

## Choose Life – Deuteronomy 30:1-20

**Introduction** – The law understood one way condemns. The law understood another way provides and brings life. In the declaration of the law, Moses has set forth life and death, blessing and cursing. Which will it be for you? What, or Who, will make the difference?

**Like the Prodigal in Exile** (vv1-5) – Life under the chastising curses of God can be hard, but God in His kindness often uses these to bring us to our senses, and this is what He promises will happen to Israel (v1). Moses anticipates the exile from Israel's disobedience, but He also anticipates a returning to the LORD (v2) and a fetching from the LORD (vv3-5). God is compassionate, and it is His love of mercy, His merciful love, which brings deliverance. Verse 5 promises greater blessings in their return than even their fathers had. We know on this end of history that the Ezra/Nehemiah days were not more glorious, and so we can see that the return from Babylonian exile was a type of a greater "fetching."

**God Will Circumcise Your Hearts** (v6) – Moses promises that you will return to the Lord "*with all your heart and with all your soul*" in v3 and in v6 we find out why. This is the power of the Lord in the New Covenant, for He is the One who sets their hearts right. In the Old Testament and in the New Testament, a true Jew, a truly regenerate person, was one whose heart was circumcised (Rom 2:28-29). God promises to circumcise their hearts and the hearts of their children. Peter picks up on this as the regenerating gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:39).

During the time of the exile, the promise of God giving new hearts was made clear (Jer 31:31-34, Ezek 36:24-32) and the promise of God to circumcise their hearts was reiterated (Ezek 11:19-20). The New Testament makes clear that this is the gift which was poured out to Jew and Gentile alike (Col 2:11-12), and this is why Jesus told Israel "*you must be born from on high*" (John 3:3). This was not to be placed in the covenant – for they were in covenant with God. This was to be faithful to the covenant. This was the chronic problem in the OT and it remains in the NT, but we are told to expect to see His grace work through the world and overcome the obstinacy of sinful men.

**Restoration Reversals** (vv7-10) – The return to God will make a difference over time in the blessings upon the earth that God will give to those who obey His voice with these circumcised hearts. These types are not simply earthy-types of heavenly realities, but rather types of successful dominion and fruitfulness upon the earth in the gospel age of hope.

**This Is Not Too Difficult** (vv11-20) – Remember, there are secret, mysterious things (29:29), but what is revealed in these verses are "*for us and for our children forever*" and they are not hard. The good news of God's mercy is plainly set before them and they have no excuse. Understanding and obedience is not far off in heaven or across the sea (vv12-13). It is right before them, in their mouth and heart (v14) – remember they chanted and sang the Great Commandment and the Ten Words. God has set before them all of His commandments for life and good if they would come to Him, but they will be death and evil if they choose not to (vv15-18). Heaven and earth are called upon to bear witness, and Moses exhorts them to choose life (vv19-20).

**Christ is the End of the Law** (Romans 10:1-17) – There is a way to understand the law and have it drive you far from God. But there is a way to understand the law and see nothing but Christ, nothing but grace and life and blessing. And this is Paul's point to unbelieving Israel and, beyond that, to every unbelieving heart. There is a "*righteousness which is of the law*" which condemns, and there is a "*righteousness of faith*" which hears the law and sees Christ (vv4-6). There is a certain kind of mind that says, "I must do, I must earn, I must get my act together, I must clean up before I take God's bath." It is a self-centered, inherent, works-righteousness that is not of faith, does not trust God, and seeks after its own way of salvation. Faith sees the gospel preached in Deuteronomy 30 (which is what Paul is doing at Romans 10:6-13).

**Heaven and the Abyss** – Paul preaches that we do not have to go to heaven to find the Messiah, for He came down and dwelt with us (v6); faith believes in the Incarnation, the God-Man, Jesus Christ. We do not have to descend into the abyss to find Christ, for He was resurrected from the dead on the third day (v7); faith believes in the resurrection and in the power of the resurrection. And so the "*word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach)*" (v8). It is right here – it is this simple – vv9-10. It is this simple for Jew and Gentile – for the world (vv11-13). You don't have to help God. You don't have to go get God. He's right here – He has come to fetch you and your children. And so this message is for you and for your children.

**Faith Comes by Hearing** – Paul tells us how the new life is communicated (v17). Proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings life, faith, light, heaven, liberty, hope. Salvation is not in heaven, far from you; Christ has risen from the dead and so salvation is not somewhere else. It is here. Are you born again? Do you believe this? Choose life. Believe the Gospel, believe in Jesus Christ, and the law is no burden at all (1 John 5:3).