

MARCH 2026 | DAY 29

ONE STORY THAT LEADS TO JESUS

With Fellowship of the Rockies

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 13
Deuteronomy 14
Psalms 57

Peer pressure often feels strongest from friends and family. In today's reading, Moses warns the Israelites to guard against insider threats to covenant faithfulness. It doesn't matter if it's coming from their best friend, brother, or even spouse—they are to resist any voice tempting them to trust someone or something other than Yahweh.

Like a cancerous tumor, the choice to trust idols threatens to metastasize into national ruin, threatening the survival of Israel's entire community. To kill the tumor, Israel's law prescribes aggressive treatment for defiant towns. Any Israelite city that chooses to follow Canaan's idols will receive the same consequences that Canaan experienced—de-creation and death. These laws also include critical safeguards. Accusations of citywide idolatry are to be followed by careful investigation. If proven true, the town's property becomes a burnt offering to Yahweh. Safeguarding regulations like these prevent the greedy and powerful from lying to take their neighbors' possessions.

Faithfulness to Yahweh means more than avoiding idolatry. Trusting and following God also involves caring for the poor. Every year, Israelite families were to bring a tenth of their income, a tithe, to Yahweh's temple for the priests and the Levites. Every third year, the tithe would go to the poor. Yahweh's generosity is supposed to form the foundation of Israel's economic and religious system. Rich or poor, God's blessing overflows to everyone.

MARCH 2026 | DAY 30

ONE STORY THAT LEADS TO JESUS

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SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 15
Deuteronomy 16
Psalms 58

How does a person rest like God rests? In today's reading, Moses reviews key Sabbath and festival commands that build divine rest into Israel's calendar. These instructions show that God's rest includes much more than avoiding labor. For Yahweh, genuine rest compels his people to pursue generosity, freedom, and justice toward all.

Once settled in the promised land, each year is to start with Passover. The Israelites will roast lamb and break unleavened bread together, not only remembering the night God rescued them from slavery but also how he kept them from entering back into bondage. Israel continues to share in that moment, year after year. And that's not all. As the video explains, the Hebrew word for "remember," *zakhar*, often refers to attention that inspires action—which is exactly what we find in today's reading. In memory of their life in bondage, the Israelites must set their slaves free every seven years.

Several months after Passover, the harvest festival comes, where the people spend seven weeks reaping grain from the fields. Then comes the Feast of Weeks, where the people gather to celebrate God's generous provision. And then, every seventh year, the Israelites will show the same generosity to others by cancelling all debts throughout the land.

Yahweh's rest creates a radical new community—one that intends to end grinding poverty, snowballing debt, and dehumanizing slavery. When God's people embrace the way of Sabbath rest according to God's instruction, the result is joy and blessing for everyone.

MARCH 2026 | DAY 31

ONE STORY THAT LEADS TO JESUS

With Fellowship of the Rockies

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 17
Deuteronomy 18
Deuteronomy 19
Deuteronomy 20
Psalms 59

In a world always pushing for bigger, louder, and more for me and mine, God's instructions for his people stand in stark contrast, calling his people to humility, restraint, and generous care for others. Today's reading includes certain limitations intended to guide Israel on the path of blessing and life.

Where other nations regard kings as divine beings who are the law, Israel's top leaders are neither divine nor above the law. Like everyone else, they are accountable to God's covenant law. Israel's kings are to wield authority alongside—not over—judges, priests, and prophets. They must also refrain from stockpiling gold for their palace, collecting wives for their harem, or securing horses for their army—all standard royal privileges in the ancient Near East. Instead, God instructs Israel's kings to meditate on the law and trust God to bless them with all they need. Israel's laws also restrict violence. No accusation leads to execution without an investigation and corroborating witnesses, and capital punishment could not be used to avenge an accidental death. In war, as well, Israel must show restraint. Their armies are supposed to rely on God's power instead of military might, even to the point of sending soldiers home. Israel was to approach most enemy cities (Canaanite towns were a special case) with terms of peace and to spare noncombatants if battle ensued.

MARCH 2026 | DAY 31 - CONTINUED

ONE STORY THAT LEADS TO JESUS

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SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 17
Deuteronomy 18
Deuteronomy 19
Deuteronomy 20
Psalms 59

This emphasis on personal restraint traces back to Eden. In the video, you'll see how catastrophe unfolds when humans see something they think is good for life and choose to take it on their terms. Conversely, when humans trust that God freely gives everything good for life, they begin to receive (rather than take) real life.

APRIL 2026 | DAY 1

ONE STORY THAT LEADS TO JESUS

With Fellowship of the Rockies

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 21
Deuteronomy 22
Deuteronomy 23
Psalms 60

Today's reading introduces laws about Israel's civil life, some of which seem bizarre or unjust by modern standards. Keep in mind that God gives these instructions in a culture very different from our own. Seeing God's commands in context helps us see how Yahweh invites people to standards of justice that far surpass those of their surrounding world. The laws in today's reading consistently place the needs of the weak above the desires of the powerful. Many ancient Near Eastern societies valued women like property or livestock, allowing men to use, abuse, or simply discard them. In that kind of context, Israel's laws grant women a sort of dignity likely seen as extreme (or even offensive) at the time. For example, while God allows Israelite men to marry war captives—a common practice then—he insists they respect these women, provide space to mourn, and treat them as wives with legal rights. Israel's laws also protect wives from angry husbands making false accusations and demand justice for victims of sexual assault. Other vulnerable groups also receive legal protections. The law requires Israelites to protect escaped enslaved people instead of returning them to their masters. And prohibitions against charging interest place a poor person's need for resources over a rich person's desire for profit. God stands up for the weak and powerless, and his laws command the Israelites to do the same. Over and over, his instructions reveal deep value for all people, regardless of social status, and a desire for people to take care of each other and bless one another.

APRIL 2026 | DAY 2

ONE STORY THAT LEADS TO JESUS

With Fellowship of the Rockies

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 24
Deuteronomy 25
Deuteronomy 26
Deuteronomy 27
Psalms 61

What does it look like to live justly with others in a world corrupted by injustice? Today's reading features several laws that aim to give vulnerable groups dignity and protection in less-than-ideal circumstances. Yahweh's laws meet the Israelites within this brokenness and call them to meet their wounded world with justice and love.

The law allows corporal punishment, but it restrains the extreme violence common to other legal systems in the ancient Near East. The law allows lending, but prohibits using the borrower's necessities as collateral. You can't take someone's coat and leave them to shiver through the night. The law allows divorce but prohibits practices that treat women like objects to take and discard at will.

The wisdom undergirding Yahweh's law for Israel pushes people to acknowledge the dignity of their vulnerable neighbors and treat them with greater love. Watch the video to learn how Jesus, for example, interpreted Deuteronomy's divorce rules in a way that honors women's dignity.

Moses wraps up his explanation of the law by presenting Israel with a choice. If they keep Yahweh's commands, they'll become a beacon of his love and justice to all nations. But if they walk away from Yahweh, he will allow them to experience the consequences of their decision. Which will they choose?

APRIL 2026 | DAY 3

ONE STORY THAT LEADS TO JESUS

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SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 28
Deuteronomy 29
Psalms 62

Adam and Eve once stood before God in a garden, facing a life-or-death decision. Israel now stands before God at the edge of a garden land, facing the same. Moses clarifies Israel's two options. They can enjoy life and ongoing blessing by listening to Yahweh and following his instruction, or experience cursed suffering and loss by rejecting Yahweh and trying to seize blessing on their own terms.

The harsh list of curses in today's reading probably feels excessive, even vindictive. But it's important to consider their function in Israel's context. First, the covenant curses of Deuteronomy parallel common rhetorical techniques of other ancient Near Eastern law treaties. When two nations entered into a covenant with each other, the terms usually included a lengthy list of curses to emphasize the stakes of the agreement.

Second, as you'll see in the video, "curse" refers to the consequences of humans trying to seize blessing on their own terms. When Yahweh says rejecting him means curse, he aims to warn rather than terrorize. God wants Israel to understand the real and painful consequences of seeking blessing from idols. If barley wilts in parched fields, a stone statue can't bring rain. If enemy soldiers storm cities, a wood carving can't stop them from dragging away Israel's children in chains.

Yahweh has already promised to bless Israel. Now, the Israelites have to choose whether they want his blessing. They will fail if they try to get life, security, fertility, and abundance elsewhere, because only Yahweh can provide those things. Moses insists, God alone is the source of life—so choose life!

APRIL 2026 | DAY 4

ONE STORY THAT LEADS TO JESUS

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SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 30
Deuteronomy 31
Psalms 63

The end of Deuteronomy also marks the end of the Torah,* and we see hyperlinking connections with the beginning of the story. As in the first garden (Gen. 2-3), humanity faces a choice between trusting Yahweh's wisdom or its own. Faith or fear. Life or death. The whole world's blessing hangs in the balance.

Moses rises to this occasion by giving the Israelites a spectacularly unmotivating pep talk. At first, he's somewhat positive. He promises that life and blessing lie within their reach. He wants them to see that the heart of God's law is good, reasonable, and attainable.

Then, Moses abandons all positivity and predicts a bleak future. He says they, like Adam and Eve in the garden, will fail the test. They will reject Yahweh's instructions and experience things nobody wants to experience. A whole scroll's worth of pleading and warning can't change Israel's heart. But Yahweh can.

Moses' reminder about Yahweh's relentless, loyal love provides a glimmer of hope at the end of Deuteronomy and the close of the Torah. The first five books develop a pattern that will continue unfolding until the end of Scripture. It's about the people of Israel and all people learning, generation by generation, to know God's love for them and to trust him as he completes the work of rescuing and restoring humanity.