

**Bible Devotions: Lock Stock & Barrel
Devotional Reading for Outdoorsmen
(Old Testament)**

Deuteronomy 30:14-16

A Trading Mood

But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it. See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to 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.

I'm in a trading mood. Yes, even as I write this, spring is in the air. I'm mowing the lawn, riding my motorcycle, and talking fishing with my friends. But this stirring brings out another side of me that routinely sets my outdoor soul on fire. I'm in a trading mood. A gun trading mood.

You, too, probably have a hobby that springs to life at certain times of the year. Football fans go nuts in the early fall, then get nuttier during play-offs. Campers and boaters can't wait until summer and warm water. Hunters have turkey fever in the spring, and deer or small game or varmint or waterfowl fever in the fall. Skiers, sledders, and mushers eagerly await winter. I, myself, swoon a little for all these things (except mushing). But my biggest battle comes with the changing of the seasons – any season, it doesn't matter – which usually brings upon me a delirious and sometimes irrational urge to do some gun trading.

Why, just today I visited my local gun store to check out a used .44 special revolver I've had my eye on. It was gone. That's okay though. My philosophy is that if it's meant to be then it's meant to be. So I checked out a .45ACP. The gun dealer saw the sweat on my brow and threw me her best sales pitch. I hesitated, thankfully, just long enough for common sense to regroup before I plunked down a deposit. I did blurt out the question, "Will you trade for it?" She said yes. Oh my... What to do?! What to do?!

The children of Israel had a choice to make: life and good, or death and evil. The options were squarely in front of them. After all that God had done for them they still needed prodding to make the right choice. They were spiritually vulnerable, capable of being swayed to the dark side (don't gloat, so are we). Unfortunately, too much of the Old Testament from here on out is about their eagerness to choose poorly.

They didn't need to go far to find the word God sent them. It was right in their mouths in the form of law and songs and stories, things they learned by quote and note and rote. It was right in their hearts in the form of fearlessness and courage and confidence, conditions of the heart which God addressed numerous times. They were so near it, so near the word. They just needed to keep it where it was: in their mouths and in their hearts.

Moses had one more chance to encourage them to make the right choice. So he sung them a song that prophesied their making a bad choice, gave each tribe a blessing that served to expunge that prophesy if they were good little boys, then went away to die.

There were choices to make. It was not a seasonal thing like my gun trading. Decision-making wasn't thrust upon them by some virtue of enjoyable hobbies. The children of Israel had forty plus years to get it done. They had witnessed God's deliverance, God's love, God's mercy, God's miracles, God's pleasure, God's protection, God's strength, God's victories. They had experienced God's choice: THEM.

All they had to do was love Him, walk in His ways, and keep His commandments. But the trading mood came upon them. Like a delirious, irrational trader at the swap meet of human decisions, they considered their choices: life and good, or death and evil. What to do?! What to do?!

Their choice? Well, let's just say that it brought tears to the eyes of Jesus (Luke 19:41-44).

Bible Devotions: Hook Line & Sinker (study guide)

Deuteronomy 30:14-16
A Trading Mood

HOOK

1. What do you trade and what motivates you to do so? If nothing, what would you choose?

2. Describe your experience at a swap meet. If you've never been, what would you expect?

3. Define the following "trading" terms: balk, boot, burned.

LINE

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All they had to do was love Him, walk in His ways, and keep His commandments. They considered their choices: life and good, or death and evil.

Explain how God's word moves you to make right choices (in other words, what makes you want to do good, and why).

How do you know when God speaks to you? Be specific. If you can, give a personal example.

SINKER

Take a few minutes to write your thoughts on this devotional. Reflect on your own experiences.

Key words: choice life and good death and evil
