

# THE GREATEST FREEDOM

By Keith Greer

Living in the United States we enjoy many freedoms. Freedom of speech, freedom to pursue life and liberty, and freedom to worship God the way we choose. Sometimes I feel we think these freedoms belong to us because we are Americans. Nothing could be further from the truth!

"I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;" {Deuteronomy 30:19} The children of Israel had a choice to make. God gave them that freedom!

"And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. "{Joshua 24:15} Joshua had made his choice. The children of Israel must make their choice. God gave them this freedom.

Do you remember the priest and scribe Ezra? Look at what we learn about him in Ezra 7. "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel." {Ezra 7:10} Ezra had made his choice!

When did it all begin? It began when God created man and woman and commanded them; "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."" {Gen 2:17;3:3} God had given Adam and Eve a choice. What did they choose?

"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate." {Genesis 3:6}

True, they made the wrong choice. Nevertheless, the choice was theirs to make. God had hoped they would make wise choices. Sadly this did not happen.

Could God have overruled their choice? Of course! If the choice was not good for man, why didn't God intervene? Look at some passages with me:

"Oh, that thy had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My Commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" {Deuteronomy 5:29} God wanted them to do right, but they would have to make that choice for themselves!

"Yes, again and again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel." {Psalm 78:41} How can one "limit" God? We tie His hands when we make the wrong choices! God can help us, but we put ourselves in a position where He will not help!

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" {Matthew 23:37} If we say "no" as our choices, God will not overrule us!

What is the "**greatest freedom**"? God made men "free moral agents". Yes, God is all knowing but in the final analysis the decision is left entirely in our own hands. Every person must give prayerful and careful consideration to each choice that is made – they have eternal consequences!

When visiting my good friend, Tim McPherson, in West Virginia, I noticed this saying on his wall: "**His greatest gift is freedom of choice. The best choice is God!**" AMEN! Can you even begin to imagine how better lives would be if we made God's choices our choice. \*\*\*