

# Read the Bible in a Year

Week 15 – September 12th, 2021

**Read on Your Own this Week:**

*Psalm 43-45*

Luke 13-16

**Readings in Class:**

Deuteronomy 18-34

**Christ In Deuteronomy:** Christ is everywhere in the book of Deuteronomy, especially when it comes to the allusions and hopes that Moses has for the children of Israel as they are prepared to go into the Promised Land. Here are just a couple of examples.

The Story of God's People: The Book of Deuteronomy is Moses retelling the story of Israel from the Exodus until now. Through this story, we have the people of Israel baptized in the Red Sea and come out into the wilderness. There they are tested and fail. When God makes a covenant, they break it. As Moses notes to them earlier in Deuteronomy, they are going to inherit the Promised Land only because God made a promise not because of their merit.

Jesus, however, comes and redoes Israel's story and succeeds where they failed. Jesus is brought through the waters and is then sent into the wilderness. When he is tempted, Jesus remains faithful. And when Jesus is tempted, it is interesting to note that Jesus each time quotes from the book of Deuteronomy (Jesus quotes Deut. 8:3, 6:16, 6:13 as it corresponds to Matthew's account of the temptation). Jesus gets the story of Israel right and becomes Israel reduced to one person. The faithfulness of Jesus comes through to fulfill the old covenant and establishes a new one in his blood.

A Prophet Like Moses: As Scripture tells of the character and nature of God, it becomes apparent that there can be no direct contact with God due to sin. Someone represents him. Through the Old Testament, the chief person is Moses. Several times, Moses intercedes on behalf of the people and turns God's wrath by reminding him of His promise. In chapter 18, Moses states that God will raise up someone like him from among his brothers and that when he comes, they people should listen to him and God will put his own Word in this person's mouth. At the end of Chapter 34, we are told by what could be scribes who put the OT together after the exile that this person has not yet come.

Jesus is this longed hope for Prophet. The one who comes from the people of Israel and is raised up from among his brothers. Being one of us, Jesus represents us to God. He takes the sins of his people and he gives us the promises that God has made. Like Moses, Jesus does signs and wonders. In John's Gospel especially, Jesus is noted as having seen the Father and sat upon the Father's lap in a way that is much greater than Moses.

**Can't Enter God's Presence?** In chapter 23:1-8 we hear of some strange laws about who can come into God's presence. All of them deal with ways concerning the coming of Jesus, but there is a case here that is surprising. We are told in verse 3 that no Moabite can enter the assembly of the Lord forever. Balaam was hired by the king of Moab and therefore they are excluded. It is good to remember though that Ruth, is a Moabite and is the ancestor of King David and therefore, of Jesus himself. The Gospel is truly remarkable in that those who are excluded forever are made a partaker in the life of God's Son who is forsaken for all.

**Remember and do not Forget:** The theme of the book of Deuteronomy is "Remember and do not Forget." This line is repeated throughout the book as Moses and God repeatedly call for the people to honor the covenant and to also remember the work that God has done throughout the midst the last 40 years. So important are these events that all of their life is structure around it. From what they wear, to how they talk, to what they do, it is all to give evidence of the work that God has accomplished in their midst and how they have been set aside as a holy people devoted to the Lord.

**How to Read What Comes Next:** With the ending of Deuteronomy comes the end of the first major section in the Bible: The Torah. It has been said by some theologians that the rest of the Old Testament is a commentary on these first five books. The Prophets are covenant lawyers that go back to these books to point out where the people of Israel have turned away from the God who rescued them from Egypt. The Writings of the Old Testament explore themes and situations that first come to play in the Torah (Ruth and Psalms for example).

Since these later parts flesh out what happens in the first five books, it is important to pay attention to how the Torah tells the story as well as concludes the story as it looks ahead. In chapter 31, God tells us what to expect in the books to come (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings). God knows that these people will not keep faith and will forsake Him just as they have over the last 40 years. And when they do break faith in the Promised Land, God says that He will reject them and send them out into exile. But ends that while God does indeed kill, he also makes alive.

So Moses is instructed to write and teach the people of Israel a song that is to stay with them and accuse them of when this does take place. This song extols God's faithfulness but also that the people of Israel, ironically called Jeshurun (meaning upright) are crooked and false and will forsake the God of their salvation. As an aside, Psalm 90 which is the only Psalm in the Bible attributed to Moses, is the "I told you so" of the Psalter which reflects on the Israelites status following the exile. As you read the end of Deuteronomy note how the final chapters tell you how to read what is to come in the "Dark Ages" of Israelite history and compare with 2 Kings 17.