

# GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



## GIG130 – The Power to Choose

Today in this podcast, we are going to be talking about our power to choose. God has given us a free will, and the way we exercise that free will is by making choices. As we come into these days, I believe we are coming into times of the end; and as we do, I believe that we are faced with more and more choices. I think it is part of what comes about during the end time, that we must choose.

I want to read a Scripture in Joel the third chapter, at verses 12-15. It says, “Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness.” So we see from this Scripture in Joel that the days of the end, the end time, the day of the Lord, is a time of decision. It is a time in which the Lord is making decisions, and it puts us in a place. He calls the nations to the valley of Jehoshaphat to make decisions, to finalize judgments. And so, as we come into these days, I believe we are faced more and more with the reality of making a choice. This is something that we see throughout the Scriptures.

In Deuteronomy the thirtieth chapter, at verses 19-20, Moses said, “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.” Moses told Israel, “I am giving you a choice today; and you have to choose life, or you have to choose death.” You have to choose the blessing, or you choose the curse.

When we come to the days of entering the Land, Joshua did the same thing with Israel. In Joshua chapter 24, verse 15, it says, “If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” So Joshua put before Israel a choice; and he was encouraging them, “Make the choice. You need to make the choice.” In these days of transition, we find that choice is required by the Lord.

Elijah did the same. In 1 Kings 18:21, “Elijah came near to all the people and said, ‘How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.’ But the people did not answer him a word.” So Elijah was telling the people, “Look, you have to make a decision.” And we are in this place today. Actually, I am making this podcast just before the elections, so we are very much facing decisions. We are going to face not only the decisions of the elections that are coming up, but we are going to face many things immediately following these days of election, I believe. And I believe the more we get into the day of the Lord, the more we are going to find ourselves put in a place to choose, and we must choose the Lord. We must choose and make decisions that are according to His will and His purposes for our lives. Because what we realize, when we make a choice, is that we are not

only choosing whatever that decision is, but we also, whether we recognize it or not, we are choosing the consequences. We are agreeing with the consequences that follow that decision.

In Deuteronomy 6:13-17, it says, ““You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name. You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you, for the Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the Lord your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth. You shall not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah. You should diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and His testimonies and His statutes which He has commanded you.””

So God puts before us a choice. What God did with Israel is that He made very clear to them the consequences of the choice that they were to make. If they served Him, there were certain blessings and things that followed. If they chose not to serve Him, if they chose to serve other gods, the gods of the land, to intermarry, to do all the things which He was encouraging them and commanding them not to do, then there were also consequences, very specific consequences that would come. We see that God is making us come to grips with the fact that, “Yes, I have given you a free will. But that free will means you must choose. You will make a choice, and out of that choice will come the consequences of that choice.”

If we go all the way back to Genesis the third chapter, we know that God told Adam not to eat of the tree. And he was given the choice whether he wanted to obey God or not obey God. In Genesis 3:1-3, it says, “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Indeed, has God said, “You shall not eat from any tree of the garden”?’ The woman said to the serpent, ‘From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.”’” In other words, God had given Adam and Eve a choice. Eve obviously had heard this from Adam, but there was a choice given; and along with that choice that they were going to make, God also laid out the circumstances, just as He did to Israel in the wilderness. He said, “Choose life, that you will live.” And God told Adam, “Choose not to eat this tree. If you do not eat of the tree, you are going to live. If you eat of the tree, or touch it, you will die.”

So the serpent comes along, in verses 4-6, and says to the woman, ““You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.” I think we all are well aware of how this story continues on, and that God does come back in the garden, Adam and Eve begin to hide from God because they know now that they are naked, and God brings judgments upon Adam, upon Eve, and upon the serpent.

So, again, they were given a choice. Along with the choice, God made very clear what the consequences of that choice were going to be. And yet we see this interesting dynamic here, when we read the story in Genesis, because put into the mixture is Satan bringing confusion and deception to Eve. He is trying to make the choice that she is to make not really clear; he begins to sort of confuse the issue of the consequences that she is to face. So he brings in the lie, he brings in deception; he paints a picture of God as being something that God is not, and he brings in a feeling about these consequences that is absolutely not true. Up to this point in this podcast, it seems really clear: God gives us a free will. He gives us a choice. Along with that choice, there are consequences that follow. But we are still put in a place, especially in these end times, when we must make choices. We must make a choice to serve God,

or not to serve Him. And yet, it is important to me, and I think to God, that the consequences of our decisions be very clear. That is what we understand that Satan was trying to confuse. He was trying to interject a lie. He was saying, "Oh no, you won't die. God knows instead that the day you eat of the fruit, you are going to be wise. You are going to be just like God. And because God doesn't want you to be like Him" – which is a huge lie. God wants us to be exactly as He is, and His plan is to transform us into His very image. In fact, we are destined for that. We are predestined to be conformed to the image of the Son. And so, Satan brings this lie, and the lie that he brings confuses Eve about what the true consequences are and what the result of her decision will be, once she makes the choice.

This is something that really concerns me, because as we walk ahead in these days just before us, we will be confronted in the day of the Lord with decision after decision to be made. We need to be choosing the right things that God is wanting us to choose. We need to make decisions according to His will, as Yeshua did in the garden. He said, "Listen, not My will, but Thine be done. I know it is My choice, Father, what I do in this very moment. I choose whether or not I go to this cross. But I also choose to do Your will, not My own will." And that is what we look to do as we come into the day of the Lord, as we are faced with many decisions that will have great and deep and grave consequences in our lives and in the days of the Kingdom. We want to be able to make the right decisions. We want a clarity to these decisions. Because in Genesis, God didn't say to Adam and Eve, "Oh, you know, I'm so sorry that Satan came and he confused you, and he lied about Me. And so, yeah, I'm going to let you pass this time. There are going to be no consequences that take place, because I realize that you were a little confused about the choice you were making, and what the consequences of the choice would be; therefore, I'll let you off this time." Interesting, that didn't happen. God still brought about the consequences to their decision and about their choice. And I believe that will happen again in our day. I feel like all of the choices we will make will have consequences, and Satan will come and try to confuse and lie and make us make a wrong choice, because he wants that from us. And yet, I don't know that God is going to have grace. He expects us, as mature sons of God, to make right choices. We are to grow in God, we are to mature in God, and we are to make right choices in God based on the free will that we have been given. And so, we must recognize that there is a response that we have and that we must choose in this process.

I want to go to Matthew the sixteenth chapter, verses 18-19. The Lord is saying, "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven." As we come to these days of decision, we must understand the necessity of our prayer, of our prophecy, of our speaking the Word of God into existence, of our spiritual warfare that we face, and that we must bind and loose what is just before us in the decisions that we are to make.

In Matthew the twelfth chapter, verses 28-29, the Lord says, "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house." So we understand that there is a need to bind the strong man. We must bind Satan and the powers of Satan that come in. It is very clear here that Christ is giving us the ability to do that.

In Mark 3:27, again, it repeats this same verse, "But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house." And I encourage us, as we walk in these days, don't be quick to make decisions. Don't just listen to the voices

that are out there that are pushing you to make a decision this way or that way, that are coming to confuse you, to lie to you. We must, as God's children, as the sons of God coming forth, we must recognize that as the church, He has given us the keys to the Kingdom of God. Within that lies our ability to bind on earth, to bind the things that have already been bound in heaven. What has been bound in heaven? Satan has been bound; he has been cast out. All of the demonic hoards that fell following Satan, they have been cast out; and according to Revelation 12, they have been cast to the earth. So we must be careful to bind on earth what has already been bound in heaven.

We cannot listen to the lies of Satan. We cannot listen to the confusion of mankind that is going on. We must seek God about our choices that must be made. The choices must be made, but we need to seek God; and in our seeking God, we must prophesy that the lies of Satan will be bound, that the confusion of Satan that he is trying to bring against us will be bound. The way that he is trying to force us into making wrong decisions will be absolutely taken away, his power will be taken away.

In Isaiah 49:24-25, it says, "Can the prey be taken from the mighty man," – and believe me, in these end times, mankind is the prey of Satan – "or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?" Surely, thus says the Lord, "Even the captives of the mighty man will be taken away, and the prey of the tyrant will be rescued; for I will contend with the one who contends with you, and I will save your sons." So God is promising that if we enjoin Him in this process, if we begin to bind the strong man, things will be different. The tyrant, the strong man, is too mighty for us on our own. But if we engage in the Word of God, where He tells us very clearly as the church, as individuals, to bind on earth what has been bound in heaven, and if we bind the strong man and his lies and his deceptions that are going on at this time – because these end days will be great days of Satan's seeking to confuse, seeking to bring lies, seeking to contend with us, so that in our humanity we make wrong choices and wrong decisions; but I believe, as it was in the garden, we still face the consequences of those decisions that we make. And so I encourage us, begin to pray. Begin to prophetically proclaim the binding of Satan, the binding of his lies, the binding of his confusion, in order that we may make the decisions that we must make.

So we come to the end of this podcast, and I would just say, I encourage you. I know God has given us free will. I know that our free will that has been given must be exercised by our choices. And God is encouraging us, He is almost demanding us, requiring us, like Moses did, like Elijah did, like Joshua did – this day choose. You must choose who you will serve, and how you must serve. As mature believers in Yeshua, we are called to make these choices. And when we choose, remember, we are not just making a simple choice between one thing or another; but we are also agreeing to the fact that we will invoke the consequences of those choices upon our lives. So we need to prophesy against the lies, against the deception, against the confusion that Satan brings to cloud our choices and to blind us so that we do not really recognize or see the consequences that we are facing; but we are facing them.

I encourage us to pray as we have never prayed before. I encourage us to rise up and speak the Word of the Lord, to bind the strong man, to bind his lies, to bind his deceptions over, so that we as individual believers, we as the body of Christ, we as sons of God bringing about His salvation into the whole earth, can be those that stand and bind the plots and the plans of Satan and bring him down, that we can make clear choices to serve the Lord, and to have our families serve the Lord.

I bless this word to your hearts. Amen.