

Choose Blessing



The Decision is Yours (Part 9)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, as we continue with our theme for the week, "The Decision is Yours," a theme that can revolutionize your whole outlook on life.

In my previous talks this week, I've explained that through the Bible God confronts us with various decisions and the responses that we make will determine our destiny. And I've given three examples this week: the first one was the decision to forgive other people. And remember the proportion in which we have forgiven others determines the proportion in which God has forgiven us and that the initiative is with us, not with the people whom we need to forgive.

The second decision was the decision of humility. And all through the Bible humility is presented as man's responsibility, not God's. It really isn't scriptural to pray, "God, make me humble," because God's answer comes back, "Humble yourself." Humility is a decision. Illustrated by the parable of the guests at the wedding banquet, you can take the highest seat or you can take the lowest. If you take the highest, there's only one way you can go, that's down; if you take the lowest, there's only one way you can go, that's up. But you make the decision. By making the decision you determine which way you'll be going.

The third decision which I dealt with yesterday was one that may surprise some people: the decision between life and death. Some people don't realize that this is a decision that we have to make. In connection with this third choice or decision, the one between life and death, I quoted the words of Moses to Israel in Deuteronomy 30, verses 15-19. And I'm going to read them again today because they contain not only the choice between life and death, but the choice between blessing and cursing. This is what Moses said to Israel:

> "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; 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 [Notice, the choice is to live.]: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. [With life goes blessing.] But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt

> not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish [that's death], and ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, wither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. [And then Moses ends with this solemn invocation:] 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."

I pointed out yesterday that the choice we make affects our descendents, not only "thou," but its "thou and thy seed may live." I pointed out, too, that there are two pairs of opposites which Moses set before Israel. One is life and death, the other is blessing and curse. Yesterday I spoke about the decision or the choice between life and death, between Jesus the life-giver and Satan the thief, the life-taker.

Today, I'm going to speak about the other half of that pair, the choice between blessing and curse. For the full implications of this choice, we need to turnback, just two chapters in the book of Deuteronomy; that is, to Deuteronomy, chapter 28. Now, Deuteronomy chapter 28 is a remarkable chapter. It's a long chapter, it contains 68 verses and its theme is blessings and curses. The first fourteen verses are devoted to blessings, the remaining 54 verses are devoted to curses. By the time you've read through that chapter, you have some idea of what are blessings and what are curses.

Let's see, first of all, about the blessings. In the first two verses of Deuteronomy 28, this is what the Lord says:

> "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God [the Hebrew says, 'If thou shalt listen listening.' It emphasizes listening.], to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall comeon thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God."

So there's the way to the blessing. It's "listen listening" to God's voice and then doing what He says. That's a decision. You can decide to listen or you can decide not to listen; you can decide to do what He says or you can decide not to do it. But remember, it's a decision. Blessings are the results of right decisions.

Then the next twelve verses present in detail the various blessings. I don't have time to go into that in detail.

Then, at verse 15, we come to this, where it begins with the curses:

> "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee."

So the way to curses is also very clear, it's not listening to God and not doing what He says. And that again, is a decision. You decide not to listen, you decide not to do. You've made your decision for curses. And then the next 53 verses (just think of that!) present the various curses. It's an awful passage to read. But God is so honest. He confronts us with the result of making the wrong decision and He does it in great detail.

Now I don't have time in this talk to go into all the details but I will briefly sum up for you, first of all, the blessings and then the curses. I recommend that you read this passage for yourself. I'm just summing it up to give you a general overview. Remember, that's Deuteronomy, chapter 28. First 14 verses, blessings; the remaining 54 verses, curses. All right.

These are the blessings as I have summed them up for myself:

Exaltation, being lifted up

Health

Reproductiveness. I couldn't find one normal English word but it means that everything you are and everything you own is fruitful. Your own body, your family, your cattle, your crops, everything. Reproductiveness.

Prosperity

Victory

God's favor

Let me enumerate those blessings just once more: exaltation, health, reproductiveness, prosperity, victory, God's favor. Now those things come as a result of making the right decision. They're not happenstances, they're not accidents.

And here are the curses, which are lengthy, but I'll try and make them brief:

Humiliation

Failure to reproduce, barrenness is a curse

Mental and physical sickness

Family breakdown

Poverty

Defeat

Oppression

Failure

God's disfavor

I'll just read those again: humiliation, failure to reproduce, mental and physical sickness, family breakdown, poverty, defeat, oppression, failure, God's disfavor. Now, remember, those things come upon you by a decision. If you make the wrong decision, those will be the consequences. But remember, the decision is yours.

Let me take just a few moments to outline for you once more the steps that lead first to blessing or then to curses. What is the pathway to blessing? What decisions do you have to make that will bring you into the blessings? They're very simple. They are this: to hear and obey God's voice. It's not complicated. And remember, the decision is yours. Are you going to hear God's voice and are you going to obey, are you going to do what He says? Then you're entitled to the blessings. And remember, the blessings will overtake you, you don't have to run after them, they'll run after you.

What's the pathway to curses? Very simple, also. It's not hearing God's voice and not obeying Him and that, again, is a decision. You either hear God's voice by decision or you decide not to hear God's voice. You either obey God's voice by decision or you decide not to obey God's voice. The decision is yours and those are the consequences: on the one hand, blessings; on the other hand, curses.

Now, I did not have time to go into the details of the blessings or the curses but there's one specific blessing that blesses me so much I want to just direct your attention to it before I close. This is in the list of blessings, it's near the end of the list. Deuteronomy, chapter 28, verse 13:

> "And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail..."

All right. Being the head is part of the blessing. Being the tail is part of the curse.

Well, once upon a time I said to myself, "What's the difference?" And I really tried to work it out. What is involved in this? And it came to me so clearly: the head is the decision-making part of the body, the head decides where to go; the tail just gets dragged around wherever the head decides to go. And then I asked myself and I ask you who are listening to me, "Which are you in life? Which position do you occupy, the head or the tail? Do you make the decisions? Do you confront life and say, 'This is what I'll do by the grace of God. I'll obey God and I'll do what He tells me to do'? Then you're the head. Or are you like so many, the tail. Just dragged around from place to place, from situation to situation. Never quite able to make it. Never having sufficient resources. Always just short of something, caught unprepared, caught off your guard, pressured into doing things which, if you'd stopped and thought about, you wouldn't have done them? You know what you are, if that's your experience? You're the tail. Do you know why you're the tail? Because you're not hearing and obeying God's voice. The head makes the decisions, the tail just gets dragged around.

Now, let me ask you? What is your decision? I want to confront you with this. You can make a decision right now as you hear these closing words of mine. Are you going to hear God's voice and obey Him? Or are you going to make the wrong decision, not to hear God's voice and not to obey Him? Remember, the decision is yours.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. Tomorrow I'll be giving you practical direction on how to make the right decision.

Radio Program

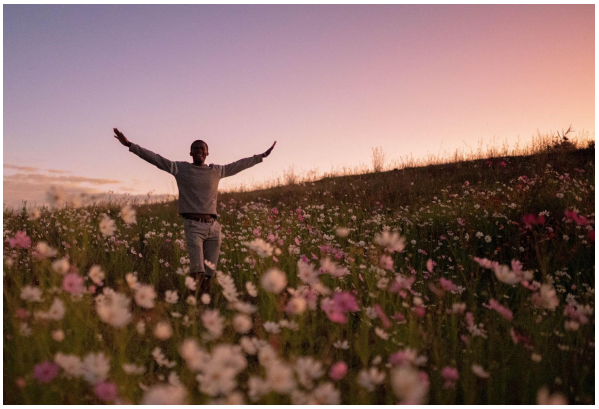
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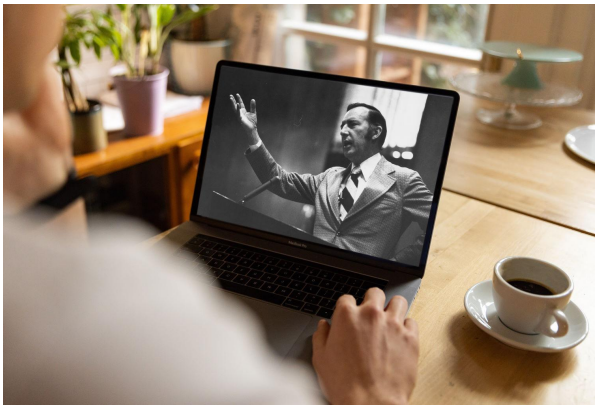
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