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**BIBLE STUDY**

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**“LIFE AND DEATH, BLESSING AND CURSING”**

**Deuteronomy 30:1-20**

***Deuteronomy 30:1 "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call [them] to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,"***

This first half of chapter 30 is a prophecy, the interpretation of which requires that the full lens of Scripture be used. Moses had pleaded with great passion for his hearers to maintain faithfulness to the Lord once they crossed the Jordan and took possession of the promised land. But he also foresaw their future apostasy and even exile from the land. The LORD will drive them into the foreign lands to chastise them and cause them to realize the error of following after false gods. Notice, it was the LORD who had driven them to the foreign lands.

***Deuteronomy 30:2 "And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;"***

***Deuteronomy 30:3 "That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee."***

After they have been driven from their homeland and are captives in another land, they can still repent and turn to God. God had heard their cries, when they were captives in Egypt, and He will hear their prayers again and help them. This has happened with them many times. One of the best remembered is when he freed them from Babylon after 70 years. Even today, God is gathering them home to Israel again. It seems this situation has happened over and over with them.

***Deuteronomy 30:4 "If [any] of thine be driven out unto the outmost [parts] of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:"***

***Deuteronomy 30:5 "And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers."***

God will accept them back if they return to Him with all their hearts. Moses was speaking about Israel’s full spiritual restoration and material blessing in the kingdom age, which will not come about until the return of Jesus Christ in his millennial kingdom. They will enjoy a time of blessing in Christ’s millennial kingdom greater than the nation has ever known before. In other words, we’re still waiting for it. The parents must, also, instruct the children, and they must turn to God, also. It seems, Israel is very much like we, Christians, are. They do not appreciate God until they seem to have lost Him. God is never very far away, however. He loves them and wants to forgive them. They are just a prayer away from His help. So, he gave them a promise of future regathering and blessing that his immediate audience and later generations of Israelites must have wondered about in terms of its fulfillment. This is, possibly, speaking of today, when they are on the other side of the world from Israel. Literally hundreds of thousands of Jews are returning to Israel from all over the world. It is as if there is an irresistible desire for them to come home to Israel. All that is required of them, is that they remain faithful to God.  He will pour them out a blessing beyond their imagination, if they will love Him above everyone and everything else.

***II Chronicles 7:14 "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."***

***Deuteronomy 30:6 "And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."***

All the blessings that Moses had recited to the nation will be realized when the people of Israel become circumcised in heart to love God as he has commanded them to do. This is speaking of cutting away earthly lust from their hearts. God, Himself, will cut away their evil hearts of unbelief.

***Hebrews 8:10-11***

***10 "For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:"***

***11 "And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."***

***Deuteronomy 30:7 "And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee."***

***Deuteronomy 30:8 "And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day."***

Those who truly love God, obey His commandments. Their well-being is dependent upon their obeying the commandments of God. Blessings beyond their imagination will come to them, if they do this. This was the promise from the beginning. God would bless those that bless them, and curse those who hate them.

***Genesis 12:3 "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."***

***Deuteronomy 30:9 "And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the. fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:"***

God loves them and wants to bless them. He reminds me of the parable that Jesus told of the prodigal son. When the prodigal son repented and came home, his father gave a big party for him in celebration. God will return all the blessings they had before they went astray. In fact, they will be blessed even above that.

***Deuteronomy 30:10 "If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, [and] if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul."***

There are conditions to receive these blessings, as there had been in the beginning. They cannot plead ignorance. The law God wants them to keep, is written down. The main thing God wants from them is spoken by Jesus in the following verse.

***Mark 12:30 "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this [is] the first commandment."***

***Deuteronomy 30:11 "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it [is] not hidden from thee, neither [is] it far off."***

Moses spent almost the entire book of Deuteronomy explaining God’s law and urging the people of Israel to obey it. He could do this because the law was not some hard-to-understand code they couldn’t figure out, or a strange teaching they were hearing for the first time. God had revealed His commandments to the people of Israel He gave them His law on the way to the promised land. The rest of the world did not have God's law. God had made His law, and Himself, real to them on the 40 year journey across the wilderness to the promised land.

***Deuteronomy 30:12 "It [is] not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?"***

***Deuteronomy 30:13 "Neither [is] it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?"***

The law of God was available to them at all times. It was not a buried treasure they had to search for before reaping its benefits. Not only were the ten commandments written in stone, but God had spoken them aloud at Mount Horeb {Sinai} to them. They did not have to travel anywhere to find them. The law travelled with them and settled when they settled. Their people were known as the people with the law.

***Deuteronomy 30:14 But the word [is] very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."***

Moses argued, God’s law was very near to them, something he had graciously made known to them. We read earlier, how God had written His law in their hearts. The mouth speaks what is in the heart. Their mouths should speak the law of God because it is in their hearts.

***Deuteronomy 30:15 "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil;"***

God has offered them everything good. He has offered them life. They must accept it though. And they knew the consequences for obedience and disobedience: life and prosperity or death and adversity. They may decide to leave the good and go to the evil. God has made them a free agent, and it is their choice. They choose life, or death.

***Deuteronomy 30:16 "In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it."***

Moses told the people once more the requirements for life to love God, walk in his ways, and keep his commands. This is a description of what they receive when they choose good over evil. Loving the LORD, and walking in His ways, brings life and blessings. God will continue to bless them, as long as they love Him, and walk in His ways.

***Deuteronomy 30:17 "But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them;"***

***Deuteronomy 30:18 "I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, [and that] ye shall not prolong [your] days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it."***

Moses also declared once again the warning of judgment for disobedience. If they refuse to love God, and to walk in His ways, there is nothing, but hard times ahead for them. The only thing that would cause them to do this, is following after false gods. God will not share them with false gods. If they insist on following false gods, God will send the curses to them.

***Deuteronomy 30:19 "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, [that] I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:"***

All of creation is a witness to the promises God has made them. He offers them life, or death. It is each person's choice. If they choose God, they are blessed. If they choose the false gods, they will receive curses. Life is available to them, and their generations who follow them. They must accept it for themselves. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live (30:19).

***Deuteronomy 30:20 "That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, [and] that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he [is] thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest***

***dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."***

To love the Lord, and walk in His statutes, is to rise above the filth of the world. It is called living a new life in Him.

***I John 1:7 "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.***

In other words, Moses argued, no other decision made sense: God himself is the life of his people. He is the only one who could prolong their days in the promised land. Therefore, to experience the favor of God, his people must choose obedience to divine revelation over their own autonomous human reason.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Where will the LORD drive them, if they do not obey Him?
2. What is verse 2 speaking of?
3. How is Israel very much like the Christians?
4. When were some specific times, God heard their cries from captivity?
5. What time is verse 4, probably, speaking of?
6. What is required of them for God to bring them home and bless them?
7. The LORD thy God will circumcise thine \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
8. When God blesses Israel, what does He do to their enemies?
9. Those who truly love God, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ His \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
10. What are the ways verse 9 says, God will bless them?
11. What conditions must they comply with to be blessed?
12. Who had God revealed His law to?
13. How had they been made aware of the ten commandments, besides them being written in stone?
14. The mouth speaks what is in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
15. What choices had God given them?
16. What would cause God to denounce them?
17. Who did God call for witnesses?
18. Who had God made His promises to from the beginning?