CONTEST.**

**THE UNIVERSE IS NOT KEPT IN BALANCE BY  
TWO EQUALLY OPPOSING FORCES – THE YING  
AND THE YANG OF LIFE – AS SOME SAY.**

**THE ONE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYS TO THE  
ONE WITH THE ‘UNCLEAN SPIRIT’ ‘BE SILENT  
AND COME OUT OF HIM.’ “AND THE UNCLEAN  
SPIRIT, CONVULSING THE MAN AND CRYING OUT  
WITH A LOUD VOICE, CAME OUT OF HIM.”**

**IN A MOST MYSTERIOUS BATH CALLED HOLY**  
**BAPTISM, WE WERE WASHED, AND WHAT WAS**  
**'UNCLEAN' HAS BECOME 'CLEAN.' AND NOW,**  
**WE'RE POSSESSED BY A DIFFERENT SPIRIT,**  
**EVEN THE HOLY SPIRIT – WHO CRIES OUT**  
**WITHIN US SAYING, "LISTEN TO HIM." AND TO**  
**"LISTEN TO HIM" IS OUR GREATEST DESIRE.**

**PRAISE GOD AND MAY IT BE SO FOR YOU AND**  
**FOR ME.....AMEN**