- *(From Tearfund 2013 Harvest material)*

Story

- What's your favourite story?
  - why? characters? plot twists? style of writing or story telling?

- As Christians we have the joy of God being part of our story:
  - throughout the twists and turns we have someone who knows where the story is going
  - and not just someone who "stands back" and observes, but who cares passionately for what happens to us
  - nothing is a surprise to God, and he knows which route we can take
  - he's been offering guidance to his people since the dawn of time...

Context

- Whistle stop of God's story with the Israelites:
  - from creation and fall
  - through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Israel)
  - to Joseph and Egypt
  - then Moses and the Exodus, God's big rescue of his people...
  - the law as a guide to how the redeemed should identify themselves with God
  - this passage as a re-telling of that law, and its part in their story, before they enter the promised land
  - with the choice God gives them...

- No robots!
  - cf difference between film and stage - in film, the director gets to retake shots until its how he wants; on stage, the director prepares the actors, helps them rehearse, but its up to them once they are on stage...

Choices

- That's what our lives are like:
  - full of God given choices, where we also have to live with the consequences of our actions
  - when children, parents will protect us from the worst consequences of our choices... part of growing up is learning to live with the consequences of the choices we make
- Or to switch images, God has created the way - but we have to walk in it (image; quote from 1 Kings 2:3)

Personal experience
- What choices have you made during your life?
  - where have they led you?
  - places you expected? places you didn't expect?
  - have you been conscious of God opening up "paths back" even after you've made choices you now think better of?

Sina

- Recap: Sina, struggling mother, desperate to provide, feeling trapped and powerless
  - she has some ideas - growing vegetables, keeping chicken - but they seem out of reach...
- Ke Pich and the church's project means Sina isn't offered a handout:
  - rather she is given the option to choose what she describes as the good path
  - the project offers the support, the encouragement, the fellow travellers to enable difference choices to be made - a group to add her ideas to, to take positive steps
- Giving Sina back the power to make a good choice for her family - as God gave

Israel the choice as they came to the point of entering the land in Deuteronomy 30

Choices

- The kind of choices Sina faces are life choices, affecting her future and the future of her children
  - but the respect for her and her family, a nobody at the bottom of the economic pile, that the Ke Pich and his church is operating out of comes from something bigger
  - from responding to the offer of life that God gives - the big choice in life - God's way or my way
  - this choice affects everything else we do, everything else we are, the way we view, value, respect and see profound potential in every human being
  - Jesus died for Sina - for me - for you - for the drug addicts of Dundee - for the greedy bankers in the City - for the posh landowners - for the single mums - for those with dementia - for the brown skinned and the white skinned... and whatever other category or put down you could come up with

Response
- What will it mean for us to have crossed paths with Sina?
  - how will you let God write the story of your life, how will respond postively to the choices he brings across your path today?
  - could be a direct response - giving, praying for Tearfund...
  - not directly to this material, but as a response to the wider work of Tearfund I'm planning on going to visit Ethiopia with Tearfund in January to see work there giving people like Sina the chance to choose
  - could be choices in how you respect/honour/value the people you come across, choosing to be more like pastro Ke Pich in the way you deal with those around you?