

YOUR CHOICES CAN MAKE OR BREAK YOU – PART ONE

This is your Friend and Minister, dr. Joshua Uhiara, bringing you healing word from the Master, a program of the Master's Vessel Ministry which lets you know that Jesus loves you as you are, but loves you so much that He will not leave you as you are.

Welcome back, friends. Today, I want to speak on: Your Choices can Make OR Break You. And we will read two short scriptures. The first one is Deuteronomy 30:19.

Deuteronomy 30:19

¹⁹ I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live.

The second one is:

Joshua 24:15

¹⁵ And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

As for me and my house, we have chosen to serve the Lord.

PRAYER:

We have come again, dear Lord. We want to yield to You now, Spirit of God, to speak to us, in Jesus Name. Amen!

Your Choices can Make or Break You: it is another way of saying, for better or worse is determined ultimately by the choices you make. Or, to put it differently, again, it means that, choices are of utmost importance in human experience. Life is a series of choices; and choices are what decisions are about. To choose is to decide. And may I add also that, not to choose is also to decide – but in the negative sense. Some people who allow time or circumstance to choose for them find that they have made a bad choice. They have taken a bad decision. Let me illustrate:

You have missed the dead line to turn in your application for the job you very much need. And that is because you have been procrastinating. Now – you have made a choice. You have made a choice by default, not by design. You will not get that job.

Choices are a matter of two or more alternatives. God said to Israel, in the first scripture we read, Deuteronomy 30:19: *I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life.*

And Joshua, in his farewell message which we read from, in Joshua 24:15, said to Israel: *And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD.*

In the first reference, God directed Israel as to what choice to make. But in the second, Joshua left the choice to them. One other thing those scriptures reveal to us is the fact that there must be at least two alternatives in order to have or make a choice or decision. In that Deuteronomy scripture, God presented a pair of two alternatives to Israel: life and death; blessing and cursing. In Joshua 24:15, Joshua presented three alternatives to them: the gods which their forefathers served in Ur of the Chaldeans, the other side of the river, that is, the river Euphrates (Recall that Abraham's father was an idol worshipper before God called him), the gods of

the Amorites in whose land they will now dwell, or Jehovah. Three alternatives. They chose to serve the Lord, although a few generations later they went back on their decision. And that affected Israel adversely. And that's the account we find in the Book of Judges.

When you don't have at least two alternatives, you will be right to say, I have no choice; even though some of the people who say they have no choice do have a choice. It's just that they don't like the other alternative. The man or the boss in the place of work who says to the young girl: I have no choice but to sack you, to relieve you of your duty, has a choice. The only reason he's doing that is because this girl has refused to go to bed with him. But he has a choice. Your wife is there. You have a choice. Leave this girl alone. Let her own a living.

Apart from the fact that choices have to do with two or more alternatives, choices are also a matter of minor or major issues. We make choices everyday, in both minor and major things. Minor choices include such things as: what to eat, what clothes to wear, what hairstyle to wear, or what perfume to wear – even though some say that it is unchristian to wear perfume. But they have made a choice. Nevertheless, they have chosen body odor to perfume. I want to keep my friends!



And these are not as serious as: what to wear, what to eat. They are not as serious as who to marry, what career to pursue, where to live, or who to worship. The weightier the matter the more important the choice or the decision will be. The greatest in importance are the choices that determine your wellbeing here and now, that determine your character and determine ultimately your destiny. This makes the choice of who to worship extremely important, because it ultimately determines your present wellbeing, your character, and your destiny. We are familiar with the saying: sow a thought, reap an action; sow an action, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap character; sow character, reap a destiny. But friend, permit me to alter this saying slightly to read: choose a thought, reap an action; choose an action, reap a habit; choose a habit, reap character; choose character, reap a destiny. You can see that action, habit, character and destiny are all products of choice.

Your choices can make or break you, friend.

We will examine two bible characters who made choices, and how the choices they made made one and broke the other. I will start with Ruth, the woman who chose wisely. In the Book of Ruth, we have the story, the *pentral* story of the family of Elimelech. In Ruth chapter one, to give us the background, verse one,

Ruth 1:1

Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons.

They were economic refugees. Bethlehem was known as the bread basket of Israel. Now, they cannot find food to eat. Why? If you read the book of Judges you will know why. They have chosen to worship false gods; and the wrath of God descended on them. Friend, when we refuse to worship the true God, when we refuse to allow the true God to control our lives, we will experience famine. It may not be famine of food – but famine, nevertheless.

Ruth 1

²The name of the man was Elimelech, the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion—Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there. ³Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. ⁴Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years. ⁵Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

Now, Naomi has decided to return to her home.

⁶ *Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread.*

But these two young widows decided to return with her. And she persuaded them to go back, strongly so; and Orpah went back. But Ruth refused to go back.

Let me conclude today with her response.

Ruth 1:15-17

¹⁵ *And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."* ¹⁶ *But Ruth said:*

*"Entreat me not to leave you,
Or to turn back from following after you;
For wherever you go, I will go;
And wherever you lodge, I will lodge;
Your people shall be my people,
And your God, my God.*

¹⁷ *Where you die, I will die,
And there will I be buried.
The LORD do so to me, and more also,
If anything but death parts you and me."*

Beautiful!

We will take it from there when we return next time, to examine the choices that Ruth made and how those choices made her, rather than break her.

PRAYER:

Father, we thank You for the time we have spent in the Word. Thank You so much, Lord. And we are praying that You will give us the wisdom to make the right choices in life, so that we will not be broken; but the choices will make us the kind of people You would have us be. Thank You, in Jesus Name. Amen!