

119

MINISTRIES

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Parashah Points: Re’eh – How to Identify a False Prophet

Welcome to another episode of Parashah Points—short thoughts from the weekly Torah Portion.

This week’s Parashah Point comes from Re’eh (reh-ay), which is Hebrew for “see,” and it goes from Deuteronomy 11:26 to Deuteronomy 16:17.

This Torah Portion gives instructions regarding YHWH’s prescribed place of worship, a warning against idolatry, a warning against false prophets, and a reiteration of God’s laws regarding clean and unclean animals, tithes, the Sabbatical year, and the three pilgrimage festivals.

There’s a lot we can talk about in this Torah Portion. Today we’re going to talk about how to identify a false prophet.

When you ask people today about what makes someone a false prophet, one of the most common answers is the most obvious answer: A false prophet is someone who prophesies falsely. Of course, this is true, as we learn later in the book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 18:22). But did you know that someone could still be a false prophet even if they prophesy accurately? Our Torah Portion this week speaks to this exact scenario:

Deuteronomy 13:1-3

If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, ‘Let us go after other gods,’ which you have not known, ‘and let us serve them,’ **you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams.** For the Lord [YHWH] your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord [YHWH] your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

So a “prophet” could have the ability to perform all kinds of amazing signs and wonders, and they could even accurately predict the future, but if they attempt to lead you away from the God of Israel, by definition, they are a false prophet. The passage goes on to further define the ways a false prophet might try to lead people astray:

Deuteronomy 13:4-5

You shall walk after the Lord [YHWH] your God and fear him **and keep his commandments and obey his voice**, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him. But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the Lord [YHWH] your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, **to make you leave the way in which the Lord [YHWH] your God commanded you to walk**. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

A false prophet, by biblical definition, leads people away from the commandments of the God of Israel. That would mean that a true prophet, by biblical definition, *affirms* the commandments of the God of Israel. So, when it comes to determining whether someone is a true prophet, a question we should ask is this: Does their message affirm God's commandments or negate them?

This issue has implications for Jewish outreach. Have you ever wondered why it is that most religious Jews today reject Yeshua? While religious Jews have several theological objections to Yeshua and the New Testament, which we address throughout our Brit Hadashah series, one of their objections has to do with this very issue.

Indeed, there's an article on the popular Jewish website, Aish, called "Why Jews Don't Believe in Jesus." One of the reasons they give is this:

The Messiah will lead the Jewish people to full Torah observance. The Torah states that all mitzvot remain binding forever, and anyone coming to change the Torah is immediately identified as a false prophet. (Deut. 13:1-4) Throughout the Christian 'New Testament,' Jesus contradicts the Torah and states that its commandments are no longer applicable.

-Rabbi Shraga Simmons, "Why Jews Don't Believe in Jesus," www.aish.com

Of course, as we've pointed out many times in our teachings, this objection is based on a huge misconception, and a misunderstanding. Yeshua-Jesus did not negate the commandments of the Torah but affirmed their ongoing authority in the lives of His followers, as we clearly see throughout the New Testament, particularly in Matthew 5:17-20.

For more information on this topic, we would recommend our teachings, [The Deuteronomy 13 Test](#) and [Why Do Most Jews Reject Jesus?](#)

But getting back to the main message in this Torah Portion, the bottom line is that we should not be led astray by someone claiming to be a prophet—even if they perform amazing signs and wonders. If their message does not align with the Word of God, they are to be rejected as a false prophet.

Thank you for joining us for another Parashah Point!

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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