

BIBLE STUDY
January 22, 2024

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Deuteronomy 18: 15-20

Mark 1: 21-28

1 Corinthians 7: 32-35

1. Deuteronomy 18: 15-20

- V. 15: "A prophet like me:" a true prophet who speaks the Word of God and obeys the covenant. Not like the prophets described in verses 10-11: *Let there not be among you who causes their child to pass through fire, or practices divination, or is a soothsayer, augur, or sorcerer, or who cats out spells, consults ghosts, and spirits, or seeks oracles from the dead.* Moses is talking about the future prophets of Isarel who will speak faithfully and honestly the oracles of the Lord. This verse became a messianic prophecy. The prophet of which he speaks will be the Messiah and later identified by Christians as Jesus the Christ.
- V. 16: The people had asked for a prophet to be an intermediary between them and God because they were so afraid of the presence of God on Sinai in fire and smoke.
- V. 17: The Lord approves of the request of the people for a prophet like Moses.
- V. 18: The lord will give the people a prophet like Moses who will communicate to them the messages of God.
- V. 19: Everyone must listen to the prophet God appoints. If not, they will be held accountable.
- V. 20: False prophets will be punished.

2. Mark 1: 21-28

- This section of Mark's Gospel presents a day in the life of Jesus that is filled with teaching, healing, casting out evil spirits, and concludes with prayer in solitude and the decision to move on to the other towns.
- Mark sees Jesus coming to bring the Kingdom of God to earth to reclaim people form the kingdom of the evil one. Since the sin of Sadam and Eve, the world was in the grip of the devil and alienated from God. Jesus comes to restore the relationship of people with God and win them back for God.
- V. 21-22: Jesus used Capernaum as a home base in Galilee. He often went to the synagogue on the Sabbath where he taught. Mark does not tell us the content of Jesus' teaching, but he makes clear the effect that it had on people. They were astonished at his teaching because he taught with authority not like the scribes who rehashed older teaching.
- V. 23: There is a man with an unclean spirit—one that resists the holiness of God. Jesus comes into direct contact with the evil one. This is a representation of the fight between good and evil. Jesus takes on the devil on behalf of God's people whom he will save.

- V. 24: The evil spirit calls Jesus by name and identity, the Holy One of God. To know a person's name was to have power over him.
- V. 25: Jesus rebukes the evil spirit because the spirit has no power over Jesus. He tells him to be quiet and to leave the man.
- V. 26: The spirit comes out of the man after convulsing him and uttering a loud cry.
- V. 27: The people react with amazement that the power that Jesus displays. He has the authority to command demons, and they obey him.

3. 1 Corinthians 7: 32-35

- Paul is writing to the Corinthians who have adopted some rigorous ascetical practices like abstaining from sex in marriage. Paul tells them that that may be good, but do not overdo it. Be faithful to life that God has called you.
- Paul is also advising early Christians who believe that the return of the Lord is imminent. The Lord will come back in their lifetime. Therefore, they need to be focused on the Lord and not let anyone or anything distract them. He says that if a person is single, they are better off staying single because they will not be distracted. However, he adds that he is not prohibiting them from marrying, only wanting them to live without distraction and close to the Lord.