



Spring 2025

Elisha: Seeing the Hand of God at Work

To be used with Session 4: God's Hand in Restoring Lives

Sermon Title: God Restores Us When We Trust and Obey Him

The Point: God restores us as we are obedient to Him.

Scripture: Deuteronomy 28:1-9, 15-19, 30:1-3 Spring 2025

Connection with the Study: To complement the Bible study "God's Hand in Restoring Lives," this sermon focuses on the covenant God made with Israel as He led them out of slavery in Egypt. God presented His people with clear options; choosing to follow and obey Him would lead to blessings; choosing not to obey would lead to curses. Their life situation would directly reflect their choice to obey or not. Fortunately for us, God provides a path for restoration when we disobey. Furthermore, He will work glorious things in and through us when we return to obedience and are restored to Him. Although this covenant was made with Israel, God is unchanging, and we can see how His righteousness and mercy apply to us as we choose to obey or not obey.

Introduction: My children don't always do what I tell them to do. However, I am certain I am not alone in this. As parents, we give our children instructions to obey because we know what is best for them before they know it themselves. Simple directions such as "don't run in front of cars," "don't pull a fire alarm," "don't eat the dog food," or "don't put anything metal into the electric outlet" offer basic safety instructions to our children. Yet they will sometimes disobey and suffer small or sometimes painful consequences. Like children, we don't know all that God knows. We must trust that His ways are higher than ours and that He is providing for our safety and security even when we don't understand.

1. Blessings for Obedience (Deut. 28:1-9).

These final chapters of Deuteronomy provide a final reading of the covenant God had made with His people Israel in the wilderness. It is a blueprint for what to expect when they crossed the Jordan and how they were to live as a nation in relationship to God while being surrounded by unbelieving peoples. The people were in covenant with God, and while He was certain to fulfill His end of the covenant, He gave Israel the conditions they must fulfill to keep their end, and the consequences of their obedience or disobedience.

Here we see listed the many blessings for obedience, and how everything the people did would be blessed. They would be blessed wherever they go, be it "in the city or country." Their children,

Lifeway

their livestock, and their food would also be blessed. Basically, all their work and all their immediate needs would be cared for by God when they obeyed. Through their obedience to God, they would be a blessing to other nations, live full, purposeful lives, and see God work through them in powerful ways.

2. Curses for Disobedience (Deut. 28:15-19).

The passage that follows the “blessings” is not pleasant, and it is difficult to read. The “curses” passage directly mirrors the opposite of blessings, stating that everything that was blessed by obedience would be cursed by disobedience. When we choose to live in disobedience, we choose to give up God’s blessing. The question is: Why would anyone want to disobey, knowing that it leads directly to walking away from the blessings of God?

Our human nature leads us away from God and into sin. We are regularly tempted by the same lie that was spoken in the garden of Eden by the serpent: “Did God really say?” (Gen. 3:1). Satan continues to tell the lie that we are better off on our own, that God has nothing substantial to offer us, and our blessings are just coincidence. Yet as we walk a life of faith, we can see clearly where we have walked in obedience and seen God’s evident blessings as a result.

3. Restoration for Repentance (Deut. 30:1-3).

The story of our relationship with God does not end with curses, but with repentance. The blessings and curses both bring us to the same place found in this passage, and that is a place of repentance, compassion, and restoration. God’s plan for us is, and always has been, our restoration to Him. His plan is for us to be ultimately and forever restored to Him through Christ. Our response to His restoration will decide how much blessing and joy we experience in life. Jesus came to give us life in abundance (John 10:10) and to restore us fully to the Father. Why would we refuse this restoration and blessing? This passage states that even if we turn away, we will at some point, “come to our senses” and realize that our hope is only in the Lord. This promise to Israel holds promise for us, in that we too will see blessings unfold as we choose to follow the Lord who loves us dearly.

Conclusion: The music of the church can have a strong impact on our memory, and imprint eternal truths into our hearts and minds. A song that stands out is “Trust and Obey,” one of the church’s best-known hymns. Many of us have sang these words since we were children, and the truth of it still holds a place in our hearts. The simple lyric tells us that “there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.” This simple phrase is fully backed up by Scripture. When we trust God and obey His commands, we will experience a life that holds happiness, blessing, abundance, and meaningful restoration. May we learn to trust and obey.

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