

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

### “COVENANTAL WARNINGS”

For individual study or group discussion

DATE: April 14, 2024

SPEAKER: John Mark/Brian

SERIES: Deuteronomy

PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 29:16-29

## Family Dinner Table

### A Prophet Greater Than Moses

The structure of the *Gospel of Matthew* gives evidence that Jesus is the prophet greater than Moses (Hebrews 3:3). In Deuteronomy 18:15-22, Moses foretells that God will raise up a prophet who will speak the Word of God (v. 18). Note the many similarities between Christ and Moses that Matthew lays out for us: 1:21, Jesus delivers his people from bondage; 2:15, “*Out of Egypt I called my son;*” 2:16, he is pursued by a king who enacts a pogrom against infant boys; 4:1-11, after 40 days in the wilderness, 5:1-7:27 Jesus ascends a mountain to deliver a new law; 17:1-8, on a mountain Jesus’ face “*shone like the sun.*” And in 14:13-21, Jesus miraculously feeds a multitude in the wilderness.

As the greater Moses, Jesus became the perfect mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5). Christ bore the full wrath and curse of God’s people upon himself so that we might inherit the land and not be uprooted and cast out (Deut. 29:28).

- Read Hebrew 9:11-15. How did Christ bridge the gap between God and man?
- Reflect on Revelation 5 this week. “*Worthy is the Lamb!*”

**PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS**  
PCA Administrative Committee,  
denominational partner ministry  
**PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS**  
Janet and Peter, supported  
missionary partners

A repeating theme in the book of Deuteronomy about covenant renewal is that it requires returning to God and listening to his voice (4:15-31; 29:1-15). In Deuteronomy 29:16-29, Moses now calls the children of Israel to action with **covenantal warnings**: “*Beware lest there be among you a man or woman or clan or tribe whose heart is turning away today from God to go and serve the gods of those nations*” (v. 18). The same admonition lies before the church today. Tolerance for secret idolaters within the community will bear “poisonous and bitter fruit” and negatively impact others (v. 19).

### **Beware of the deceptiveness and destructiveness of idolatry. (vv. 16-21)**

The Bible speaks of idolatry more than any other sin. In today’s passage, Moses is calling the people of God to guard their hearts, warning them that arrogance and stubborn willfulness in pursuing idols will not only bring curses upon the individual but upon the entire community if left unaddressed. Secret sins affect others. According to Raymond Brown, “*Men and women of any generation who imagine that they can get away with ‘secret’ sinning have forgotten three crucial things. Secret sin deceives ourselves, affects others, and grieves God.*”<sup>1</sup>

- Read John 15:1-6. We need to be mindful where we are rooted. Why does one need to be rooted in Christ in order to bear good fruit? What can you do to strengthen your roots in Christ?
- The Gospel is revealed within the book of Deuteronomy. Read Romans 7:7-25. Discuss why keeping the law should be a response to God’s grace and not a means of earning God’s favor.

### **Be humbly aware of God’s just judgment. (vv. 24-28)**

Moses uses strong language to describe God’s judgment against idolaters. Paul states in 1 Corinthians 5:6-7 that “*a little leaven leavens the whole lump,*” indicating that if sin is not dealt with, it can spread throughout the whole community. In verse 28, the punishment for such stubbornness of heart would be “*the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger and fury and great wrath, and cast them into another land, as they are this day.*”

- Read Joshua 7:20-26. Describe how the sin of Achan affected the whole community of Israel. How does Achan’s story illustrate the covenantal warnings in today’s passage?
- Idolatry is at the root of all sin because worshiping the good things that God gives us, instead of worshiping God himself, robs God of the glory due to him alone. What are some of the things that compete with God for worship in your life? How can you keep those things in their proper place? (cf. John 4:19-26.)

### **Be fully alert to what God has revealed. (v. 29)**

In verse 29, both God’s transcendence and immanence are described. God is transcendent in that he is outside of mankind’s full experience, perception, and grasp. God is immanent in that he has revealed himself to us so that he is knowable and perceivable. C. S. Lewis summarized, “*God is both further from us, and nearer to us, than any other being.*”<sup>2</sup> And according to Brown, although “*the secret things belong to the LORD our God,*” there are “*uncovered facts*” that God gives to his people through his Word, and those “*uncovered facts*” are ours to value, share, and obey.<sup>3</sup>

- Read the [WLC Q&A 7](#). When we cannot fully comprehend God’s ways, how does knowing God and his attributes aid us in believing his Word? Meditate on Job 38-39 and Proverbs 30:1-6 this week.

<sup>1-3</sup> Brown, Raymond. *The Message of Deuteronomy*. 1993, Downers Grove, IL. IVP. 279, 282

<sup>2</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*. 1996, New York: Touchstone. 37-38