

**The Mosaic Prophet:  
The Divinely Commissioned Agent of Righteousness in Israel  
Deuteronomy 18:9-22  
Veritas Class  
December 14, 2013**

**Introductory Comments**

A. 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)

B. The Concern of 18:9-22

C. The Style of 18:9-22

D. The Background to 18:9-22 (Deuteronomy 12:29-31)

E. The Structure of 18:9-22

- 1. The Foil for the Promise of a Prophet Like Moses (vv. 9-14)
- 2. The Nature of the Promise of a Prophet Like Moses (vv. 15-20)
- 3. The Challenge to the Promise of a Prophet Like Moses (vv. 21-22)

**Exposition**

**1. The Foil for the Promise of a Prophet Like Moses (vv. 9-14)**

- a. The Chronological Context for the Expectation of a Prophet Like Moses (v. 1a)
- b. The Need for a Prophet Like Moses

- (1) Negative: The disposition of YHWH toward the alternative:
- (2) Positive: The disposition of YHWH toward his people (v. 13)

Other "Blameless" Texts

Genesis 6:9  
Job 1:2  
Genesis 17:1  
Joshua 24:14  
2 Chronicles 16:9  
Deuteronomy 6:4-5  
Psalm 119:1  
Matthew 5:48

Hebrew *tāmîm* carries a moral sense expressing the totality of a person's commitment to Yahweh as expressed in the second half of the Shema (6:5; cf. 32:4; Gen. 6:9; 17:1; Job 1:2).

It involves a heart/mind that is undivided in its devotion and loyalty to God (Josh 24:14; 2 Chron 6:9), and a life characterized by "walking in the Torah of YHWH" (Ps 119:1)

This appeal to be blameless reiterates the call for "righteousness, only righteousness," with which this larger section began (see 16:20 and comments).

**c. The Alternatives to a Prophet Like Moses:**

**Practices Abominable to God**

- (1) Offering children as sacrifices
- (2) Divination
- (3) Sorcery
- (4) Omens
- (5) Black Magic/Witchcraft
- (6) Casting Spells
- (7) Mediums (consulting ghosts)
- (8) Consulting Familiar Spirits
- (9) Necromancy

**Fundamental Assumptions of these Abominable Practices**

- (1) There is a link between the natural and supernatural world that makes cooperation between these spheres possible.
- (2) There is a world of supernatural forces that constantly threaten human beings or that may be harnessed for personal benefit.
- (3) The wills and operations of supernatural forces may be deciphered in natural phenomena through unsolicited omens (e.g., solar eclipses, birth anomalies) and solicited omens (examining entrails, dropping arrows).
- (4) By invoking the gods or manipulating other supernatural forces, a person may affect the outcome of events.
- (5) Since magic is a science, these skills can be taught and learned.