



Daily Devotional

Note for 20251214 – You Choose.

1. Opening

Welcome to the Devotionals of The House of Bread. In the Word we read that we are to receive the Word of GOD by the Spirit, so I strongly urge you to pray before you receive the Devotional. Let Christ take the lead in your Spiritual Development.

Introduction

Good morning, my friends and family. I am grateful to be given another opportunity to come and speak with you again.

A little backstory on this devotional: it was given to me in three parts. First came the title, *You Choose*. Then came the Scripture, which you will receive shortly. And finally came the permission to sit and write this devotional.

What caught me off guard was how things began unfolding around me—people were being given exactly that: **choices**. What road will they decide to walk?

Right now, in the government of my country, South Africa, there are efforts to force churches to have a government-seated council. As of writing this devotional, there are also attempts to make the word *Israel* a hate-speech term in my country, allowing legal action to be taken against those who use it. One has to wonder: if this becomes law, will they expel all those of Israel from the country?

You see, people often look only at how something impacts *them*. When these laws come into place, many will suddenly realize they can no longer go to church on Sunday. But were they listening while they were in church? Because if they were, this would not surprise them—it would have been expected.

I was waiting for our government to play this card, and so were many other believers. **Choices, friends—that is what is laid before us this very day.**

But before we continue, let us bring this devotional into alignment with God's throne and His will. Let us pray.

2. Scripture Text

Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

² Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

³ All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

⁴ For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

⁵ But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

⁶ And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

⁷ And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

⁸ But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

⁹ And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

¹⁰ Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

- ¹¹ But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.
- ¹² And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.
- ¹³ But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.
- ¹⁴ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.
- ¹⁵ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.
- ¹⁶ Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!
- ¹⁷ Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?
- ¹⁸ And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.
- ¹⁹ Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?
- ²⁰ Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.
- ²¹ And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.
- ²² And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.
- ²³ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.
- ²⁴ Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.
- ²⁵ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.
- ²⁶ Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

²⁷ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

²⁸ Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

²⁹ Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

³⁰ And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

³¹ Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

³² Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

³³ Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

³⁴ Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

So, friends, we are going to handle this chapter section by section, because there is a lot to digest. Let us begin with the first portion:

Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,
Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat... (*vv. 1–10*)

Let us look at this from the perspective of the Church today. We cannot directly place ourselves in the role of the scribes and Pharisees of the Old Testament, because we are now born-again believers in Christ Jesus, carrying His name as Christians. Therefore, we must examine what **He** has given us.

Something that has become very apparent to me is that some pastors—not all, but some—desire to be treated like VIPs. They are driven to church, and some no longer carry their own belongings; they have others do it for them. While serving is a beautiful thing for those who do so willingly, it can become dangerous for the one being served if he forgets that he was first a servant to God. A servant who begins to see himself as a master is walking a dangerous road.

Pride is a terrible thing, friends. It sneaks in slowly, almost unnoticed.

But let us not point only at pastors—let us also look at ourselves and those around us. Are we guilty of telling people, “*Do as I say, not as I do*”? I know I am. I know people in my family are famous for that phrase. Yet it directly contradicts what Christ taught. He said, “*Follow Me*.” He said, “*Do as I do*.”

When we look at our lives, the moment we can get someone else to do something we don’t want to do, we often take that shortcut. Now, this should not be taken as a blanket statement. God equips people for different tasks all the time, and those tasks can vary greatly. But when those unique abilities come together under God’s purpose, it is a beautiful thing to witness.

Here at the House of Bread, Matt and I can write devotionals. He can make music (I’m a little tone-deaf), and I can do video editing. My uncle manages the websites and the radio station. Does that mean the others *can’t* do those things? No. It simply means God has placed people where they are needed.

An equal load does not always look the same for everyone. What is equal to you may not be equal to someone else. God has made some people strong pillars, capable of carrying much, because He needs them to. But let us return to the Scripture:

“For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.” (v.4)

When God places something on your shoulders, it is light—because Christ within us carries the weight. But when man places burdens on you, they weigh you down more and more. And when you ask man for help, you often hear, “*I’ll pray for you*,” and nothing follows. Or, “*That’s rough*,” without a hand ever being extended.

Have we forgotten that we do not walk this world alone? Or do we believe our problems are so much bigger than everyone else’s that we deserve priority? That is the balance before us: **do we help or do we ignore? Do we inspire, or do we Bible-bash?** “But all their works they do for to be seen of men...” (v.5)

Some of us are guilty of much, some of less—but guilty all the same. We know the penalty for sin is death. Whether little sin or much sin, the penalty is the same.

There is much more in this chapter that could be addressed, but I fear it could come across as an attack. That is not my heart. I am not Bible-bashing you. I am standing beside my brothers and sisters in the faith and saying, “*God, I am guilty too*.” I can look at every part of this chapter and find moments in my life where I can say, “*Yes—that was me*.”

But God is doing a beautiful work in me, and in you who are reading this, all for the glory of His name. And I am excited to see where it leads.

Friends, look around us. We are living in the end times. Wars and rumors of wars. Storms. Earthquakes in diverse places. People are living lives of **choice**.

What choices will you make?

Will you show Jesus to those caught in this world, or will you show them the rod that was not shown to you?

3. Devotional Reflection

I leave you with this warning: there is much more that could be said, but this is now an open invitation to go before God and receive it directly from Him—not just from one of His servants.

As you move forward, examine the choices you are making. Are they kingdom-focused, or focused on *your* kingdom?

Make your choice: **Christ or this world.**

You have entered a time of choosing. The sheep and the goats are being separated before your very eyes. Make the choice to follow Christ—and do not take that choice away from someone who was you a few years ago.

Written by the hand of a willing servant of God

**Son of David
Selah. Shalom.**

4. Verse of the Day

From the YouVersion Bible App

James 5:8

⁸ Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

5. Resources

Playlists:

Over the last few months and years, we have compiled a few playlists on SoundCloud. Feel free to explore it, download it and share with friends and family.

Find playlists at: <https://soundcloud.com/houseofbread4u/sets>

NEW: Download Music



We have added the ability for you to download the music you heard in the devotionals. You can listen to the song before hitting the “Download” button to know it is the right song you wanted. For now, at least, these are free downloads, and my hope is that I can keep it free. Enjoy!

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