

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

"CHOSEN, BUT NOT CHOICE"

For individual study or group discussion

In Deuteronomy 7:7-11, we discover that Israel's identity is rooted in the steadfast love of Yahweh, who chose them "not because you were more in number than any other people" (v. 7), but "because the LORD loves you" (v. 8). God's love was wholly undeserved on Israel's part. They were **chosen, but not "choice."** They were not "superior" or "better qualified" than the surrounding nations in character or conduct. In fact, we learn later on that Israel stubbornly refused to walk in God's way. Yet their relationship is sustained by God's "steadfast love" (v. 9).

- Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31. Describe the upside-down nature of God's grace. What explanation does Paul give for the way God chooses (v. 29)?
- God's call, rooted in his steadfast love, requires a response from his people. What will be the consequences of not responding to God's call? (cf. 2 Thess. 1:7b-12)

The rationale behind God's choice (vv. 7-8)

In the rationale behind God's choice, we learn that it has nothing to do with Israel's qualifications (v. 7). In fact, the apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:4 that God's election took place "before the foundation of the world." Although the corporate aspect of election is being taught in today's passage, it would be inaccurate to claim that individual election is not in view (Ephesians 1:3-14, 2:1-10, and Romans 8:28-39). *The rationale behind God's choice is he loves because he loves (v. 8).* Behind God's work of redemption is his steadfast love, which is the Hebrew word *hesed*, also translated "lovingkindness" or "covenant love."

- What oath is Moses referring to in verse 8? (cf. Genesis 12:7; 13:15; 22:16-18)
- Recall from our previous studies in the *Gospel of Luke* the song of thanksgiving lifted up by Zechariah at the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:67-79). How is Zechariah's song connected to today's passage and God's oath to Abraham in Genesis 22:16-18?

The character behind God's choice (vv. 9-10)

In verses 9-10, we see the character behind God's choice as he is faithful to a thousand generations of those who love him, yet repaying those who hate him. God's faithfulness, demonstrated by his steadfast love, is unmerited grace. Old Testament scholar N.H. Snaith explains, "*The loving-kindness of God towards Israel is therefore wholly undeserved on Israel's part. If Israel received the proper treatment for her stubborn refusal to walk in God's way, there would be no prospect for her of anything but destruction, since God's demand for right action never wavers one whit. But this much is clear: when we try to estimate the depth and the persistence of God's loving-kindness and mercy, we must first remember his passion for righteousness. His passion for righteousness is so strong that he could not be more insistent in his demand for it, but God's persistent love for his people is more insistent still. The story of God's people throughout the centuries is that her waywardness has been so persistent that, if even a remnant is to be preserved, God has had to show mercy more than anything else.*"¹

- What do verses 9-10 tell you about the character of God? Read Lamentations 3:22-66. How did God respond to Israel's rebellion in Jeremiah's day?

The right response to God's choice (v. 11)

God's gracious choice and loving character should motivate us toward obedience.

In Micah 6:8, the prophet describes the right response of an obedient heart. It loves both God and neighbor, "He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." In Jesus Christ, we have the only human who truly loved God and his neighbor. The fullness of his steadfast love for us culminated on the cross, bearing the guilt of our sins, so that we might be reconciled unto God.

- Read Isaiah 55:6-7. Why is our response to God's steadfast love so important?

DATE: May 14, 2023

SPEAKER: Wil/Chad

SERIES: Deuteronomy

PASSAGE: Deuteronomy 7:7-11

Family Dinner Table

Chosen, Not Choice

by John Van Eyk

"'Tis not that I did choose thee, for, Lord this could not be; this heart would still refuse thee, hadst thou not chosen me.' Now that we know the glory and grace of God in Jesus Christ, it seems incredible that we would ever refuse One so gracious and kind. Yet, such is the depravity of the human heart that we would have. The stream of God's grace can be traced back to before the creation of the world. From all eternity the God of our salvation selected from the human race some who would be recipients of eternal life. And it's that eternal choice which leads some to choose to believe in Christ when they hear the gospel of salvation. The elect are chosen by God, but not because they are choice people; they are selected but not because they are select. God chose those He wanted to choose because He loved them. And if you ask why He loved them, the answer is because He did. This truth of unconditional election not only magnifies the glory of God, but it also offers unspeakable comfort to unbelievers and believers. If salvation were based on justice or merit, no unbeliever could have hope that he might be saved. Since salvation depends on God's eternal good pleasure, everyone who knows Christ can know as well that his salvation is secure. God will never stop loving us because God never started loving us, since from all eternity God had set his affection upon us."²

- Read Exodus 19:4-8, Ephesians 1:3-6, and 1 Peter 2:9-10. Upon what grounds does God call people into covenant with himself?
- God's steadfast love (*hesed*) never ends and will always be shown to his people. Read and meditate on Psalm 136 this week.

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

RUF International at UTK,
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PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Viktar, supported missionary
partner in Eastern Europe

¹Snaith, N.H. *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*. Edited by Alan Richardson. 1951, NC. MacMillan. 136-7

²Van Eyk, John. *Chosen, Not Choice*. October 26, 2019, Reformed Perspective. <https://reformedperspective.ca/october-27-chosen-not-choice/> May 9, 2023.