

Deuteronomy 18:15-20ⁱⁱ

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: “If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.” Then the LORD replied to me: “They are right in what they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak — that prophet shall die.”

ⁱⁱ About the First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Today’s passage describes the role of the prophet to make known God’s will, a role distinct from the fortune telling, communication with the dead and divination practiced by pagans.

This passage validates prophetic practice by telling of the establishment by Moses of a succession of prophets to mediate as he did between God and the people. A criterion is established to aid in distinguishing the true prophet from the false.

In the postexilic period, when prophetic activity ceased, the statement about the raising of “a prophet like me” (v. 15) was interpreted as the promise of a “prophet like Moses” to come in the last days. The early Church saw this fulfilled in Jesus.