Deuteronomy 18:15-20

15 The Lord your God will raise up for you
a prophet like me
from among your own people;
you shall heed such a prophet.

16This 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.'

17Then the Lord replied to me:
'They are right in what they have said.

18I 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.

19Anyone who does not heed the words
that the prophet shall speak in my name,
I myself will hold accountable.

20But 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.'

Mark 1:21-28

21 They went to Capernaum;
and when the sabbath came,
he entered the synagogue and taught.

22They were astounded at his teaching,
for he taught them as one having authority,
and not as the scribes.

23Just then there was in their synagogue
a man with an unclean spirit,
24and he cried out,
'What have you to do with us,
Jesus of Nazareth?
Have you come to destroy us?
I know who you are,
the Holy One of God.'

25But Jesus rebuked him, saying,
'Be silent, and come out of him!'

26And the unclean spirit,
throwing him into convulsions
and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.

27They were all amazed,
and they kept on asking one another,
'What is this?
A new teaching—with authority!
He commands even the unclean spirits,
and they obey him.'

28At once his fame began to spread
throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Reading Torah This Week

Deuteronomy is put in the mouth of Moses
As if a long speech in Moab at the Jordan, 1200BCE
Before Joshua succeeds Moses to lead on to Promised Land
This text comes from the portion *Shofetim,* judges
We raise up for ourselves judges and officers,
God will raise up a prophet (repeated, distributive) like Moses

By the time this Deuteronomic voice is written, and edited,
the context is exile, and revisionist history in 500's BCE
'second book of law', *deutero-nomos* – Torah's *Devarim*
So what 'prophet' is promised, alongside law & order roles?
In exile and restoration, messianic hope is expressed, informed
More – or less – than a prediction of Jesus in 30CE!

The complementary roles are chosen, judges officers,
The rejected alternative is direct revelation of God, as at Horeb
v16 claims that generation said 'never again'
and begged for mediation of divine messages

What follows clarifies the weighing of a prophet's words,
Where the prophet speaks in the name of other gods,
Or sincerely but mistakenly speaks for God
But God did not give them the message
That's right – kill the messenger!

That's about specific and general deterrence,
More than it is about retribution or restorative justice –
And my usual note on the Talmudic principle of *galut,*
Reading down 'death penalties' in a context of exile

Links for audio & notes on the whole of Deut in '23, c18 in '22:
http://www.hereticslikeus.com/2023/03/deuteronomy-rewriting-rules.html
http://www.hereticslikeus.com/2022/07/deuteronomy-18.html

Reading the Gospel this Week

In Mark, once Jesus is baptized, tempted,
back in Galilee with 2 pairs of fishers following,
what does Jesus do or say, according to Mark,
compared to 3 bible gospels, or your own?

Mark's Jesus goes to a fishing town, Capernaum,
An episode begins/ends by enter/leave a synagogue
Mark tells us <u>that</u> he teaches, not <u>what</u> he teaches,
and wows the congregation with <u>how</u> he claims authority

Jesus confronts an unclean spirit, who enters the space,
Names Jesus 'Holy One of God', and he silences it
His exorcism of it out of its convulsing host convinces others
Of the efficacy, power, legitimacy, authority of Jesus' teaching

Mark will pile up exorcism & healing stories
that's not a sweet spot for UCC or first world folks!
How do <u>you</u> handle biblical distinctions of magic or mantic,
of supernatural miracles or marvels?

Mark assures us by this prioritized text
that Jesus' first hearers, in a Galilean synagogue,
recognized his new teaching, moved by it,
not simply in words, intention, or reason
but also or perhaps more in action and effect

What's your measure of Jesus – or of the body of Christ:
what he/we teach, intent on 'making us think',
or how he/we effect change, in people & situations?

Of course, we know the rhythm of early impact,
will be met with growing resistance…

in this gospel, and in our experience?