



SOUTHLAND CHURCH

THE BOOK OF  
**DEUTERONOMY**

*21 Day Devotional*



**foundations**  
daily devotional



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Versions of scripture quotations are noted.

**DAY 1****INTRODUCTION TO DEUTERONOMY**

It often feels like there is a lot of repetition in Scripture, and that's true... because there is. Deuteronomy is an example of this, but let's be encouraged by this! It gives us an opportunity to dig deeper and challenge our initial understanding in a way that also allows our perspective and relationship with God to change and grow stronger.

Deuteronomy, if looked at topically, is littered with warnings, like a careful declaration made to a stiff-necked people who continuously forgot and turned their backs on their God.

We are blessed with this book because it is also a warning to us (who are not unlike the Israelites with our whims, short-sighted perceptions and selfishness). We may shake our heads and on occasion be shocked how a people who experienced the might of God by way of plagues, walking through the parted Red Sea, following a cloud of smoke by day and fire by night, could be so frivolous to turn their backs on God. Unfortunately, we have nothing to shake our heads about because we do it too, therefore this book is relevant to us, and its warning, which is repeated and precise, applies to us as well.

*For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. **Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him.** For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*  
Deuteronomy 30:16-20 (NIV)

**JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Ask God to give you fresh eyes and a heart that searches for new truths as you go through this devotional.
2. Ask God to reveal to you specifically areas where your relationship needs to be strengthened. For example, perhaps you excel at setting aside time to read the word but struggle to sit quietly in His presence in prayer.
3. Let your prayer be that you 'choose life (Jesus), so that you and your children may live and that you may love the "Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him." Dt 30:19b-20 (NIV)

**DAY 2**

**READ:** Deuteronomy 1

**God keeps his promises = faithfulness.**

*'See, I have given you this land. Go in and take possession of the land that the Lord swore he would give to your fathers – to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – and to their descendants after them.'* (1:8 NIV)

*'See, the Lord your God has given you the land. Go up and take possession of it as the Lord,*

*the God of your fathers, told you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.’ (1:21 NIV)*

It is interesting to read through this story and know that Moses is speaking directly to the Israelites the word God himself instructed him to say, and still, the Israelites doubted what was plainly laid out before them.

We do this too; doubt the goodness God is offering to us, whether due to fear, insecurity, disbelief, stubborn pride or any other variation of disobedience – **yes disobedience**; we do it too.

Praise the Lord that He is faithful, that He practices grace and reveals His character and love for us by-way of patience. He was patient with the Israelites when He conceded and allowed them to send out scouts to spy out the land and return with reports for the ideal route to take and what would face them on their journey. God was faithful in allowing this to bolster confidence and courage among the people. Yet the Israelites failed to stand firm in the promise of God before they even encountered the obstacle, which God also promised would not be an issue. (1:29-31)

Yet God’s patience does have a limit and when that limit is reached consequences are in order or, plain and simple, we miss out on the goodness that was within reach. (1:34-36)

The land was theirs. The Israelites failed to grab hold of that promise and walk through the doors to the Promised Land, not trusting the God who walked them along the floor of the Red Sea, being lead to the other side by His miraculous hand.

How often do we fail to grab hold of the promises that God has given us?

That He would relieve of us of bondage – if we would only trust Him.

That He would heal our family – if we would only submit to following Him.

That our lives would be filled with the flavour of His love – if we would only choose to live for Him.

I wonder how different our lives would look if we gave ourselves, without reservation, to the One who first loved us. *‘Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all His glory. (Col 3:2-4 NLT)*



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Thank God for the detailed documentation and repetition in the Scriptures which guides us in understanding and growing in the Spirit.
2. Are you aware of the promises God has bestowed on your life? Take a few minutes to write down a list of all the places where God has fulfilled His promises in your life. If you can’t think of any ask the Holy Spirit to reveal them to you.
3. Look over that list and take a moment to thank Him for His faithfulness.

## DAY 3

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 **READ:** Deuteronomy 1:29-46

**There is no faithfulness without trust and there is no trust without faithfulness.**

Relationships are little if there is no trust. Would you confide in your neighbor if you knew the moment the door closed they would pick up the telephone and relay your deepest fears to anyone who would listen?

Would you willingly get in a vehicle and pass the keys to your three year old who couldn't ride a bike without training wheels, not to mention they couldn't see over the dash? Would you hand a child a lighter or pack of matches if you were trapped in a room filled with loose paper and kindling?

Trust is crucial when it comes to placing your life in the hands of others. Trusting a stranger who we don't know or understand with any part of our being would dance on the line of foolishness. Trusting a family member would seem like less of a risk, as they would likely have proven somewhat reliable. Trusting someone who gave his life for you seems like a wise choice; the obstacle to tackle here is that trust is hard.

Trust equals vulnerability. Trust equals sacrifice. Trust equals allowing something other than ourselves to navigate a situation. Again, I repeat, trust is hard.

The Israelites lived through numerous situations where their lives were resting firmly in the hands of God, and they came through. If you break down the life of Moses and the history of the Israelites, what more proof would they need to place absolute trust and confidence in the hands of God? God spoke to them directly through Moses, giving commands, laws, and instruction for the ways to live.

The Israelites lack of trust and disobedience led to consequences; consequences which could not be undone because they changed their minds and thought to carry out God's commands after the fact (1:41-46). Therefore the promise that they would take possession of the Land was suspended (delayed) and the fulfilment would only be seen by a future generation.

God not only requires our trust, but He has earned it, and though His sovereignty reigns forever, our relationship with Him is a give and take. Both ways.

Today, we are blessed with the wisdom imparted to us through the Holy Spirit. This is a gift that is invaluable to those of us seeking the Lord as Head of our life. He leads us daily. He guides our paths and maneuvers in our lives in ways we cannot fully understand. We are gifted with the wisdom in the Scriptures to strengthen that understanding and to hone our hearing so that we know when God is asking us to move. It is our job to trust; to choose to obey where we are being led.

*'He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.'* (Ps 91:1-2 NIV)



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. It can be difficult to be truly yourself around others. Thank God for knowing you, for seeing who you are down to the deepest part of your heart. Thank Him for loving you and for creating you in His image and for making no mistakes in doing so.
2. Have you ever failed to trust and disobeyed God, missing out on the rewards your obedience would have reaped? If so, confess your actions and ask God to reveal to you where you stumbled and ask for strength in the future to trust unreservedly where the Saviour is leading you.
3. Ask God to develop your trust in Him. This is a prayer that will stretch you and deepen your relationship with our Almighty God.
4. God is faithful without exception. Thank and praise Him because He is trustworthy. Thank Him for the patience He shows you.

**DAY 4****READ:** Deuteronomy 2 & 3*'Then the Lord said to me,' (2:2)*

Isn't it utter relief and a great encouragement to know that even when we falter, stumble, fall or completely fail to obey God, He is faithful?

If you are a parent you know how intense it is to raise a child to be an obedient and respectful person. It is an exhaustive task that requires endless vigilance and a level of attention that is always at your fingertips and frequently necessary to keep pressed under your thumb. And still, even with a parent's ever watchful eye, we miss things.

God misses nothing; and the Israelites were as numerous as the stars in the sky (1:10).

Forty years the Israelites wandered the desert as the generation of fighting men who had disobeyed God's instruction passed from this earth. God the Father had them under His thumb, and like a loving parent, He continued to give His children what they needed, even in the midst of their consequence.

*'The Lord your God has blessed you in all the works of your hands. He has watched over your journey through this vast desert. These forty years the Lord your God has been with you, and you have not lacked anything. Dt 2:7 (NIV)*

Even in, what could be imagined as frustration, anger, hurt and betrayal, God continued to supply the Israelites with his presence as He spoke to Moses and instructed His people where to go and what their actions ought to be. Chapter 2 & 3 are littered with God's commands and directives and they are done with different words and in different ways because God speaks in many different formats.

(2:2) *Then the Lord said to me,*

(2:4) *Give the people these orders:*

God often told them when to move and in that command He also described the actions to be taken while continuing to reveal His goodness and faithfulness to His promises, as was detailed in 2:18-19 (NIV) *"Today **you are to pass** the regions of Moab at Ar. When you come to the Ammonites, **do not harass them or provoke them to war, for I will not give you possession of any land belonging to the Ammonites. I have given it as a possession to the descendants of Lot."***

When a child disobeys there are consequences to be faced. When a child obeys there are rewards, victories, on occasion, celebration. These vary according to the action, what doesn't vary is a parent's love; God's love.

He is with us always.

He speaks to us whether in our downfall or our obedience.

God is Good. He is Faithful. He is Father who continues to guide His children and wants what's best for us.

**JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Think about your past week or month. What are some of the lessons God has been teaching you?
2. Thank God for raising you up as a parent rears a child; developing and teaching you as you grow in your relationship with Him, He is our Heavenly Father, after all.

3. Spend some time praising God, telling Him you love Him, not only for what He has done, but for WHO HE IS!
4. Ask God to give you a heart of obedience, a heart that knows His voice and desires to follow where He leads.

## DAY 5

 **READ:** Deuteronomy 4:1-31

*Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you. Deuteronomy 4:2 (NIV)*

At a quick glance the Book of Deuteronomy is all about warning; be careful this, be careful that; it's everywhere, it is repetitive. The Israelites needed this repeated as it appeared they had a short memory when it came to God. This is fortunate for us, centuries later, as we benefit greatly from this repetition because (surprise) we are a short sighted people as well and we need to learn this lesson too.

We like to do things our own way, not only in making decisions, but in how we come to the conclusion before we act. It's in our nature to be selfish, to not only forge our own path but to go our own way, in our own time, with the guidelines we deem fit to fulfill our chosen path.

Religiously speaking, we live in an age that likes to pick things apart and grab hold of the pieces that seem good, or right, or acceptable to what we feel or to what society approves. Like technology, fashion, or even government, faith has trends. This is wrong on so many levels, but sadly, also the way of the world.

The laws Moses was instructed to give to the Israelites were not laws that followed trend. They were non-negotiable, direct instructions from God, who loves His people, to a nation that needed guidance; laws that came directly from a loving, present, communicative Father who desired to teach His children His righteous ways. *'What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him? And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?'* Dt 4:7-8 (NIV)

In His instruction, God gave the people everything they would need to live fruitful lives in His sight; providing they do not add or subtract according to their own desires and wills (4:2). Obviously this command is much harder than it seems or we would have learned our lesson through the history of the Israelites. Unfortunately, it is not easy.

Enter the warning: *'Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.'* Dt 4:9 (NIV)

This command is not a trend. It was not given to be picked apart, added to or subtracted from. It was an edict set in place for generations upon generations of people. The warning is clear and the point is driven home by repetition in these next verses and through the remainder of the book.

(Dt 4:15b) *Therefore watch yourselves very carefully,*

(Dt 4:23-24) *Be careful not to forget the covenant of the Lord your God that he made with you; do not make for yourselves an idol in the form of anything the Lord your God has forbidden; For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.*

The warning is clear, concise and the consequences are laid out (4:25-28) but God in His Goodness always gives us a way back to Him and He does this again clearly in verses 4:29-

31(NIV) *But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul....For the Lord your God is a merciful God; he will not abandon or destroy you or forget the covenant with your forefathers, which he confirmed to them by oath.*



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. How awesome is our God? His promises prevail, forever! Praise Him for his Goodness in giving us His Word.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal whether you are neglecting any commands from scripture. Spend time confessing.
3. Thank Him for His patience, even when He has to repeat things to us in abundance and a variety of ways.

### Prayer:

Thank you, Father, for always walking with me. Thank you for the warnings you've placed in my life that keep me on the path towards you. Give me strength to seek you daily, with my whole heart and my entire soul. Your promises are perfect, Father. You never fail. Give me the strength of character to take your Word and your commands and follow them, not adding or subtracting, but standing firm on your statutes and in the Word you've placed in my heart.

Thank you for who you are, Father.

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

### DAY 6

 **READ:** Deuteronomy 4:32-49

### The LORD is God

*Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the LORD is God in heaven above and on earth below. **There is no other.** Keep his decrees and commands, which I am giving you today, so that it may go well with you and your children after you and that you may live long in the land the Lord your God gives you for all time.* Deuteronomy 4:39-40 (NIV)

What more proof could we ask for to know the Lord our God loves us? What more proof did the Israelites need to understand they served the God who created the universe; the one and only true God worthy of all praise and glory.

If proof was necessary the works of God cited in verses 32-38 would surely bring any heart into the loving and protective arms of the Lord; wouldn't they? But wait, we still seek this proof today. And, thankfully, God's response is as patient today as it was then revealing to us that He has been there from the beginning of time and that His ways have been challenged and have lacked nothing.

*'Ask now about the former days, long before your time, from the day God created man on the earth; ask from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything so great as this ever happened, or has anything like it ever been heard of?' Dt 4:32 (NIV)*

The Israelites were reminded of these acts of God first before Moses pressed upon them the reasons behind God's goodness and His faithfulness to His promises in verses 35-38 (NIV), *'You were shown these things so that you might know that the Lord is God; besides*

*him there is no other. From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you. On earth he showed you his great fire, and you heard his words from out of the fire. Because he loved your forefathers and chose their descendants after them, he brought you out of Egypt by his Presence and his great strength, to drive out before you nations greater and stronger than you and to bring you into their land to give it to you for your inheritance, as it is today.'*

God is patient and He reveals himself to us in an abundance of ways, one of the greatest of these being His words in scripture. We have at our fingertips a love letter from our King. Our Lord of Lords, the One True God; there is none like Him. Therefore, *'acknowledge and take to heart this day that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other.'* Dt 4:39 (NIV)



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. There is none like our God. Take a moment to thank Him for who He is.
2. Where has God revealed Himself to you? What are the actual *places* you have been where you have met God?
3. Thank God for how with each passing day He reveals himself to you continuously in unique and awesome ways.
4. Make it your purpose today to praise Him endlessly, acknowledging from the depths of your heart that He is the God of heaven above and the earth below. Praying words of scripture is a powerful tool and what better place to start than by submitting your heart to honor and praise the King who has done great things.

## DAY 7



**READ:** Deuteronomy 5:1-10

*'You shall have no other gods before me. You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind, or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love me and obey my commands.'* Dt 5:7-10 (NIV)

When you love something with all your heart, all your mind, and all your strength, it would stand to reason that you would do anything to nurture, build up, and at all cost, protect, that something. In theory it seems easy, unfortunately we all know it's not, and without question, we all stumble and fall on this one.

God loves us, His children, with all His heart, His mind, and strength. Our God is also a jealous God. This is a good thing. We were created to enter into relationship with our Father, we are His, and above that, relationship means commitment, honesty, trust and fidelity. It means communication at a healthy level and functionality. It means that we must nurture that friendship, care for it, pour ourselves into it, and that, at all cost, we let nothing stand in the way of honoring the one we are in relationship with. Relationship, at its functioning best, requires us to put into practice mutual submission.

Jesus calls the church, His people, His bride. That is a commitment that gives us an idea, a picture if you will, of how beautiful our relationship with Jesus is intended to be. Imagine a picture of a bride dancing at her wedding, being held in the protective arms of her groom. He is gentle, attentive, and the emotion that pours from not only his body but from his

eyes declares to all who watch that no one else in the room exists in that moment. That moment is as it should be. But imagine that bride having eyes for someone other than her groom, having her arms around someone else, willingly giving her affection to another. Would the groom brush that off and continue to pour his love into his bride unabridged? No, plain and simple, no; the groom would be angered, infused with the most potent strength of jealous understandable, and rightfully so.

That is a glimpse at the love and jealousy our God harbours for us. We were created in His image to be His delight, His children, His bride; to love Him and Him alone with the greatest love imaginable.

The life of Jesus exemplifies the ultimate picture of love and submission to us. *'You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.'* Romans 5:6-8 (NIV)

That's a big love.

Huge!



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Reflection: If God our Father was willing to send us His Son to become the ultimate picture of submission of His love for us, how much more does our Father deserve our submission in return?
2. What does counting the cost mean to you? Reflect on that meditate on the words of this song, *Count The Cost*, which we sing during the weekend services.

### *Count The Cost*

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*I shall have no other Gods before you  
I will not put myself before you*

*You deserve my life, my all  
You deserve a faithful child*

*I will count the cost, to follow you  
And count the world as loss  
You are the treasure I seek, and all I need  
Come abide in me*

*The more I seek you, I will find you  
The more I know you, I will love you God*

*Sometimes it feels so hard  
But I know you're worth it God  
So I will lay down my life  
A living sacrifice*

3. Praise the Name of Jesus and ask Him to strengthen you, that you would hold nothing above Him, as you walk with Him daily.

**DAY 8****READ:** Deuteronomy 5:11

***'You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.'*** Deuteronomy 5:11

I imagine very few of us make it through the day without hearing the Lord's name taken in vain. Sadly, as it is a rampant part of not only today's vocabulary, but also part of pop-culture in its abbreviated form, we can't escape it.

A few years ago I was puttering around the house, picking up odds and ends and passing by my children's bedroom when I heard the dreaded phrase fall easily off the tongue of one of my innocent, small children. I froze. A myriad of feelings surged through me; shock, anger, disappointment, fear, and finally, pained sadness.

Now I will preface this by saying I understand fully the moment they walk through my doors and up the stairs of the bus they will be exposed to any number of variables I am no longer in control of. I was also aware that I couldn't shelter them forever, and by that I mean I know they hear bad words and foul language on occasion, but I never imagined they would pick up on the misuse of the Name of the Lord; not at the age of 5.

This opened a whole can of worms and a great teachable moment because I had to explain to my five year old why we don't use God's name in that way, even in the popular acronym style. I also, as the questions kept being tossed my way (and if you know the mind of a child, they ask the toughest questions) had to explain why not everyone cares that they are misusing the name we love and worship and hold Above All Names.

Let's go back to those feelings I felt upon hearing the name of the Lord uttered without regard.

Fear.

It clearly states in the commandment that ***'the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.'*** Dt 5:11b (NIV) This means that we will all stand before the Lord once we've breathed our final breath and answer for wounding our Saviour in such a superficially cavalier fashion.

Let's expand this further and cut right to the marrow here by replacing our verbal assault with a physical picture.

Pained sadness.

Imagine each time you misuse the Name of the Lord that you are physically harming the Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. Physically hurting your Saviour. He has been whipped and beaten; and each time His name is disparaged He receives a new lash or punch in the gut. He is spit on. Laughed at, kicked and pushed. He has endured all of this, wearing a crown of thorns, carrying a heavy weight as He makes His way to Calvary.

Imagine each time He hears His name misused He relives His moments leading up to and giving His life for His children.

It's not a minor offense any longer.

**JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Confess any and all ways you misuse the Names of the Lord.
2. Intercede for those you know who abuse God's name. Ask Him to have mercy on them but also reveal Himself to them as worth honouring!

3. Thank God that He has given these warnings and incited us to uphold His commandments.

## DAY 9

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 **READ:** Deuteronomy 5:12-15

***‘Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you.’  
Deuteronomy 5:12 (NIV)***

**And on the 7<sup>th</sup> day He rested.**

Everyone needs a rest. Even God stepped back from the Works He made to take a break. Let’s concentrate for a moment on that, or more specifically, why God stopped to rest.

Was He tired, exhausted beyond belief? Likely not.

Did He need a day of “fun” to break up the monotony of the daily grind? Again, I don’t imagine so.

Was the seriousness of the Works of His Hands so much that He knew if He kept going He’d burn out? Absolutely not!

Let’s go back to the beginning of Genesis and take a look at what God’s real purpose for declaring the seventh day one of rest. *‘So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.’* Ge 2:1-3 (NLT)

God rested because His creation was complete.

He stepped back to assess all that he had done, to admire the beauty of His creation, and to deem it Good.

***‘And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy,’*** Ge 2:3a (NLT)

God took the opportunity to lead by example, teaching us that He holds His creation in the palm of His hands, that He is Holy, and that we were created to praise Him for all He has done.

 **JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Confess and God to forgive you for not always looking at the Sabbath as His day.
2. Ask God to give you an unquenchable desire to spend more time with Him. Not only on the Sabbath, but in every moment of your day.
3. When you’re out for a walk, communing with nature, or gazing out the window as frosty snowflakes fall, are you ever overwhelmed with the need to praise the Creator for the beauty you see? That’s what the Sabbath was created for; praising our King from whom every good and perfect gift is born. Take some time to thank God for setting aside a day in which we can give Him glory for all He has done, for who He is, and the Works that are yet to come.

**DAY 10****READ:** Deuteronomy 5:16

***'Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.'* Deuteronomy 5:16 (NIV)**

It is a parent's job to teach their children the many things they need to know to raise them up to be healthy functioning citizens of the world.

The job starts out with the small things. From the moment a child is conceived they are fed and kept warm in the mother's womb. At birth parents are needed in more present, intensive and concrete ways. The job of a parent is all-inclusive, but as a child grows the job changes and varies between stage of life and cultural influence. That said, through the most influential years, a child is ultimately dependent and will look to the parent figure for its needs.

These needs are not just about physical provisions. Parents teach the child what love looks like, what love expects, how love behaves, and in turn the child reciprocates accordingly.

Parents are also tasked with teaching their children respect. This encompasses a spectrum of behavior including obedience, right vs wrong, and The Golden Rule; treating others as you would want to be treated.

Sounds simple, but let's give credit where it's due; parenting is the hardest job on earth because people, and in this case children, bring in the human aspect. Meaning: the variables in play are endless!

Parenting is hard, but it is also a job that to some extent involves reciprocity, and children are smart, they learn how to work the system at an early age.

Enter the commandment; *'Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.'* Dt 5:16 (NIV)

Yes, children are called to honor, which encompasses a varying number of synonyms including: obey, respect, give credit, mark with integrity, pay tribute, revere, decency, uprightness, admiration, hold in esteem and graciousness. That covers a lot of ground, but if we flip it around those are all things parents are called to, and entrusted to instill the understanding of in a child.

So how do we model this to our children, or even go about knowing how to teach them all these huge concepts? The equation is written in Deuteronomy 6:5-9 (NIV) *'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.'*

Do you know who loves children more than anyone else? God! By way of Jesus He said, *'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'* Mt 19:14 (NIV)

Yes, there isn't even a question, children, honor your mother and father; though, what better place to start than by holding tight to Deuteronomy 6:5 (NIV) *'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.'*



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Spend some time thanking God for being *your* Heavenly Father.
2. We all have parents, regardless of circumstance, God has taken us as His own, calling us His. Thank God for your journey and that He has brought you to this moment.
3. If you are a parent take a moment and ask God to give you a heart like His. A heart that loves His children deeply, and in line with having a heart like God, ask Him for a strategy to share His love and impress upon your children a deeper importance of seeking God with your whole heart, soul, and strength.
4. There is always room for improvement. Ask God to speak to you in any area where you need more of His help.

## DAY 11



**READ:** Deuteronomy 5:17

### ***'You shall not murder.'* Deuteronomy 5:17 (NIV)**

There seems to be lots of rules or guidelines that need to be enforced for someone to walk the Christian life. It often feels like it too, especially if we take a weight and measure of ourselves. But the truth is, if we lived as we were created to live, we wouldn't need the rules, or at least our idea of such austere and unwavering rules, in the first place.

God made all of creation and He saw that it was good; not only good, but good enough for the Creator to sit back and enjoy what He'd made, deeming it complete.

Creation was good. We were set to live in the Garden of Eden, a place we can't, or in the least have difficulty, imagining today with our murky, sinful nature. Yes God placed a hierarchy to life in the Garden, but the only official command was that Adam and Eve not eat from the tree of knowledge. And there it was, with one act of a rebellious spirit, a distinct choice, we faltered in our commitment to God, we broke a rule. We stumbled, and we have been falling haphazardly ever since.

Creation was perfect, until we exercised our independent, self-seeking spirit and we allowed temptation to rule.

Yet God is Good; He did not abandon us. He led the Israelites out of slavery and gave them a way to live a renewed life in communion with Him. He did this with a seemingly easy set of rules/guidelines, or commitments for His people to follow.

Simple, right? But like in the Garden with Adam and Eve, humanity asserts itself.

The truth is nothing is simple when we are battling the base desires and twisted depths of our human nature. God knows this so He gave us a way to Him. First through His commandments, which encompass not only the 'Big Topics' which are articulated in the Ten Commandments, but also the underlying, all-encompassing depths that rest in the subtext of these 'Big Ten' rules.

After the Ten Commandments are laid out in Deuteronomy the larger part of the book is a recap of what to do and what not to do while living under the Law of God. The book is a warning; again, be careful this - be careful that; it digs deeper and elaborates the commandments. It seems obvious and an easy enough commitment to adhere to, and still, the people stumble.

The New Testament puts a new twist on the "Big Ten" giving it a new name, a new purpose and a seemingly less rigid, and more accessible, "rule" to follow. We call these

new commitments the Fruit of the Spirit. If you apply these fruits to each of the Ten Commandments they seem less daunting, the Voice you hear, the Cloud of Smoke, the whipping *wind* that seems to bring Moses down the mountain carrying the heavy stones is perceived in a different way.

The Ten Commandments become less a picture of rules and more so a committed way of life, a set of characteristics to become who we are and not what we should or shouldn't do.

This is perhaps better explained in Galatians. To abide by the Ten Commandments can be compared to: *'So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.'* Gal 5:16 (NIV)

A life lived outside the law God instructed Moses to bring to the Israelites is a life unraveled, which leads to death and being separated from God: *'The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.'* Gal 5:19-21 (NIV)

The one true way to live for The God of Israel is to follow Him in all His ways: *'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.'* Gal 5:22-23 (NIV)

If we hold close and embrace the fruits of the Spirit and exercise them daily, following and holding the Ten Commandments tightly in our hearts and minds it doesn't seem like such a mighty feat, it's no longer about the guidelines or rules inscribed on the tablets by Moses. It becomes something bigger, fuller; therefore, the characteristics we need to obey the law in the Commandments become a way of life, a part of living by the Spirit who lives within us, and not a rule. Jesus said in Matthew 5:21-22 (NIV) *'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.'*



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. When was the last time you felt true anger towards someone? Remember the root of the feeling. Now consider the Fruits of the Spirit; which fruit did your anger trump? Was it love? Perhaps self-control or patience. Take a moment and ask God to speak into the situation, asking Him which fruit of the Spirit you need to focus on to combat your instinctive reaction.
2. Thank God for making a way for us. Thank Him for sending His son Jesus, for the rules/commitments He designed for us to live according to.
3. A life lived within the Law of God which embodies the fruits of the Spirit is the life Jesus explained to his disciples in Matthew 16:24-27 (NIV) *'Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.'* Living a life in submission to God isn't always easy, just as it isn't always easy to follow all the rules, but what greater reward are we offered in this life than an eternity spent with our Heavenly Father? Thank God for the gift of his Commandments and ask Him to strengthen you and enable you to walk each day, submitting to Him as you live a life saturated and striving to embody the fruits of the Spirit.

**DAY 12****READ:** Deuteronomy 5:18**'You shall not commit adultery.' Deuteronomy 5:18 (NIV)**

If this was a law in the days of Moses it's interesting to note, or perhaps rather assume, that because a law like this was necessary and therefore instated, not much has changed. Or perhaps a lot has changed because in today's culture sexual sin, with a highlight on adultery, runs rampant.

We live in a the-grass-is-greener-on-the-other-side day and age. If you're single, you wish you were married. If married the wish is to be single. You don't have kids; you feel your life would be better, more fulfilled, and therefore complete if you had them. When you have them, you look at your friends without children and see they do stuff; like really go out and *do stuff*, having a blast while you are at home because your children are in bed or have the flu, and you think, "man, they are living it up!"

The grass isn't always greener....

The thing is we were not created to indulge our every whim. We were not created to have desires that would hurt people; let alone ourselves, we were not created to deface the sanctity of marriage and family. We were not created to live as slaves to our sinful nature, and slave the adulterer certainly is.

Satan is clever in his machinations against God's people and it is rarely as evident or as deceptively contrived as it is when adultery comes into play within a family. It tears apart a husband and wife. It traumatizes children so deeply the effects are seen in an overwhelming array of manners often well into adulthood, the effect so deep they often shadow adult relationships. It brings disillusionment to close friends and those who are distant from the couple. It not only tears apart the relationship but it fractures the fundamental structure of trust in the offended and trust, when broken, is not recovered easily.

Adultery also finds its way into other areas of sinfulness such as deceit, apathy, selfishness and myriad of other destructive behaviors and dispositions.

Bottom line: the effects are catastrophic, not to mention what it does to the offender and their relationship with God.

God is the ultimate picture of faithfulness. He is faithful in everything He does, in loving His children, and giving instruction. He loves His Church, **us**, so deeply that He gives us every opportunity to make our way to Him. He never lets us down. He never betrays. God never substitutes us for another. God is the perfect picture of love. *'Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.'* 1 Co 13:4-7 (NIV)

The grass is greener when we follow God's design for our life, submitting wholly to His plan and being guided by His plan.

**JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. One of the reasons we live with a grass is greener attitude is that we don't practice gratitude for what we have. Why not spend time thanking God for all the things you *do* have. Include material possessions that are important to you because they make your life more enjoyable. Include relationships and the ability to have hobbies. Thank God for your health and your family.

2. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal where you typically envy someone else. Ask Him to reveal *why* it is that you envy. (Do you feel entitled to something? Do you feel like you're sacrificing more than someone else? Do you feel like other marriages are happier than yours?)
3. Confess these areas as sin and ask for forgiveness and a renewed attitude of gratitude.

## DAY 13

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 **READ:** Deuteronomy 5:19 & 20

**'You shall not steal.'** Deuteronomy 5:19 (NIV)

**'You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.'** Deuteronomy 5:20 (NIV)

Do you ever long for simpler times. The days when wholesome ideals seemed to be the commodity that was traded, when a hard and honest day's work was followed by the family all sitting down and enjoying a meal together before everyone was tucked in tight, the lights went out so it could start again the next day.

The picture in my head is like an old movie or cartoon; black and white, of course, and there's whistling. Happy, apron-wearing moms setting pies to cool on the window sill, while the lingering aroma of fresh bread permeates the small rooms of an even smaller house when dad gets home to kiss the cheek of his content wife. Sunshine days with kids running through the neighborhood, streamers attached to their hands or sparklers lit and firing as laughter and footfalls are the sounds that echoed across the street while a sprinkler swaying back and forth, its mist coaxing a rainbow to fascinate those who pass by.

Simpler times.

Wholesome times.

Ideal pictures of safe, good, clean living.

A romantic notion of days long gone by.

Life doesn't look like that these days, if it ever did. Our world is saturated in a let's-find-the-easy-way, the-faster-the-better, make-a-quick-buck, attitude. We skimp on workmanship. We lie to get around contracts. We don't pay our bills until the collector comes calling, and instead of an honest day's work, we watch the clock so we can punch out and fill ourselves with whatever pleases our fancy. We gossip. We disparage our neighbors so we can feel better about ourselves, and our mindset has become juvenile to the point of believing that our own personal hardships are always much greater than the next. We become thieves when we take other's ideas and pass them off as our own.

We are in a word; disillusioned, and it's of our own making.

These are not new commandments; it is the growing attitude of the world that is changing. We in the Western world are an entitled lot. And the sad state is that we need God desperately to change our way of thinking. We need Him to align our hearts with the desires of His.

*'Oh, the joy of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night.'* Ps 1:1-2 (NLT)



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Let Psalms 1:2 be your prayer today; that you would delight your selves in both the word and law of the Lord, that you would breathe it into your being and live it out with your life.
2. The tongue is a sharp tool that can leave damage in its wake. Ask the Lord to help you be mindful of the words you speak and the way you treat people in their presence or outside of it.

## DAY 14

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**READ:** Deuteronomy 5:21

***'You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. You shall not set your desire on your neighbor's house or land, his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.'* Deuteronomy 5:21 (NIV)**

We were created to be content.

We were created to love our neighbors.

We were created to extend kindness, compassion, understanding and joy.

*'But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.'* 1 Ti 6:6-9 (NIV)

We often lose our way with contentment early in life, especially when work habits or appreciation for what we do have aren't introduced early in life. If you watch a toddler playing with a toy he would likely appear to be content and happy with the car in his hands. However, if you added a second child to the room, setting him down next to the original, a child who has in his possession a new, perhaps shiny truck with big tires, the problems begin. There will inevitably be reaching, grabbing, struggling, whining, crying, even hitting, to discover who will take possession of the new, shiny toy that has been introduced.

You may laugh at this analogy, because yes, the picture is amusing, and one that everyone, no doubt, has witnessed. The problem is this picture loses its innocence when you replace the children with adults.

According to the dictionary to *covet* means: *to desire wrongfully, inordinately, or without due regard for the rights of others.*

There is little chance for contentment when we covet, and engage with these feelings, allowing them to grow roots in our hearts.

We were created to be content.

We were created to love our neighbors.

We were created to extend kindness, compassion, understanding and joy.

We were created to give all our love to God the Father, to open our hearts and minds to the Voice of the Holy Spirit, and to put all our hope in Christ.

*'Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with*

*Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.*

*So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming. You used to do these things when your life was still part of this world. But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Don't lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him. In this new life, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us.*

*Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.*

*Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.' Col 3:1-17 (NLT)*



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. We all want things; that is a normal human condition. It's how we react and pursue the things we want that makes a huge difference. Ask the Lord to help you differentiate between your needs and your wants and to view them both in a healthy manner.
2. The best method for combating feelings of covetousness is to be thankful. Take a moment right now to make a list of ten things you have to be thankful for today. Start with the smallest things you can think of and move on from there.
3. Thank Jesus for His forgiveness, and that you have been raised in new life with Christ! Praise Him for giving you freedom and for teaching you through His Word a better way to live!

## DAY 15



**READ:** Deuteronomy 5:22-6:25

It can be hard for us at times to fear God when we don't physically see Him or audibly hear Him.

The journey of a Christian is filled with stops and starts. Its road, or path, is curved, winding, and often up and down. It's like a flight plan with innumerable layovers, some last minutes or hours, some days, months or even years. It is broken up into pieces on occasion and sometimes feels chopped up and like there is no way to the other side of a crumbling bridge off a rocky cliff.

In contrast, the path to God is a straight line, always accessible, never swaying or inoperative. The path to God is clear; He made it that way.

For the Israelites, both God and His people agreed that Moses would be the conduit by whom He would speak to them. The Israelites didn't believe they could bear to repeatedly experience God as they had when Moses descended the mountain. Truthfully their fear was no doubt fully justified. It is a sight we are used to reading about or imagining on an easy, safe, often fluffy level, but the experience when understood in its full glory, was likely beyond anything we could imagine ourselves witnessing. They experienced true, bone gripping fear. The Lord in all His power revealed Himself as He delivered His message with solemn authority. God heard the cry of the Israelites and He gave them a way to Him that was approachable and bodily present; what a Great God we serve!

*'The Lord heard you when you spoke to me and the Lord said to me, "I have heard that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!'" Dt 5:28-29 (NIV) 'So be careful to do what the Lord your God has commanded you; do not turn aside to the right or to the left. Walk in all the way that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.'* Dt 5:32-33 (NIV)

The Israelites were given numerous warnings, as are we when we pour our efforts into studying the scriptures. Neither we nor the Israelites are led on the path in blindness. The warning was and still is clear: **'Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take our oaths in his name. Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you; for the Lord your God, who is among you, is a jealous God and his anger will burn against you, and he will destroy you from the face of the land. Do not test the Lord your God as you did at Massah. Be sure to keep the commands of the Lord your God and the stipulations and decrees he has given you. Do what is right and good in the Lord's sight, so that it may go well with you and you may go in and take over the good land that the Lord promised on oath to your forefathers, thrusting out all your enemies before you, as the Lord said.'** Dt 6:13-19 (NIV)

Fear the Lord, not because all of His creation is at His command, but because you *'love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.'* Dt 6:5 (NIV)

Fear the Lord because He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Fear the Lord because He Was and Is and Is to Come.

Fear the Lord not as though he were a punisher wielding a cruel punishment, but rather with reverence for all He is, and because He IS WORTHY.



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Spend some time telling God why you love Him.
2. The idea of fear is often a blurry picture of what we don't know; like a child who fears the dark. That is not the fear of the Lord. Talk to God about this concept. Ask Him to place a reverence in your heart for who He is.
3. Make an effort throughout the day to continue praising God. Talking to Him as you go about your tasks; share your day with Him intentionally. Inviting God into every part of your day is a step towards loving Him with all your heart, your soul and your strength.

## DAY 16

 **READ:** Deuteronomy 31

***'The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.'*** Deuteronomy 31:8 (NIV)

This is Moses's swan song, his final push on the Israelites, encouraging them to remain focused on God, as well as the passing of the torch to Joshua, so to speak. These are not only the final words spoken to Moses by God but also Joshua's commissioning, as well as prophetic words which lay the groundwork for the bittersweet song which lays in the next passage.

Moses has told the Israelites he will not accompany them into the Promised Land, but he does so by giving them a boost, by reinforcing the focus that has been impressed upon them through the previous passages of Deuteronomy, which are standing strong and following the commands the Lord has set before them.

One of the most heralded verses spoken to the Israelites as well as directly to Joshua in this book is also a banner for those who pursue Christ as well as the Christian faith.

*'Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.'* Dt 31:6

When Moses calls Joshua to join him before the Israelites he repeats these words in verses 7 & 8, establishing a trust, passing the torch, and encouraging Joshua to face the task at hand with courage, knowing the Lord their God has blessed their journey and has promised to go before them.

What encouraging words spoken by The King to His people. What encouraging words we can hide in our hearts; that we might know that God is the same yesterday and today and forever.



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Thank God for the story of Moses laid out for us in the book of Deuteronomy. Thank Him that we can see that Moses was simply a man doing His best to lead a complicated people to the land promised to them via their Ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
2. The Lord goes before us. What a precious truth to carry always. Thank God for His faithfulness, from the beginning of time till eternity.
3. Thank God that he loves us enough to give us a book that repeats itself in order to make clear the warning we must heed.
4. Praise God for the work of His hands. That He uses ordinary people. That He speaks to us and nurtures us through His Word.

## DAY 17

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**READ:** Deuteronomy 32:1-4

What gentle, adoring, praise-worthy love. Moses's final words to the people of Israel not only lift up the Most High, but also affirm God's love alongside the warning in the previous thirty one chapters with beautiful, poetic style.

*'Listen, O heavens, and I will speak;  
Hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.  
Let my teaching fall like rain  
And my words descend like dew,  
Like showers on new grass,  
Like abundant rain on tender plants.'*

Dt 32:1-2 (NIV)

Rain, dew, showers, and abundant rain on tender plants; these all nourish, tend to, nurture and fulfill a need with a gentle touch. Each of these lines symbolizes a picture of a soft touch, a gentle hand, a caring Watcher and loving provider.

It is also a beautiful reminder that though God expects much of us through our submission and obedience, He is also patient, and will not abandon us to our devices. He cares for us each step of the way.

He teaches us each moment of our day, in every direction we can see, through each decision placed before us before we have a chance to act.

His love is gentle, and in our darker moments (dew only falls at night) He is present, soothing us with His life's breath and drawing us towards Him, being our comforter, in our time of need.

He provides for us, and like showers on new grass, we need Him, His Word and the Holy Spirit, to fuel our pursuit for Him so we don't fade out or burn out when the world tries to knock us down.

He pours into us an endless supply of himself. We are tender plants, easily bruised, swayed, and mishandled; but praise the Lord Most High for His abundant rain, The Spring of Living Water, that touches us and helps us grow to maturity, that we might handle anything that comes our way.



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

*A prayer to pray:* We praise you, Father, because you command the heavens and hold all the earth in the palm of your Mighty Hand. Thank you, Father, for your firm direction, for the Law that Lives in your Word. Thank you that when the roots in my heart are dry, cracking and floundering for purchase, that you descend on me dew, as like Living Water; refreshing my spirit, guiding me through and strengthening the foundation I stand upon, in turn making my life more fruitful.

I praise you, Heavenly Father, because you are more than I could hope for. You are everything I need and gentle in revealing your love for me.

O, God, fill me with your Spirit that I might draw closer to you, walking towards all that you created me to be. Thank you, Father, for you speak through your Word, that your ways are clear, and that the path towards knowing your heart is alive in the scriptures.

Amen

Now spend some more time talking with God, giving Him your time and opening your heart, as well as telling Him you love Him.

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## DAY 18



**READ:** Deuteronomy 32:3-4

*'I will proclaim the name of the Lord.  
Oh, praise the greatness of our God!  
He is the Rock, his works are perfect,  
And all his ways are just.  
A faithful God who does no wrong,  
Upright and just is he.'*

Deuteronomy 32:3-4 (NIV)

What stands out to you in these verses?

Read them again and soak in their meaning.

What does it mean to proclaim the name of the Lord? Does it mean literally shouting it from the rooftops or through a loudspeaker attached to the hood of your car?

I wonder how often we actually live the idea of proclaiming the name of the Lord.

Sure, many of our conversations may be focused on Him. Our Sunday morning efforts, and indeed our prayers would boast our devotion. But the very word *proclaim* means more. Derivatives of the word include; announce, declare, state, decree, assert, broadcast, pronounce, publically state. They all sound quite clinical in theory, but they all have an idea, or concept that runs through them and that something is that they are all exposed. All these words allow for an opening, something to be seen, heard or experienced.

Let's put this idea into something more visual:

You can't get a suntan if you are covered from head to toe in thick fabric. You need to peel off the layers and *expose* your skin to the sun. Once your arms are bare you have a greater chance of soaking up that vitamin D. But what if you still have a shield in place, or sunscreen to be exact? You still won't be opening yourself up, *exposing* yourself in a way that would declare you truly wanted a suntan.

You get the picture?

Do we proclaim the Name of the Lord with our lives? With our speech, actions, intentions and all we do?

Verse 4 surely gives us ample reason to shout it from the rooftops, don't you think?



### JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind a moment where you failed to proclaim God as ruler of your life. Ask God to forgive your neglect and replace it with a boldness for the next time the opportunity arises to give God the glory for what He is doing in your life.
2. *'He is the **Rock**, his **works are perfect**, and all his **ways are just**. A **faithful** God who **does no wrong**, **upright and just** is he.'* DT 32:4 (NIV) That is quite the list of attributes. Take a moment to praise God for He is Worthy.

## DAY 19



**READ:** Deuteronomy 32:5-43

There is another turn for warning here, but one of more urgency as of what has been and a prediction of what was to come, and an ugly prediction it surely is. Moses tells a story in this song and it is one at first that relishes in all God has done in verses 1-4 and reveals the great failings of a people in the eyes of their God for the remainder.

Verses 5-6 is much like a lament, a "how could you" forsake the God, your Father, who created you.

Verses 7-9 are an admonishment for the people to remember, to look back and see with open hearts all that the Most High had done for His people.

Verses 10-14 show God's love via a series of pictures that show the abundance God has to offer.

Verses 15-18 reveal the perverse nature of humanity in needing to break boundaries and

assert our own desires and authority. They were selfish, prideful and insolent, asserting themselves, ultimately leading them to renounce the God they once served.

*'You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave you birth.'* Dt 32:18 (NIV)

*'The Lord saw this and rejected them because he was angered by his sons and daughters.'* Dt 32:19 (NIV)

Verses 19-27 drips with the agonizing betrayal and burning jealousy of God whose wrath is justified and terrifying in the same breath. *'For a fire has been kindled by my wrath, one that burns to the realm of death below. It will devour the earth and its harvests and set afire the foundations of the mountains.'* Dt 32:22 (NIV)

Verses 28-38 God sits as judge over His people. There is a sadness layered in the words in these verses, *'If only they were wise and would understand this and discern what their end will be.'* Dt 32:29

A sadness that could have been avoided had the warnings been heeded, had His people held his statutes, had His church, His bride, followed Him with their whole heart, soul, and strength. *"Have I not kept this in reserve and sealed it in my vaults? It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them." The Lord will judge his people and have compassion on his servants when he sees their strength is gone and no one is left, slave or free.'* Dt 32:34-36 (NIV)

Verses 39-43 God declares His Great Name. *'See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me.'* Dt 32:39 (NIV)



## JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. We see a spectrum of God's characteristics in these verses. Which aspects of His character are particularly important to you?
2. Thank God for being the Rock that we are to build our life upon. Thank Him for his patience and that He is the ultimate teacher.
3. Pray that God would strengthen your resolve; that you would follow Him in submission each day of your life.

## DAY 20

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**READ:** Deuteronomy 6:6-9 & 11:18-19 & 32:44-47

Have you heard the phrase 'teach your children well'? Surely you have, there's even a song written about it. We know having read the scriptures that Jesus himself had a deeply devoted love for the children. He says in Matthew 19:14 (NIV) *'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'* Those are powerful words spoken by the King of Kings, who found delight in children.

Parents know, too, that it is easier to instill values in their children at an early age, compared to when they are older and already established in a lifestyle of their own choosing. It is, after all, the purpose of the Christian parent to demonstrate the love of the Father to the child they were blessed with, as well as raising them up to be humans of strong character, following the path towards Jesus.

The lovely thing about these passages in Deuteronomy is that children were very likely raised in community, not solely by their individual parents. This diversifies the responsibility directing it on the community as a whole. Therefore, if you did not or do not have children, you are not off the hook on this one!

These highlighted verses are imperative as well as tremendously beautiful as they give us, not only purpose as followers, but also a focus to our identity in Christ. *'Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you – they are your life.'* Dt 32:46-47 (NIV)

### **They are our life.**

The commands of God are imperative truths to those who walk daily and have given their lives to a living God who is sovereign, mighty, all-powerful, worthy of praise, compassionate, slow to anger, loving, faithful, gentle and patient. This command needs to be the goal of every Christian, *'Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the Lord swore to give your forefathers, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.'* Dt 11:18-21 (NIV)

What a beautiful purpose that exalts the Lord over our life.

*'These commands that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.*

*Impress them on your children.*

*Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.*

*Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.*

*Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.'*

Dt 6:6-9 (NIV)



### **JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Are the Words of the Lord fixed on your heart? Do you love Him with all your heart, soul and strength? Ask Jesus to help you make Him your focus, that your hands and feet would be symbols of His love in your life.
2. Whether you have your own children or are in a place of influence to a child, pray that you would be a bright light of God's love in their life. Pray that the child would seek God as their Lord and Saviour and carry His Word in their hearts all the days of their lives.
3. Thank God for His love for His children; He is the ultimate example of a loving and giving Father, after all!

## **DAY 21**

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**READ:** Deuteronomy 34

Imagine yourself in the shoes of Moses for a moment.

- He and the Israelites experienced firsthand God's power and wrath as they endured deadly plagues while retaining their lives in Egypt as death surrounded them.
- He led the people out of Egypt.
- He climbed the mountain and spent time in the presence of the Lord only to descend said mountain to discover his people, in such a brief time, had turned their backs on their Mighty God and given their attention to idols.

- God sustained Moses and the Israelites for 40 years, again revealing His Goodness to His people while they wandered in the desert.
- He named his successor, the leader who would ultimately lead them to the Promised Land.

What a life. What a life filled with a deep, abiding relationship with God. And yet in all that Moses would never be allowed to cross into the Promised Land. How heart breaking it must have been to know that Israel would again turn away from the God who brought them out of Egypt; the same God who revealed himself repeatedly through many signs and spectacular wonders. Oh how his heart must have ached to give his final warning, a warning that revealed what was to come, even as he knew they were going on without him.

Yet God in all His goodness allowed Moses to see the Land the Israelites would come to settle in. *'This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it.'* Dt 34:4 (NIV)

**Here is your encouragement.** Moses was a flawed man. He questioned God and His call for Moses's life five times when God spoke to him through the burning bush in Exodus 3 & 4. That's right, five! His questions and protests were essentially these:

- Why me?
  - I don't know enough?
  - What if I'm not good enough?
  - What if they don't believe me or listen to me?
- Please don't make me do this.

Does any of this sound familiar?

God sometimes asks us to do big things and our human reaction is often to run and hide in fear, or to ignore, sweeping it under the rug, coming up with excuses as to why we are not the man/woman for the job.

It's laughable really, because our fear is produced from our human experience. We often forget that through Christ, all things are possible, *'I can do everything through him who gives me strength.'* Philippians 4:13 (NIV)

Moses did not want this job in the beginning, but God was patient, guiding Him through each step of the way, listening to Moses' protests and providing help and direction along the way.

What an Awesome GOD!

He uses us where we're at, just as He did with Moses. We can doubt and struggle along the way as long as our heart is set on obeying the commands and directions given by the One True God.

This was said of Moses: *'Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the Lord sent him to do in Egypt – to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land. For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.'* Dt 34:10-12 (NIV)

There's hope, because if God can use Moses who struggled along the way, surely He can use us!



## **JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Thank the Lord for not abandoning us when we question what He has asked us to do.
2. Thank God that He uses His people, that He speaks to us each in a way unique to each of us, and that He is always available to us to seek out.
3. Praise and Thank God for the warning in the Book of Deuteronomy. It is vital to us, that we know His heart and understand what is important to Him so in our pursuit of Him our love and knowledge of Him may grow.







## The Book of Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy highlights the final leg of Moses's journey as he leads the Israelites to the Promised Land.

Even though it's a book filled with warnings, what cannot be mistaken throughout this book is how much God loves His children. Oh, how the Lord loves us! Deuteronomy is a beautiful confirmation of that as well as an exhaustive picture of the Lord's patience as warning after warning is declared.

### **Deuteronomy 6:5 (NIV)**

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts."*

