



Obedience is Costly

EXPERIENCING
GOD

Henry and Richard Blackaby
**ADJUSTING YOUR
LIFE TO GOD**

Session 8

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OBEDIENCE IS COSTLY

Once one comes to believe God, they must demonstrate faith in Him by their actions (what they do).

☐ Travelling with God requires:

FAITH that leads to ACTION

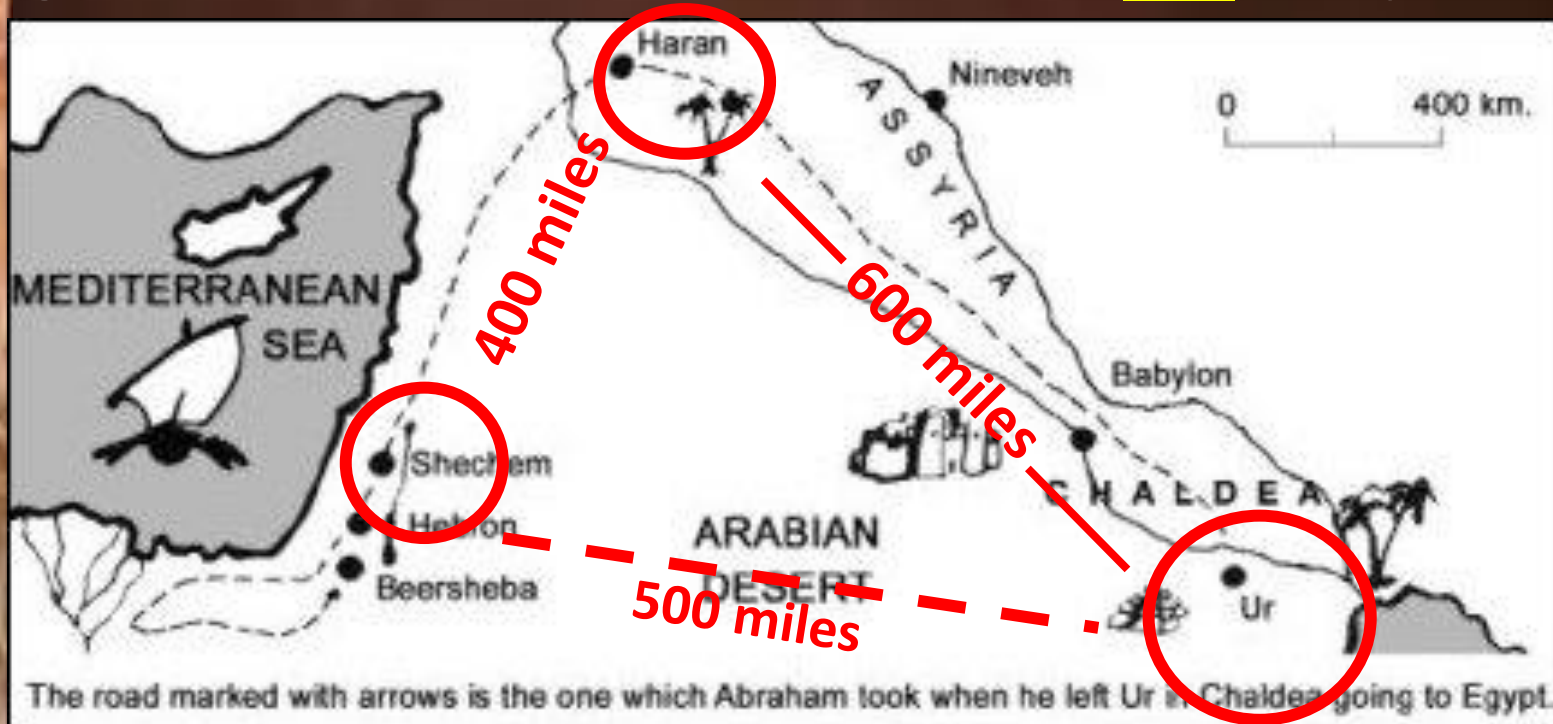
ACTION = ADJUSTMENT + OBEDIENCE

Whenever God speaks to us and reveals What He is about to do, that revelation is always an invitation to adjust our lives to Him. After we make the **necessary adjustment**, then God can accomplish what He has purposed through us.

- Moving with God diffuses the idea of life as usual

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God spoke to Abram even when he was influenced by **Nanna** the Sumerian deity (Semitic--Sīn) and gave him a new directive for the life of **HIS** family:



- Ur was a place of upheavals and it was under constant attack from hostile neighbors
- But God had another purpose for Abrams life



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In Ur God spoke to Abraham at the right young age of 75 and gave distinct directions (Acts 7:2-3)

○ **Genesis 12:1-3** Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and **in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**

A. PEDIGREE -- It is important to note Abram is ten generations removed from Shem, the son of Noah

- ❑ According to the Biblical record, It has been 10 generations since God spoke directly to anyone.
- ❑ The blessing and promise from the flood wasn't enough, for this text is post Babel (Gen. 11:1-9)



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☐ God spoke to Abram again at a dry season in his life as the Lord spoke to Him in **Haran** (parched place) and the Word brought forth the miracle of faith

B. PROMISE -- This call included two promises:

- 1) 1st showing the land of his future posterity
- 2) 2nd that in his posterity all the earth was to be blessed (Ge 12:2).

❖ Abraham obeyed, and it is mentioned in the as a striking instance of his faith (Heb 11:8).

C. PROVISIONS – Abram had to make ADJUSTMENTS which increased in intimacy and importance

- 1) Go away from your homeland & birthplace
- 2) Get away from your relatives – *natural affection giving way to Divine grace*
- 3) Leave your familiar models of leadership as I am now going to lead you



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Abram is not the only one having to make adjustments:

- Noah had to embark on his calling of shipbuilding, having to forsake his previous employment (Gen 6)
- Moses could not remain a fugitive on the backside of the desert herding sheep for God made an appointment for him with Pharaoh (Exd. 3)
- David had to leave the sheep under his personal attendance and prepare himself for the royal court ((I Sam 16)
- Amos had to leave his job as a fruit picker and farmer to become a Divine voice to the King (Amos 7:14-15)
- Jonah had to abandon his home and forsake his bias and prejudice to preach to the enemy of his nation (Jonah 1-4)
- Matthew had to leave his cushy tax collector job and follow a preacher who didn't have a visible church (Matt. 9:9)
- Jesus had to unglorify Himself with Heavenly glory and adorn Himself in flesh to redeem sinners like you and me



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And adjustments always cause us to reposition ourselves to be used by God according to His way

There is a myriad of adjustments we must make to walk with God and work in His assignments

- a) Circumstances – Matt. 4:18-22 James and John had to forsake their former occupation
- b) Relationships – Matt. 5:43-48 the parameters for Godly love requires we love differently
- c) Thinking -- Matt. 20:20-28 The cost for holding positions is high -- SERVING
- d) Commitments -- Luke 9:62 The decision to follow Christ requires forsaking the past
- e) Actions -- Matt. 6:5-8 Things which once were done for show, must be done in sincerity
- f) Beliefs -- Acts 10:1-20 Our standards are to be assessed according to what God says.

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God Invites
God Speaks



After our Crisis
of Belief, we
must ADJUST
to walk in the
center of God's
will.



OBSERVATIONS FROM THE VIDEO

- ❑ Whenever **things happen that deter us** from a direction God has called us to, go back to God and ask Him: What do you want us to do now?
 - These occurrences should not be disappointments but times of **ADJUSTMENTS**
- ❑ Never see CRISIS OF BELIEF and the resultant ADJUSTMENTS as a negative
 - We have not failed nor has God's purposes failed
 - Many times God wants us to see if we are willing to adjust to God with a profound trust
- ❑ Whenever we are **doing things for the sake of Christ and the gospel**, it requires us to make adjustments in our own plans (Mark 8:34-38; Matt. 10:37-39)
- ❑ When we have an encounter with God, there's a crisis and that crisis will often necessitate a requirement of adjusting in personal areas of our lives (father, mother, friends)



OBSERVATIONS FROM THE VIDEO

- ❑ Repent simply means we are going in the **wrong direction** and an alteration is needed to experience the Kingdom of God (Matt. 4:13-17)
 - Immediately, we have the major adjustment in the lives of Simon and Andrew (**BECOME**)
 - Matt 4:21-22 Likewise with James and John
- ❑ It is impossible for us to stay where we are and go with God at the same time
- ❑ There is never an invitation from God without receiving a **God-sized assignment**
- ❑ Many of the major decisions of adjustment are harnessed to our connection with our families
- ❑ To experience the fullness of God's purpose in our lives, requires a Crisis of Belief
 - And confidently believing that an adjustment is required, as we obey God's new direction



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How thankful we should be to God for His persistent **PURSUING** and **DRAWING** (*to impel to action by inward power*).

Whenever God speaks to us, it is as expression of His **WILL** and **PURPOSE** as it relates to the Kingdom.

Human will or **VOLITION** has been misunderstood to be the choice man makes for his life's activities.

The question of the freedom of the will, or the power of the human will to obey God; and to do that which is spiritually good, is inseparably connected to man's **SIN** and **MISERY** (total inability).

❑ No matter how you slice it, Obedience is costly



OBEDIENCE IS COSTLY

There is no scripture as clear about this truth than Mark 8:34 “Jesus summoned the crowd, along with his disciples, and had them gather around. And he said to them: “***If you truly want to follow me, you should at once completely disown your own life. And you must be willing to share my cross and experience it as your own, as you continually surrender to my ways* TPT”**

- This translation is so much more definitive than the metaphorical language of KJV “pick up your cross.”
- It is directed to those who choose (will = thelō- to desire) to follow God
- ***Let him deny (aperneomai) himself*** in this text means “to forget one’s self, lose sight of one’s self and one’s interests.”
- The verb tense speaks of entrance into a **new state or condition.**



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- It is changing from a state of **SELF-INTEREST** to **SOVEREIGN** concerns
- That person, at once begins to lose sight of himself and his own interests as he dies to self
 - **Take up his cross.** The cross was emblematic of death to self.
- **Follow Me.** The word “follow” is *akoloutheō* = “to take the same road as another does.”
 - It literally means “Let him follow with Me.”
- **The clausal extension: if you let your life go for my sake and for the sake of the gospel, you will continually experience true life. But if you **choose to keep your life for yourself**, you will forfeit what you try to keep.**
- The general concept of obedience both in the OT NT relates to hearing or hearkening to a **Higher Authority.**



OBEDIENCE IS COSTLY

- I. Obedience Is an Act of Worship -- While the Bible places a strong emphasis on obedience, it's critical to remember that believers are not justified (made righteous) by obedience
 - Yet we are directed in Rom 12:1 to give our bodies to God because of all He has done for us
- II. God Rewards Obedience – Repeatedly in the we read in the Bible God blesses and rewards obedience:
 - **James 1:22** Don't just listen to the Word of Truth and not respond to it, for that is the essence of self-deception.
- III. Obedience to God Demonstrates Faith -- When we obey God, we show our trust and faith in him: (1 John 2:3 Here's how we can be sure that we've truly come to know God: if we keep his commands)

PERSONAL STUDY

1. Have you come to a place in your life where you had to decide to forsake something to following God? How do you evaluate that decision now?
2. Describe at least one adjustment in your thinking you have made since starting this study.



PERSONAL STUDY

3. Have you ever had an experience in which your adjustment to God or Christ was costly? What was the cost and why was it so valuable to you?

4. Can you think of an occasion where your unwillingness to follow God had a high toll on your relationships?



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