

Making Life's Choices

Key Verse: *"If serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."*

—**Joshua 24:15**,
New International
Version

Selected Scripture:
Joshua 24

AFTER THE DEATH OF MO-

ses, Joshua led the nation of Israel into the promised land and gave them commands of which they said they would follow, even as they had with Moses. (Josh. 1:16) Moses had warned the people about forsaking the LORD and following idols, but the people were disobedient in following God under Joshua as they had been with Moses.

In our lesson for today, Joshua was getting old (chap. 23:1), and he called for the elders of Israel, their judges and officers, who all came to hear him. (chap. 24:1) Joshua recounted how God had led the Israelites from Abraham's time, and that Terah, Abraham's father, had "served other gods."—vs. 2

Joshua gave the account of Israel's bondage in Egypt, and how God had brought them out of bondage and into the promised land. The men of Jericho fought against Israel, but the Israelites had defeated seven nations in battle. In all this, we see that Joshua was showing God's kindness and mercy to a very disobedient nation. Now

God gave a choice to Israel, and said, "I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat. Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And 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."—Josh. 24:13-15

The question arises, have we made a commitment to follow and serve God, and yet followed after worldly ways? We note Joshua's words, 'choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served' or those 'in whose land ye dwell: . . . as for me and my house,' says Joshua, 'we will serve the LORD.'

We all make choices every day—what to eat, what to wear, where we live and whom we want to follow. Joshua tells the nation, you cannot serve other idols and God. God is a holy and jealous God. The word jealous has the thought of zealous. Follow me and live in peace, or follow after idols and reap the consequences.

The people did not like what Joshua was telling them, and they said, "Nay; but we will serve the LORD." (vs. 21) "Put away" then your "strange gods, . . . and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel." Again the people said, "The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey."—vss. 23,24

Joshua then "made a covenant with the people," writing it into the "book of the law." (vss. 25,26) Our lesson then, is to let us make good choices in our dealings with God, realizing that he who is our Creator and lifegiver is deserving of our utmost praise, honor, obedience, service, and love. ■