

DEUTERONOMY 18:1 The priests the Levites, all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion nor inheritance with Israel. They shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire and his portion.

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The priests and Levites to have no inheritance, Deu 18:1, Deu 18:2. What is the priest's due, Deu 18:3-5. Of the Levites that come from any of the other cities, Deu 18:6-8. The Israelites must not copy the abominations of the former inhabitants, Deu 18:9. None to cause his son or daughter to pass through the fire, or use any kind of divination or enchantment, as the former inhabitants did, Deu 18:10-14. The great prophet which God promised to raise up, Deu 18:15-19. Of false prophets, Deu 18:20; and how to discern them, Deu 18:21, Deu 18:22.

#### Verse 1

The priests the Levites - shall have no part - That is, says Rab. Maimon, they shall have no part in the spoils taken from an enemy.

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DEUTERONOMY 18:2 They shall have no inheritance among their brothers. the LORD is their inheritance, as he has spoken to them.

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#### Verse 2

The Lord is their inheritance - He is the portion of their souls; and as to their bodies, they shall live by the offerings of the Lord made by fire, i. e., the meat-offering, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering; and whatever was the Lord's right, in these or other offerings, he gave to the priests.

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DEUTERONOMY 18:3 This shall be the priests' due from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice, whether it be ox or sheep, that they shall give to the priest the shoulder, the two cheeks, and the inner parts.

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#### Verse 3

Offer a sacrifice - זבחי הזבח zobechey hazzebach. The word זבח zebach is used to signify, not only an animal sacrificed to the Lord, but also one killed for common use. See Gen 46:1; Pro 17:1; Eze 39:17. And in this latter sense it probably should be understood here; and, consequently, the command in this verse relates to what the people were to allow the priests and Levites from the animals slain for common use. The parts to be given to the priests were,

1. The shoulder, probably cut off from the beast with the skin on; so Maimonides.
  2. The two cheeks, which may include the whole head.
  3. The maw - the whole of those intestines which are commonly used for food.
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DEUTERONOMY 18:4 The first fruits of your grain, of your new wine, and of your oil, and the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give him.

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Verse 4

The first-fruit also of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, etc. - All these firstfruits and firstlings were the Lord's portion, and these he gave to the priests.

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DEUTERONOMY 18:5 For the LORD your God has chosen him out of all your tribes, to stand to minister in the LORD's name, him and his sons for ever.

DEUTERONOMY 18:6 If a Levite comes from any of your gates out of all Israel, where he lives as a foreigner, and comes with all the desire of his soul to the place which the LORD shall choose;

DEUTERONOMY 18:7 then he shall minister in the name of the LORD his God, as all his brothers the Levites do, who stand there before the LORD.

DEUTERONOMY 18:8 They shall have like portions to eat, in addition to that which comes from the sale of his family possessions.

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Verse 8

The sale of his patrimony - So we find that, though the Levites might have no part of the land by lot, yet they were permitted to make purchases of houses, goods, and cattle, yea, of fields also. See the case of Abiathar, 1Kgs 2:26 (note), and of Jeremiah, Jer 32:7-8 (note).

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DEUTERONOMY 18:9 When you have come into the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the abominations of those nations.

DEUTERONOMY 18:10 There shall not be found with you anyone who makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices sorcery, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer,

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Verse 10

To pass through the fire - Probably in the way of consecration to Molech, or some other deity. It is not likely that their being burnt to death is here intended. See on Lev 18:21 (note).

Divination - **קֹסֵם קְסָמִים** kosem kesamim, one who endeavors to find out futurity by auguries, using lots, etc.

Observer of times - **מַעֲוֵן** meonen, one who pretends to foretell future events by present occurrences, and who predicts great political or physical changes from the aspects of the planets, eclipses, motion of the clouds, etc., etc. See on Gen 41:8 (note).

Enchanter - מנחש menachesh, from נחש nichesh, to view attentively; one who inspected the entrails of beasts, observed the flight of birds, etc., etc., and drew auguries thence. Some think divination by serpents is meant, which was common among the heathen.

A witch - מחשף mechashsheph, probably those who by means of drugs, herbs, perfumes, etc., pretended to bring certain celestial influences to their aid. See the note on Lev 19:26.

DEUTERONOMY 18:11 or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

#### Verse 11

A charmer - חבר חבר chober chaber, one who uses spells; a peculiar conjunction, as the term implies, of words, or things, tying knots, etc., for the purposes of divination. This was a custom among the heathen, as we learn from the following verses: -

Necte Tribus Nodis ternos, Amarylli, colores:

Necte, Amarylli, modo; et Veneris, dic, vincula necto.

Virg. Ecl. viii., ver. 77. "Knit with three Knots the fillets, knit them straight;

Then say, these Knots to love I consecrate."

Dryden.

A consulter with familiar spirits - שאל אוב shoel ob, a Pythoness, one who inquires by the means of one spirit to get oracular answers from another of a superior order. See on Lev 19:31 (note).

A wizard - ידעני yiddeoni, a wise one, a knowing one. Wizard was formerly considered as the masculine of witch, both practising divination by similar means. See on Exo 22:13 (note), and Lev 19:31 (note).

Or a necromancer - אל המתים doresh el hammethim, one who seeks from or inquires of the dead. Such as the witch at Endor, who professed to evoke the dead, in order to get them to disclose the secrets of the spiritual world.

DEUTERONOMY 18:12 For whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD. Because of these abominations, the LORD your God drives them out from before you.

DEUTERONOMY 18:13 You shall be perfect with the LORD your God.

DEUTERONOMY 18:14 For these nations that you shall dispossess listen to those who practice sorcery and to diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you so to do.

DEUTERONOMY 18:15 The LORD your God will raise up to you a prophet from your midst, of your brothers, like me. You shall listen to him.

#### Verse 15

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet - Instead of diviners, observers of times, etc., God here promises to give them an infallible guide, who should tell them all things that make for their peace, so that his declarations should completely answer the end of all the knowledge that was pretended to be gained by the persons already specified.

Like unto me - Viz., a prophet, a legislator, a king, a mediator, and the head or chief of the people of God. This was the very person of whom Moses was the type, and who should accomplish all the great purposes of the Divine Being. Such a prophet as had never before appeared, and who should have no equal till the consummation of the world.

This prophet is the Lord Jesus, who was in the bosom of the Father, and who came to declare him to mankind. Every word spoken by him is a living infallible oracle from God himself; and must be received and obeyed as such, on pain of the eternal displeasure of the Almighty. See Deu 18:19, and Act 3:22, Act 3:23; and see the conclusion of this chapter, Deu 18:22 (note).

DEUTERONOMY 18:16 This is according to all that you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, "Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I not die."

DEUTERONOMY 18:17 The LORD said to me, "They have well said that which they have spoken.

DEUTERONOMY 18:18 I will raise them up a prophet from among their brothers, like you. I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I shall command him.

DEUTERONOMY 18:19 It shall happen, that whoever will not listen to my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

DEUTERONOMY 18:20 But the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die."

DEUTERONOMY 18:21 You may say in your heart, "How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?"

DEUTERONOMY 18:22 When a prophet speaks in the LORD's name, if the thing doesn't follow, nor happen, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You shall not be afraid of him.

## Verse 22

If the thing follow not - It is worthy of remark that the prophets in general predicted those things which were shortly to come to pass, that the people might have the fullest proof of their Divine mission, and of the existence of God's providence in the administration of the affairs of men.

The promise contained in the Deu 18:15 and Deu 18:18 verses of this chapter has long been considered of the first importance in the controversies between the Christians and Jews. "Christ," says Ainsworth, "was to be a man, and of the stock of the Jews, by promise, because the people could not endure to hear the voice of God, Deu 18:16. And as in respect of his prophecy, so of the priesthood: for every high priest is taken from among men, Heb 5:1; and also of his kingdom, as in Deu 17:15 : From among thy brethren shalt thou set a king over thee like unto me. "1. Christ alone

was like unto Moses as a Prophet; for it is written, There arose not a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to do, Deu 34:10, Deu 34:11, Deu 34:12. This therefore cannot be understood of the ordinary prophets which were raised up in Israel, but of Christ only, as the apostles expound it Act 2:22-26.

2. Christ was like unto Moses in respect to his office of mediation between God and his people, Deu 5:5; 1Tim 2:5; but greater than Moses as being the mediator of a better covenant, (or testament), which was established upon better promises, Heb 8:6.

3. Christ was like unto Moses in excellency; for as Moses excelled all the prophets in speaking to God mouth to mouth, Num 12:6, Num 12:7, Num 12:8, so Christ excelled him and all men in that being in the bosom of the Father, he hath come down from heaven and declared God unto us, Joh 1:18; Joh 3:13.

4. Christ was like to Moses in faithfulness, but therein also excelling; for Moses was faithful in God's house as a servant, but Christ as the son over his own house, Heb 3:2, Heb 3:5, Heb 3:6.

5. Christ was like to Moses in signs and wonders, wherein he also excelled Moses, as the history of the Gospel shows; for he was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, Luk 24:19. A man approved of God among them, by miracles, signs, and wonders, which God did by him in the midst of them, Act 2:22. For he did among them the works which no other man did, Joh 15:24. Unto him, that is, not unto the diviners, wizards, or any such like, but unto him, and him only; as Him thou shalt serve, Deu 6:13, is expounded, Him only, Mat 4:10. And though this is principally meant of Christ in person, of whom God said, Hear him, Mat 17:5; yet it implies also his ministers, as himself said, He that heareth you heareth me, Luk 10:16." To these may be added,

6. As Moses was king among his people, in this respect Christ is like to him, but infinitely greater; for he is King of kings and Lord of lords, Rev 19:16; 1Tim 6:15.

7. He was like to Moses as a legislator. Moses gave laws to Israel by the authority and commandment of God, which the Jews have ever acknowledged as coming from the immediate inspiration of the Almighty: these are contained in the Pentateuch. Christ gave a new law, the Gospel contained in the four Evangelists and Acts of the Apostles, on which the Christian Church is founded, and by which all genuine Christians are governed both in heart and life. To all which may be added,

8. That God never commissioned any human beings to give laws to mankind but Moses and Christ; and therefore, as a lawgiver, Christ alone resembles Moses; for to the present hour none but themselves have given laws in the name of God, which he has ratified and confirmed by the most indubitable and infallible signs, proofs, and miracles.

Dr. Jortin, in his Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, has drawn a parallel between Moses and Christ in a great number of particulars, which he concludes thus: "Let us search all the records of universal history, and see if we can find a man who was so like to Moses as Christ was, and so like to Christ as Moses was. If we cannot find such a one, then have we found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write to be Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God." On this subject see Ainsworth, Calmet, and Dodd, who have all marked this striking correspondence between Moses and Christ.