

11. Freed to Live

Deuteronomy 28-30, Hosea, Galatians 3

1. INTRO

- a. Sitting on the fence
- b. Where are you in the narrative?

2. WHAT DOES THE NARRATIVE SAY?

- a. Blessings... *Deut 28:1-6, v10*, → Who wants all this?! Yea!
- b. Cursings... *Deut 28:15-20, 27-29, v32ff* exile
- c. But there's a catch... *Deuteronomy 29:2-4*
- d. Why? Because our hearts are hard *Deuteronomy 29:18-20*
- e. Even this furthers God's plan: *Deuteronomy 29:24-28*
- f. "I don't understand the way God works... [29] *"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. (Deuteronomy 29:29 ESV)* We don't know everything. We know just what we need to know.
- g. Now look at Deut 30... *"And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, and [you] return to the Lord your God, you and your children, and obey his voice... then the Lord your God will restore [you]... [v6] And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart...so that you will love the LORD your God with ALL YOUR HEART and with ALL YOUR SOUL, that you may LIVE."*
- h. What is he talking about? He is talking about the New Covenant...
 - i. How do you love God w/ all your heart, soul? You can't, but Jesus DID
 - ii. B/C of Jesus' faithfulness we receive blessing and not cursing
- i. *[8] And you shall again obey the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today. (Deuteronomy 30:8 ESV)*
 - i. Then, once you have a new heart, you shall obey the Lord.
- j. *Deuteronomy 30:15-20*
- k. Of course, we know that they failed. They didn't choose life, they chose death. They didn't choose trusting in God, they chose trusting in lies...

3. WHY TALK ABOUT THIS PASSAGE?

- a. Deuteronomistic History → Foundation for Prophetic Preaching (Hosea)
- b. Hosea pictures Israel's behavior and God's patient faithfulness
- c. Even though God gave them countless opportunities for repentance, extending grace upon grace, it wasn't a permanent fix.
- d. Jesus is the only one who ever loved God with all his heart, mind, soul, strength
- e. He was the only one who ever did and ever could fulfill the law
- f. But rather than leveraging that perfection to get what he wanted, he submitted himself willfully to execution for our crimes

- g. In other words, to use Deut 28 language, he was punished with the punishments we deserve, plagued with our plagues, cursed with our cursings
 - h. *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree” (Gal 3:13)*
4. WHAT DOES THIS STORY TEACH ABOUT GOD?
- a. You might be tempted to think Deut 28 means that God is a cause/effect God
 - i. This is a prime example of taking things out of context
 - ii. Will only lead to heresy → prosperity gospel and legalism/angry God
 - b. What does it actually teach about God?
 - i. God is holy and just...
 - ii. God is longsuffering and gracious (e.g. DH and prophets)...
 - iii. God provides a better way through Christ (the unconditional covenant transcends the conditional covenant)...
 - iv. God rewards/blesses our obedience...
 - 1. But not as you might expect... killer bread bowls
 - 2. The reward is the presence of God
 - a. A return to Eden, the true and better Promised Land
 - b. ****Can God give a gift better than himself?***
5. WHAT DOES THIS STORY TEACH ABOUT MANKIND? (without Christ)
- a. Without Christ, our choices will always lean towards sin → we will choose death
 - i. *(probably won't have time) Romans 3:9-18*
 - b. Without Christ, we will reap the horrible repercussions of sin → a pit we can't climb out of, a curse we can't bear, eternal death, hell
 - c. But WITH CHRIST it means something entirely else for us because he carried the burden on our behalf.
 - d. Now, we are ushered into the Promised Land as if we had obeyed
 - e. In other words, we are TRULY free and TRULY blessed (in the spiritual realm)
 - f. As new creations, w/ new heart, enjoying new covenant, we now have the capacity, in the Holy Spirit, to choose to walk in obedience (c.f. Deut 30)
 - i. You have the capacity to hear, embrace and live/obey the Word
 - g. Any obedience we choose is Christ working in us
 - h. Any sin we choose is our body of death rearing its head. (Romans 7)
 - i. The point is this: In Christ, we are freed by having the capacity to choose to live and to love the way God loves us because we have been made anew
 - j. *[13] For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. (Gal 5:13)*
 - i. We are free to live as we please, but we shouldn't abuse that freedom
 - ii. All things are permissible, but not all things are beneficial or helpful
6. SUMMARIZE → Include these talking points as slides.
- a. Deuteronomy 28 is about the nation of Israel staying in the land (God's presence)
 - b. They never stood a chance to be good enough to maintain that covenant
 - c. Jesus came and obeyed the covenant completely, but was executed

- d. He rose from the dead, ascended into heaven and sent the Holy Spirit into his follower's hearts.
 - e. Now maintaining access to God, enjoying his presence and his blessing isn't about entering into a physical land, it is about the presence moving into your heart
 - f. We live in this cross between two worlds: Our spiritual man is tasting the presence of God because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but our physical man is trapped in a body of death.
 - g. Before being filled with the Holy Spirit, we had limited ability to not sin, but in Christ we are freed and empowered to OBEY.
7. SO WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
- a. To put it in terms of Deut. 28: Choose life. Choose blessing. Choose obedience
 - b. To put it in New Testament terms: Walk in the Spirit and bear much fruit
 - c. Some of you have never made the first step of obedience in trusting in Christ → you continue to embrace willful disobedience
 - d. Others have trusted, but you are abusing God's grace by actively choosing disobedience. I am not talking about struggling w/ sins, I am talking about a habit of willful disobedience
 - i. Make war on your sin.
 - ii. You have not been given a weak spirit of fear and timidity, but a spirit of power and love and self-control
 - iii. You don't have the power to change, but the HS in you contains resurrection power, limitless power
 - iv. Make war on your double life... your anger... your lust... your greed... your racism... your pride...
 - v. This is why accountability through community (DGs) is so important
 - e. Practically speaking this means...
 - i. Hearing TRUTH by choosing to be in God's Word
 - ii. Embracing that truth by choosing to believe the truth of God over the lies of the Garden (that God is not good)
 - iii. Being transformed by that truth from the inside out
 - 1. From your mind, to your individual person, to your family, to your community, to the world
 - iv. Submitting and surrendering to truth through obedience
 - v. As you choose obedience, you experience the reward of blessing → a deepening relationship with Jesus
 - vi. This leads you to drink deeply from the limitless ocean of God's joy.
 - vii. Hear. Embrace. Live.
 - f. What will you choose? Will you choose obedience? Will you choose blessing? Will you choose life?
 - g. Or will you choose the way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads only to misery, destruction, squandering and death?