

# Pastoral REFLECTIONS

March 17, 2024

## A Good Measure



When people travel by plane, and the ride is very smooth, they tend to feel that everything is well over a long period of time until there is turbulence. If turbulence continues, there is anxiety and nervousness, but they would still say it was a good flight. They can say that because, despite the turbulence, the plane landed safely. As a matter of fact, the first question people tend to ask you is, "How was your flight?" My standard answer is always, "It was a great flight; the plane landed."

When the economy is strong and jobs are well (may not be the exact job we want, but we have one), we tend not to have time to serve or provide a lot of time to the Lord; when salaries are good, we may debate how much we should give; some people may even say this is a lot when they give. It is not about how much God instructed them to keep, but more about how much they gave. As a result, our giving to God becomes grudging rather than thankful. So, sometimes, God allows for turbulence.

Turbulence can come in the form of flood damage, wrecks, health issues, loved ones struggling with health issues, and a death in the family. Companies may decide to downsize, or a supervisor, manager, or president may resign, and the new person is not as favorable towards you. Now that there is turbulence, we come to God expecting immediate resolutions or protection because we forgot that it was more to life than what we have achieved or the level of security that our job benefits may provide. God talks about what this means in Deuteronomy 8:11-20.

When the plane is flying, we forget how much traffic is in the sky, how many millions of parts must work right, how the pilot needs to stay alive, and how many things can go wrong upon landing or during take off. In the midst of life, we forget that someone must regulate the air we breathe (especially with all the oil refineries we have), keep the animals or vegetation we eat multiplying, the earth spinning in space, the sun gassed up, the temperate regulation on earth, so the seasons flow well, etc. When God instructs us to give, He demands respect for all He does, which causes Him to own 100% of what we have. We are on His earth that He sustains. Respect—reverence is worship, which is why giving in the Old and New Testament is worship (Malachi 1:6-14). "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Luke 6:38 NIV)

We give because God gave to us, not because we are in church (Job 38-41). It is respect! It is reverence! It is worship!

## UPCOMING Events



**PRAYER VIGIL TUES. MAR. 26TH 12 & 7 PM**  
"He is the Way...and He Never Fails" Living Word Family join us for the first Prayer Vigil of the year Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 12 p.m. & 7 p.m. Come and pray for our families, our church, our community, nation and world. For more information email Pastor Duane Lawrence at [dlawrence@lwfellowshipchurch.org](mailto:dlawrence@lwfellowshipchurch.org)



**REVELATION BIBLE STUDY— EVERY TUESDAY**  
Join us for Revelation Bible Studies every Tuesday at 12 p.m. & 7 p.m.  
Review your Revelation Bible Study notes at <https://bit.ly/LWFCBibleStudyNotes>

See you there to continue our deep dive into the book of Revelation. For more information call the church at **(281) 260-7402**.



### Easter Weekend 2024

**FRIDAY, MARCH 29TH—GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE**  
6:00 P.M.  
LWFC Drama Ministry & Creative Jams  
Present "Forgiveness"

**SATURDAY, MARCH 30TH—GOOD NEWS FEST**  
11 A.M.—2 P.M.  
Good News Fest—Fun, Food, Games, and more for the Entire Family!

**SUNDAY, MARCH 31ST—RESURRECTION SUNDAY**  
Services will be at: 6 A.M. | 8:30 A.M. | 11 A.M.



### MEN'S PURITY DISCUSSIONS

Living Word Men, join us for our 2024 Purity Discussions. You don't want to miss this opportunity to engage in thought-provoking conversations and walk through *Every Man's Battle* by Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker. Register at <https://bit.ly/MensPurity> or, for more information contact Jeffrey Allen at [jeffrey.allen@lwfellowshipchurch.org](mailto:jeffrey.allen@lwfellowshipchurch.org).



### LWCA/ABC SUMMER CAMP

The Living Word Christian Academy and ABC Word Academy have a Christian-based, fun-filled summer camp available for ages 5—12 years-old. The campers will have a dynamic summer with robotics, arts & crafts, cooking classes, karate and much, much more! Register on the events page of the website or call **(281) 260-7402**



## ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Worship In Giving

*Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses*

Special Music

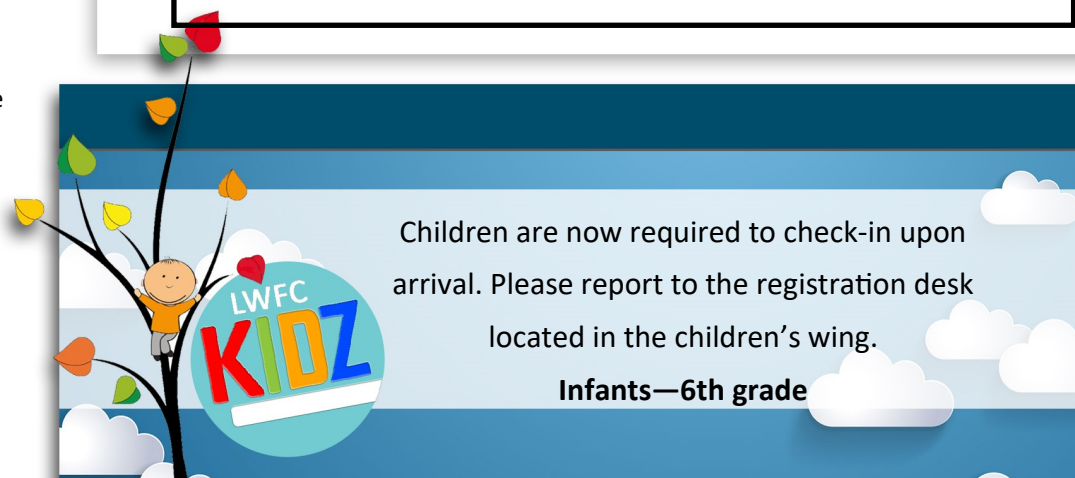
**"To The Edge"**  
*Deuteronomy 31 & 34*

Click "Sermon Notes" on the Website

**Call to Discipleship**  
Please remain seated at this time

Visitor's Welcome

Benediction





To The Edge  
Deuteronomy 31 & 34

I. Beginning of the End Numbers 20:1-13 Deuteronomy 32:51

- a. Uncrossable
  - i. Not Believed Me
    - 1. The Lord told Moses only to speak to the rock for its flow must not be attributed to his own efforts but to the Lord’s miraculous provision. Moses, however, at the breaking point of his endurance and patience (he called the people rebels), drew attention to his own authority as covenant mediator by striking the rock twice with his staff. The water came because of God’s beneficent grace, but because Moses and Aaron had drawn attention to themselves rather than trusting in the Lord they were denied entrance to the Promised Land.
    - 2. Yahweh, and that they did not “sanctify” him (להקדישני)in the eyes of Israel. The general effect is to suggest that they have prevented the full power and might of Yahweh from becoming evident to the people, and have thus robbed him of the fear and reverence due to him.
    - 3. The former term (Heb. mā’al) has the basic idea of treachery or unfaithfulness, suggesting here that Moses, as covenant mediator, had proved to be disloyal to that covenant commitment in a time of unusual trial. The verb occurs in numerous other places where the issue of covenant is central (cf. Lev 26:40; Num 31:16; 1 Chr 5:25; Ezek 17:15–19; 20:25–27)

II. Before It’s Over vs. 31:14-30

III. Last View vs. 34:1-7

- a. God Showed
  - i. All the Land
    - 1. Moab, a plateau about 3000 ft. above the level of the sea, descends gradually to the Jordan-valley by a multitude of irregular mountain ridges and summits
    - 2. Anyone who stands atop Mount Nebo and looks across the great Rift valley toward the land of Israel knows full well that Moses saw much more than the normal human eye can see, for God enabled him to “see” the whole promised land. Today we see the northern end of the Dead Sea, the green of the palm trees in the oasis of Jericho down in the valley below, and dimly on top of a distant ridge on the horizon there in front of us, beyond the valley
  - ii. Not Go
    - 1. Tragically, Moses was once more to hear the words of Yahweh denying him access to all he saw before him (v. 4b; cf. Num 20:12; 27:14; Deut 1:37; 3:26–27). The prohibition here was very simple—“You will not cross over into it”—but there no reason was stated. This, of course, was not necessary since Moses had heard it many times (Deuteronomy 32:51)
- b. The End
  - i. Servant of the Lord
    - 1. the servant of the Lord” (v. 5), a designation few others were privileged to bear (cf. Josh 24:29; Judg 2:8; 2 Sam 3:18; 7:5, 8; 1 Kgs 11:13; 14:8; 2 Kgs 18:12; 19:34; 21:8; Job 1:8; 42:8; Isa 20:3; 41:8–9; 42:1; 44:1; 52:13; 53:11).
  - ii. Died in Moab
    - 1. No man knows the Burial
      - a. Most likely the sepulchre remained hidden precisely to prevent the Israelites from taking Moses’ body with them to Canaan, thus violating the divine command to disallow Moses entry there.
      - b. In his death, Moses was faithful, and that the prohibition against entering the land had not separated him from God’s presence
  - iii. 120 Years Old
    - 1. Not human inability but God’s capability
      - a. That Moses’ death was premature, even though he was 120 years old, is clear from the assessment that “his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone” (v. 7). In other words, he did not fail to enter Canaan because he died, but he died because he failed to enter Canaan.
      - b. Moses died because he reached the limit God had set for him, namely 120 years. Unlike the senile David at the time of his death at a later point in time (1 Kgs 2), Moses died at the height of his physical strength shortly after he had commanded the tribes of Israel in battle against the Canaanite kings, Sihon and Og, and immediately after he had climbed to the summit of Mount Nebo alone. He died forty years after the exodus from Egypt, which took place when he was eighty (Exod 7:7; cf. Deut 1:3). Though forty more years had passed, he had not aged.
      - c. Although his vision and vigor were not impaired, he was no longer able to fulfill all the onerous responsibilities of leadership he was no longer able to fulfill all the onerous responsibilities of leadership.

IV. Remembered vs. 34:10-12

- a. No Prophet Like Him
  - i. No Prophet
    - 1. The statement that “there has not risen a prophet since in Israel like Moses” makes a sharp contrast between Joshua and Moses. Although Joshua succeeded Moses, neither he nor any other prophet after him is to be compared with Moses
  - ii. Face to Face
    - 1. The point of the text is that Moses had the most direct contact with God of any prophet, and hence had the clearest knowledge of Him and His will.” As the “Word of God” incarnate, and the ultimate fulfillment of the promise of a “prophet like (Moses)” at some future point in time (Deut 18:15, 18)
- b. All God used Him for
  - i. Signs
    - 1. Thus the unique aspect of Moses’ prophetic ministry is to be found in the role he played in a unique and vitally important event in Israel’s history. That unique event, emerging from the Exodus and the forming of the covenant at Sinai, was the formation of the kingdom of God in the nascent, theocratic state of Israel, in which the Lord was King (Exod. 15:18; Deut. 33:5). The event began with the great liberation from Egypt and it was sealed by the new commitment at Sinai.
  - ii. Wonders
  - iii. Mighty Power
  - iv. Great Terror
    - 1. Moreover, no other prophet had till then performed such signs and wonders (’ōtôt and mōpētim; cf. Exod 7:3; Deut 4:34; 6:22; 7:19; 26:8; 29:3; Neh 9:10; Ps 78:43; 105:27), awesome displays to Pharaoh and all Egypt that Yahweh alone is God (v. 11). Nor was their effect intended only for the pagan world. Israel also needed to be reminded over and over again of the power and protection of Yahweh manifested through his humble and faithful servant Moses (v. 12).
    - 2. The words denote the special pre-eminence of Moses among the prophets.—11–12. Two verses calling attention to Moses’ pre-eminence in other respects, viz. on account of the wonders wrought by his instrumentality.
    - 3. The significance of these words does not lie simply in the character of Moses, but rather it is to be found in the nature of his achievement, in God’s strength.
  - v. All Israel
    - 1. Deuteronomy concludes with the phrase “before the eyes of all Israel.” In the phrase “all Israel” we find an envelope around the book as a whole (see 1:1) that tells the reader we have reached the end of a long journey, which is also the beginning of another even longer journey for God’s people

PRAYER REQUESTS

**Grieving:** Janie Buchanan & family, Kathleen Franklin & family, Andrew Gibson Jr. & family, Mary Bender & family, Cloteil Bolden & family, and Mignette Dorsey & family.

**Health and Healing:** Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Eric White, Pat Crawford, Birdie Williams, Tanisha Collins, Jon Heard, Rutha Patrick, Kevin Carey, Sherri Love, Elizabeth Clarke, Clara Williams, Kathryn Ford-Cheatham, Anthony Thomas, Beverly Austin, Joshua Williams, Ruby Hunter, Elizabeth Bean, Patsy Gatterson, Joyce Newsome, Arleatha Housley, Patrina Johnson, Elvis Anderson, H.D. House, Jr., and Angeliqne Hudson

TO THE  
EDGE

DEUTERONOMY 31 & 34