

“CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY”

After forty years of wandering in the wilderness, the children of Israel followed the godly leadership of Joshua into the promised land. The record states, “the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which He swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the LORD gave them rest round about, according to all that He swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass” (Jos. 21:43-45). About fourteen years later, Joshua gives his last address to the people of God. In this address, in the one hundred and tenth year of his life, Joshua proclaims, “if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (24:15). There are many wonderful and powerful lessons from this statement, but let us examine just a few.

One, man must “*choose*” whom he will serve. Every individual is responsible for making this choice. He can choose to serve the One, True God of Heaven or he can choose to serve one of the many false gods that man has devised which cannot save themselves, much less mankind (cf., 1 Sam. 5:3-7). Man cannot choose to “sit on the fence.” Jesus says, “no man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Mat. 6:24). God does not force men to serve Him; He gently calls upon man to obey Him and waits for our response (2 The. 2:14; Mat. 11:28-30).

Second, it is “*you*” who must do the choosing. No one can choose for you, nor can you choose for someone else. God says, “the soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him” (Eze. 18:20). God had proven Himself to be faithful and true to the Israelites time and again. Only a fool would have chosen to serve someone or thing other than the Almighty God. The same is true to this day. God has not changed (Mal. 3:6). God has proven His love for us by sending His only begotten Son to die on the cross for our sins. He has revealed unto us, by means of the Gospel of Christ, the plan by which man can be saved by Jesus’ blood (Rom. 1:16-17; Rev. 1:5; Acts 2:38-47; 22:16). Still, He calls and waits for you to respond.

Third, the choice that you must make is so important, that you should make the decision “*this day*.” The Lord beckons, “behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2). The inspired James writes, “whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (Jam. 4:14). Today is the day of salvation, because we are not promised a tomorrow.

On this day, you could make the greatest choice of your entire life – to serve the True and Living God. By faith (Heb. 11:6), you can repent of your past sins (Luke 13:3), confess the Deity of Jesus (Acts 8:37), and be baptized, immersed in water, to have your past sins washed away (Acts 22:16). You will then be added to the Lord’s Church by God, Himself (Acts 2:38, 47). You can then begin living your life as “a new creature” (2 Cor. 5:17). You can also follow the wonderful example of a loving parent, and declare, “as for me and my house, we will serve the

LORD” (Jos. 24:15).

- *Brad Green*