



Handout for week of 1/22/18 Mk. 1:21-28 & Dt. 18: 15-20

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Dt. 18: 15 A prophet will HaShem thy G-d raise up unto thee, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; 16 according to all that thou didst desire of HaShem thy G-d in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying: 'Let me not hear again the voice of HaShem my G-d, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.' 17 And HaShem said unto me: 'They have well said that which they have spoken. 18 I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. 19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it

of him. 20 But the prophet, that shall speak a word presumptuously in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die

<b>c.</b> <b>1250</b>	<b>Moses, the Exodus wilderness</b>	<b>nomadic tribal migration</b>	<b>* China: Shang dynasty (c. 1480-1050)</b>
<b>c.</b> <b>1210</b>	<b><a href="#">Joshua</a></b>	<b>invasion of Canaan</b>	<b>* Rise of India's civilizations</b>

**COMMENTARY:**

[15] A prophet like me: from the context (opposition to the pagan soothsayers) it seems that Moses is referring in general to all the true prophets who were to succeed him. But since Christ is the Great Prophet in whom the prophetic office finds its fulfillment and completion, this passage was understood in a special Messianic sense both by the Jews ([John 6:14](#); [7:40](#)) and by the Apostles ([Acts 3:22](#); [7:37](#)).

[Deuteronomy 18:15-22](#) comes in the central section (5-26) which has laws governing worship, offices and institutions. A number of scholars take Deut 16:18 - 18:22 as a section which has different headings applied to it. Clements names it 'Public Authority and Leadership' (Clements: NIB: 289), whereas Biddle follows some earlier scholars (eg. Braulik) and sees the section as an explication of the fourth commandment (Biddle: 277). It appears to me that those scholars who want to fit Deut 12-26 into a neat linear arrangement based on the ten commandments are pushing the limits of commonsense. Deut 14:21 spells out what animals the people are allowed to eat to maintain cleanliness, followed by laws related to tithing with especial reference to care for the Levite, the widow and fatherless. This care is continued in Deut 15 with laws regarding the release of debts and slaves after every seven years and Deut 16:1-17 names three festivals which the Israelites must keep - Passover, Feast of Weeks and Feast of Booths. Deut 16:18-20 sets out very clearly the qualities of the judges who will deal with the both religious and moral misbehaviors named in Deut 17:1-13. From there we move to the nature of kings (Deut 17:14-20), then the care of the Levitical priests who have no inheritance of their own and rely on the people to provide for them (Deut 18:1-8). Before we get to the description and role of a prophet there is a strong condemnation of certain rituals and those who act in such roles which are practiced by the nations (Deut 18:9-14). Following God's promise to raise up prophets, Deut 19-21 requires the nation to set up cities of refuge, and spells out the difference between manslaughter and murder. This theme is carried through in relation to warfare in Deut 20. It is worth reading some of the very caring laws in Deut 22:1-4, 6-7, 8; others we would find offensive today. Deut 12-26 is very different from the laws in the Book of Leviticus which deal with issues of sacrifice and priestly duties.