

Welcome to the Sabbath.

The title of today's sermon is *Life and Death*, and this will be *Part 2*.

We're going to start by looking at Hebrews 9:27. In the last part of this sermon series we looked at the fact that God is the Creator of *all* life, that God is the author of life. He had life inherent in Himself and He created life. And this sermon series really is talking about what is life. God is the author of life, but there's a purpose behind life. And we're going to see this now in **Hebrews 9:27—And it is appointed for men to die once, but, so there's something different after this death, but after this, after this first death that man is appointed to or reserved to, the judgment, because there is a resurrection to life. So life, death, then a resurrection to life, and then there is a matter of choice. The great thing that God has done for the angelic realm and now for mankind is this topic of choice. We have a choice.**

The angelic realm were created and were given the capacity to choose, which is a marvelous and wonderful blessing. But if the angelic realm would not choose to follow God or to obey Him, well, there is a consequence. There is a blessing and there is a cursing. There is a blessing for obedience and there's a curse or a reward for disobedience. Well, the angelic realm have gone through that process and it is now fixed and established. One-third have chosen to rebel against God and they will be rewarded with the consequence of disobedience. The other two-thirds of the angelic realm have been set (they have chosen) to obey God and they have been rewarded and their reward is life, whereas the other reward for rebellion is death. Well, mankind is the same. Mankind has been given life for a purpose, and that purpose is life! Mankind has been given a physical life for the ability to choose. We have been created with this capacity to choose, to make a choice, which is a marvelous and wonderful blessing. If we choose to obey God there is a reward, and if we choose to disobey God there is a reward.

Hebrews 9:15. Now, Hebrews 9:15 is cutting into a thought process here about Jesus Christ, but it also points to the purpose of life. **Hebrews 9:15—And for this reason he, talking about Jesus Christ, is the mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, because through that death of Jesus Christ the penalty for sin has been paid, which then enables life. So Jesus Christ was given life for the purpose of death, and that death created the capacity for life, true life. ...for the redemption of the transgressions, which is the covering of sin, under the first covenant, under the first agreement, because "the wages of sin is death."** Now that Jesus Christ has paid the penalty for sin, which is death, therefore, now under this new agreement (the second agreement) we have this capacity to go to God and have our sins forgiven because of the death of Jesus Christ.

Continuing on in **verse 15... that those who are called**, now this is a key to this, "to be called." Mankind has not been called. Mankind has been left to himself, and therefore, he is under the penalty of sin, because he hasn't been called at this time to come out of sin, whereas we have been called to come out of sin. **Those who are called may receive the promise**, the purpose of physical life is to receive this life forever in Elohim, to enter Elohim as a spirit being. That is the purpose of life. Now, mankind doesn't know it, but those who are called, which is us, we have the opportunity to choose life or to choose death. The choice is ours. So those that are called now have been given a choice. A choice has been placed in front of us, whether we will obey God or whether we will disobey God. That is our choice. So this scripture clearly outlines now the purpose of physical life, why God created physical life, and it was all about this, "That they may receive," those that are called by God the Father, given His holy spirit, the ability now to choose spiritually, to make spiritual choices, to choose based on the spirit of a matter, **may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance**, which is to enter Elohim as a spirit being.

Well, brethren, we have this choice. We have to choose individually. It is our choice. When we look at this and we go back into man's thinking, mankind chooses selfishness, where we've been called by God the Father to make right choices. And those right choices are based on the spirit of the law. Obedience leads to blessings, which lead to life. Disobedience leads to rewards, which is curses or penalties, and those penalties for disobedience leads to death. So it's a matter of life and death, blessings and cursings, obedience or disobedience. And they're all connected. Obedience, blessings, and life. Disobedience, curses, and death.

So we're going to pick it up now in Deuteronomy 28:1. It has been appointed unto mankind to be obedient *or* to choose disobedience. The choice is ours. Now, this is a marvelous and wonderful capacity that we have. We have a choice. We have a choice whether or not we're going to listen to God or we're not. We've been called to listen to God on a spiritual level. Mankind hasn't. Well, the opportunity to choose has always been with mankind since Adam. And since then mankind has made choices.

Now, it's interesting if you look at human nature, because mankind will believe whatever suits him. There are many that believe in aliens, for example. Well, that's the choice they have made because they have made this decision based on their reasoning or their understanding. And yet mankind won't listen to God or come to obey God or to consider He is even in existence. Mankind has made other choices about evolution and many other things. Well, the time is coming now where this choice for mankind is coming to them and it's going to be magnified. During this last period of time, this last 3½ years, we're going to see this magnification of mankind having to make individual choices. The very fact is that Deuteronomy 28 outlines the blessings for this obedience, and then we'll go on and look at some of the curses for disobedience.

Mankind has a choice and they're going to be faced with a choice very soon, whether they want to choose life or choose death, because they're all connected. If they want to choose life, they're going to have to start to obey God, and if they obey God it's going to lead to a physical life, but it will end

up leading to a spiritual life. Well, if a person is going to choose to disobey God, it's going to lead to something. Disobedience leads to penalties. There's a penalty that's going to take place physically, but it's also going to take place in their thinking. And what will that do? That will lead to the opposite to life; it will lead to death.

Deuteronomy 28:1—Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Eternal your God (your Elohim), to observe, now, this is "to do," so to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Eternal your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. Now, this was speaking to Israel, that God would intervene into their life and that Israel would be "set high above," which means they would be lifted up because of these blessings that were going to be given to them and they would be seen to be God's people, because they were obedient to God. So this was a choice that they had. The choice is, "Will you," will they as Israel, will we, brethren, as spiritual Israel, "diligently," "diligently" really means an effort has to be put into it, which is to be very diligent. "Will you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God?" Now, this is about listening and obeying. Obedience will then bring something. But the choice is ours. The choice is everybody's to make. And that's the period we're entering into. Mankind is going to have to make a choice, obedience or disobedience. Now, this obedience leads to a mental health and a physical health, and it leads, in the end, powered by God's holy spirit, to a spiritual health. If we are obedient to God, if we diligently obey God in spirit and truth, we're seeking to obey God on a spiritual level, which means we're monitoring our attitude, we're looking at why we're doing what we're doing, we're looking to the spirit of the law, if we do that it will lead to life. Blessings! Because spirit life is a great blessing! It's the greatest blessing any human could be given, which is spirit life in Elohim. What a marvelous and wonderful blessing that would be!

Well, God says that if we diligently seek Him, if we diligently listen to Him and obey Him, strive to obey, well, what would happen? That God would set us apart, He would "lift us up on high above all the nations of the earth." Well, that time in the Millennium is coming, that mankind, when they listen to God and obey God, will be set up high above all the nations of the earth. Those that are being obedient will be blessed. As we know in other scripture, that once Jesus Christ returns to this earth, that those that obey him will be blessed. They'll be given rainfall and they will be in prosperity. Those that choose to disobey God and not go to the Feast of Tabernacles, for example, or choose not to keep the Sabbath, well, there's going to be a reward. Because the blessings and cursing's will continue into the Millennium. This is about obedience or disobedience.

Verse 2—And all those blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because... So why is a person blessed? **Because you obey the voice of the LORD your God.** In other words the person is listening to God and they're striving to overcome themselves. Well, if they do all of the blessings, all of the benefits that God will give, they'll come upon a person if they're listening, they're obeying, and diligently seeking to know what God is wanting out of their life - which is obedience to Him, choosing to be obedient to Him. Because this is a choice.

Verse 3—Blessed shall you be in the city, which is in any place where people are grouped together there's going to be peace and safety in that location. **Blessed you shall be in the city, blessed you shall be in the country**, which is in the field. So the fields will be in prosperity. There'll be rain given, there'll be many things given because no matter where they are they'll be protected and God will be with them because of their obedience. And this obedience on the physical level will lead to a better physical life.

Verse 4—Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, which is referring to having children, **the produce of your ground**, which is the crops will be growing, **and the increase of your herds**, which is the livestock will be increased, **the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks**.

Verse 5—Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowls. So there's going to be a strong agricultural system there. **Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out**. All of their efforts will be in the way of prosperity. Everything will be blessed by God because God is giving them something.

Just dropping down to **verse 8—The LORD (the Eternal) will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all which you set your hand**, which is everything that is done because of this effort that they're putting into obeying God, that God will be involved in everything that they do. **And He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you. The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you**. So that's all going to happen, **if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways**. So this is the big "if." If people will walk in God's ways, if people will be obedient, if people will choose to be obedient to God, God will pour out His blessings. Because there are laws that God has set up, that anybody that is striving to obey God, well, God is with them. Now, we understand, brethren, that we are not like the rest of mankind at this point in time because mankind has been left to himself for 6,000 years to make choices. And the natural carnal mind, without God, will make wrong choices. They'll make choices based on what is best for them. We have been called out for a purpose, and that purpose is to transform our very thinking. Now, this transformation of our thinking that takes place is because God has called us, and therefore, we are God's special people and God is with us. God has a purpose in our life and He is working with us while we work with God, while we *choose* to obey God.

Now, the moment we stop choosing to obey God, well, God cuts His spirit off, His flow of His spirit to us, and therefore, it's based on whether or not we want to repent. And God will give us the opportunity to repent if we diligently seek Him. But if we don't diligently seek Him, if we don't choose to obey Him, and we don't desire anymore to be in submission to God, to be obedient to God, well, God can't work with us, and therefore, we are left to ourselves. We are left to ourselves, and therefore, the principle will apply that God is no longer with us. Well, therefore, we're back in the world's system. Our minds will then transfer back to where they came from - "a dog going back to its vomit." It's worse than that because we're now *corrupting* our thinking. Our minds are being corrupted and we're no longer growing spiritually. We're regressing. We're going back using the natural carnal mind and the perversion of that way of thinking.

Dropping down to verse 15, because we've looked at the blessings where God would be with us because we've chosen to obey Him. Now we're going to see the curses or the suffering that's going to come upon us, because all of this is about the cause and effect, sow and reap. The cause of something - disobedience - well, what's the effect of disobedience? Well, let's look at it. **Verse 15—But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.** So this is something that is going to start and it's going to continue, but it's going to increase because they're going to overtake a person.

Verse 16. When we look at the word "curse," we're looking at suffering. There's going to be suffering. Physical humans are going to suffer on a physical level. **Verse 16—Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country.** Which is the opposite to what we read before. Cursed; there's going to be a reward. There's going to be suffering for disobedience. **Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, and the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.** In other words, what will happen is there's going to be suffering. There's not going to be prosperity. Yet God *wants* to give prosperity. God desires to give prosperity to those that choose to obey Him. Now, if we choose not to obey Him, well, we're going to suffer.

Let's look at a couple of principles with regards to this choosing to obey or choosing to disobey God. In **Proverbs 21:21—He who follows righteousness and mercy,** which is about this pursuing. So to follow something really is to pursue it. We're to pursue this righteousness, which is God's righteousness, and mercy. What happens if we pursue it? Well, on a physical level we can see that there are rewards for this obedience. Well, on a spiritual level there's also the same principle. "He who pursues righteousness," which is God's holy spirit, God's character, "and mercy," which is still God's thinking towards a matter, **finds life, righteousness, and honor.** On a spiritual level if we pursue righteousness, this relationship with God, this battling against ourselves, and mercy, we look to being merciful to others, not to lift ourselves up in pride and to make wrong judgments about people and about situations, but always to have God's thinking towards others, God's thinking about a matter, the way He sees it, what is the outcome? "Finds life!" Talking about not only a physical life, or an improved physical life, it's actually talking about something spiritual - find spiritual life in Elohim. So if we find life, what do we find? We find righteousness, which is God's thinking in us permanently, "and honor," which is glory. Being in Elohim is a glory. It is really true life. It is righteousness. It is God in us. And the glory is having God in us. Being in Elohim is a glorious thing. Now, we have to pursue, we have to follow, which is to live righteousness and mercy, and that can only be done by the power of God's holy spirit.

Here when this proverb was written, you can look at this on the physical level. "He who pursues righteousness," which is obedience to God's law, "and has a merciful attitude will find an improved physical life, will find also righteousness," which is virtually the physical component of obedience to

God, "and honor," because there's an honor to this. Because God will increase His blessings on the person.

Dropping down to **verse 23—Whoever guards his mouth**, which is his words, **and tongue**, so we have to guard our thinking first. We have to guard it. We have to be fighting against our selfishness (by the power of God's spirit), and we then guard the words we say because they're bringing our thoughts into check (and the tongue); in other words, we're not just blabbering things out, we're actually striving to fight against ourselves in our thinking, **keeps his life from troubles**, which is "keeps his life from anguish." So if we are guarding our mouth, if we are guarding our tongue, which it means we're fighting against our own thinking, we keep our life from anguish, from trouble. So guarding our thinking is the key to this righteousness. Because we have to be guarding ourselves, we have to be guarding our selfishness, we have to be fighting against it, overcoming self.

Proverbs 22:1—A good name is to be chosen rather than riches. Well, this is about a reputation. Now, reputation will come from behaviors, from the way we live. So it's based on our character. It's based on the choices that we make. What do we choose in life? Well, this good name will come from obedience to God, and if we have this obedience to God a reputation will be given. So we have to make this choice. This is a choice that we have to make. "A good name is to be chosen," which is we have to choose to obey God, we have to choose to be merciful, we have to choose to do good to others, we have to overcome evil with good. Well, if we do that we're choosing a good name. It's a choice! "A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches," because at some point we're going to have to make a choice in life. We're going to do things God's way or we're going to do things our own way. Well, that is the choice that we have. **...loving favor rather than silver and gold.**

Verse 2—The rich and the poor have this in common, the Eternal is the maker of them all. God is the Creator of all things. God is the maker of rich and God is the maker of the poor, because He makes mankind, He leaves mankind to himself, and people look at the world (as the book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes goes through), people can look at the world and say, "The rich are prospering. What are you doing, God? You know, the wicked are prospering. What are you doing?" Well, God has said He has left man to himself for 6,000 years, and some do gain wealth because of obedience to certain laws that they have, or their diligence. Many gain wealth because of evil, because they do against God's way but then they prosper in this world because of their greed and because they *are* willing to devour, they are willing to consume everything. "They tread people down on the ladder," as they say. The saying is you've got to be careful of the ones you tread on top of as you climb the ladder because you're going to meet them on the way down. Because as people go up, at some point they're coming down, and if they're not, well, they're going to die and they *will* be brought down, because it has been appointed unto mankind to die once, then that Hundred-year period. So God is the author of life and death. The Eternal is the maker of them all. Everything comes from God. Life comes from God and riches come from God, as does prosperity come from God. A good reputation will come from God because of a person's obedience to God and their diligence in doing good.

Verse 3—A prudent *man* foresees evil and hides himself, which is looking at somebody that is looking at the situation and he avoids the situation, he foresees it. "This is going to lead to that, and therefore, that's not good, therefore, I'm going to avoid it." That's being prudent. That's being wise - watching out, making anticipations of things that could happen, and working out whether a person wants to get involved in it. Well, a prudent person foresees it, and therefore, hides himself. In other words, he avoids it all together and doesn't go near it. **...but the simple pass on and is punished.** They suffer from the lack of the fear of God. They do not fear God. They don't look at sin to say, "Ah, this is a sinful situation. I'm going to avoid it." No, someone who's simple and naïve and just living in his selfishness, well, they'll just move forward and they will suffer the consequence of the decision they made. Because this goes back to this choice principle. "A prudent man foresees evil," he could see it but he has to make a choice; what will he do? Well, he chooses, someone who is wise, he'll choose to hide himself, hide themselves. They will avoid it because they can see this sin and what it's going to lead to. But someone who is not prudent, who's not using God's holy spirit, well, they just live life. And what happens? They get punished for their disobedience. They are going to suffer because of their disobedience to God.

Verse 4—By humility *and* the fear of the Eternal *are* riches and honor and life, which is the end result of all this. It's by godly humility, by the fear of God, that we have true life, we have the choice of true life. So by this humility, which is this not having an attitude of selfishness and pride, but understanding who we really are on a spiritual level - that of and by ourselves we can't do anything. By nature we have pride. It's just something that is in us. If we are willing to humble ourselves - and by this humbling of ourselves we then obey God, we go back to Deuteronomy 28. It's by humility that obedience comes into play. By humbling ourselves and realising that we don't know everything at all, that if we humble ourselves and obey God—because humility and obedience go together—and fearing God, which is to place God in awe, to know our true spiritual condition in all of this matter, what is the outcome? "Are riches," not just physical - spiritual riches! "And honor," which is the honor of being part of God's Church, being a member of the Body of Christ. And although the world doesn't know us at this point in time there will come a time where honor will be given to God's people because of the calling that God has given. Nothing that we've done, just what God is doing in us. And the outcome of this humility is life; not just physical life, but spirit life. So it's by this *true* humility, not just a man-made thing, true humility which is powered by God's holy spirit. And if we're living humility, we truly know our true spiritual condition and we fear God, which is to obey God, we hold Him in awe, what is the outcome? Well, it's blessings! It's riches, honor, and life, life in Elohim.

Verse 5—Thorns *and* snares *are* in the way of the perverse. Now, that is, perverse there is something that is twisted or false or crooked. "Thorns and snares," well, that's the reward for disobedience, "are in the way of the perverse." **He who guards his life will be far from them**, because they're being prudent. They're standing back, they're looking at the situation, analysing the situation, and what they realize is that this is sin and they don't want to be involved in any way with sin. Well, they're "guarding their life." They're guarding their physical life, but they're guarding the potential of a spirit life, therefore, they've made a choice. A prudent person through humility will make a choice.

They will avoid perverseness. They will avoid evil. "He guards his life and will be far from them." He will withdraw from them and he will draw to obedience to God, not disobedience to God.

Mankind is currently in a state of disobedience to God. And we've now entered a time where they're going to be asked to obey God. They're going to be asked to repent. We understand repentance is change. Mankind is going to be given the opportunity - many of them - are going to be given the opportunity to change, to repent. They're going to have to make a choice. Well, in Deuteronomy God is now outlining to Israel about making this choice, and He's gone through and told them what will happen if they choose to disobey God and if they choose to obey God. There is a reward for either choice, but it is a choice.

Deuteronomy 30:1—Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, which is referring to, **the blessings and the curse**, or the curses, the rewards for decisions, the rewards for choices. Same principle applies to us today. There is a reward for the choice that we make. We're either going to be obeying God, we're going to then receive a reward, and that reward is life. An improved physical life now, but more importantly a spirit life in the future, which is the blessing. Or we're going to choose the opposite, we're going to choose our disobedience and that disobedience leads to this curse or the reward for this disobedience that we're going to receive. And what's that reward? "The wages of sin is death." The reward for disobedience is death. The reward for obedience is life.

...all these things will 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. Because of their disobedience God said He would punish them, and therefore, they would go into this captivity or they would be rewarded with these penalties. One of the penalties was to be taken into captivity. If, while in that captivity, they would then remember to obey God - in other words, they'd turn back to God - if they do this something is going to happen.

Well, mankind now is in this captivity, spiritual captivity. And there's going to come a point during this next period of time that they're going to be given opportunity - not everybody - some are going to be given opportunity to make a choice. They're going to remember God in the sense they're going to be given the opportunity to obey God or not. And this is part of the witness to mankind. The witness to mankind is choose life - choose life or choose death - but the choice is yours. The choice is mankind's. Now, the main part of their choice is going to take place in the Hundred-years, where mankind will still be given a choice, because that is one of the great blessings God has given to mankind. Do we want to choose God or do we want to choose something else? Choose God means life. Choose something else means death. Well, here it's saying that Israel has taken into captivity, and when they're in captivity it comes to their mind that they should now turn to God.

Verse 2—and you return, or you turn to the **LORD your God** (Yahweh Elohim) and obey His voice, because they're being punished because of their disobedience. They haven't chosen to obey God, they've chosen to disobey God. Now they have to turn, which to make this choice, "What am I going

to do? I'm going to return, I'm going to *turn* to Yahweh Elohim and obey His voice. I'm going to be obedient to Him." ...according to all that I have commanded you today, you and your children, that's everybody, **with all your heart**, now this is with "all your mind," "with all your inner thinking." So it is about a choice. What is man going to do? Same applies now. What is man going to do? Many are going to have a witness to them that they need to make a choice - choose to obey or not.

If we go back and look at the situation where Jonah was sent to Nineveh, well, a choice had to be made. It had to be made within their thinking. And the king makes the right choice, as an example that people have a choice in life - choose to obey and there is a reward, and choose to disobey and there is a reward. Well, here God is saying, "Well, when you remember from your captivity, you're going to have to turn back, but you're going to have to be very diligent about it. You're going to have to now, 'with all your heart,' which is all your inner thinking." ...**and with all your life**, you're going to have to not only think it, you're going to have to live it. Because "all your life" really means a choice to live it. Because we can know about the Sabbath and think that it's right, but we have to implement it into our life. We actually have to make a change. We have to actually change the way we think, change the way we live, because just thinking differently is not enough. We have to implement it into our life, and therefore, it just becomes part of our life. In the end it's the only way we think. We don't actually have to go into a lot of work about thinking about it because it's just a way of life; we live it. It's part of us. We're changing the way we think and we've changed the way we live.

Verse 3—that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you, which is God's mercy towards them, because they're making the choice to want to obey God, and therefore, God will intervene and begin to bless them again, begin to give them prosperity, and God would deliver them from the captivity they are in.

We're in that same situation. Mankind has the captivity of his mind because of Satan's influence and because of the natural carnal mind. Well, if mankind would choose to obey God, choose to listen to Him, God will deliver them. God will support them, and they will be rewarded with blessings for their obedience. But they have to make this choice, just like we have to make the choice every day.

Verse 4—If *any* of you are driven out to the farthest *parts* under the heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you. It doesn't matter where we are, God knows what He is doing and God can deliver us from every single situation. **And from there He will bring you.** He will bring us back from this captivity. Well, we're fortunate that we've had a calling that has fulfilled this prophecy because we have been in the furthest parts of the land under the heavens. We've been out there in our mind. We've lived in the world. But from there God gave us a calling. Many of us have pasts or things that we've done in the past that we cringe at now. Well, it was God in His mercy that intervened, and God gave us the opportunity through a calling to make a choice. Will we obey and be delivered or will we be disobedient and disobey God and not be delivered? The choice was ours. And we are here today because we keep choosing to obey God, we keep choosing to humble ourselves to be

obedient to God. And that's why we're here today, because of a choice. God says He will gather everybody. It doesn't matter where they are, if they are willing to turn to God (turn or return), God says if we humble ourselves He would deliver us.

Verse 5—Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He (Yahweh Elohim) will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. This is talking about going into the promised land. Well, the promised land, really, in type, in a way, is about going into the Millennium, and it's also about going into a relationship with God, going into the Body of Christ, the Church of God because we've been called out into a relationship with God. Just like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had a relationship with God, we've had the same opportunity. They chose to obey God and they have been given prosperity. They have been given prosperity physically, but they have been given prosperity spiritually - yet to inherit it. Well, we're very similar. We've been given great prosperity now because we're part of the Body of Christ, the Church of God now, and we have had what they have had, the knowledge of God. We've had a relationship with God. Well, God says here He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. We have so much more than Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Much more! We have great spiritual knowledge. We have great spiritual understanding. We have God's holy spirit. We have the Church. We have brothers and sisters in Christ. We are part of a family! We have these relationships. It was actually just between them and God, and their families didn't always understand them. Well, we have an opportunity that we have another family. We have a spiritual family, members of the Body of Christ.

Verse 6—And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, which is all your life, **that you may live.** So this circumcision is important because it was about the circumcision of the heart, which is this change of thinking, another way of thinking.

Let's have a look at this in the principle of it in **Romans 2:25**. The physical circumcision in the Old Testament pointed to a relationship with God. The New Testament is about circumcision of the heart. The truth is that unless we have a circumcision of the heart we will not have life. Absolutely impossible! If we remain uncircumcised in heart we face death.

Verse 25—For the circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law. Now, it's referring back to keeping the law without God's holy spirit. Now, the reality is we can't keep the law without God's holy spirit. Well, if we could we'd only be doing it on a physical level, and therefore, it would be a demonstration of this relationship with God, which was pointing to Israel of old, for their circumcision was a physical circumcision and it was profitable because it pointed to the fact that they were in this relationship with God and they were supposed to be striving to obey God's law - not in spirit, because they couldn't. They never had God's spirit. **...but if you are a breaker of the law,** so if we're physically circumcised and we're supposed to be keeping the law on a physical level, and if we break the law, which we would because it was impossible to keep God's law, **your circumcision,** their outward sign of this so called relationship and obedience to God, **your circumcision has become uncir-**

circumcision. Well, it's of no value because we're continually breaking the law, therefore, it was all a waste of time.

Verse 26—Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, which is what is required now, which is obedience to the 10 Commandments in spirit and truth, and a person was not circumcised (in other words, it wasn't physically pointing to this relationship to God and a relationship about obedience), but if a person's uncircumcised (physically) and the person keeps the righteous requirement of the law, which is the spirit of the law, which is this relationship with God in spirit and truth, having God's holy spirit powered by God's holy spirit, **will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?** The answer is, yes. Because whether we're physically circumcised or we're not is totally irrelevant. It doesn't matter. It's about a circumcision of the heart. It's not about a physical sign, it's a spiritual one. It's actually about this circumcision of the heart that leads to life, the choice of life. And if we remain physically uncircumcised or physically circumcised it counts for nothing. It's about the righteous requirement, which is this keeping of the 10 Commandments in spirit and truth powered by God's holy spirit.

The choice to obey. The choice to obey is the key powered by God's holy spirit. We have God's holy spirit so that we can make right choices. We can still make wrong ones because of the natural carnal mind, and we can choose to disobey. The choice is ours. Whenever we sin, whenever we choose to go against God (which is sin), it was our choice. Now, it can be through weaknesses of the mind and weakness of the flesh, but it still was a choice, because we have choice in life. Now, often we make wrong choices. That's natural. We have the ability to repent, which is a wonderful blessing from God. Well, physical circumcision means nothing; it's all about the spirit of the law, circumcision of the heart.

Verse 27—And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written *code* and circumcision (physical), *are* a transgressor of the law? What he's saying there is that an uncircumcised person can make righteous judgments and can turn around and work out what sin is. They can work out and say, "Well, you're circumcised and you're transgressing the law. You're breaking God's law." They can make that judgment even though they're uncircumcised. So the answer to that is, yes, yes they can make this judgment because they have God's spirit. They can discern what's right and wrong. But somebody who's physically circumcised and they break God's law, well, what good is it if there's no repentance involved.

Verse 28—For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, in other words, the physical circumcision, **nor *that* circumcision which *is* outward in the flesh.** It's all physical. It's not spiritual at all, **but *he is a Jew who is one* inwardly,** because it's about the spirit of the matter. It's not about a physical circumcision, it's about a spiritual circumcision of the heart, within the thinking. Now, this requires a calling and the power of God's holy spirit. To be circumcised in heart is to have God's holy spirit. ... **and circumcision *is that* of the heart,** which is the mind, which is this changing of the way we think, **in the spirit,** which is talking about the intent. Our intent is no longer satisfying self, our intent is to do things according to God's word, to be obedient to God.

Continuing on... **not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God**, because God is first in everything. It's not about physical rituals. It's not about physical matters. And motive and intent is about pleasing God at all times. Everything we do in spirit is about obedience to God, and that obedience will lead to life. That is God's promise. Obedience leads to life. Choosing to disobey will lead to death. It's a matter of life and death, and God, as we're going to go through in Deuteronomy, encourages us and urges us to choose life.

Now, we're looking at this in two ways. We can see the physical component of it, where Israel was asked to choose life. It was all about physical. We, brethren, are different. We've been asked to choose life because it's spiritual in nature, and therefore, the choice is still ours, whether we want to obey, whether we want to repent, whether we want to remain humble (powered by God's spirit). Well, it is our choice. We can lift ourselves up in pride and be non-repentant. When we do that we're choosing death.

1 Corinthians 7:18. This is covering the fact that physical circumcision is not required anymore. It's about a calling and a circumcision of the heart, which is a cutting off of the old selfishness that was in us and getting rid of the selfishness, which is having God's holy spirit which counteracts it. So the physical means nothing anymore, it's the spiritual circumcision that's required, a changing of the way we think.

Verse 18—Was anyone called while circumcised? Well, was anybody? Yes, some were. **Let him not become uncircumcised.** So don't go and try and reverse it, because it makes no difference whether we're circumcised or uncircumcised. **Was anyone called while uncircumcised?** Yes, there have been many. **Let him not be circumcised.** Because they're all outward physical things and now they point to nothing. The circumcision is now spiritual.

Verse 19—Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. They're only physical things. There's no righteousness in it. One person can take themselves and say, "I was circumcised," and take it to themselves. Pride. Pride. Or, "I'm uncircumcised, therefore, I'm better than you because I haven't gone through that." It means nothing. They're only to do with pride if we think we're better because we're circumcised or if we think we're better because we're uncircumcised. They're both going to be an aspect of pride. **Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping of the commandments of God is what matters.** It's about obedience to God, circumcision of the heart.

Back to Deuteronomy 30:6. We're going to read that. **Deuteronomy 30:6—And the LORD your God (Yahweh Elohim), will circumcise your heart**, which is going to require a calling and the power of God's holy spirit, **and the heart of your descendants**, which is those that are to follow. And what's this circumcision about? Well, what is the outcome of this circumcision of the heart? What's going to happen? There's going to have to be a choice made here, and the choice would be if we are circumcised of heart and given this opportunity and we make right choices - **to love the LORD your God with all your heart**, with all your thinking, **and with all your life**, we're going to have to implement this change of thinking into our life and actually physically live it, **that you may live**, that we may

actually have life - not just physically, but a spirit life, because that is God's promise to us. If we choose to obey, if we choose to circumcise our thinking we can actually have life, true life.

Verse 7—Also the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies, so they'll be on others because of their disobedience, and on those who hate you and persecute you. This is not going to change during the thousand years and it won't change during the Hundred-years because this is a spiritual principle. It's not physical, it's spiritual. "As the LORD your God will put these curses," the curses will be applied or the reward for disobedience will be applied to those during the thousand years and the Hundred-years. And those that have chosen not to be of circumcision of heart (if that's their choice), they're going to be rewarded. They're going to be given the curse. And the reward for that disobedience is death because that's what they have chosen.

Continuing on, "as the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies, and those who hate you and persecute you." **And you will again obey the voice of the LORD your God, so if they did choose to obey God, and do all His commandments which I have commanded you today.** What's going to be the outcome? **The LORD your God will make you abound in all the work of your hands, in the fruit of your body, and the increase of your livestock, and the produce of your land for good.** It's all going to be benefited. It's all going to prosper. **For the LORD (Eternal) will again rejoice over you for good.** In other words, God will then pour out His blessings on them. ...**as He rejoices over your fathers,** because of their obedience. God rejoiced over the fathers because of (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), because of their obedience to God. And because of this obedience to God they were increased physically. There was physical blessings. Well, now these blessings are spiritual and that God will rejoice over His people, just like He has rejoiced before over those that have chosen to obey Him.

Now, here comes the choice. It's *our* choice, and it's the choice of those that are going to hear the witnesses towards them, the witness that has already gone out. And now there is a witness going out to other nations, *Prophesy Against the Nations*, because they are going to have this opportunity to obey God. It is their choice.

Verse 10—if you obey the voice of the LORD your God (Yahweh Elohim) to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, and if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart, so it's *all* our hearts, it's all our minds with our thinking. We have to turn our thoughts to God, **and with all your life,** which is now choosing to implement this change into our life. **For this commandment which I command you today it is not mysterious for you, nor is it far off.** In other words, it's not that difficult. It's very close by. It's not that difficult to make this choice. And it's not as if it's a big mystery! It's quite simple. There are 10 Commandments, and we are to obey those 10 Commandments in spirit and truth. It's not that complicated and it's not as if it's been hidden from us. It's been provided to us. It's not mysterious.

It is not in heaven, where we can't get to it, **that you should say, Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?** So that's the question, "Well, it's so far away

we can't actually know it or we can't get to it!" Well, God's saying, "No, it's not like that at all." **Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.** This is about God's thinking. God's word is close because it's powered by God's holy spirit, and *if* we are powered by God's holy spirit we have to choose to do it. "That you may do it"; it requires action. Well, now God's word is going to be poured out to mankind, and in the Millennium God's word is going to be poured out even more. And in the Hundred-years it will fill the earth! What an amazing time! The word is very near to them because God is going to be there teaching them through Jesus Christ and the 144,000.

Verse 15—See, I have set before you, now, this is about a choice, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. The choice is ours. Prosperity is our choice. Life is our choice. We're given life to choose life. So God is going to say, "I have set before you today life," which is going to be connected to obedience, which is connected to blessings, which is connected to *true* life, which is good, which is that prosperity spiritually. And the other one is this disobedience. This disobedience will bring penalties, and the outcome of the penalties will be evil, and the evil will be death. They're all connected - cannot be separated. Now, that word "evil" there is "afflicted" or "troubled." So God said, "I've set before you two ways of life. You're going to have to choose one or the other. It's your choice. It's up to you to make a choice."

Verse 16—in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways. Now, to walk is to think about them and actually be obedient. To walk in it is to live it. We have to learn to live God's way. We actually have to implement it, change our way of thinking, change the way we actually live. To live mercy means a change of thinking. To live love means a change of thinking. And if we're living love and we're living mercy we'll be walking towards others, living towards others a different way. Obedience to God will be required. **...to walk in His ways and keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.** Physically we can understand that. It's about obedience and that obedience lent to these blessings.

We, brethren, have been called by God into a relationship with Him. So the benefit of Him blessing us that He can give us life, "that you may live." Not just live physically, but to live spiritually in Elohim. "And the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess." We, brethren, have the opportunity to be in the land of plenty now, which is in the Church of God now, the land of spiritual prosperity. The end result of that is life, true life in Elohim.

The opposite to it, **verse 17—But,** the choice is ours. God has set before us life and death, blessings and cursing's, good and evil. The choice is ours. **But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear,** that's the refusal to listen. And this refusal to listen has been the habit of the world. It's the way the world is now. Well, they're going to be given opportunity to hear and they're going to have to make a choice - turn to God and listen, or not. Either one brings a reward. The reward for turning and listening is life. And the reward for turning away and not listening is death. **But if your heart**

turns away so that you will not hear and you draw away, which is to draw back, and worship other gods, other Elohim, which is other relationships, they're in relationships with false gods, relationships with Satan, really, because of his way of thinking, and serve them, which is living towards them. Because "to serve them" means we're putting ourselves to benefit them. So to serve them means we're sacrificing to them, we're sacrificing ourselves, we're giving our minds over to them. It's anything before God is going to be considered as sin. Mankind has a choice. We're either going to listen to the truth or we won't, and anything that we put before God there's going to be a reward for it, because if we've "turned to worship them," which is to put our minds to them, "and serve them," which is to give our minds over to them, to put them before anything else, there's going to be a problem in our life.

Verse 18—I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; they'll be cut off, cut off. Now, there's two parts to this. Physically, yes, they'll be cut off and die. The same thing applies on a spiritual level, that if we turn against God, if we turn away from God and won't hear the truth, won't listen to God, won't yield to God, won't obey God in spirit and truth, we will perish. We'll be cut off spiritually. The flow of God's holy spirit will be cut off from us. It will cease to flow into our life because we have turned away and we will not hear and we have drawn away, we've pulled back from obedience to God. We will perish spiritually. We'll be cut off spiritually. ...**you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go and possess. I call heaven and earth as witness today before you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, that both you and your descendants may live.** Well, we understand this is physical. We can look at this spiritually. God is saying He has set a witness before us today. We have it today in God's Church, that God has set before us a choice. We can choose life through this obedience and humility to God. We're choosing life every single day of our life. And the life that we are choosing is just not a physical life, it's a spirit life. It's life in Elohim. That's the choice we have made. That's the choice we are making every single day. Well, the other one is if we're choosing death, we're choosing death by disobeying God and being non-repentant. That's our choice. Blessings for obedience, which will lead to life, and cursing's for disobedience, which lead to death. God says with great zeal, "Therefore, choose life!" Because God wants to give us life. God wants a family and He wants us to be in that family. And we're so blessed now to have this opportunity to make this choice. Yes, from the time of Adam we all have this choice, the choice to obey or to disobey.

Verse 20—What is required of us? **That you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, that you may cling to Him.** Now, this clinging to Him is about this trust in God. When you look at children and a parent - when there's a time of fear or there's a time of distress within a family environment, and the children, what do they normally do, younger children? They run to their mother and father and they cling to them. They hang on tight. Because? They trust them. They trust who they're clinging on to. Same for us, brethren. If we're obeying God and listening to His voice, and that we may cling to Him, Yahweh, Elohim, **for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.** So this is the promise. There is a physical promise of blessings for obedience and there's

spiritual promises for blessings for obedience. Those promises are that we would be part of God's family at some point in time, according to God's will. But it all goes back to that we "will love the LORD your God and obey Him and cling to Him," which is we trust Him, with all our life. Because He is our life! God is the Creator of life. He gave life and He can give life. We have physical life now. It doesn't really matter if it comes to an end. It doesn't really matter, because the promise to God's people is that we have the opportunity to choose life. And that's what we are doing every day of our life now. We're choosing life. And while we have this relationship with God and we cling to Him, we trust in Him, He will give us life. Not only physical life but a spirit life. And that is the purpose of physical life - spirit life in the end.

2 Kings 4:1. This is covering an area of Elisha and his relationship with a widow and the outcome of that relationship and how God can bless obedience. We're also going to look at the aspect of choice in amongst all of this. **2 Kings 4:1—A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, Your servant my husband is dead, so he's actually physically died, and you know that your servant feared the Eternal.** Now, the fear of God is to have God in awe, which is to obey Him. So this particular person was one of the prophets with Elisha and he was in obedience to God because he feared God or placed Him in awe. **And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slave.** Because in those days if somebody owed money, which they did, the only way to pay it back would be to take the children to work the debt off. The person would become a slave to somebody to pay back the debt and they would remain a slave until the debt was paid.

So Elisha said to her, What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in your house? And she said, Your maidservant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil. So there's virtually little left there to pay any debts or to sell things to be able to pay the debt, and the only thing there is this jar of oil.

Then he (Elisha) said, Go, borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbors—empty vessels; do not gather just a few. So don't just get a few, get a lot of jars, have heaps of these jars to be able to put the oil in. **And when you have come in, you shall shut the door behind you and your sons; then pour it into all the vessels, and set aside the full ones.** So take the one that had oil in it and tip it into all the others. **So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons, so it's the three of them there, who brought *the vessels* to her; and she poured *it* out. Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, Bring me another vessel. And he said to her, *There is not another vessel.* So the oil ceased.** So she filled up every single jar that was there, and that's why Elisha said do not just get one or two, get lots of them. So one lesson here, that we can look at this, God provides. God is almighty. God is all-powerful. God is the author of life and death. God is the Creator. God can provide for us at any time He wants in any manner that He wants. Debt and having problems in life are minor things to God. God allows those things because of our choices that we've made, and many of them being wrong choices that we do suffer. Well, we suffer for a spiritual outcome. So God will allow that suffering for a spiritual benefit.

Well, here this person was suffering and God is intervening to help the person in a way that nobody would really think to solve the problem. But God has decided to intervene here, but it is the way that God has set it. Now, if she had disobeyed the instructions that Elisha had given and only got a few jars, well, she would not have had enough oil to provide for the payment of the debt because she had disobeyed. But because she obeyed, God has now filled up every single jar with oil. And the key to this is that God provides and we have to do as we are instructed. We're not to make decisions based on our own thinking. She has obeyed. She has got lots of jars, therefore, God has provided for her according to her obedience. If she had disobeyed and only got a few she would have only been provided based on her decisions, based on her choices. Well, fortunately here she chose to listen, she chose to obey, and therefore, she's been blessed with a lot of oil in the jars.

Verse 7—Then she came and told the man of God. And he (Elisha) said, Go, sell the oil and pay your debts; and you *and* your sons live on the rest.

Verse 8—Now it happened one day that Elisha went to Shunem (don't know if I pronounced that correctly), where there *was* a notable woman, and she constrained him, which is to hold him back, to eat some food. So it was, as often as he passed by, that he turned in there and ate some food. And she said to her husband, Look now, I know that this *is* a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. So, this is a man of Yahweh Elohim because he's in obedience to Him. And she recognized him for who he was and she wanted to do good to him.

Verse 10—Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall. So, "Let's build an extension there that we can actually have a place for him to stay," and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lamp, which gave him some area of comfort. He'd be able to eat there. He's be able to sit there. And with a lamp he'd be able to do some reading or be able to see at least at night time. So it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there. And it happened one day that he came there, and he turned in to the upper room and lay down there. So it's all been built and finished.

Verse 12—Then he said to Gehazi his servant, Elisha there had a servant that would be with him, Call this Shunammite woman. And when he called her, she stood before him. And he said to him, Say to her, Look, you have been concerned for us with all this care, because of what the woman had done. What *can I* do for you? Do you want me to speak on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army? And she answered, I dwell among my own people, which, "I don't have any real physical needs and I have no requirements of you." In other words, "I'm okay physically. I don't need you to do anything in that area for me by having any of the king's benefits or the commander of the army, any benefits there, no matter what it would be. There was no real physical needs that she had from anybody. So he said, What then *is* to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Actually, she has no son, and her husband is old.

Verse 15—And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the doorway. Then he said, About this time next year you shall embrace a son. And she said, No, my lord. Man of God,

do not lie to your maidservant! "Don't say this if it's not going to happen." And the woman conceived, and bore a son when the appointed time had come, of which Elisha had told her.

Verse 18—So the child grew. So he's getting a little bit older. Now it happened one day that he (the child) went out to his father, to the reapers. And he said to his father, *My head, my head!* So he's got this pain in his head. So he said to his servant, *Carry him to his mother.* And when he had taken him he brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and *then* he died. God has the power of life and death. God had given life here because Elisha had said it. And she conceived because God allowed it because God authorized it. Well, now God is going to intervene to show that He has the power over life, but not only that, that He has the power over death, that death is nothing to God. It's just a state of sleep. And mankind looks at death so weirdly because they think it's the end or they're going up to heaven or hell. But the reality is that God looks at it as sleep. It's only temporary. Death is only temporary. Once dead they're dead, they know nothing, as the Bible says.

Verse 21—And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, so it's in the room that Elisha normally would stay in, shut *the door* upon him, and went out.

Verse 22—Then she called to her husband, and said, *Please send me one of the young men and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and come back.* He said to her, *Why are you going to him today? It is neither the New Moon or the Sabbath day,* which is referring to the appointed times that God has established. And she said, *It is well,* which is really saying, "It will be well," is a better combination, that if she went and did it, it would be okay if she was able to go and get Elisha.

Verse 24—Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant, *Drive, and go forward; do not slacken the pace for me unless I tell you.* "Let's get moving. Doesn't matter what speed you're going. If I tell you to slow down, I'll tell you, but don't worry about me," because she's going to put up with it because she wants to get to Elisha as quickly as possible. And so she departed, and went to the man of God at Mount Carmel. And so it was, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to his servant Gehazi, *Look, there is the Shunammite woman! Please run now to meet her, and say to her, Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?* And she answered, *It is well,* or, "It will be well," is another way to put that. Now when she came to the man of God at the hill, she caught him by the feet, but Gehazi came near to push her away. He's thinking, well, she's grabbing a hold of him and he's going to protect her because he was Elisha's servant. But the man of God said, *Let her alone; for her life is in deep distress, and the LORD has hidden it from me.* In other words, he wasn't aware of it, where normally God would give him the sense of what was going on. Well, this was not the case here. He didn't know. ...and has not told me. He's not aware of anything that is wrong; it's all well.

And she said, *Did I ask a son of my lord?* Well, the answer is, no. *Did I not say, Do not deceive me?* "You've deceived me because he's been taken away." In other words, "You've caused distress to me. That's all you've really done." Then he said to Gehazi, *Get yourself ready, and take my staff in*

your hand, and be on your way. If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him; but lay my staff on the face of the child. So he now is aware that the child is dead. "Did I ask a son of my lord?" Well, no. "Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me?'" because now the child is dead. Now Elisha has worked that out, the fact that the child has died. He had given a son and it's caused her great distress, which was not what Elisha had thought would happen. He thought it would be a blessing rather than it would be a distress to her.

Verse 30—And the mother of the child said, *As the Lord lives, and as your life lives, I will not leave you. So he arose and followed her.* She's saying, "I'm not going anywhere unless you come as well. And just sending your servant with the rod to place over the child, well, I'm still not leaving here. You have to come."

Verse 31—Now Gehazi went on ahead of them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but *there was* neither voice nor hearing. In other words, he's dead. Therefore, he went back to meet him, and told him, saying, The child has not awakened. "He hasn't been awakened from his death."

Verse 32—Then Elisha came to the house, there was the child, laying dead on the bed. He went in, therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the Eternal. And he went up and layed on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, on the child's mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm. He returned and walked back and forth, and again went up and stretched himself out on him. Then the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi and said, *Call this Shunammite woman.* So he called her. And when she came to him, he said, *Pick up your son.* So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out.

The point in all of this is that it was not Elisha that resurrected the child. It was actually God. Because God has this power and God does things in ways that mankind can't always work out. This points to the power that God has to give life, by allowing the person to be pregnant in the first place, to give life, to bear life, then the power of God to create life again, which is through a resurrection. This points to a resurrection of the dead. That God is the one that can give life and it's God's decision whom He will resurrect and at what time He will resurrect. The decision is His. God will resurrect for the purpose of giving the opportunity for mankind to make a choice, to be obedient or to be disobedient. The choice is mankind's. And God says, "Choose life!" God wants to give them true life. Not just the physical life during the Hundred-years, God wants to give them *life*, spirit life in Elohim.

Mark 5:21. This is in relation to Jesus Christ giving life to a 12-year old child. **Verse 21—**Now when Jesus had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to him (to Jesus Christ); and he was by the sea. And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw him, he fell at his feet, Jairus has come up and he's fallen now at Jesus

Christ's feet, and begged him earnestly, saying, **My little daughter**, who is twelve years of age at this point, **My little daughter lies at the point of death**. She's really sick. She's going to die. **Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live**. Now this is faith, because he believes that Jesus Christ has the power, the power of God to give life, to maintain life. Not only to save life but to give life, to sustain life. God is the one who heals.

Verse 24—So Jesus went with him (Jairus), and a great multitude followed him and thronged him, which, in other words, there's heaps of them there. **Now a certain woman had the flow of blood for twelve years, and had suffered many things from many physicians**, which is typical of today's world where people have these illnesses and continue to go to doctors (now-a-day) and physicians and literally have to go through an experimentation process. Because physicians have found out what works and what doesn't work through experiments. Therefore, one person can come up and the doctor will have to work out between three or four different choices what it may be and what the cure *may* be. And therefore, they'll say, "Try this," and you try that and that doesn't work, and they come back and, "Ah, that didn't work. Well, maybe you should try this." Because the reality is they have choices to make about what they're going to give you. It's their choice. They have all this education. But during it they have to work out what they *think* might be wrong, and therefore, they give out what they *think* might be the cure, what might help. But doesn't necessarily mean they're going to get it right all the time. Sometimes they do, sometimes they don't.

So this lady here for twelve years has had this flow of blood and she's suffered many things from many physicians. So she's been experimented on many times. Many "cures" have been offered and many things have been done to her, what they thought might stop the flow. **She had spent all that she had**, which is money, **and was no better, but rather grew worse**. Now, this is very similar to today's society, because many things happen to people. And guess what? They spend all their money trying to find a cure and many of them are no better. In actual fact they can get much worse. Nothing changed for her and today's the same. Nothing changes for many sick people. In actual fact, they get worse and doctors continue to experiment to try to find a way to improve the person's health condition.

Verse 27—When she heard about Jesus, she came behind him, and in the crowd touched his garment. For she said, If only I had touched his clothes, I shall be made well. This is faith. Faith is believing God, and when something takes place believing that God can intervene. Now, she believes here. "If only I may touch his garments, I shall be made well." She believed this, and it's her faith that is going to cause her to be healed.

Verse 29—Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed from the affliction, from this suffering. Many suffer in this life. Many will have to wait for the Last Great Day to be healed because they're going to be healed when they are resurrected. Those that are suffering are going to be healed. Their healing is going to take place on a physical level, but also the healing of the mind is going to take place. So this Hundred-year period, the judgment, where man is going to have to choose, mankind, all of mankind are going to have healed bod-

ies and healed minds, because the mind is what God is very interested in. "If only I may be touched by his clothes, I may be made well." We understand that God is the author of life and death. Well, God is the one that heals, and God can heal, and it's up to God's will be done in our life, and therefore, if we're not healed we understand we continue to have faith in God and we believe God that He can heal and it is His decision.

Verse 30—And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that power had gone out of him, turned around in the crowd and said, Who touched my clothes? But his disciples said to him, You see the multitude thronging you, which is pushing up against you and touching you, and you say, Who touched me? In other words, "There's heaps of people touching you and you turn around and say, 'Who's touching me?' Well, they all are!"

Verse 32—He looked around to see her who had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. She was being open and honest, which is a sign of this humility. She was very humble to do this because a lot of people would cower away and try to cover it up. She doesn't. She's very open. She's honest. And this points to her level of humility and faith. **And he said to her, Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.**

While he was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue's house and said to him, Your daughter is dead. So there's a ruler of the synagogue there and his daughter is dead. She's died. We had seen before this, in verse 23, that he had come up to Jesus and asked, saying "Will you come because my daughter is unwell?" Well, now his servants have come and say, "Your daughter is dead." **Why trouble the Teacher any further?** So, "Why do you want to keep talking to Jesus Christ about it? Don't bother him. It's too late. She's dead."

Verse 36—As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he said to the ruler of the synagogue, Do not be afraid; only believe. "Have faith. Believe that she can be healed. Believe that she will be resurrected." **And he permitted no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James,** which is the three disciples with Jesus Christ. **Then he came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw the uproar and those who wept and wailed loudly.** Because there's this massive uproar of all the people wailing and carrying on because he was a ruler within the synagogue, and therefore, they would have professional mourners, but they also had others that were in great sorrow. And the way that they expressed their sorrow was this weeping and this wailing loudly because it was one of the customs that was associated with death at that time.

Verse 39—When he (Jesus Christ) came in, he said to them, Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping. This is something that we can take on board about death because a resurrection is a type of healing for all mankind. They are dead. They are sleeping, is really what it is, because they're going to be awakened, they're going to be resurrected to life. They're going to be healed. And this is what Jesus Christ is going to demonstrate to them.

Verse 40—And they laughed him to scorn. In other words, they mocked him and laughed out loud, because they could see the child was dead, and here Jesus Christ is saying, "It's not a problem. She's just sleeping," which is actually true! Because death is a sleep. And Jesus Christ is actually telling the truth here. "She's sleeping." Because there would be a resurrection at some point. If it wasn't now, it was going to be in the future. She is simply just sleeping. She's not off in heaven and hell, she is just asleep and knows nothing at all.

Verse 40, again—They laughed him to scorn. They mocked him because they didn't believe in this. **But when he had put them all out,** he's put them outside, **he took the father and the mother of the child, and those *who were* with him,** which is Peter, James, and John, **and entered where the child was laying. Then he (Jesus Christ) took the child by the hand, and said to her, Talitha, cumi, which is translated, Little girl, I say to you, arise** (which is what I should have said in the beginning rather than that word, because I can't get it right). This is simply saying that Jesus Christ has the power of God in him, which is this power of life.

Verse 42—Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years of age. So this is a 12-year old girl. She's now been awakened, she's been resurrected from the dead, and now she's walking. She's actually living a life again having life again. Life in her, whereas before life was not in her. God has the power of life and death. God has the power *over* death. And we understand that the final enemy that will be destroyed is death because there'll be death no more. Sin will no longer exist. "The wages of sin is death," and when sin is gotten rid of death is gotten rid of. There will be no more death at some point in time in the near future at the end of 7,100 years.

Continuing on in **verse 42—And they were overcome with great amazement,** because she had been resurrected back to a physical life, to live a physical life, where at some point in time she'll be given the opportunity to choose life and death on a spiritual level.

Verse 43—But he commanded them strictly that no one should know it, that no one was to talk about it, **and he said to her, *something* should be given to her to eat.** We can see from this that God has the power over life and death and God is the one who gives life and God is the one that can take life if it's His decision. And yet that life being taken (that death) is only something that is temporary. It's just simply a temporary sleep, because mankind will be given an opportunity to have life for the purpose of making choices in life.

Matthew 12:31. We're looking at this in the context of life and death, about choices. **Verse 31—Therefore, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men,** based on their repentance. The refusal to repent becomes the issue. **...but the blasphemy *against* the spirit will not be forgiven men,** because the person refuses to repent. They make this choice not to repent. So this is about choices. The person who chooses to repent of anything that is said or done against God, anything that is said or done in the way of sin, well, that will be forgiven based on the person's desire and choice to repent. "But," the opposite to it, "but the blasphemy against the spirit will not be forgiven," they refuse, they choose not to repent. So this is a matter of life and death. The first part is they'll

be given life because of repentance. The second part is they'll be provided death because they will not repent. They refuse; they're not willing to repent. **Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man (Jesus Christ), it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the holy spirit, which is the power of God, which is the thinking of God, they go against it, they sear it, they refuse to repent of the sin, of what they've said or what they've done, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age to come*, or in the ages to come, which is during the thousand years and during the Hundred-years.**

A person during the Hundred-years has a choice - to either repent or not to repent. To repent means to choose to obey, and to not repent means a choice to disagree with God or disobey God.

Verse 33—Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by *its* fruit. People have a choice. You're either going to choose to obey or choose to disobey, to do good, powered by God's holy spirit, or the choice to do bad. "Make its fruit," what a person bears in their life, what comes from the individual.

Verse 34—Jesus Christ now speaking to these people: Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? Well, it's not possible. **For out of the abundance of the heart,** which is the inner thinking, **the mouth speaks.** So this is attitudes that are chosen. If a person chooses to speak against God and thinks about speaking against God, well, they will do it, because their hearts are evil and their minds are twisted and perverted. **A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, out of his mind, bring forth good things, an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil things,** because the natural mind brings forth selfishness. That's the only thing it can bring forth. But a person with God's holy spirit can bring forth something good. Powered by God's holy spirit a person can do good things. And a person left to the natural carnal mind cannot do good things. Absolutely impossible.

Verse 36—But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account for it in the day of judgment. This is referring to that Hundred-year period where people have had life and they have then died; they've been provided death. Well, they're going to be resurrected again to bring into account their thinking. There's a Hundred-year period where they are now to make a choice - the choice to be for God or be against God, the choice to be for God's way or against God's way. One way is repentance; one way is being non-repentant.

Verse 37—For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. "By your words you'll be justified," through repentance, by humbling ourselves and repenting. "And by your words you will be condemned," by not repenting. We'll be brought into this period of judgment and the outcome of that judgment is life and death. They are the issues here.

Verse 38—Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, Teacher, we want to see a sign from you. They wanted proof from Jesus Christ. They desired a proof from him. "Show us that you are the Messiah."

Verse 39—But he answered and said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seek after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, which is referring to the grave. Jesus Christ would be alive for a period of time then he would be dead. He'll be put in the grave for exactly three days and three nights - 72-hour period - but then God would raise him up and give him life, spirit life. Well, that's our potential, brethren. If we choose to obey we will be given life. If we choose to disobey we'll be given death.

Verse 41—The men of Nineveh will rise in the judgment, which is this Hundred-year period. So they're all dead. They have been provided life, now they are dead. Well, they're going to be given life again for this purpose of making a choice. So these men of Nineveh will rise in the judgment, this Hundred-year period, **with this generation,** because they will have had life and now they're dead and they're waiting for a resurrection. And what will happen? The men of Nineveh will condemn that generation, **because they repented at the preaching of Jonah.** Although it was a physical repentance, they chose to change. And that's the key. The choice to change the way we think. Repentance means change. Repentance means thinking differently. Here we see the men of Nineveh actually did make a choice to change. Although it was physical, God's spirit wasn't involved, they made a choice. Well, mankind has a choice now before them: they can choose to change, they can choose to think differently. The choice is theirs. **...and indeed a greater than Jonah is here,** which was the Son of God.

Verse 42—The queen of the south will rise up in the judgment, because she had life. She's now dead in the grave, but soon (at the end of a thousand years) she will be resurrected to physical life again all for the point of being under judgment for 100-years about making this choice. The choice is choose life, and that is done through obedience, or choose death, and that is done through choosing to disobey or go against God. **The queen of the south will rise up in the judgment,** Hundred-year period, **with this generation** that was alive with Christ then, and the queen of the south will condemn this generation that heard Christ but wouldn't do anything. They chose not to change. They chose not to listen. So she will rise up in the judgment with this generation **and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon.** Now, this is, "The wisdom of Solomon," of course, came from God. He saw things on a physical level but it did come from God, **and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.**

Now, this is the choice that's going to take place during the Hundred-years. There is a choice that mankind now faces, and that choice is a matter of life and death. And God says, "Choose life!"