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Chancellor's Update

Are you the one who is to come?

In the Old Testament we read that the Jewish leaders who kept looking for the promised Messiah, sent priests to inquire of John the Baptist if he was the Messiah. John said, "I am not the Christ", but he insisted that there was one coming after him "whose sandal" he was "not worthy to loose." *Are you the one who is to come or should we look for another?* (Luke 7:19) Pope Benedict reflected on this point in his book Jesus of Nazareth (Doubleday, New York, 2007) (Chapter 1).

"The Book of Deuteronomy contains a promise that is completely different from the messianic hope expressed in other books of the Old Testament, yet it is of decisive importance for understanding the figure of Jesus. *The object of this promise is not a king of Israel and king of the world – a new David, in other words – but a new Moses.* Moses himself, however, is interpreted as a prophet. The category 'prophet' is seen here as something totally specific and unique...something that Israel alone has in this particular form...a consequence of the uniqueness of the faith in God that was granted to Israel."...

"It does this in the form of a promise: *The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you...him you shall heed* (Deut 18:15)..."

"The conclusion of Deuteronomy returns to the promise and gives it a surprising twist that takes it far beyond the institution of prophecy. In so doing, it gives the figure of the prophet its true meaning. *And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses,* we read, *whom the Lord knew face to face* (Deut 34:10)...It now becomes clear that these words... refer...to something different and far greater: the announcement of a new Moses. It had become evident that taking possession of the land in Palestine did not constitute the chosen people's entry into salvation; that Israel was still awaiting its real liberation; that an even more radical kind of exodus was necessary, one that called for a new Moses.

"And now we are told what set the first Moses apart, the unique and essential quality of this figure: He had conversed with the Lord *face to face*; as a man speaks to his friend, so he had spoken with God (cf. Ex 33:11)...The most important thing is that he spoke with God as with a friend...This...was to show Israel its path through history..."

"The prophet is something quite different. His task is not to report on the events of tomorrow...He shows us the face of God, and in so doing he shows us the path that we

have to take...He points out the path to the true “exodus”...the path to God is the true direction that we must seek and find. Prophecy...is the translation of this faith into the everyday life of a community before God and on the way to him.

“And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses...Israel is allowed to hope for a new Moses...who will be raised up at the appropriate hour. And the characteristic of this “prophet” will be that he converses with God face-to-face, as a friend does with a friend. His immediate relation with God...enables him to communicate God’s will and word firsthand and unadulterated. And that is the saving intervention which Israel - indeed, the whole of humanity - is waiting for...”

“Moses asked God, “I pray thee, show me thy glory” (Ex 33:18)...God passes by with his glory. As he passes, God covers Moses with his own hand, but...”You shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen” (Ex 33:23)...

“Although Moses’ immediate relation to God makes him the great mediator of Revelation, the mediator of the Covenant...he does not behold God’s face...The last prophet, the new Moses, will be granted what was refused to the first one – a real, immediate vision of the face of God, and thus the ability to speak entirely from seeing, not just from looking at God’s back. *This naturally entails the further expectation that the new Moses will be the mediator of a greater covenant than the one that Moses was able to bring down from Sinai (cf. Heb 9:11-24)...*

“No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, who is nearest to the Father’s heart, who has made him known (Jn 1:18). It is in Jesus that the promise of the new prophet is fulfilled...He lives before the face of God, not just as a friend, but as a Son; he lives in the most intimate unity with the Father...”

“Jesus’ teaching is not the product of human learning... It originates from immediate contact with the Father, from “face-to-face” dialogue – from the vision of the one who rests close to the Father’s heart...”

“The Gospels note that Jesus withdrew “to the mountain” to spend nights in prayer “alone: with his Father...This “praying” of Jesus is the Son conversing with the Father...”

“He who sees Jesus sees the Father (cf. Jn 14:9). The disciple who walks with Jesus is thus caught up with him into communion with God. And this is what redemption means: this stepping beyond the limits of human nature, which had been there as a possibility and an expectation in man, God’s image and likeness, since the moment of creation.”

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