

Deuteronomy 18:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken.

Analysis

And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken—God affirms Israel's request for prophetic mediation as wise and appropriate. The Hebrew hetiv (well) indicates approval; their recognition of need for a mediator demonstrated healthy fear of God and realistic assessment of their sinful condition. This divine affirmation establishes the principle of mediated revelation as God's normative pattern for relating to His people.

God's approval here is remarkable—He commends human awareness of limitation and need for intermediary relationship. This validates the prophetic office as divinely instituted, not human invention. It also establishes a pattern: God speaks through chosen messengers who bear His authoritative word. This principle extends through biblical history—prophets, apostles, and ultimately Christ, the final Prophet-Mediator. Rejecting God's appointed mediators is rejecting God Himself (Luke 10:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:8).

Historical Context

This divine response came at Sinai/Horeb following Israel's terror at God's direct manifestation. Moses recounts it in his farewell address (circa 1406 BC) to explain the prophetic office's divine authorization. Throughout Israel's history, God raised up prophets—Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel—as His covenant prosecutors and spokesmen. The New Testament recognizes Jesus as the

Prophet like Moses (Acts 3:22-23; 7:37), whose words carry ultimate divine authority.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does God's affirmation of human need for mediation shape your understanding of why Christ's mediation is necessary, not optional?
2. What does divine approval of Israel's request teach about the proper attitude toward God—reverent fear rather than casual familiarity?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	יְהוָה	אֵלַי	הֵיטֵיבוּ	אֲשֶׁר
said	And the LORD	H413	unto me They have well	H834
H559	H3068		H3190	
דְּבָרוֹ:				
spoken that which they have spoken				
H1696				

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 5:28 (References Lord): And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.