

# The Christian Arsenal

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## DEUTERONOMY 17:8-26:19

A lot of today's lesson deals with various laws that were given to the Jewish nation. But, what I want us to do this morning is to look at three offices...three positions that would be held during Old Testament times and see what God's Word says about each of them.

Deuteronomy 18:15-22...*The Prophet...*

***Moses is telling the people that God will raise up someone like himself*** who will speak God's message to them.

What was a prophet? What did a prophet do back in the Old Testament days?

A prophet was a man God used to deliver His message to the people. And we see in this passage that the proof of a true prophet is found in **verse 22**. In fact, God said in this passage that a man who would speak a word presumptuously...a man who would say that the Lord said thus and so when indeed the Lord had not said thus and so...or would even speak in the name of other gods **"shall die."**

Many times prophets in the Old Testament spoke of events that would take place years after their own death. In fact, there are still many things that have not yet come to pass that were spoken by the prophets...The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign, for instance.

These men were to be God's men and He took very seriously the duties of this office...and the proof of their calling was if what they prophesied was 100% accurate. God doesn't want His children led astray!

God said in the book of *Jeremiah* said, **"Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture."**

**And the message of the Old Testament prophets was not always popular. Many times their message was a call to repentance...and a message of coming judgment. Their message brought them persecution and imprisonment, but they were still faithful to proclaim it because it was God's message to His people...even Jonah, after running from God, still spoke God's words to the people!**

I believe the plainest example of a false prophet in the Old Testament was Balaam. Poor old Balaam didn't have a chance. He wasn't allowed to curse God's people. God insisted that he bless His people. But, what made him a false prophet was that through his counsel, the enemies of God's people knew how to come against God's people for harm.

God's prophet could not speak out of "both sides of his mouth." He could not compromise.

He had to be God's man.  
He had to be willing to be persecuted.  
He had to be willing to be imprisoned.  
He had to be willing to be put to death.  
He had to be completely sold out to God!

Those who call themselves prophets today boast of 75% or 80% accuracy, but God said His true prophets must be **100% accurate**.

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Satan is a counterfeiter and he counterfeited prophets in the time of the Old Testament and he is still putting forth those who claim to be “modern-day” prophets.

**Those who have the “gift of prophecy” today aren’t like the Old Testament prophets. These folks are folks who “tell forth” the Word...as in standing in the pulpit and expounding the Word of God. God has just gifted some individuals in knowing how to apply God’s Word to our hearts and lives today.**

**But in reality the office of “prophet” as the Old Testament prophets operated does not exist today.**

**And we’ll see why a little later.**

Believers today must exercise spiritual discernment because John tells us in **1 John** that **“many false prophets are gone out into the world.”** John makes it clear that the first test of a true minister of the Word is the confession that Jesus Christ came in the flesh and is indeed the Son of God.

When you listen to someone who is truly God’s servant, the Spirit dwelling in your heart will respond to the Word being taught. The message of a person with the gift of prophecy today must be true to the Scriptures and must exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that is exactly why you must know God’s Word for yourself. There are some very winsome, charismatic folks on TV who will call themselves “prophets” and will lead God’s people astray and scatter His sheep... It’s your and my responsibility to know the difference in truth and error!!

**And let me just add this before leaving the office of prophet. There are those today, especially those on TV who exalt the Holy Spirit over the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit magnifies the Lord Jesus...the Holy Spirit exalts the Lord Jesus...and those who exalt the Holy Spirit over the Lord Jesus Christ are in error and are false teachers and false prophets! The message they give is largely a message emphasizing “ecstatic experiences” and not a message based on the truth of the Word of God.**

Now, let’s backtrack a little bit and look at **Deuteronomy 18:1-8...The Priest**

The Levitical priesthood had the huge responsibility of performing the necessary duties in the Tabernacle.

During the wilderness journey they were in charge of the “things of God.” They were in charge of transporting the Tabernacle, setting it up...taking it down...conducting worship at the tent where God met with His people.

**All priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests.**

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Those Levites who were not priests were teachers of the Law. They attended to the trappings and furnishings of the Tabernacle. They were gatekeepers and singers and bakers of sacrificial bread and so forth...

But, they were all...

to be consecrated to God...  
to be supported by the people...  
to have no inheritance in the land...  
the Lord was their inheritance...

The priests who offered sacrifices for the sins of the people came only from Aaron's line. Aaron was Israel's first High Priest.

And day after day...he and his descendants offered sacrifices for the sins of the people. Year after year on the Day of Atonement, he and his descendants entered the Holy of Holies and offered sacrifices for himself and the sins of the people. Can you imagine the animals that were slain and the blood that was shed for the sins of the people? The work of the priests was never finished!!

**Hebrews 10:11...**

***“And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins...”***

And with the exception of the years spent in exile...this sacrificial system continued until 70 A.D. when the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed.

Well, let's look at the third position we have in our Scripture today...

**Before we read this passage, however, let me ask you a question.**

What would you think the world would say is the most ideal form of government?

**A democracy?** One man, one vote form of government?

**A republic?** Representative form of government?

Or

**A theocracy?** “God in control” form of government?

Would you like to live under a government completely controlled by God? We will someday!

**Deuteronomy 17:14-17...The King**

Here we see that God, in His foreknowledge, knew that the people would desire a king.

Instead of being **different,**  
**holy,**  
**set apart,**  
**distinctive** from all the other nations...

**God's people instead wanted to be *like* all the other nations.**

**How often do we desire to be like the world?**

Well, remember what happened?

Remember Samuel? Samuel's mother was Hannah. And Hannah had prayed and prayed that God would give her a son. In fact, before she ever even became pregnant, she told God that if He would give her a child she would dedicate him literally to the Lord and His service.

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**And she did! When Samuel was born, Hannah took him to the Temple to live when he was just a little boy!**

Samuel grew up to be a godly servant of God. He became a priest, and a prophet and a judge.

## **1 Samuel 8:1-9...**

Samuel has served God and the people faithfully all these years... and in **verse 5**, the people are telling Samuel that he has grown old and that Samuel's sons do not walk in his way...

And they said,

***"Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations."***

## **Verses 9-18...**

Let's see what God tells them will happen when they set up for themselves a king...

- 1) the king will take **your sons**
- 2) the king will take **your daughters**
- 3) the king will take **your money**  
and the best of **your fields**  
and the best of **your vineyards**  
and the best of **your groves**  
and the best of **your flocks**  
and the best of **your seed**

**By the way who was supposed to have gotten the best of their flocks and produce? God was!!**

- 4) the king will take **your servants**
- 5) the king will take **your freedom...**

## **Verses 19-20...**

***But the people refused to listen!***

## **Verses 21-22...**

God may allow me to choose my own way. But, He does not allow me to choose the consequences of the way I choose.

**HE DOES THAT!!**

Now let's go back to **Deuteronomy 17...**

Bear in mind that between **Deuteronomy** and **1 Samuel** is a span of almost 200 years! God, in His foreknowledge knew:

- 1) ...that the people would rebel against His command to totally wipe out all the nations He had told them to destroy!
- 2) ...that the people, as a result of their disobedience, would have a deep longing in their hearts to be like the heathen nations around them.

Remember, God told Samuel the people had not rejected Samuel, they had rejected God! God's perfect form of government for His people was a **theocracy**, but they had rejected Him!

We see here God's permissive will at work. God set up these guidelines for the king He knew the people would so desperately want...

## **Deuteronomy 17:15-17...**

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The king was not supposed to multiply horses for himself.

*(Solomon is said to have had 12,000 horses!)*

The king was not supposed to multiply wives for himself.

*(David and Solomon were both disobedient to this...)*

The king was not multiply silver or gold for himself.

*(In the days of Solomon the drinking vessels were of gold because silver was not even considered valuable...)*

Let's stop here and say that God had promised Solomon riches if he would walk in His ways. In other words, there is nothing wrong with possessions if your wealth does not possess you.

The book of **1 Kings** tells us, however, that because Solomon broke the commandments of the multiplying of wives (700 wives and 300 concubines...many of whom led him into idolatry...Solomon didn't even stick with the Israelite women, he married many foreign women). Solomon married women from the nations that God strictly said not to associate with.

And because of this he would suffer God's judgment...His kingdom would be divided.

Solomon wrote the book of **Ecclesiastes** and in that book, we see the writing of an old man, wearied from a life of excess...having begun well, but having lived the biggest part of his life out of the will of God.

## **Verses 18-20...**

These verses tell us what God expected the king to do.

## **2 Chronicles 34...**

Josiah was only an eight year old boy when he became king. His father and his grandfather were evil kings, but this little boy must have had a godly influence in his life. More than likely it was his mother and perhaps even his grandmother. His mother's name was "Jedidah"... "beloved of Jehovah."

- **He became king at age 8**
- **He began to seek the Lord at age 16**
- **He began to purge the land of idolatry at age 20**
- **He began to repair the Temple at age 26**

Money had to be raised for this project...

## **Verse 14...**

Hilkiah, the high priest gave the book to Shaphan, the scribe...  
The scribe read the book to Josiah.

## **Verse 19...**

Josiah tore his clothes as a sign of repentance and humility before God.

## **Verse 21...**

How long had the kings neglected to copy the Law in the presence of a priest as God had commanded in **Deuteronomy 17**?

How long had the kings neglected to read the book of the Law as God had commanded in **Deuteronomy 17**?

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**How long had the Word of God been laid aside and neglected? How long had the Word of God been lost in the house of God?**

Do you see the significance? When we neglect the Word of God, we open ourselves up to all sorts of sin!

Saul was Israel's first king. David, their second king, and then, Solomon. Solomon started his reign in such a grand way...full of God's promises and blessings...but he neglected to follow God's Word!

So, God divided the kingdom after his death, taking away part of his son's authority. (How this must have grieved God to divide the land.)

Well, you all know the story...over the years, the kings got worse and worse. Over a period of 555 years, the total years that both Judah and Israel had kings...Judah had only 8 good kings and Israel had none!

But, look what God can do with a young man committed to do His will!! Don't turn there, but let me just read you what is said about Josiah in **2 Kings 23:25...**

***“And before him there was no king like him who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him...”***

What an example we have in Josiah!

We've not been able today to cover so many laws God laid down for His people...laws pertaining to their everyday life...laws having to do with

**witchcraft  
cities of refuge  
building codes  
hygiene  
boundaries of property  
rules of warfare  
morality**

...laws that God gave for the people's best! Laws to make their lives pure and holy. Laws to make them different from the heathens around them.

***We just didn't have enough time...***

But, before we leave this morning, I want us to look at another **Prophet, Priest, and King!**

Jesus Christ is indeed our **Prophet**...He heard directly from the Father.

Jesus said, ***“The Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son does in like manner.”***

Jesus said, ***“I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.”***

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Jesus, in His humanity was truly inspired by His Father.

What was a prophet? A prophet was a man who spoke for God. The children of Israel were to listen to God's prophets. WHY? Because they spoke for God. And also because by listening to the prophets it was preparing them to listen to the final messenger, the final Prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ.

***Hebrews 1: "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son..."***

There is no "new revelation". God has nothing more to say to the world than what He has said in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His Word.

Not only is Jesus a Prophet...He is also a **Priest...our High Priest.**

But, unlike the priests of the Old Testament, **His** work is finished.

***Hebrews 10:12-14... "He (Jesus Christ), having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from the time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified."***

And He is also our **King!**

From the very beginning, the Lord Jesus Christ was known as a king. Remember Herod? That's why Herod tried to kill the Lord Jesus. The wise men told Herod they had come to look for the one who was born "King of the Jews."

**His followers were disappointed because He didn't set up His kingdom when He came the first time. But, one day He will!**

He will come again and all the world will know this! He will come according to the book of **Revelation** on a white horse, ***"and on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'King of kings, and Lord of lords.'"***

In closing, let me just say this...

All of God's Law was perfect. If we had had the time today to look at all of the laws and ordinances...we would have to say they were perfect. God does all things well.

If man had kept that Law how much simpler his life would have been.

But, man was born a sinner, and he could not keep the Law.

**But, God granted man grace through Jesus Christ, our Lord. The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Him!**

I'm glad we live in this age of Grace. I'm glad God didn't give up on mankind, but sent His Son to give us new life in Him.

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**Without the Law we would not know our sin...**

**Without the Law we would not know our need for the Savior.**

But, without Grace we would still be under the Law...

**“For by grace you have been saved through faith...”** It is God’s precious gift to each one of us! Have you been saved by grace through faith? Or are you still trying to be “good enough”?

**“Grace, grace – God’s grace.**

**Grace that will pardon and cleanse within.**

**Grace, grace – God’s grace.**

**Grace that is greater than all our sin.!”**