

Read the Whole Bible with Pastor

Monday (May 15) – Deuteronomy 29, 30

The Lord commands the people to keep the words of His covenant. He will be their God, and they will be His people. The covenant works both ways, but God knows that the people will break their side of it. Even so, He promises that when they turn from their sin, He will have mercy and gather them to Himself once again. In verse 6 God speaks of a future day when He will “circumcise the hearts” of His people, a foreshadowing of Holy Baptism which will supersede the circumcision of the flesh.

Tuesday (May 16) – Deuteronomy 31

Although Moses knows he himself will not enter the promised land, as a faithful pastor he speaks God’s faith sustaining words to the people while prepare to enter and receive their inheritance. They must be strong and courageous, for it is the Lord who goes with them. We too face spiritual battles each day, but we know that we do not fight them in our own strength. We take comfort in the strength and presence of our God, who will never leave or forsake us.

Moses, the law-giver, cannot lead the people into the promised land. Joshua must do this. There is a beautiful picture of the Gospel here: The Law cannot bring us into heaven (the promised land). Only Jesus can lead us through death (the Jordan River) into the promised land. (Joshua and Jesus are the very same name – Joshua is Hebrew and Jesus is Greek.)

Wednesday (May 17) – Deuteronomy 32

Moses writes a hymn to instruct the people. The purpose of the hymn was not to make them feel good, but to teach them. In this case the hymn taught them of their future unfaithfulness. We must remember that the purpose of all hymnody is instruction in the faith. We don’t judge hymns by how they make us feel, but by what they teach us. Hymns that teach the faith will speak both of our sinfulness and of God’s gift to us in Christ. Saint Paul reminds us that as we share God’s word in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, we teach one another as we make melody to the Lord (Colossians 3:16).

Thursday (May 18) – Deuteronomy 33, 34

God speaks words of kindness and blessing upon His people, Israel. In Scripture a blessing is something that is spoken audibly. The Lord blesses us today through the preaching of His Word. His peace and mercy is upon us now as it was upon the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16). We are His church joined of both Jew and Gentile, now one in Jesus Christ!

Although the Lord allows Moses to view the promised land from afar, Moses is not permitted to enter the earthly promised land. (Instead, God calls Moses directly to the far greater promised land of heaven.) Moses dies and the people mourn over him. As people of God we also weep and sorrow, but not as those without hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13). Rather, we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God (Romans 5:2).

Friday (May 19) – Joshua 1, 2

With the death of Moses, God fulfills His promise to care for the nation of Israel by appointing Joshua as Moses' successor. God promises to be with Joshua just as He was with Moses. Two and a half tribes had already received their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan, but Joshua reminds them of their promise to cross over and help their brothers gain their inheritance.

In chapter 2 Joshua sends two spies to the city of Jericho, where they find shelter in the house of Rahab the prostitute. Rahab misleads the enemy soldiers in order to protect the spies. This "lie" is not a sin, but rather is an example of keeping God's commandments by loving her neighbors and protecting them from harm. The Scriptures speak of Rahab as a woman of faith, who "welcomed the spies, and did not perish with those who did not believe" (Hebrews 11:31). Having left her old way of life and false gods behind, Rahab became an Israelite, later marrying Salmon from the tribe of Judah. Their son would be Boaz, who marries Ruth, and would be the great-grandfather of David. Rahab is listed in Matthew's genealogy (1:5) as an ancestress of Christ.

Saturday (May 20) – Joshua 3, 4

Joshua is translated as Jesus in the New Testament. In the person of Joshua, we see a foreshadowing of our Savior. Just as Joshua leads the people from the desert, through the Jordan, and into the promised land, so by faith in our Savior, Jesus Christ, we are led out of the wilderness of sin, through the portal of death, and into the eternal life of heaven. As the ark of the covenant went before the Israelites, so our Lord Jesus, the true Ark of God's presence, goes before us as we cross from death into life. Joshua instructs the people to set up memorial stones as a visible remembrance of God's salvation. God's people have signs of His saving presence still this day. His means of grace, that is His word in all its forms, are memorials of His saving intention toward His people in Jesus Christ today.

Sunday (May 21) – Joshua 5, 6

Signs of the covenant, circumcision, and the Passover meal are to be received by the people. However, the sons of Israel had not yet received the covenant sign of circumcision. God's people in the church receive the signs of the covenant both in baptism and in remembrance of His saving presence in the new Passover Feast.

Joshua is standing on holy ground as he sees the commander of the army of the Lord. He falls before Him and worships, which indicates the appearance of God in human form. The Lord will give the people the land. According to God's instruction, they march for seven days around the city, and on the seventh day they march around it seven times. The trumpets blow and the people shout as God causes the walls to fall flat. In the Scriptures the number seven indicates completion and perfection. Like the people who shouted in faith, we speak and act out obedient faith trusting in God's salvation. The Lord fights for us even today!