

# It Is Your Choice

Deuteronomy 30:11-20



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**FOCAL** (Deuteronomy 30:11-20 KJV) "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. {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? {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? {14} But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. {15} See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; {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. {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; {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. {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: {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."



This must have been a very bitter moment for Moses. Sometime between his eightieth and his hundred and twentieth birthday this dear saint had made a terrible mistake. Though he had led Israel - a hard hearted and murmuring people - through the wilderness, he did what many leaders over the years have done. Moses placed himself in an area that belonged only to God. The Bible says:

**(Numbers 20:10-12 KJV) "And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? {11} And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. {12} And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."**

that Moses took credit for something that God alone could do. Now Moses stands before the second generation of Israel and tells them that they will enter the Promised Land, but without him.

This idea is foreign to many who profess Christ as their Savior. There is an odd idea that has developed in theological circles that follows this path: *since God is love, and love is sweet and merciful, God holds none of us accountable for our actions.* Yet God held Moses



accountable for striking rather than speaking to the Rock, for claiming glory for that which alone belongs to God. The New Testament supports this truth as well:

**Romans 14:12<sup>1</sup> "So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God."**

### **What God Commands, God Enables**

**FOCAL** (Deuteronomy 30:11-14 KJV) "For this commandment<sup>2</sup> which I command<sup>3</sup> thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. {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? {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? {14} But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

A dear friend of mine once said "**God does not set us up to fail**". I believe that, and I believe that the Scripture bears this truth out. The second generation of Israel was getting ready to enter the Promised Land. What was the most important thing that they needed before they entered this beautiful, but dangerous land.

<sup>1</sup> Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB) Copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003 by Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville Tennessee.

<sup>2</sup> mitsvah {pronounced mits-vaw'}, a code of conduct, directive, marching orders, communication from God

<sup>3</sup> tsavah {pronounced tsaw-vaw'}, Piel Participle, to commission, to charge, to give marching orders to

**Question** Did they need more *money*, more *riches*, more *material wealth*? No. Did they need more *people*, more *trained military men*, more *weaponry*? No. What they



needed was *to draw closer to God* - to listen to His Voice, His direction, His guidance. God told Israel in verse 11:

**this commandment<sup>4</sup> which I command<sup>5</sup> thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off**

Whenever I see words *repeated* in the the King James text, I dig a little deeper in my studies. What was God telling Israel? Literally He was saying **these are the marching orders I have commissioned you with**. These are not words of condemnation, Beloved. These are words of *encouragement*. These are *power words*. God told Israel as they stood at the brink of the River Jordan:

**"I, YAHWEH ELOHIM, The Eternal God, the Everlasting Father, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords - I have given YOU a commission. You are My Anointed, and you are to go into this land based on the marching orders I gave you"**.

The reason that Moses was *not* going into the land was because He put Himself in God's place, making the success or failure of Israel something that mortal man did. Beloved, no mortal man has the power to

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commission a people to the Promised Land. No mortal man has the strength nor the endurance to move a people into a place of blessing or cursing. The dear saint, precious Moses, in a moment of weakness forgot that the power is not in man's flesh - but it is in God's majesty!

**Israel and the Church are two separate entities, who operate in two separate dispensations. But we both have the same Eternal God!** This Eternal God commissioned Israel to enter the Promised Land by faith, to take that land to herself, to live victoriously according to God's marching orders. This same Eternal God commissioned His Church to move outward, to tell others about Christ, to conquer - not with spear and sword - but with the Gospel of Salvation.

In the Old Testament Israel was to have a land with marked boundaries, a land that she took from unbelieving and unsaved peoples. People who did not know YAHWEH ELOHIM, people who followed fierce and terrible demonic gods, gods who often demanded the sacrifice of innocents. Israel was to one day build a Temple, and from that Temple worship God. The Temple would be built in Jerusalem, and people would have to come their to serve the Eternal God.

In the New Testament the Church is also to have a land, to make an advance, to take from the unbelieving and the godless. We do this by advancing forward following our Great Commission (**Matthew 28:19-20**), telling others about Jesus, living lives that are pleasing to Him. In the early Church the Christians were so *effective in preaching Jesus* that they were accused in **Acts 17:6**

of being -

**"... these that have turned the world upside down... "**

Though the Church and Israel are two different entities, there's not a whole lot of difference between our commissions. Israel moved into the Promised Land and were to possess the land *for God*. The Church is supposed to go out, tell others about Christ, and as people surrender to Christ God gains the land they are on.

**Canaan cannot lose its population of unbelievers and idolaters until Israel enters that land under God's commission and takes it.**

**The Church cannot remove the influence of the unbeliever and the idolater from America until each member of the Church *entering the land under God's Great Commission* takes it.**

The commandment given to Israel was not far off, nor hidden, nor up in Heaven - it was close to hand. God was ready to enable His people to take that land, but they had to believe and *act on that belief*. The wandering was at an end - now they must trust and obey. Just like that song we sing:

**When we walk with the Lord  
in the light of His Word,  
What a glory He sheds on our way!  
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,  
And with all who will trust and obey.**

**Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies,  
But His smile quickly drives it away;  
Not a doubt or a fear, not a sigh or a tear,  
Can abide while we trust and obey.**

**Trust and obey, for there's no other way  
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey<sup>6</sup>.**

**If the Church - like Israel - does not move forward and fulfill its commission, telling others about Jesus, then the unbelieving and the lost will continue to take over our land.** A young girl wrote:

**"When God doesn't want me to do something, I definitely know it. When he wants me to do something, even if it means going outside my comfort zone, I know that too. I feel pushed in the direction I need to go... I try to stand up for my faith at school... It can be discouraging, but it can also be rewarding... I will die for my God. I will die for my faith. It's the least I can do for Christ dying for me."<sup>7</sup>**



These were the words of **Cassie Rene Bernall**, A 17-year-old from Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, USA who died April 20, 1999. She confronted the Canaanite for her Lord Jesus and, because of her

<sup>6</sup> John H. Sammis, 1887 Copyright: Public Domain

<sup>7</sup> <http://psalm121.ca/quotes/dcqobedience.html>

sacrifice, she made an eternal difference in the life of many.

In every place where the Canaanite was *not confronted*, that Canaanite eventually became a millstone that drug Israel herself out of fellowship with God. God has commanded, God has enabled - we, like Israel, must do. As we read in verse 14:

**"But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it .."**

### **Success Is In Obedience - Failure Is In Apathy Or Disobedience**

**FOCAL** (Deuteronomy 30:15-16 KJV) "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; {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. "

Israel had a choice set before them. Obey and be blessed, or disobey and be cursed. Obey and live, or disobey and die. These were very clear choices - and Israel *did control the outcome or the result.*

Israel was going against a *vast population* of unbelievers, people who were *vicious*, terrible, *dedicated* in their unbelieving ways. What did Israel have? Was she a *military power*? No, Israel was spent - she had just

come from 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. The first generation of Israel - all but Joshua and Caleb - lay dead in the desert. These people were probably without any military training to speak of. Their leader, the man they had looked up to for years, Moses, was *not* going into the Promised Land with them. To look at them, Israel really had nothing but one thing.

They had the love of God! God loved them, and wanted them to love Him. God wanted them to do *everything out of a heart of loving service* to God. When they loved God and *obeyed God rather than allow their outward circumstances to drive them* then God promised to bless them. We read in verse 16:

**"... the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it ..."**

The Christian, too, is called to love God with all his or her heart. Loving God means being *committed to Him in all that we do*. Sister Marsha West<sup>8</sup> writes:

**"According to Dr. Jane Brown, journalism professor at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, "If you believe Sesame Street taught your four-year-old something, then you better believe MTV is teaching your 14-year-old something, because the influence doesn't stop when we come to a certain age."**

**There's no getting around it. What our children watch on TV effects everything about them, especially**

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<sup>8</sup> Her article, *There's No Getting Around It*, is posted on this site at Marsha's index at: <http://www.bibleteacher.org/when.htm>. Marsha is the founder and editor of the Email Brigade.

**their outlook on morality. I think it's safe to say that just about everyone in America knows that the Hollywood elite and product advertisers intentionally target the young. Those who don't believe it are either in deep denial or they're dumber than a fence post! I say that only because advertisers don't even try to hide their marketing schemes from consumers. Why should they? Consumers seem oblivious to the fact that they're being brainwashed.**

**So, what's behind the effort to turn our kids into good little hedonists? Hollywood knows that if they can win our children over to their depraved world view, they win the country. Make no mistake about it: The anti-God crowd is winning our children. And while parents are snoozing, youngsters are losing their innocence. The world view depicted in the majority of TV and films is anti-God. Yet Christian's viewing habits are not much different than the world's. ..."**

God told Israel "I have set before you life and good, death and evil - which will you choose"? Israel had been saved from Egypt, now she must step out on faith, living her life *worthy for her Lord*. If you love the Lord, it should effect *everything you do*. So it is with the Christian. If we are going to reclaim America, our city, our families, our land for Jesus - then **Jesus needs to be seen in all that we do**. Our television viewing should reflect Jesus. Our commitment to the Church that Jesus Christ died for should reflect Jesus. The way we raise our children, our grandchildren, and our great grand children should reflect Jesus. God has set before us **life and good, death and evil** - and the choice we make will

determine whether we are blessed or cursed.

God committed Himself to Israel in the Old Testament, and in the same way He commits Himself to His Church today. The Chinese Theologian **Watchman Nee**<sup>9</sup> said:

**"In our day God commits Himself to the Church. His power and His work are in the Church. Just as in the Gospels we find all God's work given to the Son, so today God has entrusted all His works to the Church ..."**

When you understand that God has entrusted His work - the work of *winning souls to Christ and thereby taking the land for Christ* to the Church, then you can understand why *so much spiritual power is invested against the Church by Satan*. Jesus Christ said it when He walked this earth:

**Matthew 12:25 (KJV) "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:"**

Success for Israel depended on *their unity* toward *one another*, and their *unity toward loving God*.

### **So What Is Our Point of Unity?**

In any group of people each person will have *different opinions* on any given thing. How can a group as diverse as Israel, and as diverse as

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<sup>9</sup> in *The Latent Power of the Soul*

the Church remain *cohesive* and move forward to do God's work? The answer is in verse 16:

**FOCAL** (Deuteronomy 30:16 KJV) "... 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. "

The banner that both Israel as well as the Church must walk under is to love God more than anything else. To love Him more than you love your children, your parents, your husband, your wife. To love Him more than you love yourself. Our Lord Jesus said:

**John 14:23-24 (KJV) "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. {24} He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."**

Loving God and obedience go *hand in hand*. "**If a man love Me, He will keep My Words**". Israel, if she loved God, was to **keep His commandments**. The Church - and the individual Christian, if you love Jesus, are to **keep His words** or His commandments. This truth is to be at *all times*. We are to practice *life in Christ*. We are to *live in Him*, to live our lives *knowing He is in us, and wants to live through us*.

There are many people who profess Christ as Savior then walk away, never giving Him another thought. Yet this is not the standard that Christ gave us for salvation. If you are saved, God actually came into your life and now lives in you. Jesus said to Martha:

**John 11:25-26 (KJV) "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: {26} And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"**

It is not just to *believe* that brings present eternal life - Jesus taught that salvation by faith in Him actually creates in us a state of being *born again*, a state of being a *new creature* where old things are passed away - and all things have become new<sup>10</sup>. The *capability* of life in *Him* is there - few realize that capability, though, because few strive to live in Him.

Just as the Israelite was designed to go into Canaan and take that land for God, the Christian is designed to go into the world

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<sup>10</sup> **John 3:3 (KJV)** "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

**John 3:7 (KJV)** "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

**1 Peter 1:23 (KJV)** "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

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**2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV)** "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

**Galatians 6:15 (KJV)** "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

around them and tell others about Jesus. We are designed to *abide in Christ* and to *bear fruit for Him*.

**John 15:2-4 (KJV)** "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. {3} Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. {4} Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

We do this by loving Him, by loving one another, and by being obedient. **Israel was commanded to love God wholeheartedly as they went into the Promised Land. We are commanded to love God wholeheartedly as we live in this life *through Jesus*.**

Israel was *not* commanded to assemble under a banner of *wrath* or *backbiting* or *infighting*.

**Illustration** The other day I went to a friend's house to help him with his computer. As I pulled into the driveway I looked at something that was in his front yard. At first I thought the animal I saw was a horse, but as it approached the car I discovered that it wasn't a horse - it was a dog as big as a horse. I made up my mind then that I wasn't going to get out of that van until I saw how this horse-dog was going to behave. Thankfully this mountain of an animal decided that I was too small to eat, and it moved on before I decided I had to move on my own self!

Not too long after that I went to watch some children of our Church playing in the park. While I was there I came upon an individual who, long before I pastored this Church, had left the flock in anger. This man is consumed with hatred and rage. Now this individual used to work in the Church that Jesus gave His life for, but now the man spends his days hating, angry, judging, full of every negative thought and deed. The man no longer attends Church anywhere - and as a result his family also attends no Church. Oh, they all have excuses as to why they won't surrender to Christ and serve Him through His Church, but their excuses are patently false. Their motivation is evil, and their lives lack any of the love of Christ. Is this man a Christian, or is he one of the lost, cursed because he has rejected Christ as Savior.

When we make *anything* outside of love the target by which we serve God in Christ, then our service will be perverted.

**FOCAL (Deuteronomy 30:17-18 KJV)** "But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; {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."

If you make **fear your god**, and live your life based on that rather than on loving the God Who saved you, then you will end up like King Saul:



(1 Samuel 28:5-7 KJV) "And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. {6} And when Saul

inquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. {7} Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor."

The Bible teaches us that **perfect love casts out all fear (1 John 4:18)**. Let your service be dedicated to God and neither Philistine nor Canaanite will haunt you - the God Who loves you will "**cover you with His wings**"<sup>11</sup>.

When you make **pride your god** then you will find yourself much like the Pharisee that Jesus spoke of:

(Luke 18:10-14 KJV) "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. {11} The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. {12} I fast twice in the week, I give

<sup>11</sup> (Psalms 91:4-9 KJV) "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. {5} Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; {6} Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. {7} A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. {8} Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. {9} Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;"



tithes of all that I possess. {13} And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. {14} I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Your prayers will not be heard, for the target *must be loving God with all your heart*. Remember the Scripture tells us in 1 Corinthians 13:4<sup>12</sup> "**Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud.. "**

When you make **self sufficiency your god** then you will find yourself much in the same position as Peter was.

(Mark 14:69-72 KJV) "And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. {70} And he denied it again. And a little after,

they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. {71} But he began to curse and to swear, saying,

I know not this man of whom ye speak. {72} And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept."



Where a Saint loves God and moves according to His Will, then *ten thousand shall fall at your side*. But when the Saint tries to stand on his own sufficiency apart from loving God, a small child can cause him to curse.

### **How Close Must I Be To God?**

**FOCAL** (Deuteronomy 30:19-20 KJV) "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: {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."

How close should the believer be to God our Savior?  
Look at this phrase:

**that thou mayest cleave<sup>13</sup> unto him: for he is thy life**

This same word is first used in Genesis when God gave Adam his Eve. Adam said:

(Genesis 2:24 KJV) "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

Just as Adam was to *cleave to or cling to* his wife, God commands His people to *cling or cleave to Him*. Why?

Because **He is thy life**. Without God Israel would have never been saved from Egypt, nor would they now stand on the brink of securing the Promised Land through His power. Without God you yourselves would never have been saved from eternal death in the Lake of Fire. Were it not for Calvary, for the sacrifice that Jesus Christ our Lord made, you would be yet dead in your sins. God is your life! Without Him there is no life! Cleave to Him, Cling to Him in love.

Only then will your life be a blessing, and not a curse.

May God touch your hearts with these words.

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<sup>13</sup> dabaq {pronounced daw-bak'}, Qal Infinitive, to cling to