



Nelson Mandela is reported to have said, “*May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears.*” I love that quote for it is very true and has been true since the beginning of time. When God created humans, He gave them freedom of choice. His design was for His creation to cooperate with Him to bring His plans for the universe into being. But He did not want robots, so He gave us free will.

Isn't it interesting that robots are becoming a big deal in our world today? It is another sign that the enemy wants to declare God as a nothing burger. There are so many things in society that the enemy is presenting to make it seem like God is nothing and that He doesn't matter. People are taking everything created by God and turning it into confusion. They are declaring if there is a God, he doesn't matter.

If God is of no consequence, there really is no choice. The enemy doesn't want you to have choices. When you know you have choices, he will try to influence you to make the wrong choice. In the garden God placed two trees. God's desire was made known to Adam and Eve, but the choice was theirs. One tree they could eat of, but the other they were not.

***Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, along with the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Genesis 2:9 (MEV)***

They were created with an ability to choose and God wanted them to understand they had a choice, but their choices would have consequences.

Satan's kingdom is rigged to keep you under control and unable to think for yourself. If we do not think for ourselves, we are prone to make wrong decisions because we have been deceived to believe there is only one choice for us. We must never give up our place to choose. It is a God given ability within us that He created.

We must always have a choice, but we must learn to choose wisely. Choices do determine our outcome. We choose what we believe. When the Israelites went into the land that God said was their inheritance to check it out, ten came back with what the Bible calls “an evil report”. Only two saw things the way God say them. The ten saw themselves as grasshoppers in a land of giants.

They trusted what they saw more than what God said. Their choice reflected their fears and not their hopes so they never got to claim their inheritance. It happens to us today as well. We have a great inheritance beyond the door of salvation that very few people go in to possess. I am not talking about heaven. I am talking about an inheritance that was given to us by the death of Jesus and is available to us right now.

What is that inheritance? To put it in a nutshell, our inheritance is Jesus, everything He is and everything He has. To inherit, we must take our eyes off our situations, and focus on Jesus. I have told the story before, but it worth repeating, of a time when we were moving from one place to another. We moved before our house sold in the place we were living before the move. We decided to rent it to earn some income while it was for sale. My mom was helping us with this, since she lived 80 miles from the place and we were over 500 miles away.

The place was rented to two school teachers who were never home. The house sat on forty acres and should be easy to sell, but it wasn't selling and my mom was concerned. She wanted us to consider selling on contract for deed. We had prayed and were believing for a cash buyer. This was before internet days. Mom wrote me a letter stating that we really needed to do something about this house.

The teachers, who were renting the place, had two Doberman pincher dogs and each one was positioned at the doors of the house. The realtor was afraid to show the house because of the dogs. When we tried to call the renters, there was no answer. It seemed like an impossible situation and it had been like this for months.

I wrote back to my mom after much thought and prayer. I told her that I was so sorry that she was stuck in the middle of this situation, but I felt strongly that we had prayed for a cash buyer and even though my physical eyes saw a house that looked like the only way it was going to sell was to stop renting it and lose the income from renters, my spiritual eyes saw that it was already sold.

I chose to believe God's report. Within two-three weeks the realtors were able to show the place, and an offer was made. In a very short time, the place was sold. We can choose to believe God or we can choose not to believe Him. Not everything happens as quickly as it did with our house, but God is faithful. Our choices matter and they are important. We must come into agreement with God. We must see things with His eyes.

The inheritance is ours because Jesus died so we might have it, but we must go in and possess it. We must make wise choices. The Israelites are an example for us. When Joshua led them across the Jordon River to begin to possess the land God had given them, they first went to Jericho.

Jericho was a well-protected city with a huge wall all the way around it. This was not an easy task to take this city. When God instructed them to do something so weird that seemed impossible, they had to choose. Will they obey or think this is just too whacky?

They were on a spiritual high. They had just crossed over the Jordon River on dry ground. Joshua had come face-to-face with the captain of the Lord's army (Jesus). They were ready. They knew their God would fight for them. There were seven priests who each blew a trumpet. Seven is the number meaning completion or maturity. The

seven mountains of culture that we have heard a lot about represent the complete cultural life of a human society. In the destruction of Jericho with seven priests blowing trumpets and the ark of the covenant (the presence of God) God was showing us His design for how the Israelites were to live.

The Israelites were to possess their inheritance and change their culture by presenting to the world, the presence of God and the understanding of who He is. They had just seen the miraculous working of God to take this city, to help them possess their inheritance. They were willing to choose God's way, even if it was strange. Who ever heard of a war strategy to march around a city for 6 days while completely silent and then on the seventh day blow trumpets and shout so the walls would fall?

We will be faced with choices as well, and many of them will seem weird and strange to us. Time and time again we will be faced with decisions. Will we choose self or will we choose God? It is this way because God wants us to be able to hear Him and to choose to obey. It is this way because God desires you to understand that He fights for you. Others will know that you faced an impossible situation, but God loved you enough to come through for you. Then they, too, will desire to know this wonderful God.

It really boils down to whether we choose God or we choose self. The story of Babylon, which is representative of satan's fake kingdom, elevates self and the thought that we do not need God.

I don't know if the second city, Ai, was on God's schedule to be next or not. Scripture doesn't really tell us how Ai was chosen as the next city to take. But it is obvious that the Israelites, including their leader Joshua, did not consult God on how to take that city. They had sinned with attempting to mix the worldly customs of Jericho with the customs of Israel. They brought back something from Jericho that was cursed and God was not happy! What ever that evil thing was, it had to be destroyed or God was not going to be with them.

We do the same thing. God reveals to us new revelation concerning our inheritance and then we try to mix our old belief system with what God is showing us. It didn't work back in the days of Joshua and it doesn't work for us today. God hates mixture. We cannot mix the truth of God with the lies of the enemy and call it holy. Yet, we do it all the time. We must have eyes to see!

God was for them when they took Jericho, so they felt God would be with them automatically with Ai. Isn't it interesting that the thing today that is trying to take over, is called AI for artificial intelligence? Food for thought!

We have choices. God designed it that way. But one could ask, aren't we just being puppets if all we do is just obey and do whatever God says? Is it really a choice? First, of all, God wants us to obey, not because we will get in trouble if we don't, but because He knows far more than we do and He wants us to trust Him.

But He also wants us to talk things over with Him and He listens. He not only listens, but He often gives us what we ask for. Sometimes, He allows us the things that are not necessarily the best for us, but will teach us some truth. Scripture is full of

examples of God giving people what they asked for. Israel wanted a king, so God gave them a king. King Hezekiah lay on his deathbed at the age of 38 and begged God to live longer. God granted his prayer.

Abraham pleaded with God to spare a city. He started with the question of whether God would spare it if there were 50 righteous. He went all the way down to 10 righteous and then he stopped asking God. It has been the question of the ages as to why Abraham stopped at 10. Scripture does not tell us.

The interesting part of this story, no one talks about. Abraham pleaded his case before God because of his nephew, Lot, who lived in one of the cities God was going to destroy. Sodom and Gomorrah were not the only two towns to be destroyed. God told Lot to flee to the mountain, but Lot didn't feel like he could make it to the mountain in time. Lot asked permission to stop in the town of Zoar. It was a small place and was on the list of cities to be destroyed. God responded to his request and allowed him to have his choice.

God saved a city at the request of one man. God cares about us! The story is found in Genesis chapter 19. The word Zoar in Hebrew means insignificance. The town was so small, Lot argued its destruction would not matter much. When God invites us to the Mountain, into His presence, it may seem hard to get there. We want God to allow us to settle somewhere close to the Mountain where we can see it, but don't have to climb it. In that place of insignificance, we settle.

God wants us to come to His mountain, to His presence. But sometimes there are stopping points on our way there, and God is gracious. Lot did eventually make it to the mountain where God had told him to go. God wants us to enjoy our inheritance, but He will allow us to spend time in the desert, often more time than is necessary to get to the promised land. It is our choice.

He lets us choose! He wants us to be obedient, yes. Scripture tells us that those who are obedient inherit their inheritance. They inherit the land and the blessings of that land.

***“If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the best of the land;***

***Isaiah 1:19 (AMP)***

Even though obedience is very important, God wants us to talk things over with Him. He invites us to come reason with Him. He wants us to see as He sees. He wants heaven's influence in the earth, but He will do that through us. He wants us to understand Him and know His heart. He wants us to enjoy being with Him and talking to Him and getting to really know Him. He wants us to enjoy what He has provided.

God has a plan for planet earth. He also has a plan for your life that also fits within His overall plan for your family, your city, your state, your country, the entire earth. When we obey His direction, we are not only impacting our world, but the entire world.

God doesn't plan out every detail of our lives. He wants us to ask.

***“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you.  
Matthew 7:7 (NET)***

Jesus goes on to explain that God is our Father and like any good father, He desires good things for us and He will not withhold from us anything that is good for us. He wants us to spend time with Him so we can discover this Father side of God that loves us so much and desires to give to us.

***If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. John 14:14 (KJV)***

***If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.  
John 15:7 (KJV)***

The key is not to be like the Israelites and decide they want whatever they want, the set out to get it without consulting God. Choosing self desires over God does have consequences. When God does bless us, we should never mix what is godly with what is worldly. God is a good God and He wants the very best for us.

The message to God's people today is think for yourselves, use the critical thinking skills for yourself. That means we have choices and can choose for ourselves what to believe. The devil sees the truth of that is radiating with God's people. So, the enemy has come up with a different tactic. Push the idea that we do have complete control and that we can make our own decisions. We can be our own gods and no one has the right to tell us what to do. We can choose to be a man or a woman, even choose to be a cat or dog. We can choose to stand in the street and block traffic. No one has the right to touch us. On and on it goes. The devil does deceive. He is a master at it.

Choices have consequences. The enemy deceives us into believing we are making our own decisions, when it is his evil influence that is messing up our thinking. God gave us weapons to combat that. He also gave us spiritual armor, like the helmet of salvation to protect our head, or brain. Our weapons are strong enough to pull down strongholds or mindsets that are against the principles of God.

***for the weapons of our warfare are not human weapons, but are made powerful by God for tearing down strongholds. We tear down arguments.***

***II Corinthians 10:4 (NET)***

I will conclude with another example from my own life. The story told earlier in this article about our house for sale, goes further. When we first moved, we were renting a place until our house sold. We had just been taught to ask God specifically for what we wanted. So, I prayed for a five-bedroom house with the look of a log cabin on some acreage. We didn't find that place, but we found a place that my husband really liked, so we made a choice and bought it.

Several years later, God's directive to us changed and we were on the move again. I had forgotten about my prayer. God led us to another place and it was beautiful and peaceful and the exact place we needed. However, it was after several years that I came to realize we were living in a five-bedroom house that looked like a log house. I had forgotten my prayer, but God had not forgotten! That is how strong His desire is to give us what will make us happy and to listen and grant our requests when they are

good for us. But most of all He wants to be what we want the most. If we have Him, we have everything.

Our life is full of choices. After entering their land, Six tribes of the Israelites were told to go to one mountain and the other six tribes to go to a different mountain. On one mountain they were to proclaim the blessings of God that would pursue them if they followed God. On the other mountain, they would proclaim the curses. A blessing is the presence of God, a curse is the absence of God. The mountain of blessing was a high, green and prosperous mountain. The mountain of cursing was a dry, thirsty land.

These mountains were in their view and reminded them how important their choices were every day of their lives. We discover that choosing God and His ways is the only way to fully enjoy our inheritance. It is a plush, rich land. If we do not choose God it is a land of waste.

So, yes, we talk a lot about obedience because it is important. But we must understand that God made a choice also and that was to include us in His decisions. We do not yet have a clue as to the impact that would have on our world if we fully understood. How do we start? Realize and understand that God really does want to have a conversation with us, and He values the time spent together. He wants to discuss things going on in our families, in our communities, in our world. He wants us to participate with Him in bringing change in these areas where change is needed.

Heaven is God's territory. He gave earth to man. His desire is not for man to long for heaven, and to leave earth behind. His desire is for us to see heaven, and desire earth to be like heaven. That is why Jesus taught believers to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". He reveals His desires and His will to us.

We choose to either allow our desires to line up with His, or choose to do our own thing. We talk things over with God to make sure what we desire will not hinder the process of bringing heaven to earth. Sometimes God grants a request that is a deviation, so we learn and become more determined to seek God in everything we do. God cares about our choices, but He also desires our input.

May God grant us His wisdom in our choices, but let's stop straddling the fence and make a choice to serve our God with a whole (not a divided) heart! Let's learn the importance of spending time talking with our God and reasoning with Him. It is a joy beyond measure. Amen!

