The Treatment of Levites as a Barometer of Righteousness in Israel (Deuteronomy 18:1-8) Veritas Class December 1, 2013

The Context

- A. Instructions concerning communal judges as guardians of righteousness (16:18-17:7)
 - B. Instructions concerning the Levitical priests as the Supreme Court (17:8-13)
 - C Instructions concerning the king of Israel as the embodiment of righteousness (17:14-20)
 - B' Instructions concerning the Levitical priests as cultic officials (18:1-8)
- A' Instructions concerning prophets as guardians of righteousness (18:9-22)

Exposition

- A. The primary concern of 18:1-8)
- B. Structure of the Passage
 - 1. The Basis of the Levites' Entitlements (vv. 1-2)
 - a. Their Social Location: "with Israel" "in the midst of his brothers"
 - b. Their Spiritual Location

2. The Nature of the Levites' Entitlements (vv. 3-5)

- a. The Opening Announcement (v. 3a)
- b. The Specific Entitlements
 - (1) The "shoulder, jowl, and stomach" of "ox or sheep" (v. 3)
 - (2) The firstfruits of "grain," "fine wine," "fine olive oil"
 - (3) The first fleece of the sheep

3. The Grounds of the Levites' Entitlements (v. 5)

YHWH has chosen them to stand before him (cf. 10:8) to minister in his name.

4. The Range of the Levites' Entitlements (vv. 6-8)

- a. The Three Stages of Levitical Priestly Movement
 - (1) The Levite leaves the town where he is residing.
 - (2) The Levite is driven by personal desire to come to the place YHWH has chosen.
 - (3) The Levite joins his brothers—other Levites—at the sanctuary
- b. The Perquisites for this Service: Equal perks for equal service.
- C. Implications of this Passage for a Theology of Ministry
 - 1. To be called into divine service is the highest calling imaginable.
 - 2. Those who are called to divine service have a special responsibility because the Lord himself has chosen them for this service and ordained them to stand before him and to serve in his name.
 - 3. "Righteousness, only righteousness" (16:20) demands that God's people care for those whom he has called into his service with generosity and liberality.

The Mosaic Prophet as Divinely Commissioned Agent of Righteousness in Israel Deuteronomy 18:9-22 Veritas Class December 1, 2013

Introductory Comments

- 1. The Context of 18:9-22
- 2. The Concern of 18:9-22
- 3. The Style of 18:9-22
- 4. The Structure of 18:9-22

Theme: The Promise of a Prophet Like Moses (18:9-22)

- a. The Foil for the Promise (vv. 9-14)
- b. The Nature of the Promise (vv. 15-20)
- c. The Challenge to the Promise (vv. 21-22)