

The Power of Choice



Past > Present > Future



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Inreach & Outreach Resource



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Enter The Ark of Hope

The Great Controversy between God and
Satan is primarily over

“WORSHIP”

Who will you Choose?



Get into the Ark **Sanctuary**



**And let them
make me a
sanctuary;
that I may dwell
among them.**

– Exodus 25:8

Psalms 77:13



Health Snippet – Air:

Carbon monoxide poisoning

Carbon monoxide a poisonous gas has no smell or taste. Breathing it in makes you unwell, and can kill with exposure to high levels. Every year around 60 deaths from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning seen in England and Wales.

- After carbon monoxide is breathed in, in the bloodstream it mixes with haemoglobin (in red blood cells that carry oxygen to the body) to form carboxy-haemoglobin. Then, the blood is no longer able to carry oxygen, and this lack of oxygen causes the body's cells and tissue to fail and die.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are not obvious:

A [tension-type headache](#) is the most common symptom of mild carbon monoxide poisoning. Other symptoms are: [Dizziness](#), feeling and being sick, tiredness and confusion, stomach pain, [shortness of breath](#) and difficulty breathing.

- The low levels of carbon monoxide are similar to that of [food poisoning](#) and [flu](#). But does not cause > temperature.

Carbon monoxide is produced when: fuels such as gas, oil, coal and wood do not burn fully. Also burning charcoal, running cars, cigarette smoke, blocked flues & chimneys, etc.

- **Seek medical advice if exposed to any carbon monoxide.**

Effects of carbon monoxide (CO) on health

Carbon monoxide concentration
(expressed in ppm)



Effects on human health

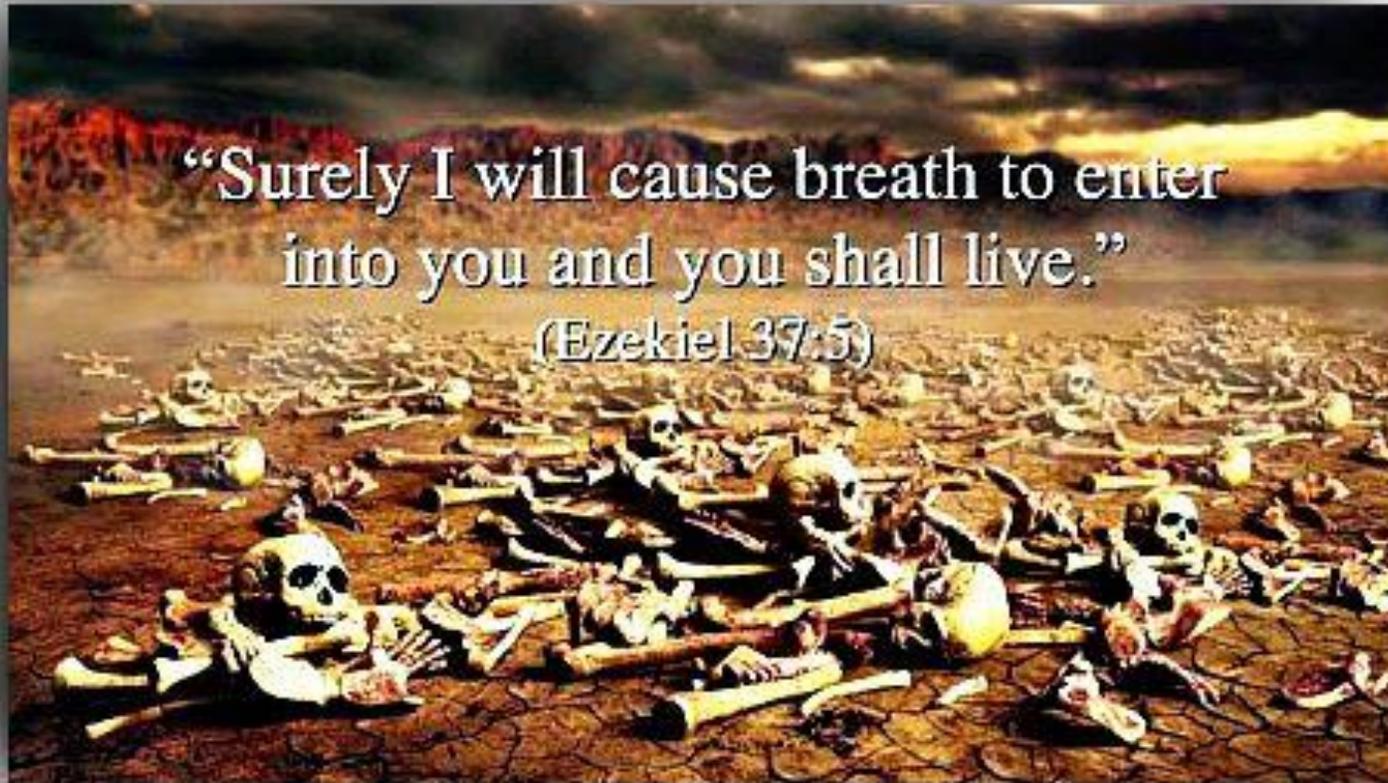
- ▶ **Immediate effects: loss of consciousness and potential death within 1 to 3 minutes**
- ▶ **Migraine and dizziness within 1 to 2 minutes - Loss of consciousness and potential death within 10 to 15 minutes**
- ▶ **Migraine and dizziness within 10 to 15 minutes - Loss of consciousness and potential death within 30 minutes**
- ▶ **Migraine, dizziness and nausea within 20 minutes - Collapse and potential death within 1 hour**
- ▶ **Migraine, dizziness and nausea within 45 minutes - Collapse and potential death within 2 hours**
- ▶ **Headache and nausea within 1 to 2 hours – Occipital migraine within 2 hours and a half to 3 hours and a half**
- ▶ **Slight headache within 2 to 3 hours**
- ▶ **Permissible exposure limit for 8 hours (OSHA)**



Can We Trust Bible Prophecy?



Yes we Can!



The Power of Choice



Past > Present > Future



Introduction

Ever notice that life is full of choices?

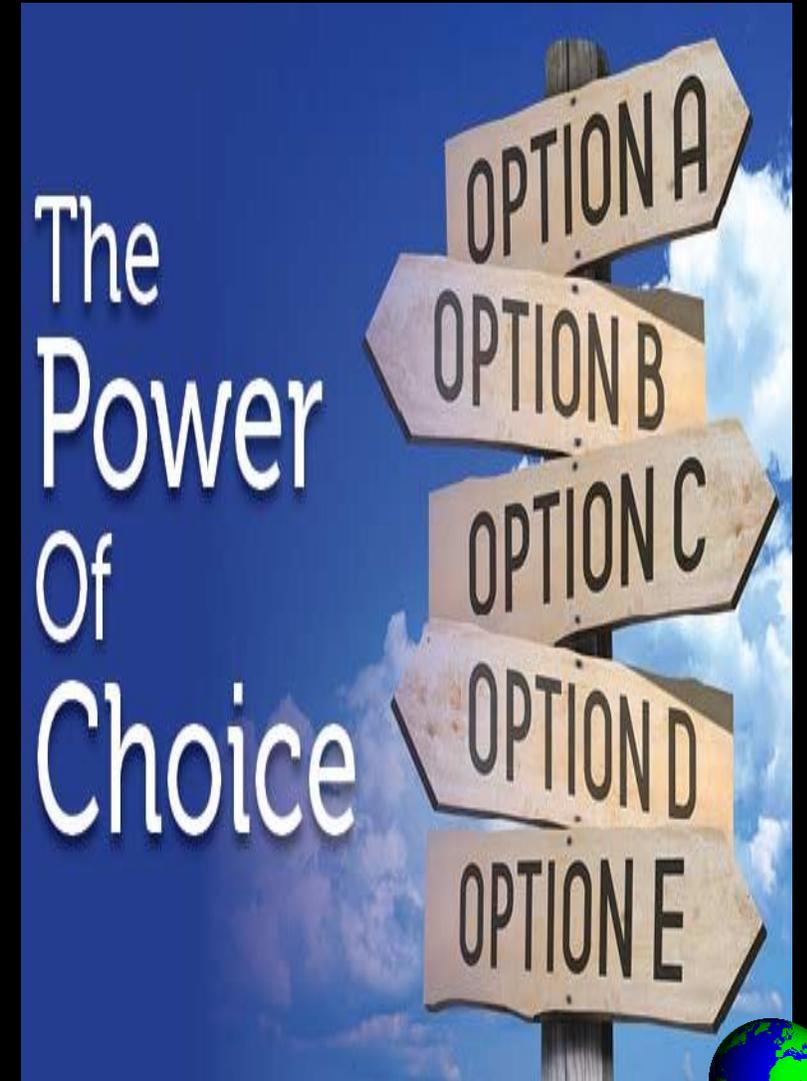
In fact, one could argue that in many ways, what we do all day, from the moment we get up until we go to bed, is make choices. **We make so many choices that often we don't even think about them. We just make them.**

Some choices are simple and even become routine, while others are life-changing and have eternal consequences, not only for us but even for our own families.

Hence, how crucial that we think through our choices, especially the big ones, the ones that can impact us and our families for the rest of not only our own lives but our family members' lives, as well.

How many of us, to this day, regret the choices we have made? How many, to this day, live with the wreckage from the wrong choices made even long ago?

Fortunately, there is forgiveness. There is redemption, and there is healing, even for the worst of decisions.



Freedom is paradoxical

Choice is characteristic of our culture:

We want to chart our own paths through life and so we value freedom to choose, but our choices appear to limit our freedom. If we choose to marry, we at once limit the relationships we will have with others, though paradoxically we open up new freedoms that come, for example, from being settled in our choice.

This principle applies to all our choices:

What we freely choose today changes the future possibilities. Thus freedom is not unconstrained choice, for with each choice we limit our freedom, and in so doing shape our environment and ourselves.

Are we so constrained by our culture, our relationships, our job, and our families that in fact we have little choice?



Free-will: its significance

Our will is driven by aspirations and desires, dreams and imagination, and these matter to us because they impact on our identity and wellbeing. Free-will also underpins ethics, where choices are made in the light of moral principles. In fact free-will underpins all choices.

Furthermore, free-will underpins the role of intentionality and guilt in the judicial system. Indeed, our Western culture as a whole is built on guilt. For example, at times we do something because we feel guilty for failing to do it – as measured against a cultural or community standard (as opposed to a legal standard). The very idea of rules or laws implies that we have a choice or ability to obey. How can the law command us to do certain things if we do not have the ability to do them? Thus even the concept of obedience implies we have a choice.



What is free-will?

Free-will is the ability to choose deliberately between options. Free-will is a cognitive concept, involving the mind. It cannot be regarded as the opposite of determinism, where events have cause and effect *outside* human control. The activity of the mind embraces situations of non-determinacy where free-will is absent. So the term free-will only applies to cognitive processes where we use our minds to make choices. The will is free in the sense that it is not completely determined. However, it is not completely free but occurs within the boundaries of predetermined factors. These predetermined factors may, for example, be biological features of life that are non-negotiable, such as breathing; however, almost all that matters to us (the things we think about) are initiated or modified by an act of the will, from how we spend our time to what moulds our character.

All through Scripture, we are confronted with the reality of human free will. Even the unfallen Adam and Eve (Genesis 3) had free will, and they unfortunately made the wrong choice with it. **If unfallen beings, in perfection, could misuse free will, how much more so beings like ourselves, steeped in sin?**

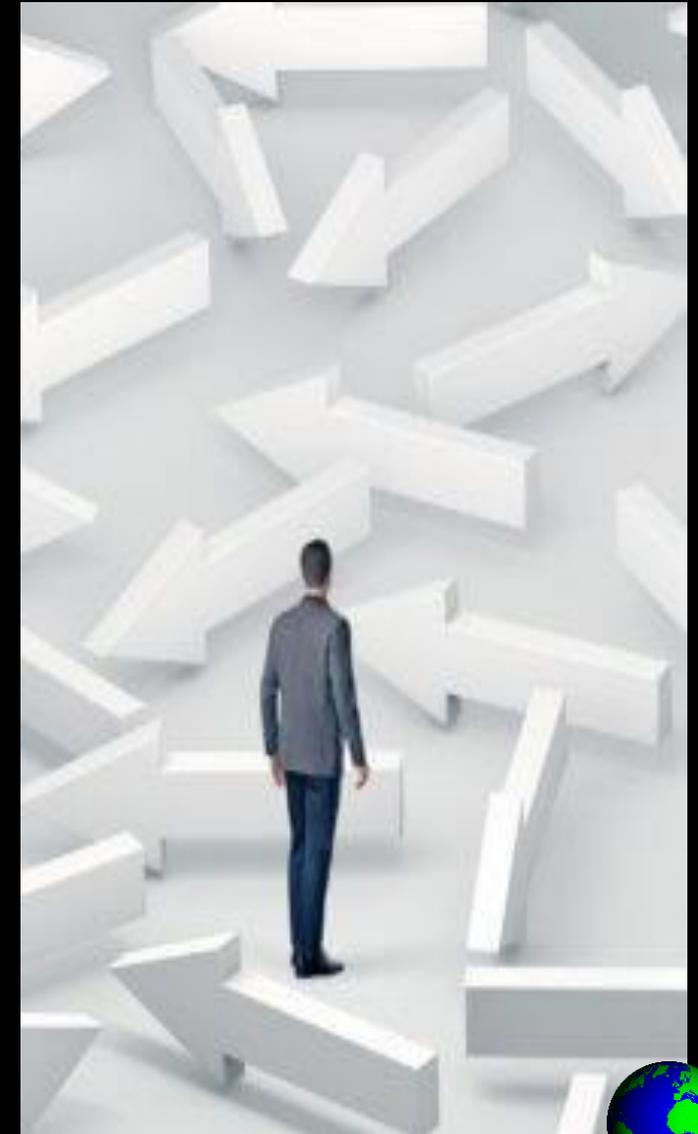


What is free-will? (cont'd)

And we need to remember that free will is just that, *free*, which means that, regardless of the pressure on us, both from within and without, we don't have to choose what is wrong. We can, through the power of God in us, make the right choices with the free will God has given us. Thus, how important that we carefully weigh our decisions, especially thinking about how those decisions can impact our family lives. **The free-will choice of Cain to kill his brother surely devastated his family. The free-will decision of Joseph's brothers to sell him into slavery ruined their father's life.**

"And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him." ([Genesis 37:33-35](#)).

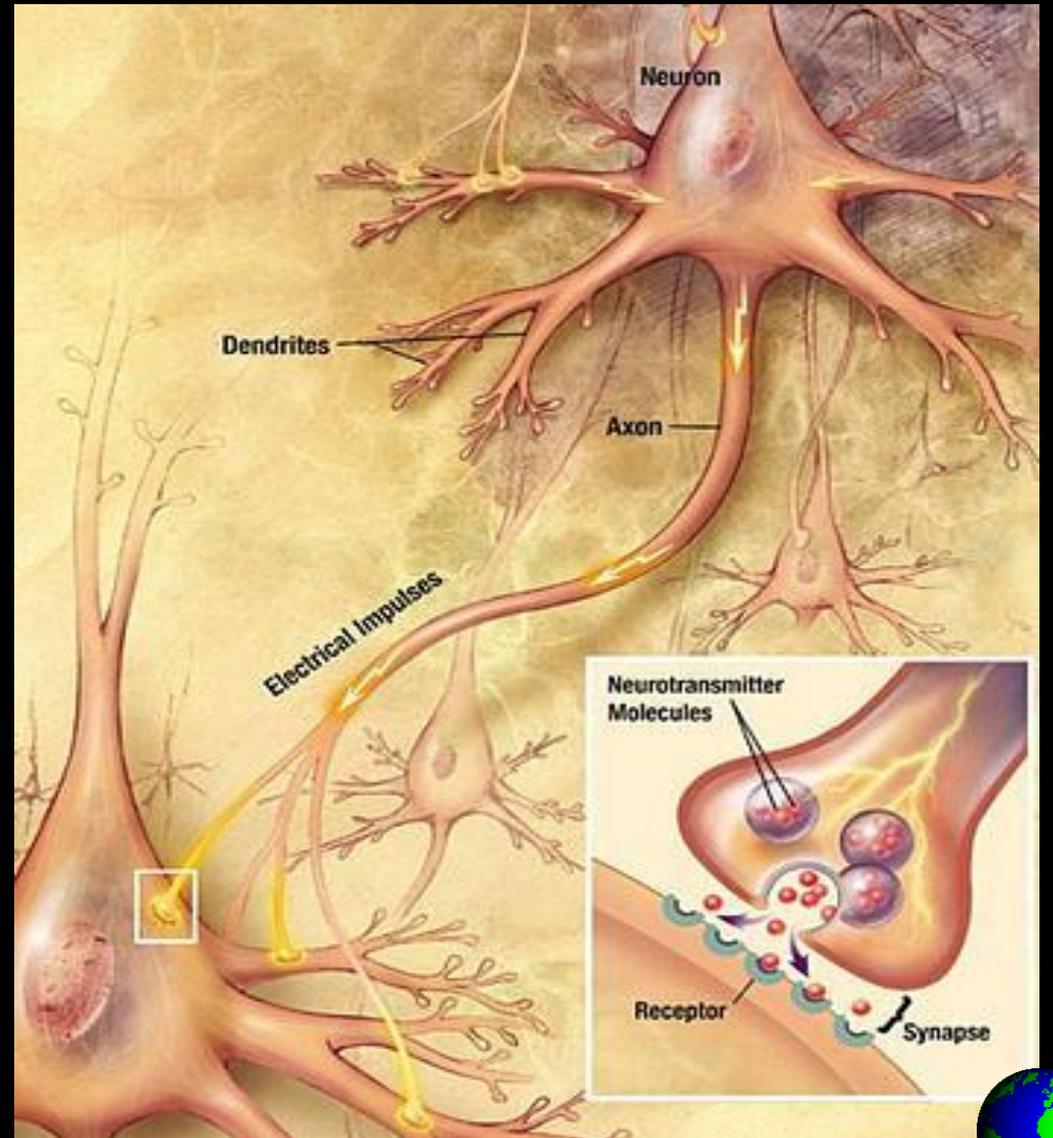
All through the Bible, as in life, we can find examples of how the free choices of family members, for good or evil, impact others, such as the choices of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram ([Numbers 16:1-32](#); see also [Daniel 6:23, 24](#); [Genesis 18:19](#)).



How the brain works

Two people presented with precisely the same information may well not make identical decisions because of the different weightings (judgements) given to the information. In the absence of memories, our decisions are uninformed, dependent only on limited 'in-the-moment' information. This latter form of free-will is largely unintentional, and may feed into future decisions by affecting the plasticity of the system, perhaps even leading to an unintentional habit.

The Bible ascribes a deep significance to the struggles of our will. It shows us how holiness is both a gift and a choice, as our character is changed through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, and as we think new thoughts and create fresh habits. It also shows us paradoxically how God's will constrains us and yet frees us.



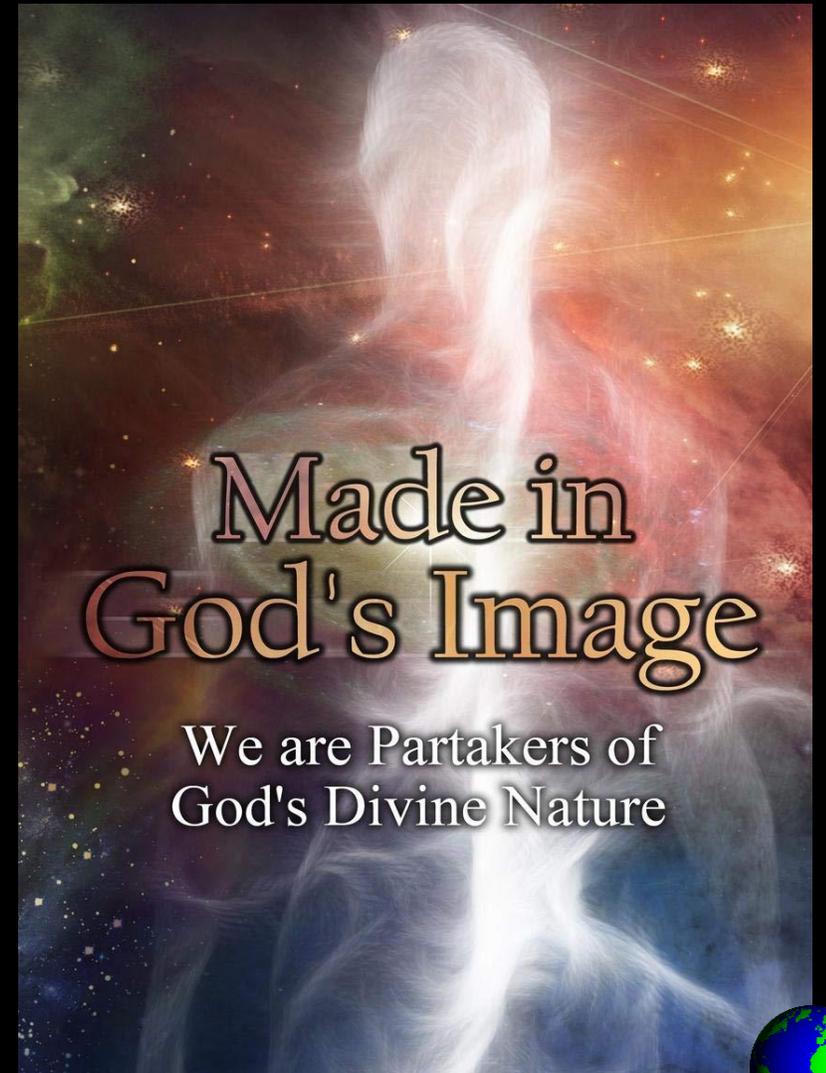
Is human free-will compatible with divine sovereignty?

When we discuss God's act of creating us, we often bring up the issue of free choice. **We believe that God has given us free choice. God created us as intelligent beings capable of making our own decisions.** It is my contention that God could not have created us any other way because it would lead to a logical contradiction.

Can God build a rock so large that he cannot lift it?

Whichever way you answer that question limits the omnipotence of God because the question leads to a logical contradiction. Likewise, God cannot create intelligent beings who love him, without giving them free choice to make that decision. **That comes with the consequence that we can choose not to love him.** The only option God had was to not create intelligent beings.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. - [Genesis 1:26](#)



FREEDOM IS REAL (*Genesis 2:16, 17*)

Really, freedom is a very deep subject. The word means different things to different people in different situations. It is not always easy to pin down exactly what people mean when they talk about freedom.

But one thing is sure: When God created humans (men, women, and children), He made them moral people. For humans to be truly moral, they must be free to make choices between right and wrong. If people did not have this right, they really could not be free.

In *Genesis 3:1–6*, we find the moral freedom given to both Adam and Eve. Why would God have warned them against eating of the tree if they had not been free to choose between right and wrong? They had moral freedom. So, we find perfect people in a perfect world. At the very beginning of human life, people clearly had the freedom of choice.



Freedom is real (Genesis 2:16, 17) (cont'd)

What are the places where Adam and Eve both used free will?

How could they at different times have made better choices?

What can we learn from these verses about the kinds of choices we make?

Human free choice must be something very important to God. Think about what our abuse (wrong use) of that freedom cost God. The gift is so holy and important that God (Jesus) would die on the cross. He could have left us to our fate (eternal death) because we misused this gift. But He did not.

What basic mistake did both Adam and Eve make?

How can we avoid making almost the same mistakes in our situations?

In what ways do we face almost the same temptations?

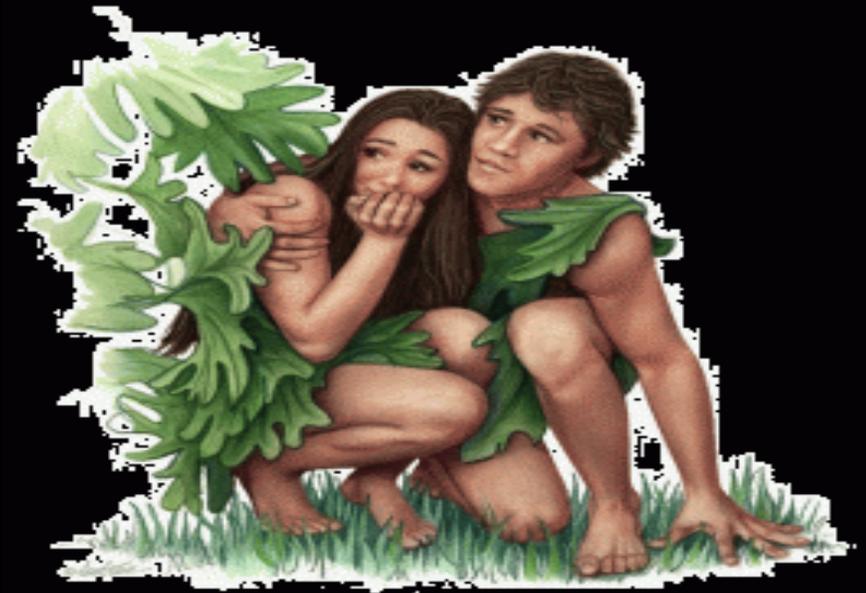


THE RESULTS: GUILT AND FEAR (*Genesis 3:7–13*)

Adam and Eve were doing a cover-up job. They were trying to hide from God what they had done. Or they were trying to put the blame on anyone but themselves.

Of course, most people who know the Lord know that it is impossible to hide anything from Him. When the hairs of our head are numbered (counted) (Matthew 10:30), we cannot fool Him about our actions. But we can fool ourselves. How easily we find ways to try to put the blame on others. If only my boss had not done this, then I would not have done that. If only my husband or wife had not done this, then I would not have done that. If only God had taken away the temptation when I prayed, then I would not have fallen. If only this, if only that . . .

Sure, we sometimes face powerful temptations. The situation is worse, too, because we already come with sinful and fallen natures. They make it that much easier for us to weaken when tempted and tried. As bad as sin is and as bad as the results often are, we make it worse when we refuse to accept responsibility (blame; guilt). After all, how can we overcome sin if we do not accept blame for our own actions?



Free Will, Free Choice

Some Christians believe that God has chosen, even before a person was born, whether or not that person will be saved. That is, those who in the end are lost eternally are lost because God, in His wisdom (this theology claims) made that choice for this person to be lost. Which means, then, that regardless of their choices, that person will be condemned.

The Bible doesn't ascribe to that theology.

Instead, that God has chosen for all of us to be saved, and that even before the world began, we were chosen in Him to have eternal life.

Read [Ephesians 1:1-4](#); [Titus 1:1, 2](#); and [2 Timothy 1:8, 9](#). These verses tell us about being chosen by God and when we were chosen?

However good this news, some people will still be lost ([Matthew 25:41](#)). And that's because, though God has chosen us all, He has given humans a most sacred gift, and that is free will, free choice.

Life is not entirely free will or destiny alone. It is a combination of the two. For example, your height is your destiny and your weight is your free will.

Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar



What does *Matthew 22:35-37* teach about free will?

The Lord does not force us to love Him.

Love, in order to be love, has to be freely given. In many ways, one could argue that the Bible is the story of God reaching out to lost human beings and seeking, without coercion, to win their hearts to Himself.

This reality can best be seen in the life and ministry of Jesus, and how people—using their free will—reacted to Him. Some were drawn to Him; others wanted Him dead.

Yes, God has chosen us for salvation, but, in the end, we have to make the choice to accept that salvation. There is no question that of all the choices we have to make, the choice to serve the Lord is, by far, the most consequential for us and for those who are impacted (such as our immediate family) by our life and the choices that we make in it.



CHOICES: GOOD AND BAD (*Hebrews 11:8–10*)

What were some of the wrong choices that Abraham made in [Genesis 16](#) and [Genesis 21:9–14](#)? **What were the results of those choices?**

“Polygamy had become so common that people did not think of it as a sin. **But it broke the law of God.** And it destroyed the holiness and peace of the family. Abraham’s marriage to Hagar led to evil among his own household and among his future children and their families.” —[Ellen G. White, patriarchs and prophets, p145.](#)

Read [Daniel 1:8–16](#). The words “Daniel purposed [made up his mind; chose] in his heart” show that Daniel’s choice was both wise and strong. The results of this wise choice influenced the whole life of Daniel. **And this also led to Daniel’s special blessing and attention by the Lord.** Daniel gave his life to the Lord daily in his prayers and devotions (study of God’s Word).

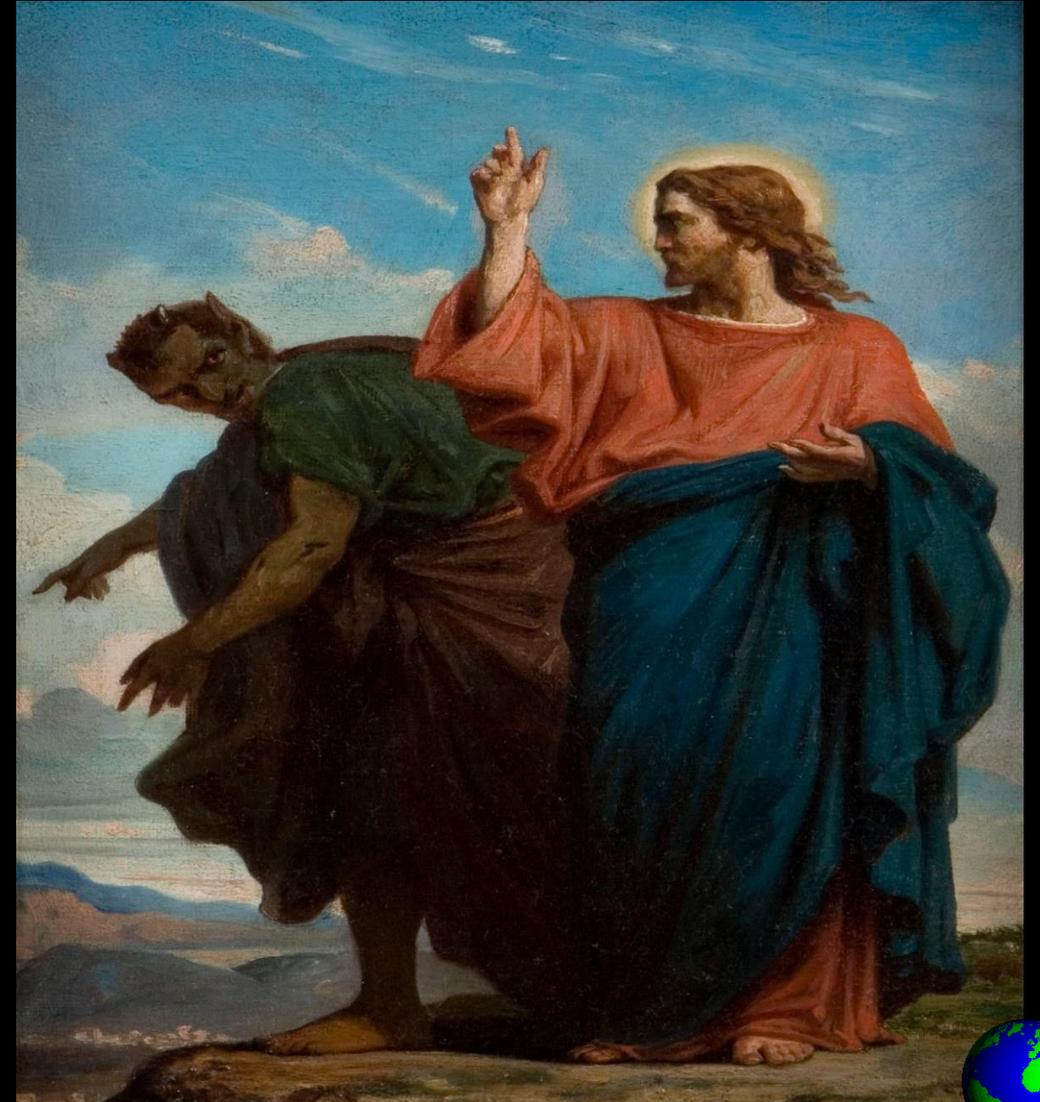


Choices good and bad (cont'd)

It is one thing to say we should make right choices. But it is another to have the heart's strong desire to do it. According to Psalm 119:11; Philippians 4:8; and Colossians 3:2, what are ways we can program (train) our minds to make the right choices?

In the end, we are free to choose for the Lord or free to choose against Him. **There is no middle ground.** We are on one side or the other. This does not mean we do not make mistakes or fall (think of Abraham, for example). It means we must "purpose in our hearts" to try to do God's will (plan), no matter what happens. **We must "purpose in our hearts" to choose what is right.** What is right is what God commands us to do.

What is important is if we fall, if we make the wrong choices, God does not cast us off. The danger is we can feel so guilty, we can feel so bad that we are in danger of giving up. **So, our only hope is to put ourselves at the foot of the Cross and claim the forgiveness offered in Jesus.**



CHOICE AND THE NEXT GENERATION

(Deuteronomy 30:10–19)

The results of life choices influence both ourselves and our children. Our influence is much more than we imagine, especially on our children. **One example is drinking alcohol.** Much has been said recently about how one glass of alcohol a day is “good” for health. This idea is encouraged by the liquor companies for making more money. But only a few people know that these studies do not have their facts straight. In reality, these claims are not true.

It is known that about 7 percent of persons who take a first drink will become alcoholic, or problem drinkers. The choice to introduce alcohol into our homes may or may not have much influence on us as persons. We may not be damaged greatly by it. But what of our children? **What about the example you leave? If you drink, your children may want to drink more.** Is it worth choosing something that may steal the life of your child? Studies have shown that children raised in homes where alcohol is present are much more at risk of alcohol problems than children raised in non-alcoholic homes.

God

Stills you

Reassures you

Leads you

Enlightens you

Forgives you

Calms you

Encourages you

Comforts you

Satan

Rushes you

Frightens you

Pushes you

Confuses you

Condemns you

Stresses you

Discourages you

Worries you



CHOICE AND CHANCE (Psalm 87:5, 6)

All have the power of choice. But not all have an equal set of opportunities (chances for success). Some choices limit future possibilities and opportunities. Some people suffer disadvantages through no choice of their own.

Think about the disadvantages that cloud the lives of some; for example, children born into homes where drugs are used, where husbands beat up wives or children, or where poorness is great. Think about the negative results of sinful living. We all have been stuck in situations that are not of our own choosing.

There are issues often brought on by choices that others made; for example, the choice of a parent to leave the family, the choice of a spouse to commit adultery, or the choice of a friend to betray someone who had trusted him or her. The number of situations are as endless as they are scary.

Choice. Chance.
Change.

You must make a **Choice**
To take a **Chance**
Or your
Circumstances will
Never **change.**

~ Author Unknown



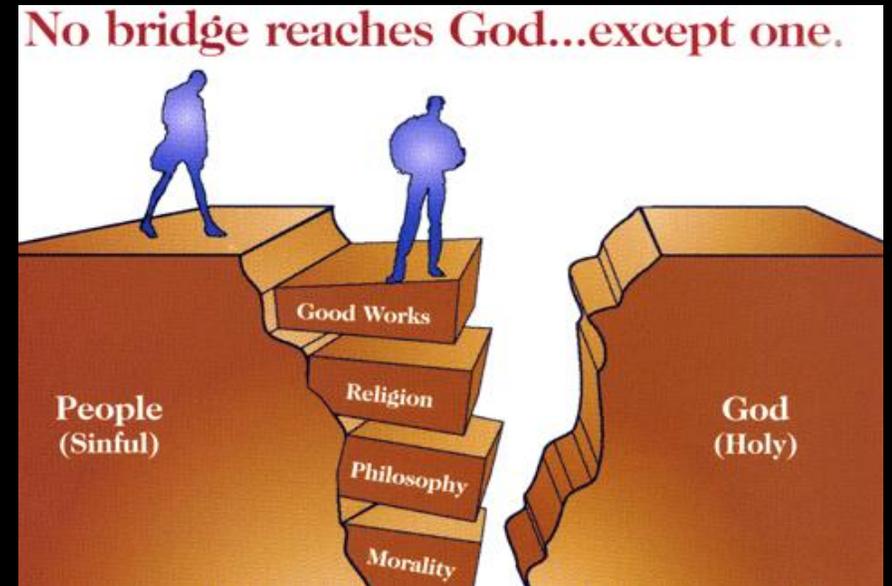
Choice and Chance (cont'd)

But the good news in all this is we can make one choice that is the most important of all. We can choose to follow Jesus. We can choose Jesus as our personal Saviour. We can repent from our sinful ways. And when we are baptized, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Through this gift, God now enters and influences our hearts and minds to direct our actions and to lead us to bear fruit. We become branches of the True Vine (Jesus).

According to Galatians 5:22, 23, the fruit of the Spirit does not come separately but in groups. It is the result of the Spirit taking control of our will, as much as we choose to let Him. Through the power of God working in our lives, we can choose to let the Lord remove some of the negative things that we had not chosen to have.

What are some of the things you have struggled with that are the result of choices that others have made for you?

How has God worked in your life to remove some of the negative results of those choices? What better choices can you yourself make that could help you to heal?



Choice and Chance – Examples

1. Choosing Friends:

One of the most important choices we'll ever make is our friends. Most of the time we don't set out to make friends; often friendships simply develop naturally as we spend time with people who enjoy some of the same things we do. See [Proverbs 12:26; 17:17; 18:24; 22:24, 25](#).

2. Choosing a Life Partner:

If you're supposed to choose your friends carefully, you must be even more careful when it comes to choosing your future spouse. Adam was very blessed that God designed his life companion with His own hands and from within himself. Adam's choice was easy since Eve was not just the only woman, but the perfect woman. The rest of us have a little more difficult time, since none of us is perfect and have many more people to choose from. See [Psalms 37:27, 119:97, 1 Corinthians 15:33, James 1:23-25](#).

3. Choosing a Course:

See [Ecclesiastes 2:1-11; 1 Timothy 6:10](#)



Very 1st Freedom for Man - Questions?

1. Read [Genesis 2:15-17](#).

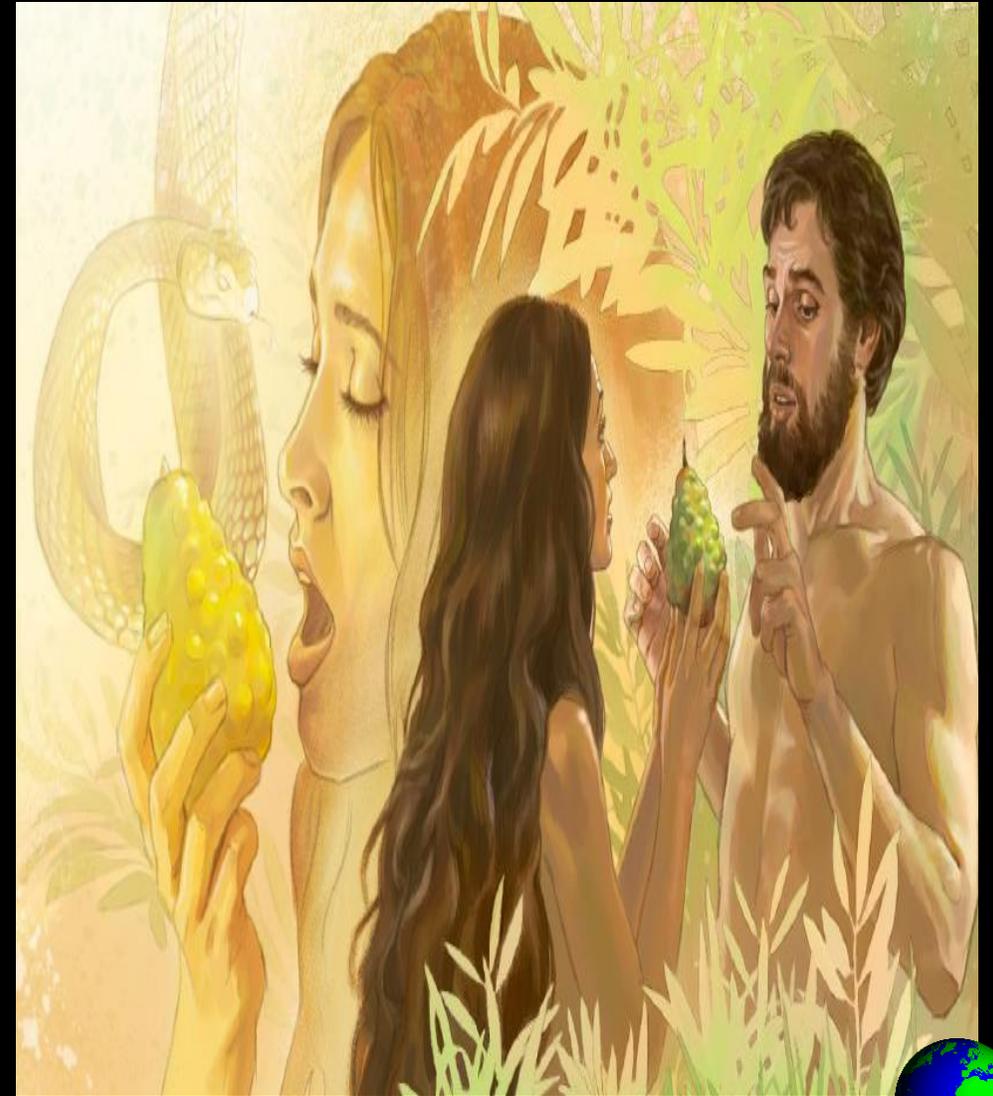
Would God get sued by a products liability lawyer?

We have a deadly product which looks like many other beneficial products. The product is not labelled, God only gave an oral warning. It has a deceptive, even attractive title ("knowledge of good and evil"), and not "killer tree". The dangerous fruit looks good ([Genesis 3:6](#)). It is not hidden away or fenced off, it is in the "middle of the garden" ([Genesis 3:3](#))."

Does God have any defense to putting this deadly poisonous fruit tree where it can easily harm someone?

2. Read [Genesis 3:9-12](#). Does Adam have a complete and absolute defense against any charges God might bring? Not only can he claim the things we just mentioned, but now God's agent (the woman) gave him some fruit and encouraged him to eat it.

Should we also sue God for punitive damages (damages intended to punish a knowingly reckless defendant)?



First Freedom – Some Questions? (cont'd)

3. If God were the manufacturer of chain saws, the purpose of the chain saw is to cut wood, not your leg. The manufacturer does everything, within reason, to make sure the chain saw is used only for its intended purpose.

What is the intended purpose of this fruit tree in the middle of the garden? It can only have one intended purpose, to pose a test of human free choice.

With all of the obvious steps that God could have taken to make it more difficult to eat the fruit, why did He not do more?

God is the intelligence of the universe. He obviously decided not to do more. The only reason I can think that He would do this is to give humans absolute free choice.



First Freedom – Some Questions? (cont'd)

4. What did God value more than free choice?

Whatever else is included in free choice, nothing seems more important than it. God and humans suffered terribly as a result of being given free choice. Can you hear Adam and Eve saying, "If You loved us, you would not have allowed this to happen?"

Some people say that religion should have nothing to do with politics. Some suggest that communism or some sort of socialism is most consistent with Christianity.

What does Genesis teach us?

God's system of government maximizes individual freedom. Although God created a rescue plan for our freedom to choose, there was no obvious safety net in Eden for man from choosing sin.



Choices and Consequences

1. Read [Genesis 4:1-2](#). Cain was the first human who was birthed. How did Eve view Cain's birth? A cooperative venture with God.

2. Read [Genesis 4:3-7](#). What choices were given to Cain?

- Did Cain possess the power to master sin? God says "you must master [sin]."

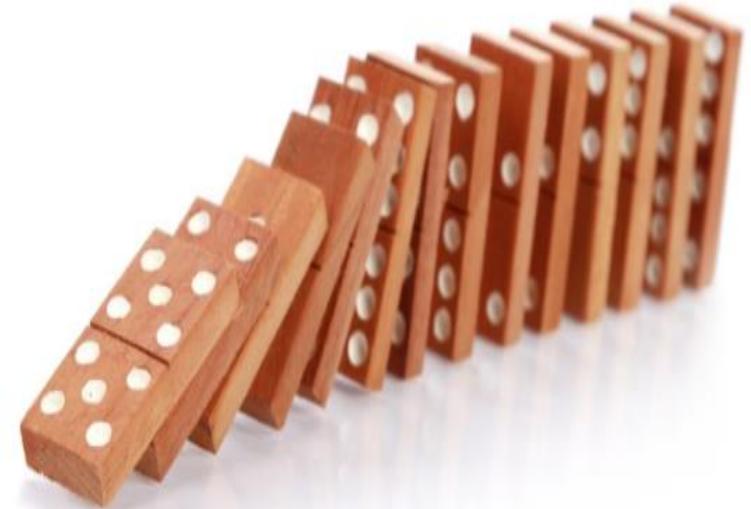
3. Read [Genesis 4:8](#). Is this premeditated murder? It seems so, because Cain asked Able to go out to the field.

4. Read [Genesis 4:9-14](#). What are the results of Cain's choice? His brother is dead, and Cain's life is ruined.

Point to ponder for us today:

"To those who refuse the precious rays of light which would illuminate the darkness, the mysteries of God's word remain such forever." - The Desire of Ages, 588.

Every day you make lots of choices.
Every choice has consequences.



Before making a choice,
consider the consequences



Choices and Consequences (cont'd)

- **Why did God not protect Abel?** Recall that [Genesis 4:4](#) tells us that God looked on Abel with favour.
 - When Eve and Adam heard of this, how do you think they felt?
 - What went through Eve's mind when she thought back about how God blessed her with Cain ([Genesis 4:1](#))?
 - **Would Adam and Eve blame themselves for this tragedy? Did they bear part of the blame?**
Yes. They introduced sin into the world.
 - **Would Adam and Eve have preferred, at this point, not to have had free choice?**
 - **What had free choice cost them?**
5. Read [Deuteronomy 30:10-14](#). **Is it possible to keep God's law?** This text says obedience is "not too difficult" or "beyond [our] reach."
- Read [Romans 3:10-12](#) and [Romans 3:19-20](#). **How do you reconcile Deuteronomy 30 and Romans 3?**
They seem to contradict each other!

You are **FREE**
to choose,
but you are not
FREE from
the
CONSEQUENCE
of your **choice.**



Choices and Consequences (cont'd)

6. Read [Deuteronomy 30:15-19](#). Does this help us to understand the apparent conflict between Deuteronomy and Romans?

Romans makes clear that no one can, through human effort, meet the perfect standard of righteousness required by God. On the other hand, Deuteronomy teaches us that we all have free choice. We can choose life or we can choose death. We can choose to "walk" in God's ways or we can choose to live a disobedient life.

- **Do these choices have consequences?** [Deuteronomy 30:16](#) tells us that obedience helps us to "live and increase." [Deuteronomy 30:18](#) tells us that if we disobey we will be destroyed.
- **Notice again [Deuteronomy 30:19-20](#). Who else benefits from our choices?** **Our children!** We previously observed how the choices of Adam and Eve impacted the lives of their children - **who themselves made choices.**



The Rule of Choice

1. The media and some Christians scoffed when a prominent American television evangelist pointed out that the recent devastation in Haiti might have something to do with the long-standing practice of voodoo by some Haitians. Is that a reasonable statement, given the texts we have just studied?

- What about all of the Haitians who are devout Christians?
- Can they suffer because of the choices of others?
- Or, do earthquakes have nothing to do with the choice of anyone?
- Read [Luke 13:1-5](#). What does Jesus say about suffering and sin?
Sin will kill the wicked in the end. However, bad things that happen to us during life might not be the result of our sin.
- How can we disagree with what Moses was inspired to write in [Deuteronomy 30](#)?



The Rule of Choice (cont'd)

2. Read [Hebrews 11:32-34](#). Are these heroes of faith? Yes. This is the "faith chapter" of the Bible and these are some of the heroes.

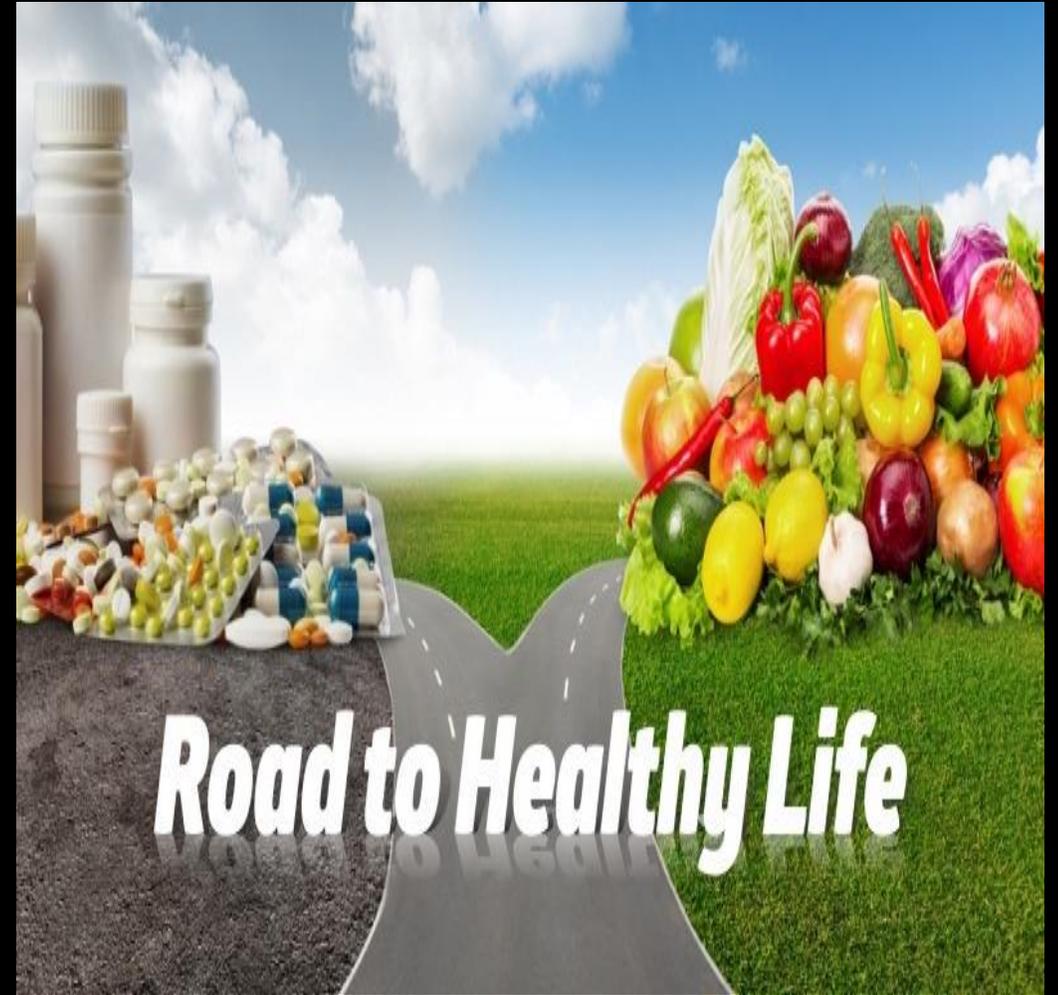
- How did life turn out for these heroes? It turned out great. They won!

Read [Hebrews 11:35-38](#). Are these also heroes of faith? Yes. But, their names are not even mentioned.

- How did life turn out for these heroes? It was terrible - the worst ("sawed in two")!

Read [Hebrews 11:40](#). How do you explain these outcomes in the face of our study about choice and the results?

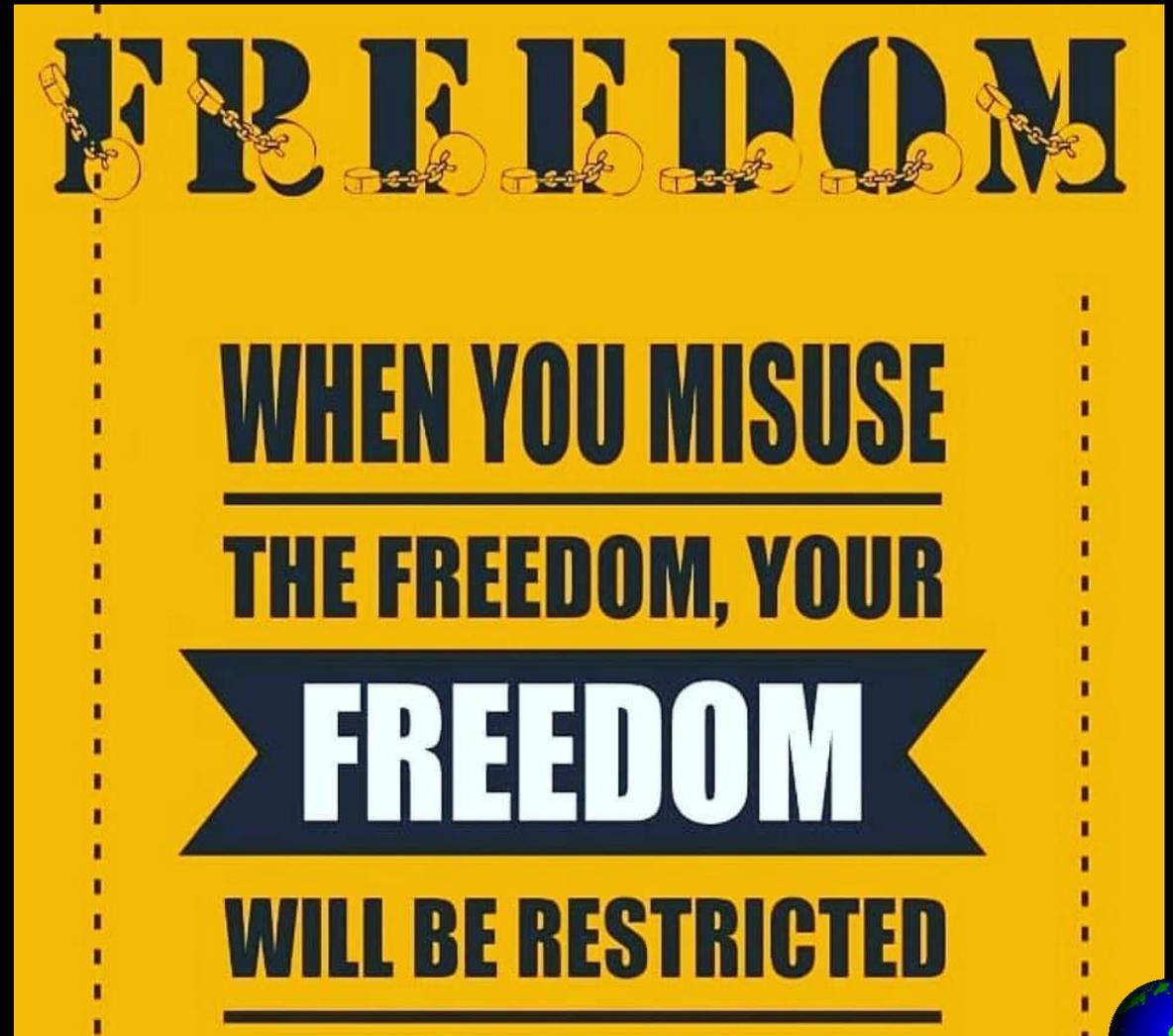
The normal rule is that choosing God makes our life better here on earth. Sometimes this rule does not apply, and we cannot conclude someone is a sinner just because they suffer. But, there are no exceptions to the rule when it comes to eternal life. Choosing God brings eternal life. Choosing evil brings eternal death.



1. What great privilege does God extend to erring man? *Deuteronomy 30:19*

What happens if freedom of choice is misused?

“God gives sufficient light and evidence to enable man to distinguish truth from error. But He does not force man to receive truth. He leaves him free to choose the good or to choose the evil. If man resists evidence that is sufficient to guide his judgment in the right direction, and chooses evil once, he will do this more readily the second time. The third time he will still more eagerly withdraw himself from God and choose to stand on the side of Satan. And in this course he will continue until he is confirmed in evil, and believes the lie he has cherished as truth.” - *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 6, 1112.*



2. How is truth genuinely accepted?

John 7:17

“The perception and appreciation of truth ... depends less upon the mind than upon the heart. Truth must be received into the soul; it claims the homage of the will. If truth could be submitted to the reason alone, pride would be no hindrance in the way of its reception. But it is to be received through the work of grace in the heart; and its reception depends upon the renunciation of every sin that the Spirit of God reveals.” - *The Desire of Ages*, 455.



3. If the truth is self-evident, why do men choose darkness rather than light? John 3:19, 20

“You may remove every prop today and close the mouths of objectors so that they can say nothing, and tomorrow they will go over the same ground again. Thus it will be, over and over, because they do not love the light and will not come to the light, lest their darkness and error should be removed from them.” - Testimonies, vol. 3, 37.

“Light makes manifest and reproveth the errors that were concealed in darkness; and as light comes, the life and character of men must change correspondingly, to be in harmony with it. Sins that were once sins of ignorance, because of the blindness of the mind, can no more be indulged in without incurring guilt. As increased light is given, men must be reformed, elevated, and refined by it, or they will be more perverse and stubborn than before the light came.” - Gospel Workers, 162.



THIS IS THE
JUDGMENT,
THAT THE LIGHT HAS COME
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MEN LOVED
THE DARKNESS
RATHER THAN THE LIGHT,
FOR THEIR DEEDS WERE EVIL.

- JOHN 3:19



4. *Through whose influence does Satan secure sin-loving multitudes to himself?*

Ezekiel 20:30; Micah 7:5, 6

“Many are the ways by which Satan works through human influence to bind his captives. He secures multitudes to himself by attaching them by the silken cords of affection to those who are enemies of the cross of Christ. Whatever this attachment may be, parental, filial, conjugal, or social, the effect is the same; the opposers of truth exert their power to control the conscience, and the souls held under their sway have not sufficient courage or independence to obey their own convictions of duty.

“The truth and the glory of God are inseparable; it is impossible for us, with the Bible within our reach, to honour God by erroneous opinions. Many claim that it matters not what one believes, if his life is only right. But the life is moulded by the faith. If light and truth is within our reach, and we neglect to improve the privilege of hearing and seeing it, we virtually reject it; we are choosing darkness rather than light.

“*‘There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.’ (Proverbs 16:25). Ignorance is no excuse for error or sin, when there is every opportunity to know the will of God.*” - The Great Controversy, 597, 598.



5 How can people rise from the lowest depths of ignorance and sin? *Psalm 119:98, 105*

“By giving heed to the teachings of God’s word, men may rise from the lowest depths of ignorance and degradation to become sons of God, associates of sinless angels.” - *Fundamentals of Christian Education, 85*

“He [Jesus] came in humility, in order that the humblest being upon the face of the earth could have no excuse because of his poverty, or ignorance, and say, Because of these things, I cannot obey the law of Jehovah. Christ clothed His divinity with humanity, that humanity might touch humanity; that He might live with humanity and bear all the trials and afflictions of man. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. In His humanity He understood all the temptations that will come to man.” - *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 925.*

What falsehood did Satan use successfully to deceive the Jews of Christ’s day? *John 7:48.*

PEOPLE DON'T
WANT TO HEAR
THE TRUTH
BECAUSE THEY
DON'T WANT
THEIR ILLUSIONS
DESTROYED.



This is the judgment,
that **LIGHT** has come
into the WORLD, but
men loved the darkness
rather than the Light,
for their deeds are evil

John 3:19



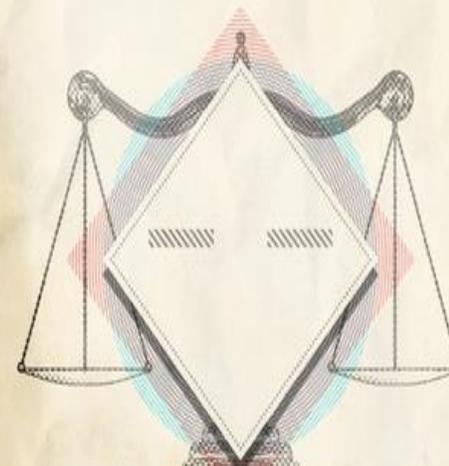
6. What will be no excuse for those who persist in error and sin? Hosea 4:6

“The times of ignorance God winked at, but now, with the blazing light of truth shining all around us, with warnings, with reproofs, with increasing light if we will but open our eyes to see it, there is no excuse of any, even the weakest child of God, that they should not disperse light to the world.

The four angels are holding the four winds that a special work may be accomplished: the saints of God are to be sealed in their foreheads. Brethren, how long before you will be ready for the seal of God? Every step you advance upon the path which God forbids, toward your own pleasure and in sin, is a step nearer your destruction. Every act of disobedience to the word of the Lord is exposing you to irreparable loss. Every moment of ease, of self-indulgence, secured by you in neglecting the divine admonitions and call to duty in earnest work for the Master, is placing you under the power and control of the prince of darkness.” - *The Review and Herald*, June 7, 1887.

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.



Colossians 3:25



7. What falsehood did Satan use successfully to deceive the Jews of Christ's day? **John 7:48**

How can we be deceived today in the same way?

“Many are deceived today in the same way as were the Jews. Religious teachers read the Bible in the light of their own understanding and traditions; and the people do not search the Scriptures for themselves, and judge for themselves as to what is truth; but they yield up their judgment, and commit their souls to their leaders. The preaching and teaching of His word is one of the means that God has ordained for diffusing light; but we must bring every man's teaching to the test of Scripture. **Whoever will prayerfully study the Bible, desiring to know the truth, that he may obey it, will receive divine enlightenment. He will understand the Scriptures.**” - *The Desire of Ages*, 459.

“Notwithstanding the Bible is full of warnings against false teachers, many are ready thus to commit the keeping of their souls to the clergy. There are today thousands of professors of religion who can give no other reason for points of faith which they hold than that they were so instructed by their religious leaders. **They pass by the Saviour's teachings almost unnoticed, and place implicit confidence in the words of the ministers.** But are ministers infallible? How can we trust our souls to their guidance unless we know from God's word that they are light bearers?” - *The Great Controversy*, 596, 597.

Crypto-Jew

Crypto-Judaism: People who practice crypto-Judaism are referred to as **"crypto-Jews"**.

The term **crypto-Jew** is also used to describe descendants of **Jews** who still

(generally **Secretly**) maintain some Jewish traditions, often while adhering to other faiths, most commonly

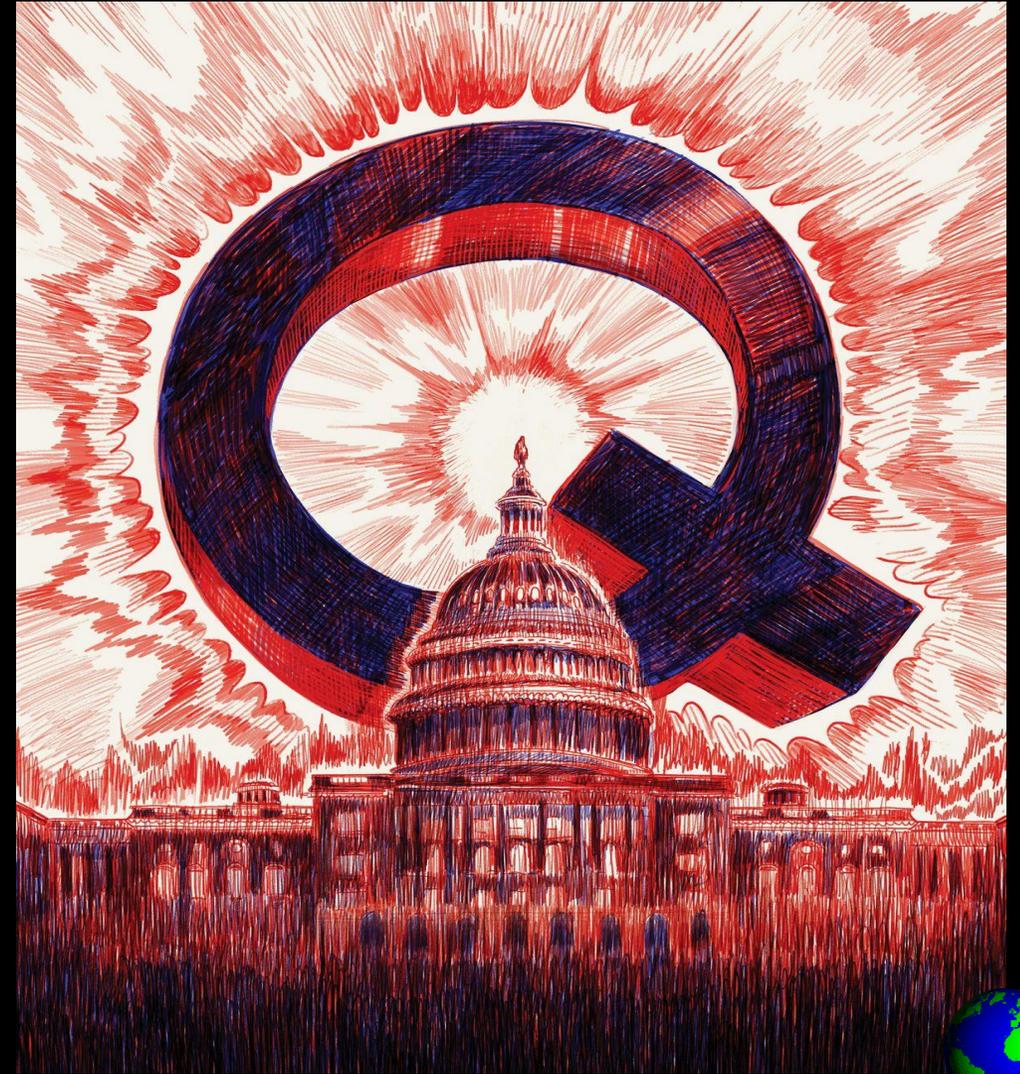
Catholicism.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crypto-Judaism>



8. How are people entrapped to cooperate with Satan? *Isaiah 53:1; Acts 28:24*

“Those to whom the message of truth is spoken seldom ask, ‘Is it true?’ but, ‘By whom is it advocated?’ Multitudes estimate it by the numbers who accept it; and the question is still asked, ‘Have any of the learned men or religious leaders believed?’ Men are no more favourable to real godliness now than in the days of Christ. They are just as intently seeking earthly good, to the neglect of eternal riches; and it is not an argument against the truth, that large numbers are not ready to accept it, or that it is not received by the world’s great men, or even by the religious leaders.” - *The Desire of Ages*, 459, 460.



9. How might we (individuals, families, churches) be in danger of following the example of the Jewish people? *Hosea 13:9; Jeremiah 6:19*

“Christ overlooked the world and all ages from the height of Olivet; and His words are applicable to every soul who slights the pleadings of divine mercy. Scorned of His love, He addresses you today. It is ‘thou, even thou,’ who shouldst know the things that belong to thy peace. Christ is shedding bitter tears for you, who have no tears to shed for yourself. Already that fatal hardness of heart which destroyed the Pharisees is manifest in you. And every evidence of the grace of God, every ray of divine light, is either melting and subduing the soul, or confirming it in hopeless impenitence.

“Christ foresaw that Jerusalem would remain obdurate and impenitent; yet all the guilt, all the consequences of rejected mercy, lay at her own door. Thus it will be with every soul who is following the same course.” - *The Desire of Ages*, 588.



10. Why will one class of people remain blind to the truth? 2 Corinthians 4:3, 4

“God does not propose to remove every objection which the carnal heart may bring against His truth. To those who refuse the precious rays of light which would illuminate the darkness, the mysteries of God’s word remain such forever. **From them the truth is hidden.** They walk blindly, and know not the ruin before them.” - *The Desire of Ages*, 588.

Some Questions to Consider:

1. To whom does God reveal the truth?
2. When the light of truth comes to a person, what are the two alternative possibilities?
3. Why is ignorance no excuse for error or sin?
4. What help should a carnal heart never expect from God?

Seal of God	Mark of the Beast
<ul style="list-style-type: none">True WorshipAdoration to the CreatorCommandment of GodProtection signalPlaced on the forehead	<ul style="list-style-type: none">False WorshipAdoration to the BeastCommandment of manSign of condemnationOn the forehead & in the hand
	
Sabbath Revelation 12:17 & 14:12	Sunday Revelation 13:16

When the observance of Sunday be mandatory, each person must decide whether to accept the sign of authority of God (Sabbath) or the authority of men (Sunday).



Final Thoughts

Ever notice that life is full of choices?

In fact, one could argue that in many ways, what we do all day, from the moment we get up until we go to bed, is make choices. We make so many choices that often we don't even think about them. We just make them.

Some choices are simple and even become routine, while others are life-changing and have eternal consequences, not only for us but even for our own families.

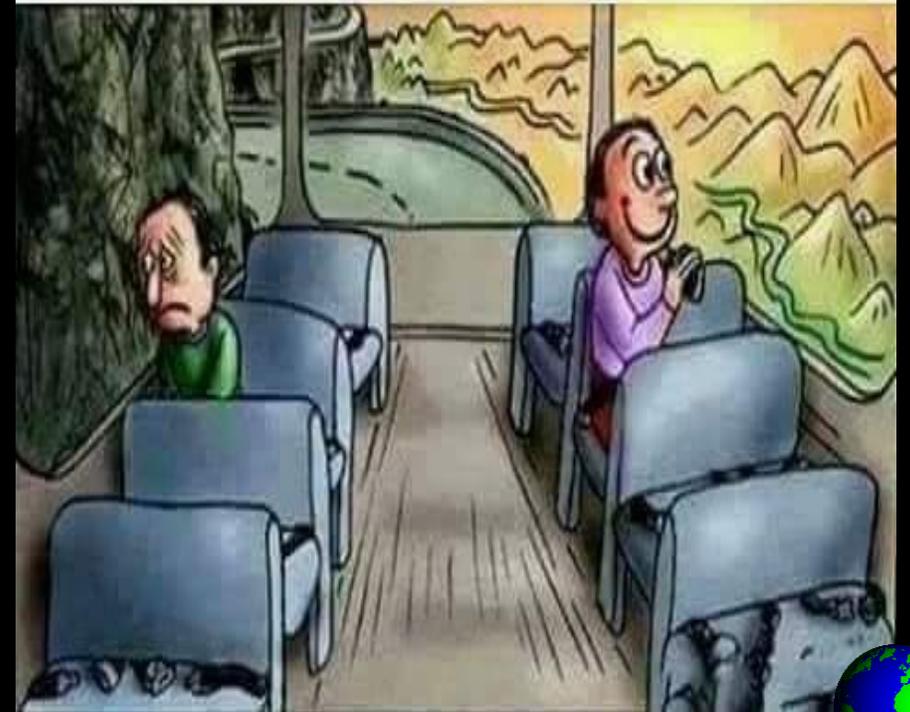
Hence, how crucial that we think through our choices, especially the big ones, the ones that can impact us and our families for the rest of not only our own lives but our family members' lives, as well.

How many of us, to this day, regret the choices we have made?

How many, to this day, live with the wreckage from the wrong choices made even long ago?

Fortunately, there is forgiveness. There is redemption, and there is healing, even for the worst of decisions.

Happiness is just a matter of perspective. It's your choice how to look at the world.



Conclusion

“Every soul has a heaven to win, and a hell to avoid. **And the hosts of angels are all ready to come to the help of the tried and tempted soul.** He, the Son of the eternal God, went through the test and trial for each one of us. **The cross of Calvary stands clearly in front of every soul. The cases of all people will be judged.** **The lost will be sentenced to suffer for dishonouring God by disobeying Him.** But no one will have an excuse nor will need to have faced an eternal [forever; without end] death. **It was left to their own choice who should be their prince— Christ or Satan.**” — Selected Messages, book 1, page 96.

“God does not force men to give up their unbelief. **Before them is the choice between light and darkness, truth and error. It is for them to decide which they will accept.** The human mind is gifted with power to tell the difference between right and wrong. God designs that men shall not decide from a wild guess. **They will decide from carefully studying verse with verse in the Bible.**” — The Desire of Ages, page 458.

CHOOSE YOUR SIDE
MATTHEW 7/13-14 ROMANS 6/23

ETERNAL LIFE
JESUS



HEAVEN

AND FEW THERE BE THAT FIND IT.

ETERNAL DAMNATION
SATAN

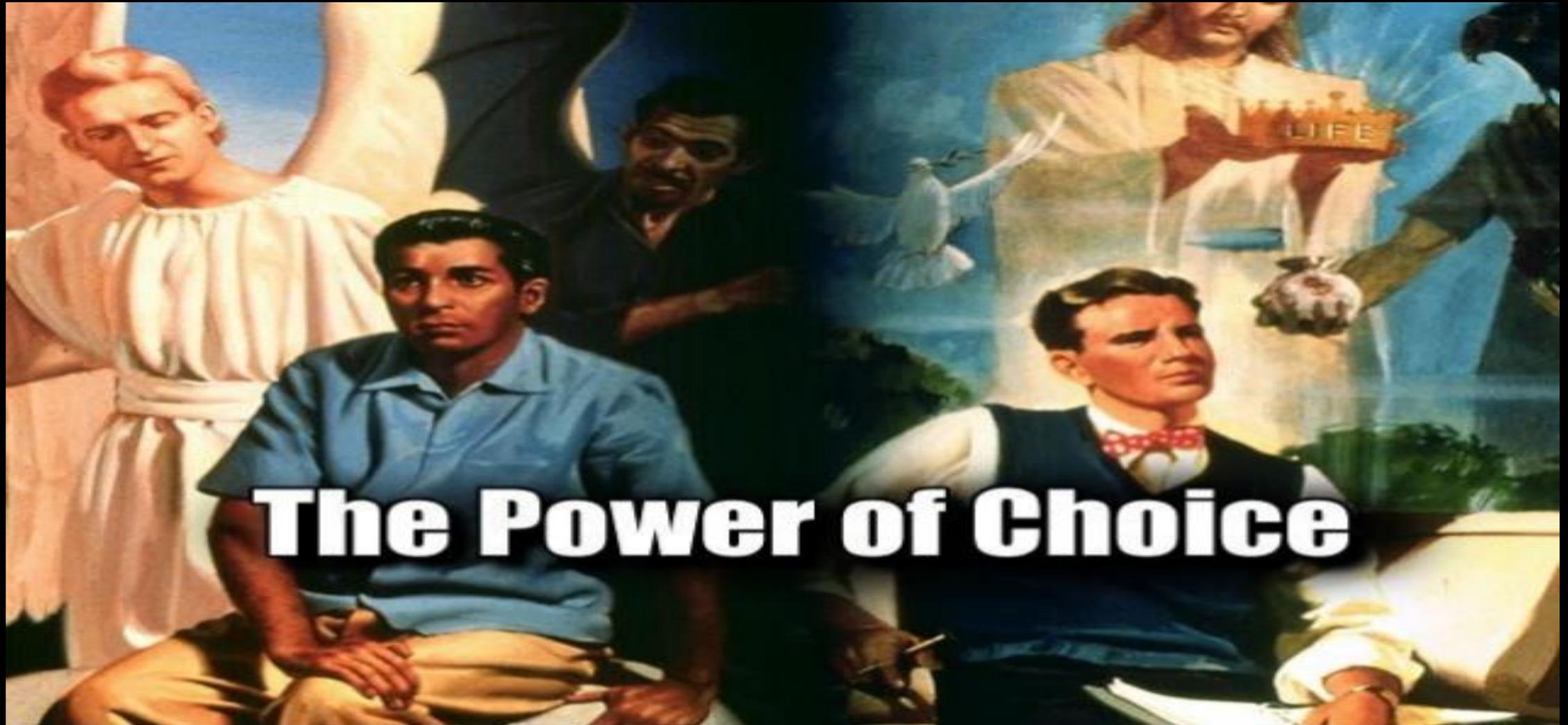


HELL

AND MANY THERE BE WHICH GO IN THEREAT.

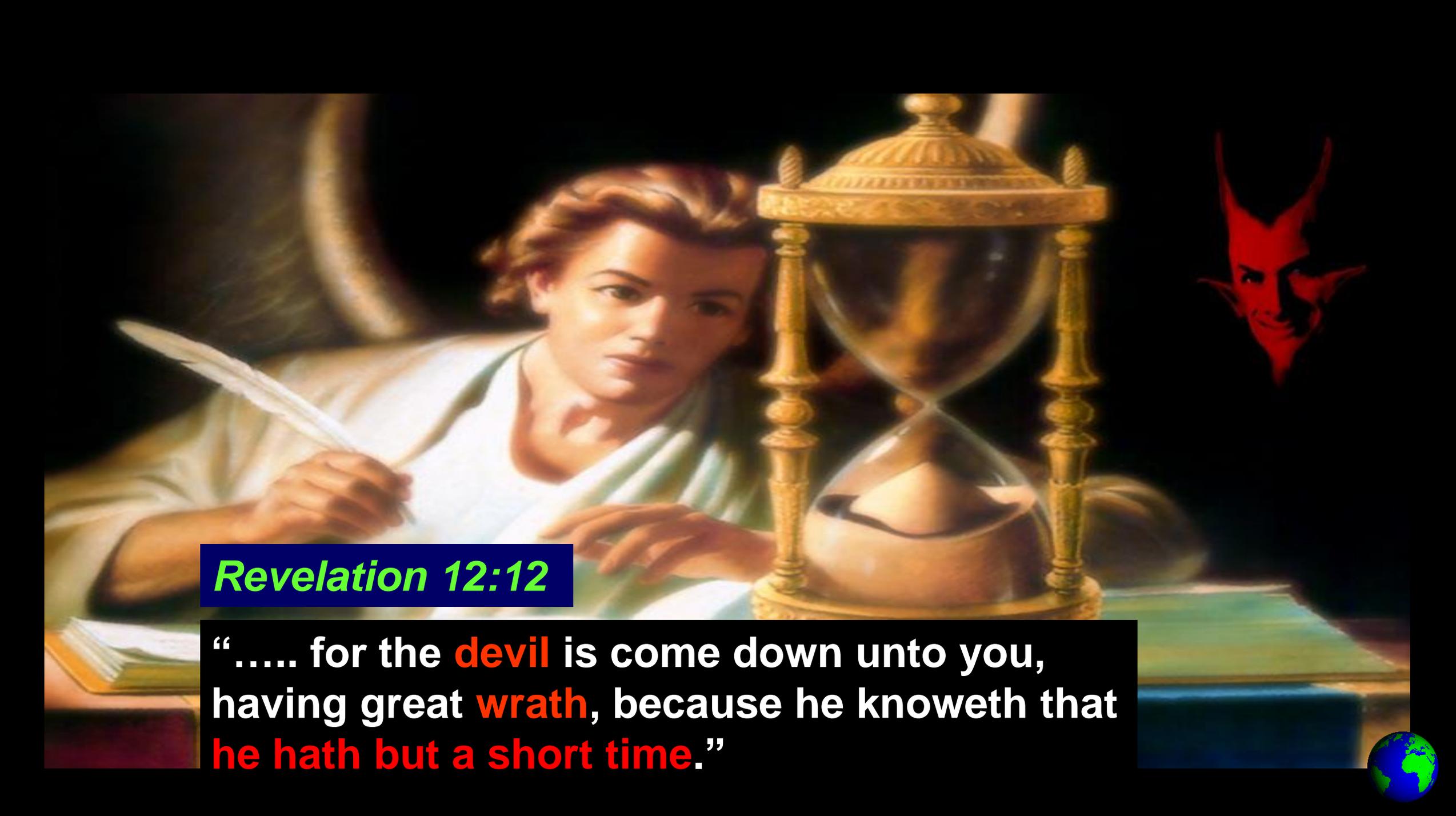


God has given all:



The Power of Choice



An angel with a halo is shown writing in a book with a quill pen. To the right of the angel is a large, ornate golden hourglass. In the background, a red devil's face with horns is visible. The scene is set in a dimly lit room with a book on a desk.

Revelation 12:12

“..... for the **devil** is come down unto you, having great **wrath**, because he knoweth that **he hath but a short time.**”



Enter The Ark of Hope

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

– John 10:16



The Ark of the Covenant



Psalms 77:13

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. –
Revelation 3:20





THE END



ARE YOU READY TO MEET JESUS?