



God Welcomes Do-overs

*Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the LORD your God will gather you and bring you back.
(Deut. 30:4)*

God's Mercies Never Cease

“The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lam. 3:22-23 ESV). The journey from baptism to sanctification can be very long. We stumble, fall, doubt, struggle, and sin. None of us has fully lived up to the commitment we expressed in our baptism. But God is full of grace, and He longs for His children. When we fall, He wants us to get back up. In His rich mercy, _____.

Choose Life! (30:1-20)

- **Deut. 30:1-3. Come on you.** It’s amazing that God makes provision for our failure; He is not surprised by our sins, and He has already made a path back to Him. **Compassion.** God is a compassionate Father who wants what is best for His children, including you. When you fail, He will take you back if you are willing to _____.
- **30:4-5. Bring you back.** God’s promises are eternal, and He remains faithful to us even when we are faithless to Him. God did, indeed, bring back the Israelites after their exile.
- **30:6. Circumcise your hearts.** God not only promises to restore Israel’s fortunes when it repents; He also promises to give them a heart for loving Him. Paul teaches us that we Christians are the heirs of this promise, as God circumcises our heart through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 2:29).
- **30:7-10. Prosperous.** God will turn our curses into blessings when we repent. **Written.** The book of Deuteronomy presents itself as the written Word of God, and Jesus took it as such. We are right to study Deuteronomy, since it is God’s sacred Word.
- **30:11-14. Too difficult.** The terms of God’s covenant are not too hard for us, but they require love in order to be fulfilled. With love, it is a delight to serve God. Without love, it is only a burden.
- **30:15-18. Life and prosperity, death and destruction.** The covenant is now set forth before Israel. To obey the covenant brings life. To disobey, brings death. The choice is always before us.
- **30:19-20. Heavens and earth.** Covenants require witnesses, but who can witness a covenant between God and His people? The heavens and the earth! **Now choose life.** Our theme verse for the study of Deuteronomy, this sentence offers boundless hope for the people of God. Choose life!



In 1984 I had the privilege of baptizing Albert Clay, (pictured here with his wife, Melviana)—when he was 84 years old! You’re never too old or too far away to come to Christ! (dmy)



Northern Israel from Mt. Carmel. God calls on the land and the sky to be His witnesses for the covenant He made with Israel (dmy)

An Invitation to Do-over

1. When you realize you have fallen, confess your sin to God and to _____ (1 John 1:9; James 5:16). In confession, we learn to be honest about our sin, and only the truth can set us free (John 8:32).
2. Be honest about your weakness, and depend on God for the strength to get back up (Prov. 3:5-8; 2 Cor. 12:9). With God, _____ (Matt. 19:26).

3. Offer to make amends to those you've harmed. In making amends, we restore _____ and give others the grace we ourselves need (Matt. 5:23-24).
4. Surround yourself with people who will help you stand firm. We become like the people with whom we associate (Prov. 13:20; 1 Cor. 15:33).
5. Turn your failure into a _____. We can redeem every problem in life, using it for the glory of God (Prov. 24:16; 1 Tim. 1:12-16)
6. Cast your cares on Him, and live in joy. Even in our failures, God is at work! (1 Pet. 5:7; Rom. 8:28)



David Ben-Gurion announces the founding of the modern state of Israel, 1948. Though the NT now describes believers in Jesus as the heirs of Abraham, the ongoing presence of Jews in the land of Israel remains a sign of God's faithfulness (<https://mfa.gov.il/Jubilee-years>)

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter. (2 Cor. 7:10-11)

Modern Israel as a *Sign* of God's Faithfulness

Of all the ancient peoples of Canaan, only the Jews survive as a distinct people group. This is a miraculous sign from God. But does the survival of the Jewish people mean that the land of Israel must *always* belong to the Jews? Is the modern state of Israel the fulfillment of OT prophecies?

The question is hotly debated. Many argue that the land should *always* belong to the Jews, since the OT promises that the land would be theirs "forever" (Gen. 13:15; Exod. 32:13; Josh. 14:9; etc.). As evidence, they point out that Jews have indeed returned to the land and live there to this day. For those who hold this position, Israel is more a *physical* nation (cf., Rom. 11:28-29).

Others believe that the biblical promises about land should now be understood *spiritually*: the land promises will be fulfilled in the "New Jerusalem" described in Rev. 20:1ff. Those who hold this position note that some of the promises of the OT were *conditional* (Deut. 30:10; 1 Chron. 28:8). Further, since the vast majority of modern Jews do not believe in Jesus, one cannot consider the physical Jews full heirs of the promises of God. For those who hold this position, Israel is a *spiritual* nation comprised of anyone who puts their faith in Jesus (cf., Gal. 6:16).

Perhaps we should understand that God still gives the land to physical Jews as a prophetic *sign* of His faithfulness, but not as the final fulfillment of the land promises. We can marvel that the Jews are still in Israel after nearly 4,000 years, while affirming that the richest land promises are spiritual in nature, to be consummated in the new heaven and earth when Jesus returns.

Such a position reminds us that only believers in Jesus will make up the final people of God, and prevents us from feeling the need to support all the policies of the Israeli government. Further, it allows us to support non-Jews living in the land. And finally, it reminds us to look forward to the final work of Christ, yet to be revealed at our resurrected life in the New Jerusalem.

Answers: God welcomes do-overs, repent, a trusted Christian, all things are possible, justice, ministry