

## God Chooses And Anoints People Who Are Different

Jesus said, "You did not choose Me, I chose you and appointed you so you would go and bear (spiritual) fruit and for your fruit to remain (for eternity)" (John 15:16).

Jesus gave parables regarding groups of believers, His friends and servants. He said, "The wedding is ready but those who were invited were found unworthy ... Many (that would be millions of people) are called (invited to be partakers in the Lamb's Supper) but few are chosen (to attend)" (Matthew 22:1 to 14).

Many people are called to have a deep, holy relationship with God and there are millions who are close to the Lord, serve God and who live normal lives but only a few are chosen to be set aside for one special, specific purpose. They are genuine disciples who live their lives in the shadow of the Almighty. When the Lord chooses a special servant, the person He chooses is often considered a social outcast like Mary Magdalene. Chosen people have a special anointing and deep knowledge of God others do not have. Mary Magdalene was the woman who wept over Jesus before He was crucified and washed His feet with her hair then anointed Him for burial (Mark 14:3 & 8; John 11:1 & 2; 12:3 & 7). No one else did that for Him yet Mary was considered to be a terrible sinner – a social outcast (Luke 7:37 to 39). She sat at Jesus' feet and listened to His teaching when others were too busy (Luke 10:39 to 42). It was through listening to Him, Mary was able to gain the special knowledge of His impending death that led her to anoint Him. Mary was also the first person to speak to Him after He was resurrected (John 20:16).

The Lord's prophets who wrote the Old Testament and the apostles who wrote the New Testament were all specially chosen for their task. Millions of Jewish people lived during the centuries of Israel from Abraham to Apostle John but during those centuries only a handful of people are mentioned by name as being chosen or anointed. The same applies today in our age of grace. Often genuine disciples have such a close relationship with God like Mary Magdalene did, He imparts knowledge of Himself to them, which can cause other Christians to feel jealous and 'put off' by the way the disciples speak about the Word of God with authority. A disciple with a special anointing may experience severe persecution, far beyond what other Christians endure. They are people with a character so different they unwittingly set themselves apart and often incur the anger or jealousy of others, including within their own families, especially brothers. Anointed disciples do not try or intend to be different but the divine call on their life sets them apart from other people. Some disciples realise they were chosen by God from a very young age and can experience a strong sense of standing alone in the world. Chosen disciples are different to 'normal' people because of the influence of the hand of the Lord on their lives and the responsibility His choice and anointing brings. Chosen disciples are often rejected by the unsaved who consider them 'weird', or their closeness to God causes demon possessed people to react to them very strongly. It is sad but true, other less committed or immature Christians frequently reject genuine disciples, especially from their own church. As Jesus pointed out, "Most certainly I tell you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown" (Luke 4:24). If disciples suffer for their faith, the rejection from Christians can be more severe and they may endure vicious comments. Some have had it said to them, "You are too heavenly minded to be any earthly good," which of course is nonsense and would only be said by a lukewarm Christian. A committed disciple was told by her pastor she was a heretic. Several times, disciples have been asked to leave a church. Jesus understood chosen people would be treated harshly and said to His chosen disciples, "If the world hates you, you know it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you but because you are not of the world, since I chose you out of the world, the world hates you. Remember the word I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his Lord'. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:18 to 20).

If chosen disciples speak of their special calling to others, the response could range from being abused to experiencing violence or they could be accused of being 'proud'. They could be hated like Joseph was when he realised he was specially chosen after he had divine dreams and vocalised his anointing to his family. Even his father Jacob told him off but kept the knowledge of his special son to himself (Genesis 37:10 & 11). One woman who as an adult expressed her knowledge of being chosen and anointed at age four was told, "You are not special to God. You are just one of millions." The man who spoke those nasty words to the anointed woman suffered the death of his third child then the man died of heart failure. The Lord said, "Do not touch the Lord's anointed" (1 Chronicles 16:22; Psalm 105:15) and that includes people especially chosen and anointed by God for a specific purpose. Jesus told us about a woman who was specially chosen to take care of Elijah who himself was specially chosen and anointed. "There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when a great famine came over all the land for three years and six months. Elijah was sent to none of them except to Zarephath in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow" (Luke 4:25 & 26).

True disciples of Jesus, His sheep, selected, chosen, set apart and anointed, may also be rejected by families, friends and cast aside by strangers, isolated, alone, considered too 'strange' or 'extreme' to be accepted. Many people cannot understand their absolute commitment to the Lord. These sheep willingly give

up the niceties of this world to wholly serve the Lord, considering worldly 'things' as rubbish. These disciples are different even as children. Anointed children usually have a rare maturity, wisdom, a deep knowledge of the Word and they love learning more about the Bible. Anointed teenage girls often will not bother wearing make up because they know their beauty is within them and outward appearances mean nothing to God, Who looks at the heart. Anointed teenage boys would rather spend a Saturday night in prayer instead of going out with his mates. Older people who are anointed are able to have long, deep conversations with God as part of their normal lives, rather than focusing on prayers of request. These special sheep may have divine encounters with angels. Some have been taken by the Lord to heaven to look around, or to hell for a short time so they can warn others of the gloom and terror there. For those people, divine appointments are the norm. These people stand out in the crowd. They are more aware of sin than other people and they hate sin (Jeremiah 15:17; 2 Peter 2:7 & 8). If they rebuke Christians when their sin is obvious, it causes intense rage like it did when Jesus rebuked the hypocrites who then wanted to kill Him (Matthew 26:4).

The biological half-brothers of Jesus rejected Him and His ministry until after He had died and was resurrected. 'The brothers of Jesus (Simon, Joses, James and Judah) said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea so Your disciples may see Your works which You do. No one does anything in secret and himself seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, reveal Yourself to the world." Even His own brothers did not believe in Him' (John 7:3 to 5). Notice the complete change in their attitude after Jesus was resurrected. 'People with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer and supplication along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus and with His brothers' (Acts 1:14).

King David, the youngest of his family, was chosen over all his older brothers (1 Samuel 16:7, 10 & 11) and was scoffed at by his eldest brother Eliab when he wanted to step out in faith to obey God. 'The men of Israel asked, "Have you seen this man (Goliath) who has come up against Israel? Surely to defy Israel has he come up and it will be for the man who kills him, the king will enrich him with great riches, will give him his daughter and make his father's house free (of taxes) in Israel." David spoke to the men who stood beside him asking, "What will be done to the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" ... Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men and Eliab's anger was kindled against David. He said, "Why have you come down here and with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the naughtiness of your heart. You have come down here so you might see the battle." David said, "What have I done now? Is there not a cause?" (1 Samuel 17:25 to 29).

Some people were born supernaturally and called before they were born. Isaac was chosen and named before he was born (Genesis 17:19). His conception was supernatural. Abraham was aged 100 and Sarah was 90 when Isaac was born (Genesis 17:1 & 17). Jacob was chosen over his twin brother Esau. The Lord has a special love for His anointed people and expressed that with the words, "Jacob I have loved but Esau I have hated" (Romans 9:13). Did the Lord really hate Esau or did He hold Esau in less regard than His affection for Jacob? Jesus said, "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:26 & 27). Obviously, Jesus did not mean we should hate our parents because we are told to love and honour them. Jesus meant we must have a lesser regard for our family than for Him. We must put the Lord first before anybody or anything else on earth and we must carry our cross of suffering or we are not considered worthy to be called His. We can conclude by the spoken words of Jesus, the Lord has a higher regard for people who are specially chosen and anointed, and who choose to obey Him. God had a high regard for Jacob and no time for Esau.

Joseph suffered terribly because he was chosen. Firstly, he lost his mother Rachel when he was just a little boy (Genesis 35:19), which would have been traumatic enough but he was despised by his older brothers (Genesis 37:4, 5 & 8), tossed into an empty well, he was sold into slavery (Genesis 37:23 to 28 & 36), imprisoned for a crime he did not commit (Genesis 39:7 to 20), was overlooked for release when he was forgotten (Genesis 40:23) but eventually became the governor of Egypt (Genesis 41:40 to 43; 42:6). Only then did Joseph remember his divine dreams and realise his cruel journey to Egypt was orchestrated by God, but in an act of revenge, he seriously tormented his dreadful brothers for some weeks before he revealed himself to them (Genesis 42:6 to 45:8). Joseph was the only one of all his brothers to be buried in Israel after Moses carried his bones back to Israel after they escaped slavery in Egypt (Genesis 50:25; Exodus 13:19) about four hundred years after Joseph died.

Moses was chosen at birth to be set aside for God and was the only man who spoke to God face to face (Exodus 33:11). 'When Moses was born, he was hidden for three months by his parents because they saw he was a beautiful child and they were not afraid of the king's decree (to drown all male Hebrew babies). When Moses had grown up, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill treatment with God's people than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a time' (Hebrews 11:23 to 25). Moses

was forced to leave his home in Egypt and escape to Midian because he tried to deliver the Israelites before God's timing. He killed an Egyptian who was abusing a Hebrew man. Instead of thanking Moses for helping them, the Hebrew men let the Pharaoh know what Moses had done (Exodus 2:11 to 15). Forty years later when he began fulfilling God's commandments for his life, Moses became the target of repeated terrible criticism from the Israelites and even his own brother and sister. Some people wanted to stone him.

God chooses some people for His purposes but there are people who choose to separate or isolate themselves from normal life to live wholly for God. They were called a Nazir, Nazirite, Nazarite or later, a Nazarene. In Hebrew that means a special 'branch' or 'twig'. The Bible calls those people trees. 'They will be like a tree planted by the streams of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf does not wither. Whatever they do will prosper' (Psalm 1:3). Jesus was a Nazarene. 'A Shoot will come out of the stock of Jesse, a Branch out of his roots will bear fruit' (Isaiah 11:1). 'Behold, the days come when I will raise to David a righteous Branch and He will reign as King' (Jeremiah 23:5). 'In those days I will cause a Branch of Righteousness to grow up to David' (Jeremiah 33:15). 'He will be called a Nazarene' (Matthew 2:23). A woman named Anna set herself apart to live in the temple and serve God. She was rewarded by seeing Jesus a week after He was born and Anna knew He was the Messiah (Luke 2:36 to 38).

'God spoke to Moses saying, "Speak to the children of Israel and tell them, when a man or woman makes a special vow, the vow of a Nazirite to separate themselves to God, they will separate themselves from wine and strong drink. They will drink no vinegar of grapes or fermented drink, nor drink any juice of grapes, nor eat fresh grapes or dried. All the days of their separation they will eat nothing that is made of the grapevine, from the seeds to the skins. All the days of their vow of separation, no razor will come on their head until the days are fulfilled, in which they separate themselves to God. They will be holy. They will let their hair of their head grow long"' (Numbers 6:1 to 5). Samson was chosen to be a Nazirite before he was conceived and enjoyed the Lord's blessings no matter what he did wrong. God commanded Samson's mother to be very careful what she ate and she was not to touch any alcohol before and during her pregnancy (Judges 13:3 to 5). It is difficult to understand how having long hair could make a man supernaturally strong, so that could only be from God for that one individual (Judges 16:17). Samson was a difficult child from the beginning but grew up to judge Israel for twenty years (Judges 15:20; 16:31). He was a very 'individual', somewhat obnoxious character. He referred to his first wife as his 'heifer' then he gave her away to a man he had 'used' as a friend (Judges 14:18 & 20). Samson was very cruel to animals. He tied the tails of three hundred foxes together then set them alight (Judges 15:4). His downfall was caused because he trusted his second wife Delilah with the secret of his strength – his long hair. When Samson's enemies cut his hair, his strength waned and he was imprisoned. When his hair grew back he regained his unusual strength and killed several thousand enemies in one terrible moment when he caused the building to collapse around them (Judges chapter 13 to chapter 16).

Samuel was given to the Lord before his birth. His mother Hannah had trouble conceiving a child so in desperation, as she prayed she promised the Lord if He would give her a son she would hand him over to the Lord God. That would have been a traumatic experience for young Samuel. Hannah had never taken Samuel to the temple then suddenly, after he was weaned at about three years of age, he was left with Eli to raise who was a stranger to him, and did not see his mother for a year (1 Samuel 1:22 to 28; 1 Samuel 2:11, 18 & 19). Like Samson, Samuel never had his hair cut (1 Samuel 1:11).

John the Baptist was chosen and named (Yohanan, meaning 'favoured by God') before birth. He was conceived supernaturally and was filled with the Holy Spirit before he was born (Luke 1:7, 13 to 15). His parents Elisabeth and Zachariah were very elderly when he was born. John too, was told he was never to drink alcohol. John was a man with a very strong character who was not afraid to rebuke sinners and hypocrites, calling them the offspring of vipers (Matthew 3:7). He lived in the desert region of Judea, wore clothing made of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist and ate insects or locusts and wild honey (Matthew 3:1 & 4). John the Baptist was fully aware he was God's special messenger, born especially for the task of hailing the Messiah's first coming. 'The voice of one who calls out, "Prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness! Make a straight way in the desert for our God' (Isaiah 40:3). 'Behold, I (God) send My messenger (John). He will prepare the way before Me (Jesus) and the Lord Whom you seek (the Messiah, Jesus) will suddenly come to His temple' (Malachi 3:1). John said, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" This is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet saying, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, make ready the way of the Lord. Make His paths straight" (Matthew 3:2 & 3). "As it is written in the prophets, 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face who will prepare Your way before You'. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make ready the way of the Lord! Make His paths straight!'" (Mark 1:2 & 3). "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord'" (John 1:23). Although John was chosen by God to be the forerunner of Jesus and had wonderful prophecies spoken about him by the Old Testament prophets, he died a terrifying and barbaric death when he was beheaded (Matthew 14:10).

'Paul, a servant of Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart (chosen, anointed) for the Gospel of God' (Romans 1:1). To be chosen or set apart by the Lord for a special task is a privilege but it comes with a great price of responsibility, suffering, hardship, persecution and often they experience events that are contrary to scripture. For example, healing from God is promised through the blood of Jesus, yet the Lord refused to heal Apostle Paul of his affliction and refused to deliver him of the demons that plagued him, but Paul was used by God to bring healing and deliverance to many hundreds of people. 'Because of the exceeding greatness of the revelations (received from God), and so I should not be exalted excessively (become proud), there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, so I should not be exalted excessively. Concerning this thing, I begged the Lord three times that it might depart from me. God has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you for My power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:7 to 9). The refusal of healing and deliverance was contrary to the promises of healing and deliverance laid out in the scriptures. "I am the Lord Who heals you," and "I will heal all your diseases" (Exodus 15:26; Psalm 103:3), 'The Lord's eyes are toward the righteous. His ears listen to their cry ... The righteous cry and God hears and delivers them out of all their troubles ... Many are the afflictions of the righteous but the Lord delivers him out of them all' (Psalm 34:15, 17 & 19). Twice in those verses the Lord promises to deliver us out of all our troubles but in reality that does not always occur.

As true servants of God called for His service, many people mentioned in the Bible were treated poorly, causing some to suffer deep depression. Moses felt like giving up. "Lord, if it is Your will, forgive their sin and if not, please blot me out of Your Book of Life, which You have written" (Exodus 32:32). Joseph suffered depression when, 'his feet hurt with fetters, his neck was locked in chains of iron and his soul entered into the iron' (Psalm 105:18). Elijah, 'requested for himself that he might die and said, "It is enough, now O Lord, take away my life"' (1 Kings 19:4). Jonah, 'requested for himself that he might die and said, "It is better for me to die than to live"' (Jonah 4:8). Even Jesus, the Son of God and our Messiah felt very down just before He was brutally murdered. "My soul is very sad and deeply grieved so that I am almost dying of sorrow" (Matthew 26:38). "My soul is exceedingly sad, overwhelmed with grief so that it almost kills Me!" (Mark 14:34). Jeremiah felt as though God had failed him. 'I did not sit in the assembly of those who make merry nor did I rejoice with them. I sat alone because of Your hand for You have filled me with indignation (at sin). Why is my pain perpetual and my wound incurable which refuses to be healed? Will You indeed be to me as a deceitful brook as waters that fail?' (Jeremiah 15:17 & 18). King David and Job showed signs of feeling depressed due to their suffering.

No person named in the scriptures as being specially chosen and anointed had an easy life. They had to set themselves apart and at times would have felt very isolated due to their sufferings being contrary to Bible promises of protection, healings and deliverance from difficult circumstances. Read the whole of Psalm 91 and compare those promises to the reality of the prophets' and apostles' suffering recorded in the Bible. Here are a few promises written in Psalm 91 that were not afforded the prophets and apostles. Psalm 91:3: 'God will deliver you from the snare of the fowler (attacks from the devil) and from the deadly pestilence (serious illness). Verse 4: God will cover you with His feathers (of protection). Verse 5: You will not be afraid of the terror by night nor of the arrow (slander) that flies by day, verse 6, nor of the pestilence (sickness) that walks in darkness nor of the destruction that wastes at noonday. Verse 7: A thousand may fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand but it will not come near you. Verse 10: No evil will happen to you. Verses 11 & 12: God will put His angels in charge of you, to guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands so you will not dash your foot against a stone (not be harmed). In spite of these wonderful promises, the apostles suffered beatings, shipwrecks, stonings, imprisonment, robberies, days lost at sea, dangers from every direction, severe persecution from Jews, Gentiles and false Christians, hunger, thirst, lacking warm clothes and at times being naked (2 Corinthians 11:24 to 27). Apostle Stephen was stoned to death; James and Paul were beheaded; Peter was crucified upside down. Only Apostle John lived long enough to die of natural causes. All the other apostles and the prophets died at the hands of persecutors. They were more than harmed, they were violently killed. It seems the promises written in Psalm 91 of divine protection, healing, being unhurt, not being slandered or lied about and not being killed, obviously does not always apply to everybody or none of these things would have happened to them. The remarkable thing about the apostles and the early church disciples, although they went through the most terrible trials and persecutions, they never lost their joy. In every book of the New Testament they all describe their joy in the Lord and the hope of eternity with Him.

There are times in our day when people who love and serve God endure terrible heartache and afflictions, such as in some countries where Christianity is illegal, they have their children taken from them and put into orphanages; or a faithful, obedient Bible teacher who is struck down with a mystery incurable illness and struggles to continue the ministry given to them by the Lord; or an innocent person imprisoned for their faith, wrenched away from young children. Things like that are seemingly impossible to explain when God has promised to heal all our diseases and He has promised to protect us and our children. Why do these things happen to His chosen and set apart disciples? To purify them (Titus 2:14) and make them fit for the Kingdom

of God (Colossians 1:12) and to refine them. 'Behold, I have refined you, not as silver, I have chosen you in the furnace of affliction' (Isaiah 48:10). If the Lord chooses someone to be a disciple, they will, without any doubt, suffer more than the average Christian. Jesus suffered far more than any member of His family. Joseph suffered more than his family. Paul suffered more than other apostles and disciples.

We can only see things from a human and an earthly point of view. God sees the end from the beginning; the ancient things to the things that have not yet happened. 'Remember the former things of old, for I am God and there is no one else. I am God and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times to things not yet done' (Isaiah 46:9 & 10). There are at least four levels in heaven. The Bible speaks of the first heaven, second heaven, third heaven, highest heaven, etc. People may go to heaven and not receive any rewards (1 Corinthians 3:15). Other people will receive great rewards (Matthew 5:12; Luke 6:23). The level of heaven they go to depends on what they went through and how obedient they were on earth. Disciples who are chosen and anointed by God and are suffering afflictions while on earth, their suffering will bring great spiritual rewards once they are in heaven. God sees how hard they work to serve Him and fulfil their calling. 'I know your works' (Revelation 3:8). 'Be sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist and fulfil your ministry ... I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course of endurance. I have kept the faith. There is stored up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the Righteous Judge will give to me on Judgement Day, and not only to me but also to all those who have loved His appearing' (2 Timothy 4:5 to 8). 'The Holy Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit, we are children of God, and if children, then heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus, if indeed we suffer with Him, so we may also be glorified with Him. The sufferings of this present time (while on earth) are not worthy to be compared with the glory which will be revealed toward us (in heaven)' (Romans 8:16 to 18).

Modern day disciples can be encouraged by knowing they will never suffer as much as Jesus did. No matter how much they suffer, they need to keep their eyes on eternity and not be overcome by the suffering on earth. 'When these things (troubles) begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads because your redemption is near' (Luke 21:28). Once with the Lord, all suffering will be over forever and disciples will be living in glory forever. Everybody needs to look to the eternal heavenly things above, not to the temporal things on earth. Our sufferings actually work in our eternal favour. 'Our affliction, which is for the moment (on earth), works for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen (on earth), but at the things which are not seen (in heaven), for the things which are seen (on earth) are temporal but the things which are not seen (in heaven) are eternal' (2 Corinthians 4:17 & 18). If we want to get to heaven, we have no choice but to endure whatever God puts us through like Job endured. Poor Lazarus had a miserable existence and suffered terribly while on earth with poverty, sickness, hunger and homelessness but was given a high place in heaven right beside Abraham (Luke 16:19 to 31). The promise of healing, abundance and a fruitful life did not apply to Lazarus but in eternity, he was rewarded for his faithfulness during his suffering.

The only time disciples need to worry is when they are not being afflicted by trials and persecution. The trials do not include problems that are self-inflicted by disobedience or sin. The trials God puts us through are difficulties out of our control and not of our making, like the supernatural afflictions Job and Apostle Paul went through. If people are not suffering from afflictions, then they may be living a lukewarm Christian life that is so void of power, the devil does not bother with them and those Christians may be found to be unworthy. Jesus said everyone who is chosen by Him would be hated and persecuted (John 15:19 & 20). Everyone who is called, chosen and anointed by God will suffer trials. Some trials are contrary to promises in the Bible, so if you are suffering an ordeal or fiery trial that is leaving you confused, astonished, bewildered and full of questions, for your own sake, do not turn away from God. Remember, only those who endure to the end will be saved (Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13). 'Beloved, do not be astonished at the fiery trial which has come on you to test you, as though a strange thing happened to you. Because you are partakers of Jesus' sufferings, rejoice, so at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exceeding joy' (1 Peter 4:12 & 13). God has a higher purpose and he uses suffering to prepare our heart for great and mighty rewards in heaven. Our redemption is drawing nearer and nearer with each day. Even through terrible adversity, trials, persecution, bewilderment and confusion caused by continual afflictions like the apostles endured, we can live our lives in joy and have a merry heart like they did. We know God has already accepted our works and service to Him, which He calls our 'white garments' (Revelation 3:5; 3:18; 19:8), and He tells us to always be filled with the oil of Holy Spirit. 'Go your way, eat your bread with joy and drink your juice with a merry heart, for God has already accepted your works. Let your garments be always white and do not let your head lack oil' (Ecclesiastes 9:7 & 8).

Amen and God bless you.

[www.bibleabookoftruth.com](http://www.bibleabookoftruth.com)