

13th Sunday after Pentecost, 12th Sunday after Trinity – 2022

Saturday, 9/3 at 4:00 | Sunday, 9/4 at 9:00

It's Your Choice...

+ Life

- Death

+ Prosperity

- Adversity

+ Blessing

- Curse

Text: Deuteronomy 30:15-20 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Today, we are in the OT at the time of Moses. What had happened over the previous 400 plus years?

- Jacob (Israel) and his large family moved to Egypt to escape the famine. *Then God grew them from 70 people into millions of people!*
- The Pharaoh became fearful of their large number, *so he enslaved them*. But, at the right time, *God set them free through many mighty miracles!*
- God intended to bring the Israelites right into the Promised Land, *but due to their lack of trust in God*, He caused them to wander in the wilderness for 40 years.

In today's reading: God is speaking through Moses to share some *vital information with the people* before they enter the Promised Land. 40 years earlier they made the wrong choice

by NOT trusting in God to fight for them. Now, in today's reading, God is laying out two choices – a **great** choice with a **great** outcome, and a **terrible** choice with a **terrible** outcome.

Even though **great connects with great** and **terrible connects with terrible**, some are planning to have their cake and eat it too. In other words, to live like the world now AND go to heaven when they die. Is that possible? The Bible says: **Galatians 6:7-8** “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap [the law of the harvest]. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.”

1. **Two Opposite Choices: Deuteronomy 30:15** “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;

a. The Way of Life and Prosperity: ¹⁶ ...I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments [commands] and His statutes [things we owe to Him, see Mark 12:30] and His judgments [decisions], that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it. // Let us be certain: *God's ways are best!* **Deut. 6:24** “So the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes [How?], to fear the LORD our God [Why?] for our good always and for our survival...” / How do we choose the great way? *By God's grace* ▶we trust in Him, then ▶we seek to know and follow His ways!

b. The Way of Death and Adversity: ¹⁷ “But if your heart turns away and you will not obey [hear and heed], but

are drawn away [by the world, the forces of evil, and the sinful nature] **and worship other gods and serve them** [whatever we put before God or choose over God becomes our god], ¹⁸ **I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it.** // Keep in mind, the **original** Promised Land, Canaan points ahead to the **ultimate** Promised Land, heaven! The Bible tells us that 603,550 men, 20 years and older, were ready to enter, BUT ONLY 2 ACTUALLY ENTERED! When people decide that ✦*the world and its ways* are better than ✦*God and His ways* – **AND DO NOT REPENT**, they “**shall surely perish.**” God is calling for repentance now – *before it is too late!*

2. **Encouragement to Choose Life:** ¹⁹ **“I call heaven and earth [all who dwell in both places] to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, ²⁰ by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast [clinging] to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”** // No one can say to God: You didn’t tell me about the choices and consequences – since everyone in heaven and earth are witnesses! *By God’s grace, let us keep clinging to Jesus and staying in God’s word all our days!*

Final Clarifications: Kretzmann: “We Christians also have life and death, everlasting salvation, and eternal damnation, laid before us in the Word of God.”

- **Saving Faith:** “He that believes the Gospel and trusts in the mercy of God in simple faith will have eternal life.” (John 3:16; 5:24; 6:23; 6:47)
- **Evidence of Saving Faith:** “He will also give evidence of his faith in his obedience to the Word and command of God.” (Colossians 2:6-7; James 1:22; 1 John 2:3-4)
- **Lack of Faith and Evidence:** “But he who does not believe the Gospel, preferring to live a life of sin and shame, will be lost forever.” (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21)

Let Us Pray: Dear Father, You made us, You love us, and You made the way from us to You through Jesus; now, by Your Holy Spirit through Your word, enlighten us, endear us, compel us, and enable us to choose life, prosperity, and blessing both now and forever.

When we know You and Your Son, life is not easy, but it is blessed – knowing our sins are forgiven, knowing we are members of Your family, knowing You will provide our needs, and knowing You will finally welcome us into Your awesome presence forevermore – TYSM!

We also pray for others that are not yet on the side blessing or have fallen away. Since we know the devil is the great deceiver, he is good at enticing people to love the darkness rather than the light. But, *by Your infinitely greater power*, may You open all blind eyes to Your truth, give them a glimpse of their terrible eternity, and lead them quickly and fully to repent and believe! In Jesus’ name!

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