

YOUR CHOICES CAN MAKE OR BREAK YOU – PART THREE

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.

Friends, I'm glad again to come to you, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We want to continue from where we stopped last time, on this topic, Your Choices can Make or Break You. In our previous discussion, I said we will examine this topic from two perspectives:

- a. An example of somebody in the scriptures whose choices (good choices) made. And then,
- b. Another character in the scripture also whose choices broke.

PRAYER:

Father, we thank You for this time we have now to look into Your Word. And I'm praying, Father, that You speak to the hearts of us all...in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen!

We've already observed that life is a series of choices. And choices are what decisions are made of. To choose is to decide; and not to choose is also to decide, but in the negative sense; because you can make decisions either by design or by default. But the former is the wiser way to go. We also observed that there must be at least two alternatives to have a choice. God gave Israel two alternatives – in Deuteronomy 30:19 where He said, *"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing..."* He encouraged them to choose blessing; to choose life.

We also saw that Joshua in his farewell address to Israel, in Joshua 24:15, gave them three alternatives: either the gods their forefathers worshiped in Ur of the Chaldeans (that is a reference to Abraham or Abraham's father), or the gods of the Amorites whose land they were to possess, or Jehovah. But he said, as for me and my house; as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.

This choice of the person to serve, the person to worship is not a minor choice; like the choice of what to eat, what to wear. It is a major choice – because it determines ultimately what happens to your wellbeing here and now and hereafter. It determines what happens to your character because the one you worship will influence your character. And then it determines what your destiny will be.

Your choices can make or break you.

We saw how Ruth, the woman from Moab, made wise choices that made her a worshiper of the true God; made her a prominent person in the history of Israel. She ultimately became the great great grandmother of King David. And through that line the Messiah came. You can see how important choices are.

Today, we shall see an example of one who was broken literally and figuratively by his bad choices. It is the Story of Samson, in Judges 13 through 16. We cannot read all that, you know. But we will read relevant portions as we get to them. The book of Judges is the story of the painful consequences of a nation's bad choices. It was a time when Israel went up and down, back and forth in its relationship with God. They would take two steps forward in their relationship with God and three steps backward. And of course when you take two steps forward and three backwards you know that you will never make progress. And each time they backslid, God will leave them at the mercy of a heathen enemy. And they would return in repentance to God, only to go back again worshiping idols.

Samson was born under an unusual circumstance as a deliverer of Israel at a time when Israel was spiritually and morally down and out. But the life of Samson is marked by series of bad choices that gradually compromised his service to God and to Israel; series of bad choices that eventually broke him literally, and ruined his destiny.

Let's look at some of the choices that Samson made.

- i. Carelessness with his Nazarite vow.

Samson was born a Nazarite. And there is no doubt that Samson knew his commission and his mission. As a Nazarite he was not supposed to touch any dead body: animal or human. Making a vow or a promise is a

choice, and keeping a promise or a vow is also a choice. Friend, do not make promises carelessly. Be deliberate when you make these choices and make them wisely. When you break a promise you have made a bad choice, as Sampson did with his Nazarite vow.

It is no wonder this instruction of yesteryears: before you make a promise consider well its importance; and when made engrave it upon your heart. Why is it necessary to engrave this promise upon your heart? So you do not break it. The promises you have chosen to make can make or break you.

Young lady in radioland, do not promise to marry a man who in the courtship stage you have discovered he has an uncontrollable anger. He will break things when he is angry; he will bang doors when he is angry; he will throw things. If you continue and go ahead and marry such a man, the moment you say I do from that time you will become a punching bag.

Samson was careless with his Nazarite vow. Judges 14:8-9. *After some time, when he returned to get her* [that is, the woman], he insisted he would marry her. I wouldn't include that as one of his bad choices, because the bible says that God was in it. That was a philistine woman.

Judges 14:8-9

⁸*After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass* [the dead body of the lion he killed earlier on one of his trips to see this woman he was to marry]. *And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass of the lion.* ⁹*He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.*

His parents would have been very much afraid. They would have been very much disturbed. He kept it from them. He was careless with his

Nazarite vow. He touched a dead animal. But things were still moving fine with him.

ii. Cracking an expensive silly joke.

The night before he was supposed to take this wife he cracked an expensive joke. We find that in,

Judges 14:12

¹² Then Samson said to them [to the young men who came to the party], "Let me pose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing. ¹³ But if you cannot explain it to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing."

And they said to him, "Pose your riddle, that we may hear it."

¹⁴ So he said to them:

*"Out of the eater came something to eat,
And out of the strong came something sweet."*

Now for three days they could not explain the riddle. To cut a long story short, they eventually went to Samson's betroth wife and made her extract the right answer from Samson. Samson then divulged the answer to them. And so he owed them what he promised. Look at what happened in verse 19.

¹⁹ Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes of clothing to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused, and he went back up to his father's house.

You see, Samson cracked this expensive silly joke. Why do I say that it is expensive? This joke was expensive because it caused thirty men their lives unnecessarily. It is not true that words are cheap, otherwise Jesus wouldn't have warned in Matthew 12:36

Matthew 12:36

³⁶ *But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.*

Words are not cheap. Words are expensive. No wonder the psalmist prayed, in Psalms 141:3

*Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth;
Keep watch over the door of my lips.*

Friends, we have seen, so far, two bad choices of Samson: carelessness with his Nazarite vows, cracking an expensive silly jokes – very costly joke! It cost thirty men their lives.

When we come back next time we will continue with Samson's bad choices. But for now, I want to say, from now on, friend, be very very careful. Pray that God will give you wisdom in making choices; for choices can make or break you.

PRAYER:

Father, we thank You for the time we have spent together. It is my prayer, dear Lord, that the words that we have heard would produce desirable fruit in our lives, helping us to make wise choices in life; so that our future, our destiny, our wellbeing will not be impaired, in Jesus Name. Amen!