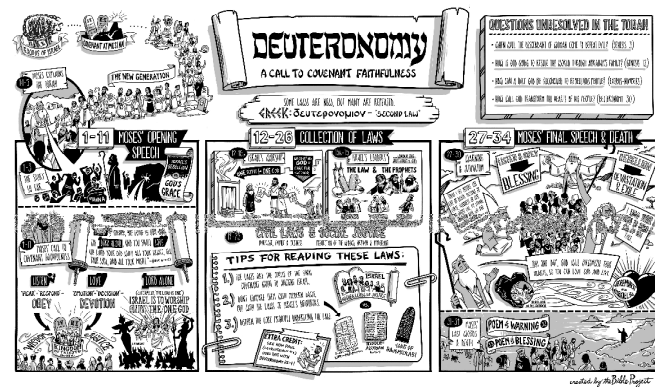


The Congregation at Prayer
The Whole Story

2025

A Daily Devotional
 St. Paul LCMS, Ida Grove, IA



Week #14-The Whole Story
Fourth Week of Lent
 March 23-March 30, 2025

Start Every Day

“In the Name of the Father, and + of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen”

recite **APOSTLE’S CREED**

Read Catechism—The Sixth Commandment
You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, an husband and wife love and honor each other.

VERSE: John 3:16 ***“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”***

PRAYER of the WORD

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, without Your help our labor is useless, and without Your light our search is in vain. Invigorate our study of Your holy Word that, by due diligence and right discernment, we may establish ourselves and others in Your holy faith; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, March 30

- Read **Psalm 89** (I will sing of the steadfast love of YHWH forever.)
- Read ***The Torah: Numbers 34-36***

EUSEBIUS: Now, since the genealogy of Joseph is so traced, Mary also appears virtually to have been of the same tribe as he, since, according to the law of Moses, intermarriages between different tribes were not permitted. For it was commanded to join in marriage with one of the same family and of the same people, so that the inheritance of the race



Luther's Evening Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

865 LORD, HELP US EVER TO RETAIN

- 1 Lord, help us ever to retain
The Catechism's doctrine plain
As Luther taught the Word of truth
In simple style to tender youth.
- 2 Help us Your holy Law to learn,
To mourn our sin and from it turn
In faith to You and to Your Son
And Holy Spirit, Three in One.
- 3 Hear us, dear Father, when we pray
For needed help from day to day
That as Your children we may live,
Whom You baptized and so received.
- 4 Lord, when we fall or go astray,
Absolve and lift us up, we pray;
And through the Sacrament increase
Our faith till we depart in peace.

Text: Ludwig Helmbold, 1532–98; tr. Matthias Loy, 1828–1915, alt.
Text: Public domain

might not be changed from tribe to tribe.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY 1.7.¹

Monday, March 31

- Read **Psalm 90** (Teach us to number our days.)
- Read ***The Torah: Deuteronomy 1-2***

ORIGEN: And here this other fact will not appear to be without significance, that it is Moses who hears from God all that is written down in the law of Leviticus, whereas in Deuteronomy it is the people who are represented as listening to Moses and learning from him what they could not hear from God. This indeed is why it is called Deuteronomy, meaning the second law. A fact which some will think points to this [is] that when the first law given through Moses² came to an end, a second legislation was apparently composed, and this was specially delivered by Moses to his successor Joshua. And Joshua is certainly believed to be a figure of our Savior, by whose second law, that is, by the precepts of the Gospels, all things are brought to perfection. ON FIRST PRINCIPLES 4.3.12.²

¹ Lienhard, Joseph T., and Ronnie J. Rombs, eds. 2001. [*Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

² Lienhard, Joseph T., and Ronnie J. Rombs, eds. 2001. [*Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*](#).

Tuesday, April 1

- Read **Psalm 91** (He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the almighty.)
- Read ***The Torah: Deuteronomy 3-5***

ORIGEN: We create other images in ourselves instead of the Savior's image. Instead of being the image of the Word, or of wisdom, justice, and the rest of the virtues, we assume the form of the devil. Then we can be called "serpents" and "a generation of vipers." When we are venomous, cruel or wily, we have taken on the character of the lion, the snake or the fox. When we are prone to pleasure, we are like the goat. I recall once explaining that place in Deuteronomy where it is written, "Do not make any image of a male or a female or an image of any beast."² I said that "because the law is spiritual," the passage means this. Some make themselves into the image of a male, others into the image of a female. One has the likeness of birds, another of reptiles and serpents. Still another makes himself into the image of God. Anyone who reads what I wrote will know how the passage can be understood. HOMILIES ON THE GOSPEL OF LUKE 8:3.³

Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture.
Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

³ Lienhard, Joseph T., and Ronnie J. Rombs, eds.
2001. [*Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*](#).

Sunday, March 16

- Read **Psalm 96** (Oh sing to YHWH a new song)
- Read ***The Torah: Deuteronomy 22-25***

End Every Day

Pray the *Collect for 4th Sunday in Lent*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Personal Prayers

pray **LORD'S PRAYER**

Luther's Morning Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

still lie concealed in it. EXPOSITION OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT, DEUTERONOMY 4.⁶

Saturday, April 5

- Read **Psalm 95—The Venite** (O come, let us sing to YHWH)
- Read **The Torah: Deuteronomy 18-21**

ORIGEN: It is written in Deuteronomy, “[The Lord] your God will raise up a prophet like me for you from your brothers. You shall hear him; and it shall be that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from his people.” Therefore some prophet was specially expected who would be similar to Moses in some respect, to mediate between God and humanity, and who would receive the covenant from God and give the new covenant to those who became disciples. And the people of Israel knew so far as each of the prophets was concerned that no one of them was the [special] one announced by Moses. COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 6.90.²⁷

⁶ Lienhard, Joseph T., and Ronnie J. Rombs, eds. 2001. [Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

⁷ Lienhard, Joseph T., and Ronnie J. Rombs, eds. 2001. [Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Wednesday, April 2

- Read **Psalm 92** (It is good to give thanks to YHWH)
- Read **The Torah: Deuteronomy 6-9**

HILARY OF POITIERS: Let us see whether the confession of the apostle Thomas agrees with this teaching of the Evangelist, when he says, “My Lord and my God.” He is therefore his God whom he acknowledges as God. And certainly he was aware that the Lord had said, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one.” And how did the faith of the apostle become unmindful of the principal commandment, so that he confessed Christ as God, since we are to live in the confession of the one God? The apostle, who perceived the faith of the entire mystery through the power of the resurrection, after he had often heard “I and the Father are one” and “All things that the Father has are mine” and “I in the Father and the Father in me,”² now confessed the name of the nature without endangering the faith. ON THE TRINITY 7.12.⁴

Thursday, April 3

Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

⁴ Lienhard, Joseph T., and Ronnie J. Rombs, eds. 2001. [Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

- Read **Psalm 93** (YHWH reigns; he is robed in majesty)
- Read ***The Torah: Deuteronomy 10-13***

AUGUSTINE: Give no credit to their words, neither be afraid of them. They say that we are enemies of their idols. So be it; may God give them all into our power, as he has already given us what we have broken down. For I say this, beloved, that you may not attempt to overcome those which it is not lawfully in your power to overcome. It is the way of ill-regulated men and the mad Circumcelliones to be violent when they have no power and to be ever eager to die without cause. You heard what we read to you, all of you who were present in the Mappalia:² “When the land shall have been given into your power”—he says first “into your power” and so enjoins what is to be done—“then you shall destroy their altars and break in pieces their groves, and hew down all their images.” When the power has not been given us, do not do it; when it is given, do not neglect it. SERMONS ON NEW TESTAMENT LESSONS 12.17.⁵

Friday, April 4

- Read **Psalm 94** (O YHWH, God of vengeance, O God of vengeance, shine forth!)

⁵ Lienhard, Joseph T., and Ronnie J. Rombs, eds. 2001. *Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

- Read ***The Torah: Deuteronomy 14-17***
PATERIUS: What did Moses mean by making this prohibition, except to forbid those who have begun to live aright to engage in human occupations? To plow with the firstborn of a cow is to display the beginnings of one’s conversion in carrying out public activities. To shear the firstborn of sheep is to strip the cover of secrecy from our first good works and display them to human eyes. Therefore we are forbidden to work with the firstlings of cattle. When we are kept from shearing the firstlings of the sheep, we should not act openly too quickly, even if we have begun some solid work. Since our life begins as something simple and innocuous, it is proper that we should not lay aside the covering of its privacy, lest it show itself naked to human eyes once the wool has been sheared. The firstlings of cattle and sheep are suitable only for divine sacrifices. Whatever we begin with that is strong, simple and innocent, we should offer on the altar of our hearts to the honor of the secret judge. And he without a doubt receives it more gladly if it has been hidden from men and not stained with any desire for praise. But often the beginnings of a new conversion are mixed with elements of a carnal life and hence should not become known too quickly. Otherwise, when the good that is acceptable is praised, the soul is deceived by praise and cannot grasp the evils that