

GOD'S PROMISES TO THE PENITENT

BIBLE TEXT : Deuteronomy 30:1-20

LESSON 140 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Deuteronomy 30:1-20

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,

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;

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.

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:

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.

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.

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

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

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Rewards

We have studied what reward was promised to the obedient, and also what the disobedient would receive. "A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: and a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known" (Deuteronomy 11:27, 28). Some of the Children of Israel disobeyed even after this warning. They lost the blessing of the Lord by turning away from Him. God had told them what to do when such was the case. They were to remember the words of the Lord. They were to recall His instructions to them when the curse was fulfilled. He had told them how the curse could be lifted because God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

Captives

Many of the Children of Israel were taken captives into other lands (**2 Kings 18:11** ¹¹ And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: **2 Kings 24:10** ¹⁰ At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. **2 Kings 24:14** ¹⁴ And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, *even* ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. **2 Kings 25:11** ¹¹ Now the rest of the people *that were* left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away). "Ahaz . . . did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD. . . . Wherefore the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus" (II Chronicles 28:1, 5).

There are many people today who are captives of the enemy of their soul — Satan. God's promises are to them as well as to the Children of Israel. Because one does not now have God's smile of approval does not mean that he can never have it God has set forth instructions that the curse for disobedience can be changed into the blessings for obedience.

The Reminder

The first step to God comes by considering one's condition and need. The Children of Israel realized that they were captives, that God was not fighting their battles for them as He once had. They remembered how God had been with them to bless them. They knew that their lives had been different. They were reminded of God's promise to those who would return unto Him

The prodigal son who had left his father's house and spent

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:

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.

¹¹ 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

all he had in riotous living, "came to himself" (Luke 15:17). He remembered the blessings he had enjoyed at his father's house. He realized that he was in a pitiful condition. He determined in his heart to return to his father (**Luke 15:18** ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee). He did not excuse himself nor put the blame on another person. He knew that he was guilty before God and man.

The Return

There are many people who realize that there is sin in their lives. Like the prodigal son, they are hungry, friendless, and laboring in the swine pen of sin. Some seem to like living in such a condition, for they do nothing to remedy it. The prodigal son did more than plan to return to his father. He put his plans into action — he returned and admitted his sin (**Luke 15:21** ²¹ And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son). Then he received his father's forgiveness and mercy instead of judgment.

The blessings of God did not come to the Children of Israel until they had returned to God. "But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there" (Nehemiah 1:9). Those who plan to turn to God but never act do not receive God's blessing. The Lord requires wholehearted obedience — "with all thine heart, and with all thy soul."

Godly Sorrow

To say, "I am a sinner, lost and doomed," does not change one's condition. Only repentance (turning with sorrow from one's sinful state) with faith toward God will bring salvation and the blessing of God. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation" (II Corinthians 7:10). One with godly sorrow has regret for doing the wrong thing, not in view of the punishment it will bring. He is grieved for dishonoring and offending God. His grief is accompanied by a hatred for sin and a love for holiness.

The Lord said that He would cleanse the heart, and put in it the love of God instead of love for sin and evil. "And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart" (Jeremiah 24:7). God wants the whole heart. One cannot serve Him with divided affections (**Matthew 6:24** ²⁴ No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon).

Repentance

The New Testament as well as the Old Testament advises all people to repent. We read that God would forgive their transgressions and have compassion on them if the people would repent and return unto the Lord (**1 Kings 8:47-50** ⁴⁷ Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; ⁴⁸ And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers,

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 swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name: ⁴⁹ Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, ⁵⁰ And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them: **2 Chronicles 7:14** 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). Ezekiel told the Children of Israel to "repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions . . . for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel 18:30, 31).

John the Baptist preached: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Matthew 3:2, 8). Jesus said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matthew 9:13). Peter preached, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). Through the whole Bible we find that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations" (Luke 24:47).

Many Blessings

When one truly repents he brings his whole life to Jesus — to obey, to love, to trust, and to depend upon Him. What has God promised to one who repents? He has promised mercy and pardon (**Isaiah 55:7** ⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.). God will give deliverance (**Psalms 34:7** ⁷ The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. **Daniel 6:27** ²⁷ He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions). "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11), for He has said that He will "do you good" (Deuteronomy 28:63). These are some of the blessings that God has promised to those who will turn to Him and continue to obey. All these are besides peace of mind, a clear conscience, victory over sin, faith, hope, and the love of God to reign in one's heart. Read, (**Luke 15:18-24** ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, ¹⁹ And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. ²⁰ And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. ²² But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: ²³ And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: ²⁴ For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry) -all the good things that were bestowed upon the prodigal son when he returned home.

Plainness of the Word

Our lesson teaches that there is a way back to the Lord, and encourages a return "while he may be found" (Isaiah 55:6). The Children of Israel were urged to obey God. There could be no excuses, for the Word of God was plain, in a language that they could understand. Salvation and obedience to God are neither

impractical nor impossible. One does not need to go to great expense, nor endure hard labor, nor have a long period of learning in order to find salvation. God set before the Children of Israel and before us today a choice — life and good or death and evil (**Deuteronomy 30:15** ¹⁵ See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil). To receive "life and good," follow His instructions: Thou "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."

QUESTIONS

- 1 Why were the Children of Israel taken captives?
- 2 What did God tell them to do in order to return to the land of promise?
- 3 What does God do for a person who repents?
- 4 What does repentance mean?
- 5 How can one have God's blessing on his life?
- 6 What choice does God give to all people?
- 7 What must one do to have "life and good"?