

DEUTERONOMY

Message Twelve

Life and Blessing under the Government of God

Scripture Reading: Deut. 30:15-20; Psa. 36:9a; 133:1, 3;
Ezek. 34:26; Eph. 1:3

- I. In order to extend their days in the good land, the children of Israel were required to live under the government of God, doing all that God had commanded them through Moses—Deut. 30:15-20; 3:23-28; 4:1-24.**

- II. Moses set before the children of Israel life and death and charged them to choose life—30:15, 19-20:**
 - A. With God is the fountain of life—Psa. 36:9a:
 1. God wants us to take Him as the fountain, the source, of our life and our being—v. 9a.
 2. The divine life may be considered the first and the basic attribute of God—Eph. 4:18; John 5:26; 1 John 5:11-12; Rom. 8:2:
 - a. According to the divine and eternal nature of the life of God, God's life is the unique life; only the life of God can be counted as life—John 1:4; 10:10b; 11:25; 14:6.
 - b. Life is the content of God and the flowing out of God; God's content is God's being, and God's flowing out is the impartation of Himself as life to us—Eph. 4:18; Rev. 22:1.
 - c. Life is the Triune God dispensed into us and living in us—Rom. 8:2, 6, 10-11.
 - B. In Genesis 2:9, 16-17 we see two choices before man—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil:
 1. The tree of life signifies the Triune God embodied in Christ as life to man in the form of food—v. 9; Rev. 2:7; John 1:4; 14:6a; 10:10b; 6:35, 57, 63.
 2. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil signifies Satan as the source of death—Heb. 2:14.
 3. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represent two principles of living—the principle of life (dependence on God) and the principle of right and wrong (independence from God)—Gen. 2:9, 16-17; 4:3-4; Jer. 17:5; John 15:5.
 4. These two trees are working within us as two principles of living.
 5. The Gospel of John reveals that the tree of life is versus the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—4:10-14, 20-21, 23-24; 9:1-3; 11:20-27.

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6. In our Christian life and church life, we should discern matters not according to right and wrong but according to life and death—2 Cor. 11:3; Gen. 2:9, 16-17.
- C. By the resurrection life of Christ in our spirit, we can be victorious over the attack of death upon the church—Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:24; 2 Tim. 1:10:
 1. Death is the characteristic of Satan’s work; the ultimate goal of his work is to saturate man with death—Heb. 2:14-15.
 2. Matthew 16:18 shows us from what source the attack upon the church will come—“the gates of Hades,” that is, death:
 - a. Satan’s special object is to spread death within the church, and his greatest fear with regard to the church is her resistance to his power of death—Rev. 2:8, 10-11.
 - b. The church that is built upon “this rock” can discern between death and life, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against the church—Matt. 16:18.
 3. If we would overcome the attack of death, we need to know Christ as the First and the Last and the living One—the One who became dead and lived again and the One who has the keys of death and of Hades—Rev. 1:17-18; 2:8.

III. Moses set before the children of Israel blessing and curse—Deut. 30:19:

- A. In Genesis 1:26-28 God blessed man to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it, because God saw on earth a living creature bearing His image and having His dominion.
- B. In order to be a blessing to His chosen people, God must have a kingdom, a realm, a sphere, on earth to exercise His administration under His full, divine authority—Matt. 6:10; Col. 1:13:
 1. Without such a kingdom, God does not have a realm in which to accomplish His purpose.
 2. Once there is a kingdom, the kingdom becomes the realm, the sphere, for God to exercise Himself to bless us—Rev. 11:15.
 3. We all want to receive blessing, but we may not realize that the blessing requires a sphere of God’s authority, a sphere under God’s administration.
- C. God “has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ”—Eph. 1:3:

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1. God has blessed us with His speaking; all the speaking in verses 4 through 14 is God's blessing.
2. *Every* indicates the all-inclusiveness of God's blessings.
3. *Spiritual* indicates the relationship of God's blessings to the Holy Spirit:
 - a. All the blessings with which God has blessed us are related to the Holy Spirit.
 - b. The Spirit of God is not only the channel but also the reality of God's blessings.
 - c. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit are all related to the blessings bestowed upon us—vv. 4-14; 3:16-17; 4:4-6.
 - d. God's blessing is mainly the dispensing of the Triune God into us—2 Cor. 13:14.
4. *Heavenlies* indicates not only the heavenly place but also the heavenly nature, state, characteristic, and atmosphere of the spiritual blessings with which God has blessed us:
 - a. These blessings are from the heavens, having a heavenly nature, heavenly state, heavenly characteristic, and heavenly atmosphere.
 - b. The believers in Christ are enjoying on earth these blessings, which are spiritual as well as heavenly.
5. *In Christ* indicates that Christ is the virtue, the instrument, and the sphere in which God has blessed us:
 - a. In Christ God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies.
 - b. We praise the Lord that we are in Christ, who is the virtue, the instrument, the sphere, and the channel in which we have been blessed.
6. Since the nature of these blessings is spiritual, we need to exercise our spirit to realize, experience, and partake of them in our spirit—Rom. 8:4.
- D. God's blessing is intrinsically related to oneness—Psa. 133:1, 3:
 1. The unity spoken of in verse 1 is a picture of the genuine oneness in the New Testament; this oneness is the processed and consummated Triune God mingled with the believers in Christ—John 17:21-23.
 2. *There* in Psalm 133:3 refers to the oneness upon which the Lord commands the blessing—life forever.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

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- E. Through His shepherding in His recovery by life, the Lord brings us into the enjoyment of His blessing and causes us to become a source of blessing under the showers of blessing—Ezek. 34:23, 26-27a, 29; Zech. 10:1:
 - 1. First, we ourselves enjoy the Lord's blessing, and then the Lord will cause us to become a source of blessing to others so that they may be supplied—Ezek. 34:26.
 - 2. God will cause the showers of blessing to come down in season—Zech. 10:1.
- F. The greatest blessing that we receive from the Lord is not what the Lord gives us; it is what the Lord makes us, what He enables us to become—Rev. 3:12:
 - 1. The Lord's promise in Revelation 3:12 is to make the overcomer a pillar in the temple of God:
 - a. Becoming a pillar in the temple of God involves transformation and building—21:22; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 2:21-22; 4:16.
 - b. It is a great blessing for the Lord to transform us and build us into His temple; this involves our being, what we are in Christ—Col. 1:27-28.
 - 2. If we see this vision, we will realize that in the church life the Lord's intention is not to do something outside of us but to transform us into another kind of being for His corporate expression—Rev. 21:10-11.
 - 3. In the church life we should not expect outward blessings; rather, it is crucial for us to realize that the Lord's blessing is to transform us into precious material and then build us into His dwelling place—Eph. 2:21-22.
- G. The normal life of a Christian is a life of blessing, and the normal work of a Christian is a work of blessing—Num. 6:23-27; Matt. 5:3-11; 24:46; John 20:29; Gal. 3:14; 2 Cor. 9:6; Rom. 15:29.
- H. We must realize that in our work, in our Christian life, and in our church life, everything depends on the Lord's blessing—Eph. 1:3; Mal. 3:10.
- I. We need to pray, "Lord, please give us a vision that we may see the meaning of Your blessing, and have mercy on us that, unhindered, we may be able to receive Your blessing."