

The Bible 20/20: "Choose Life" (3-8-20)

Introduction: Overview of Deuteronomy

Context: Moses and the old wilderness wandering generation are coming to a close, and the next generation is about to head into the land that was promised long ago.

The Purpose: To engage, prepare, & inspire the "next" generation to take their place as "this" generation.

Picture a relay race – they are being taught how to take the baton, run their leg, and hand-off well so the race can be won over the long haul.

Key Thought: Your life is more than your own. Your legacy is wrapped up in both the past & future.

Basic outline: Looking back, within, ahead, and up! (Warren Wiersbe)

- Looking Back – Moses is reminding the next generation of their people's history (good & bad)
- Looking Within – A reminder of the Law of God and who they are called to be
- Looking Ahead – What it's going to require to take the promised land & keep it!
- Looking Up – A new leader is appointed, and a song of Worship, and a Blessing is pronounced.

Last Week: Looking Back & Looking Within

This Week: Looking Ahead & Looking Up (Deuteronomy chapters 13-34)

1) Looking Ahead

Moses Speech: Restating Laws & Judgements (12-26), Blessings & Curses (27-28), Future Captivity - Repentance - Forgiveness - Return (29-30)

Then Moses speech culminates here in **Deuteronomy Chapter 30:11 - Choose Life . . .**

Deuteronomy 30:11-20 (ESV)

(11) "For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. (12) It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' (13) Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' (14) But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it. (15) "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. (16) If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. (17) But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, (18) I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. (19) I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, (20) loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

Let's walk through Moses' final exhortation here . . .

Deuteronomy 30:11 (ESV)

For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off.

Note: Moses instruction is not too hard to understand or too difficult to accomplish!

Deuteronomy 30:12-14 (ESV)

(12) It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' (13) Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' (14) But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

Note: The word is very near, in your mouth and in your heart. You can do it!

Paul picks up Moses' explanation here about God's Word and applies them to Jesus . . .

Romans 10:5-10 (ESV)

(5) For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. (6) But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) (7) "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). (8) But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); (9) because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (10) For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Note: Paul takes Moses' words even further - not just that taking God's Word and acting on it is possible, but more than that - Jesus is the Word brought near. He is alive and is our source of life!

- The Gospel is simple - you can understand it, and you can walk it out. Jesus is our life!
- Look at the rest of this passage with this same view that Paul brings to it, in light of Jesus . . .

Deuteronomy 30:15-18 (ESV)

(15) "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. (16) If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. (17) But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, (18) I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess.

Note: The choice is before you . . . will you choose death or life?

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 (ESV)

(19) I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore **choose life**, that you and your offspring may live, (20) loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

Note: This is no small decision - Choose Life! And in doing that you will leave a legacy of life!

So what does it look like to Choose Life?

- **Love** the Lord your God (personal affection), This is about love - know God and treasure Him!
- **Obey** his voice (listen, understand, yield), This is about faith - take God at His word & follow Him!
- **Holdfast** to Him (cling, stick with, follow closely). This is about hope - don't lose heart!

Choosing Life means Loving, Obeying, and Clinging to God - because He is the very source of Life.

These are the parting words of Moses - who is preparing to die . . . Remember the man saying all of this, lived it. And he has chosen these as His parting words!

2) Looking Up

Moses goes on to appoint Joshua as leader, teach the people a song, complete the writing of Deuteronomy, and pray a specific blessing over Israel and each tribe by name. And then . . . God Buries Moses.

Deuteronomy 34:4-6 (ESV)

(4) And the LORD said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, ‘I will give it to your offspring.’ I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there.” (5) So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD, (6) and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day.

Note: God keeps his promise, Moses sees the promised-land but does not enter, and then God buries Moses

- Moses begins terrified to go where God was asking him to go (Exodus 3-4 at the burning bush)
- Moses finishes by trusting God, even when he is denied the fulfillment of his life's work.

Moses learned from all of those years walking with God and choosing the life He offered, that he could love, obey, and trust God!

Moses believed that he could trust God with his death, as he'd trusted him in life. God's promise is sure.

And because of this, Moses did set foot in the promised land . . .

In Luke chapter 9 - another Leader has come along, who is speaking to His followers about his coming death, and giving them some final instructions regarding their lives . . .

Luke 9:18-25 (ESV)

(18) Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" (19) And they answered, "John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah, and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen." (20) Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered, "The Christ of God." (21) And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, (22) saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." (23) And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. (24) For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. (25) For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?"

Note: Jesus is making it clear that His time is coming to a close. And like Moses, He calls his disciples to make a similar choice - choose life, by giving it to Him. (Remember Paul's words in Romans 10)

Luke 9:28-31 (ESV)

(28) Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. (29) And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. (30) And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, (31) who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Note: Moses sets foot in the promised for the first time - with his God, face to face. Who is also about to lay down his life, so others can enter in to the good life God has for them.

Conclusion: This is the legacy of Moses, a man who took on the life God offered (despite all of the obstacles, difficulties, and disappointments) and declared that it was worth it!

He invites Israel as Jesus now invites us: Choose Life, it's near you, and you can do it!

Deuteronomy 34:10-12 (ESV)

(10) And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, (11) none like him for all the signs and the wonders that the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, (12) and for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

Note: May we follow Moses legacy and choose life - Loving, Obeying, and Holding Fast to God!