

said to each other, “Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity.” They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah – *who chose to go in the opposite direction the Lord had commanded*. Let us be different by always †loving, †seeking, and †following God’s will for our lives!

- c. Sometime between *Jesus’ Ascension* and *the Day of Pentecost*, the disciples cast lots to determine who would replace Judas (the one who betrayed Jesus):  
<sup>NIV</sup> **Acts 1:26** Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

**Conclusion:** Casting lots is one way to proceed with fairness; it’s also a way to put a decision *completely into the Lord’s hands!* We may struggle to give up our choice, *but let us know that God’s ways are always best! Amen!*

Next week we will continue the topic of **Biblical Decision-Making** as Gideon seeks the Lord’s will in Judges chapter 6!

Then, *on June 20*, we will ask God during worship to show us HIS CHOICE on two decisions; therefore, *on that day*, we will all gather together for worship at 9:00. **Please join us!**

This and other sermons are available on Bethlehem’s website: [www.blc7500.com](http://www.blc7500.com)  
Please share them with your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers!  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Rd., Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230

**Worship Schedule Decision – June 20 during our 9:00 service:**

- Current Sunday schedule (no weekday services over summer)
- Current Sunday schedule + *Monday at 7:00 (July and August)*
- Sunday at 9:00 (BC&SS at 10:30) + *Monday at 7:00 (July & August)*

**Seating Area Decision – June 20 during our 9:00 service:**

- Do not rope off any of the pews
- Rope off the 3 back pews on each side
- Rope off the 6 back pews on each side

# Biblical Decision-Making – Part 1

## “Casting Lots”

Based on Various Passages NIV

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Trinity – 2010  
June 6 → 8:15 & 10:45

**Introduction:** Dear members of Bethlehem: Have you ever faced a difficult decision:

- Should I go to college *HERE* or *THERE*?
- Should I ask *HER* to marry me – *is SHE the one?*
- Should I leave *THIS JOB* for *THAT JOB*?

The decision-making process can include †worry, †struggle, and †fear – *what if I make the wrong decision?*

As Christians – *according to our new nature* – we always want to *know* and *do* God’s will. God’s will is found in **God’s Word – *It’s a lamp to our feet and a light to our path*** (Psalm 119:105)! However, *with some decisions*, options 1, 2, and 3 can all be good. In such cases, we have the freedom to decide for ourselves; however, *we also have the privilege of letting God make the decision for us!*

**Today we are beginning a short series which will include:**

- Biblical decision-making examples.
- Components of the Biblical decision-making process.
- Some actual decisions of our congregation.

This sermon focuses on casting lots, which could refer to sticks, stones, coins, or dice; *the details are unknown.*

1. **Casting Lots – is Fair:**

- a. **The descendants of Aaron served as priests and were divided in a fair manner:** <sup>NIV</sup> **1 Chronicles 24:5** They divided them impartially by drawing lots...
- b. **Qualified people were assigned their duties in a fair manner:** <sup>NIV</sup> **1 Chronicles 25:7** Along with their relatives--**all of them trained and skilled in music for the LORD**--they numbered 288. <sup>8</sup> Young and old alike, teacher as well as student, cast lots for their duties.
- c. **Contribution assignments were made in a fair manner:** <sup>NIV</sup> **Nehemiah 10:34** We--the priests, the Levites and the people--have cast lots to determine when each of our families is to bring to the house of our God at set times each year a contribution of wood to burn on the altar of the LORD our God...
- d. **Those who lived in Jerusalem was decided in a fair manner:** <sup>NIV</sup> **Nehemiah 11:1** Now the leaders of the people settled in Jerusalem, and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of every ten to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, while the remaining nine were to stay in their own towns.
- e. **Jesus' garments were divided by casting lots:**
  - i. The prophecy: <sup>NIV</sup> **Psalms 22:18** They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.
  - ii. The fulfillment: <sup>NIV</sup> **Mark 15:24** And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.
- f. **Which goat will live was decided in a fair manner:** <sup>NIV</sup> **Leviticus 16:8** He is to cast lots for the two goats--

one lot for the LORD and the other for the scapegoat.

<sup>9</sup> Aaron shall bring the goat whose lot falls to the LORD and sacrifice it for a sin offering. <sup>10</sup> But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD to be used for making atonement by sending it into the desert as a scapegoat. **Let's understand and rejoice that both goats point to Jesus' sin-removing work for our salvation:**

- i. "The one goat was killed, its blood sprinkled in the Most Holy Place and its body burned outside the camp, symbolizing the payment of the price of Christ's atonement." *Jesus shed His precious blood and died outside of Jerusalem – for us!*
- ii. "The other goat, sent away alive and bearing the sins of the nation, symbolized the removal of sin and its guilt." (CSSB, 166) The Bible says that "the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." (1 John 1:7 NIV) ***That is good news!***

2. **Casting Lots – Puts the Decision in the Lord's Hands:**

<sup>NIV</sup> **Proverbs 16:33** The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.

- a. **The Lord decided which tribe would get each part of the land:** <sup>NIV</sup> **Joshua 18:6** After you have written descriptions of the seven parts of the land, bring them here to me and I will cast lots for you in the presence of the LORD our God. ***Similar to the cut and choose method – they cut, the Lord chose!***
- b. **In the midst of a violent storm that threatened to break up the ship, the Lord pointed the sailors to Jonah as the cause:** <sup>NIV</sup> **Jonah 1:7** Then the sailors