

Know the God of Scripture

Volume 1

Week 10: Choose Life - Answer Guide

Below is the answer guide for this week's lesson. By no means are the answers complete or the only possible responses to each question. They are a guide to fully understanding the intent of the questions posed.

1. The commandment referred to is found in Deuteronomy 30:10, obey the Lord your God and keep His commandments. Paul quotes part of Deuteronomy 30:11-14 in Romans 10:6-10 to support the fact that faith can't be "found" or "obtained;" rather it is in your heart and can be pronounced by your mouth. Faith is within you, but you must choose to step out in it. Moses spoke these words before in Deuteronomy 11:26-32 highlighting blessings and curses atop Mt Gerizim (rocky) and Ebal (bald; bare) (Deuteronomy 27:12,13). Check out Joshua 8:30-35.

2. The three conditions required for God's blessings were:

- to love the Lord your God
- to walk in His ways
- to obey His commands, statutes and ordinances

3. The Hebrew word for commandments is "Mitsvah" and it means a command, whether human or divine (as in the Ten Commandments or the Law). The Hebrew word for statute is "Chuqqah" which means an appointed custom, manner or rite. The Hebrew word for judgements is "Mishpat" and means assigned judicial sentences after a sin has been committed. The Israelites were expected to remember and adhere to the Law of Moses, to adopt and exercise the customs and manners Moses spoke about, and to carry out the proper judgements imposed on those who broke the Law.

4. When Jesus was asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" He replied, "to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind. And to love your neighbor as yourself." You cannot love God if you do not love your neighbor. New Testament writers picked up on this concept. James highlights this by saying that our faith is demonstrated through our actions. 1 John 1:3 says, "This is how we are sure that we have come to know Him: by keeping His commands." So, even though Deuteronomy 30:1-14 was addressed specifically to the Israelites prior to entering the Promised Land, the concept of obeying and loving God reach all through history to our present day.

5. When we turn our backs on God and migrate to the world's gods, idols, customs and ways (Deuteronomy 30:17) we reap God's disfavor. One very pronounced theme that threads itself throughout the Scriptures is that God desires His people to worship Him and Him only. If our heart turns away, and we do not listen and are led astray to bow down to other gods and worship them, then we will certainly perish in our sin. In doing so we would warrant the curses pronounced atop Mt. Ebal. Syncretism, deceptively allowing false doctrine into our worship, is a major threat to Christianity today.

6. The person Joshua suddenly encountered at Jericho was the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, the Word eternal. Joshua, upon realizing who the man-God was, fell down and worshipped Him, recognizing Him as Adonai, more than a mere angel. Angels were never to be worshipped.

The Angel of the LORD at the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-9) spoke from the midst of the burning flame, yet the bush was not consumed. One could say He was the flame whereas here God was in the form of a man wielding a sword claiming to be the captain of the host of the LORD. Both Moses and Joshua realized they were in the presence of holiness and bowed their heads in reverence. In both instances the LORD informed the men that they

were treading on holy ground and to remove their sandals. Both instances have the LORD speaking to the reverent men with authority and instructions for the future. Finally, after their encounters with God they were both changed men in that their future faith was resolute and their commitment to following God was unwavering.

7. It seems that sin within the camp of Israel had warranted God's disfavor in defeating the city of Ai. Because of the sin of Achan, God had left their presence (Joshua 7:12). In addition, it seems the Israelite's easy victory at Jericho caused pride to bubble up in their leaders for they thought they didn't need as much men to defeat little old Ai as they did Jericho. A theme throughout the Bible is that sin hinders the work of the LORD.

8. Joshua 7:11 outlines the sin God pronounces upon the camp of the Israelites. Achan's actions "transgressed My covenant" (Joshua 7:11). Joshua confesses his sin in more detail in Joshua 7:20-21.

9. In both instances the sinner "saw" something that appeared good, they "desired" in their heart to obtain it, and they were driven to "take" action in taking it. Both were warned by God not to do or take the objects. Both incurred dire consequences for their sin. Death became a reality for Adam and Eve and their progeny, and death physically occurred to Achan and his family. The eyes are the windows to the soul and allow lust to foster desire. Pride of self and the sin of coveting flame this desire into action by the body. A good example of these steps being implemented in sin is the sin of King David and Bathsheba. David "saw" Bathsheba bathing. He "desired" her and had her "taken" and brought to him where together they committed adultery.

10. As hard as the punishment is to carry out, it seems Joshua was acting in faith and obeying the LORD (Joshua 7:25). A good read regarding this question can be found at: <https://www.gotquestions.org/sin-of-Achan.html>

Additional Questions:

1. From the beginning God instilled free will into His creation. Adam and Eve had the choice to live in harmony and peace with the LORD or to disobey His one command and be separated from Him forever. Today, we all have the choice to obey God or deliberately and intently sin against His will. Our free will is important because by it we determine our worldview, our belief system. Joshua 24:15 outlines the choice we all have in life, to obey or disobey God.

2. Answers may vary and are opinionated. However, many argue that true love is dependent on free will, otherwise love is mechanical.

3. Seeing that none of us are guaranteed tomorrow, the urgency to spread the Gospel to a dark world is ever present and should be first priority in our lives. Too many times have Christians desired to tell someone about Jesus only to have that person's life snuffed out too early. Reference Romans 10:14-17 for more encouragement to tell others about the salvation Jesus offers to everyone.

4. I don't know the mechanics on how it works, but music certainly helps one to memorize. I'm 63 years old and I can still sing the entire lyrics of Hotel California, American Pie and most of Journey's songs. I do this without practicing on a daily basis. Putting scripture verses to tunes has helped many people memorize them. Songs of worship in the Old and New Testaments were nothing more than singing scripture, mainly the Psalms. Several songs have been written that are included in scripture such as the song of Moses (Exodus 15) and the song of Mary, called the Magnificat, found in Luke 1:46-56.

