

Deuteronomy 18:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

Analysis

According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb—This recalls the theophany at Sinai (Exodus 19-20; Deuteronomy 5:23-27) when Israel, terrified by the direct divine presence, begged Moses to serve as mediator. **Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not**—The people's fear was appropriate reverence (Hebrews 12:18-21), recognizing that sinful humanity cannot directly encounter God's holiness and survive.

This verse establishes the theological rationale for prophetic mediation. God accommodates human weakness by speaking through prophets rather than overwhelming direct revelation. This foreshadows the ultimate Prophet-Mediator, Jesus Christ, through whom God speaks His final word (Hebrews 1:1-2; John 1:18). The incarnation is God's supreme accommodation—the Word made flesh, God's presence mediated through humanity, making the unapproachable approachable.

Historical Context

The Horeb/Sinai theophany (circa 1446 BC, traditional dating) was Israel's defining covenant moment—thunder, lightning, thick darkness, earthquake, trumpet blast, and the audible voice of God (Exodus 19:16-19; 20:18-21). The

terror was so overwhelming that even Moses trembled (Hebrews 12:21). This experience shaped Israel's understanding that encountering the holy God required mediation. Moses functioned as the archetypal mediator, prefiguring the greater mediation of Christ who brings believers into God's presence without terror (Hebrews 10:19-22).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the terror of Sinai help you appreciate the grace of approaching God through Christ's mediation?
2. What does Israel's request for a mediator teach about the necessity of Jesus as the one mediator between God and humanity (1 Timothy 2:5)?

Interlinear Text

אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה	מִעַם	שָׁאַ לְתֹ	אֲשֶׁר	כָּכָל
H430	H5973	H7592	H834	H3605
my God	of the LORD	According to all that thou desiredst		

לִשְׁמִעַ	אִם	לֹא	לֹא	הַקָּה ל	בִּי וּם	בְּחֹרֶב
H8085	H3808	H559	H6951	H3117	H2722	
Let me not hear	again	saying	of the assembly	in the day	in Horeb	

הִזְאת	הַגְדֹּלָה	הָאֵשׁ	וְאֵת	אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה	קוֹל	אֶת
H2063	H1419	H784	H853	H430	H6963	H853
this great	fire	my God	of the LORD	the voice		

אֶמּוֹת:	וְלֹא	עוֹד	אֶרְאֶה	לֹא
H4191	H3808	H5750	H7200	H3808
any more that I die	neither let me see			

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 20:19 (References God): And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

Deuteronomy 9:10 (References God): And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.

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