

Acts 1:23-26

And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

In today's devotional verses, this is the disciples choosing a replacement for Judas Iscariot who had betrayed Jesus and hung himself.

If you read back in verse 15 in Acts it says that there were about 120 men present at this time, and out of these 120 men, two were chosen who were Joseph called Barsabas and Matthias, and out of these two one would be chosen to be the 12th apostle.

They made their choice by casting their lots for the two men.

What is casting lots?

A lot is an object used, which was either a pebble, or a potsherd, or a bit of wood.

The lots of several persons concerned, inscribed with their names, were thrown together into a vase, which was then shaken, and he whose lot fell out first upon the ground was the one chosen.

So both Joseph and Matthias' names were put into the vase and out came Matthias' name, which was chosen by the apostles to be the 12th apostle. But if you read the rest of the New Testament, you no longer hear of Matthias (and you don't hear about many of the other apostles either), Why? It's possible that Matthias was not the 12th apostle. Some believe (as do I) that the real 12th apostle is Paul. But this devotional will not go into the reasons why.

What I want you to notice today is that the 120 men only gave God two choices, Joseph or Matthias. Sure they prayed after the two men were chosen, but they didn't pray for God's choice. Notice verse 24 again ***show which of these two You have chosen.***

But we do the same thing when we pray. If someone is sick we give God two choices, either heal them or take them home to heaven. But what if God wants to do neither? Maybe God doesn't want to heal them so that His name will be glorified and others saved through the work God is doing in their lives.

We pray the same about our personal needs, "*God I am trying to choose between this nice big SUV that will hold my whole family, or this little sports car so me and my wife can have a good time driving around in it together.*"

Yet God may have another car in mind for you, one that's more practical and better on gas and cheaper insurance.

Or maybe you are searching for a wife or husband. In your search, you narrow it down to two people and present them both to the Lord asking which one He wants you to marry. If God does not answer, then you may choose one that you think is the right one. But God

may have someone totally different for you to marry. He or she could even be someone that you haven't even met yet. Or maybe He doesn't want you to marry at all right now. These are just a few examples, and I'm sure you can come up with others, maybe even one you are currently praying about.

So many times, we set the rules when we pray about something, and only give God a few options then we wonder why God doesn't answer our prayers. The truth maybe that you are only giving God two choices, and neither one is His will. If He does not answer one of these options, then we either choose which one we think is correct, or we think God is mad at us and isn't answering our prayers. But the truth is that God may have someone, or something else in mind far better than what you could ever hope for or imagine.

So stop limiting God on the choices and start asking what His choice is, or if neither one of your choices are the right one and to let you know. Then wait patiently on the Lord for His answer.

† ***Psalms 40:1 I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me, and heard my cry.***

He hears your cry to Him, now wait for him to come to you with His answer, not giving God choices on how you think He should handle your requests. But rather allow God to decide what is needed and how He wants to give it. Allow God to give you a nice juicy New York steak and Lobster, and stop giving God the choice of giving you something from, McDonald's or Burger King.

† ***Matthew 7:11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!***