

## Adventures in Truth:

### 01: Bible Numbers and Our Choices

Our Great Creator God is all about Freedom of Will and Freedom of Choice! What does 'Will-Power' actually mean? Will-power means using our God given ability to make a choice! All of God's intelligent beings were created with freedom of choice, they all possess the ability to reason and make choices, which is what the will actually is. Why did God create all His intelligent beings with the power to choose?

Many people criticize our Creator for this, blaming Him for all the wicked things in the world because He did not make us with no power to choose wrong. Well, those who ask this show they are not using their God-given intelligence very much or they would never ask such a thing. Would you enjoy living with no power to think or reason or interact, just a robot or a puppet? There would be no enjoyment, no thrill of learning and discovering, no interaction with one another. And there would be no real love, without the ability to choose not to love!

God's whole character centers around unselfish ministry. God does not live for Himself. By creating the world, and by upholding all things, He is constantly ministering for others. **"He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."** Matthew 5:45. He created intelligent beings so He could interact with them on a family basis, on the basis of love. But there can be no love without the freedom not to love. There are toys made that have little recordings in them and so can 'talk' to us. How many would truly enjoy a good conversation with one of them? Neither would God, the greatest intelligence in the universe. So God is all about Free-Will, Truth, and unselfish Love.

He is not about 'Force' 'Fear' and 'Oppression' either! Again, life is made meaningless if we only 'choose' to do something because we are forced to. Force destroys freedom; and force destroys love. But there is a being who is all about force; it is the fallen angel, Satan. It is interesting that he started out by accusing God of the very character he has himself! Unloving, selfish, cruel, oppressing, and enslaving all His creatures for His own benefit! So with this lying set of falsehoods he developed his plan to trick, enslave, force, and use any and all methods to get what he wanted, the worship, control, and mindless servitude of all creation, and he did not care how he got it!

How many options do we need before we can use our will to make a choice? We need two, so our first Bible number is two. In the Bible we see 2 Trees; 2 Cities; 2 days; 2 kingdoms, 2 Laws, and 2 Masters.

In Heaven the great rebel lied, tricked, accused and flattered the angels, promising them 'freedom' when they already had it, but a third of them ended up choosing to believe him and right away became enslaved by him. God and the other angels tried to warn them to turn back to God, but Satan was ready with more lies to talk them out of it, promising them freedom while all the time wrapping them up into serving him. He learned that the best way to trick and enslave others, was to influence them to desire what he wants for himself, and they readily fall for it! A third of the angels ended up having to be cast out of Heaven. Instead of happiness and freedom they now had lost everything they had enjoyed while serving God.

After the creation of this earth, Satan determined to cause the fall of Adam and Eve, our first parents, whom God had created and placed in the lovely Garden of Eden. Somehow he had to trick them into

wanting what he wanted himself; but how could it be done? They were happy and contented, and enjoyed visits from the holy angels and even the Creator Himself. Satan was not allowed to bother them except only at one place in the entire world. There had to be a choice, would they love and obey their Creator, or not? So in the center of the Garden were Two Trees; one was the Tree of Life that they could eat of and never get sick or die. The other had a strange name, the 'Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil'. They were commanded not to eat from that tree, and advised to stay away from it as only there Satan was allowed to tempt them. This choice was life or death to them, but there was no reason they ever needed to go near that tree.

But it happened; and Satan in disguise told Eve lies about God and got her yearning for the same selfish power he sought himself. Notice the series of choices she made, 1 to wander away from Adam; 2 when impressed to turn back, deciding not to; 3 choosing to go look at the forbidden tree; 4 questioning the wisdom of God in forbidding that fruit. By this point she was set up for trouble and Satan in disguise, called to her from the tree, presenting doubts and lies about God. 5 She chose to discuss with him—always a terrible mistake; 6 She chose to take the word of a stranger over the Word of God; 7 she began to desire self-exaltation; power and control just like Satan does; 8 she chose to disobey and then runs off to tempt Adam into wanting what she now wants. All sin has many small choices that lead to the bigger choice; many seemingly little compromises. Sin always seeks company and those who fall for temptation, become tempters of others.

After Adam and Eve transgressed the divine law, his nature became evil, and he was in harmony, and not at disagreement, with Satan. There exists naturally no enmity between sinful man and the originator of sin. Both became evil through apostasy. The apostate is never at rest, except as he obtains sympathy and support by inducing others to follow his example. For this reason, fallen angels and wicked men unite in desperate companionship. Had not God specially interposed, Satan and man would have entered into an alliance against Heaven; and instead of cherishing enmity against Satan, the whole human family would have been united in opposition to God.

They had sold out to Satan and he wants no free choice in his kingdom! Remember that! The Creator, who had now volunteered to pay the terrible price to give them a chance to be saved, had to recreate something in them or even that great sacrifice would be meaningless. Here it is: **"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."** Genesis 3:15. This 'enmity' is related to our conscience; it placed in mankind a sense of right and wrong. An influence that the Holy Spirit could work through in trying to draw us back to the family of God and His law. This influence again created a choice, two contending powers to choose between, two masters, two characters, that of Satan, selfishness and greed, or that of God, love, caring, self-sacrificing service, we call this conflict, the Great Controversy.

What is the 'will', how does it work and how can it help us. The 'will' is the power of choice God gave mankind. We lack the power in ourselves to change our own characters or overcome sin alone, But we can choose! And then God enables us to carry out our choice.

"Every child should understand the true force of the will. He should be led to see how great is the responsibility involved in this gift. The will is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or choice. Every human being possessed of reason has power to choose the right. In every experience of life, God's word to us is, **"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."** Joshua 24:15. Everyone may place his will on the side of the will of God, may choose to obey Him, and by thus linking himself with divine agencies, he may stand where nothing can force him to do evil. In every youth,

every child, lies the power, by the help of God, to form a character of integrity and to live a life of usefulness." Education 289.

"The will is the governing power in the nature of man, bringing all the other faculties under its sway. The will is not the taste or the inclination, but it is the deciding power, which works in the children of men unto obedience to God, or unto disobedience." Child Guidance 209.

"You will be in constant peril until you understand the true force of the will. You may believe and promise all things, but your promises or your faith are of no value until you put your will on the side of faith and action. If you fight the fight of faith with all your will-power, you will conquer. Your feelings, your impressions, your emotions, are not to be trusted, for they are not reliable, especially with your perverted ideas; and the knowledge of your broken promises and your forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in yourself, and the faith of others in you." Messages to Young People 151.

Here is what Jesus will do for us when we choose to allow Him to work for our salvation.

"Your part is to put your will [Your Choice] on the side of Christ. When you yield your will to His, He immediately takes possession of you, and works in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. Your nature is brought under the control of His Spirit. Even your thoughts are subject to Him. If you cannot control your impulses, your emotions, as you may desire, you can control the will, and thus an entire change will be wrought in your life. When you yield up your will to Christ, your life is hid with Christ in God. It is allied to the Power which is above all principalities and powers. You have a strength from God that holds you fast to His strength; and a new life, even the life of faith, is possible to you. You can never be successful in elevating yourself, unless your will is on the side of Christ, co-operating with the Spirit of God. CTBH 148.

The Ultimate 'Two'. Two men stood before Pilate the Roman Governor; these two speak to us of the ultimate Choice we must all make in this life. One represented the Law of Love, the Son of God, the other represented the selfishness and greed of Satan. There is no third option—it must be one or the other! The two men were Jesus Christ, the innocent Saviour, and a liar, thief and murderer named Barabbas. Which will you choose as your Master today?

At the trial of Jesus, Pilate sent for Barabbas to be brought into the court. He then presented the two prisoners side by side, and pointing to the Saviour he said in a voice of solemn entreaty, "Behold the Man!" "I bring Him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in Him."

There stood the Son of God, wearing the robe of mockery and the crown of thorns. Stripped to the waist, His back showed the long, cruel stripes of the whip, from which the blood flowed freely. His face was stained with blood, and bore the marks of exhaustion and pain; but never had it appeared more beautiful than now. The Saviour's visage was not marred before His enemies. Every feature expressed gentleness and resignation and the tenderest pity for His cruel foes. In His manner there was no cowardly weakness, but the strength and dignity of long-suffering. In striking contrast was the prisoner at His side. Every line of the countenance of Barabbas proclaimed him the hardened ruffian [criminal] that he was. The contrast spoke to every beholder. Some of the spectators were weeping. As they looked upon Jesus, their hearts were full of sympathy. Even the priests and rulers were convicted that He was all that He claimed to be. But what choice did they make that day? They chose Barabbas and crucified the Saviour. What choice do the majority of people make in this devil controlled world?

What choice will you make today? In all our little decisions we are choosing what master we will serve.