

OBEDIENCE IN CRISIS

Genesis 12:1-9

Abraham is mentioned by name 179 times in the Bible. He is referred to as another Abram 28 times. He is a superb example of faith in the time of crisis. But we must not think of him as a superhuman person. He was a man who had doubts and fears and problems, just like the rest of us. While he was successful on many occasions, and even referred to as **“the friend of God,”** he also faced a number of crises in which he failed.

Today, our nation, in fact the world, is facing a crisis – a health crisis. We have faced others before and will undoubtedly face more in the future. But in this present crisis it might do us well to look again to the Scriptures to determine how to handle it. This the first lesson in a series designed to help you and your family see what God has to say about our current situation and how to Biblically respond to it.

I. The Future Of Faith.

- A. Did you notice the word **“had”** in verse 1?
 1. The word takes us to Genesis 11:31.
 - a. Terah took Abram, his son, and other relatives from the city of Ur at the mouth of the Euphrates, to Haran, located about 600 miles North-West.
 - b. Stephen’s sermon in Acts 7 mentions this fact. (Acts 7:2-3)
 2. Abraham’s family life in Ur was bent on idolatry. (Joshua 24:2)
 - a. They were called by God to leave their idolatry and to embark on a wonderful journey.
 - b. The beginning of anyone’s journey of faith begins when one turns idols to God. (I Thessalonians 1:9b).
- B. God appeared to Abraham and said, *“Leave it all and start going. I will direct you as you go, and let you know when you get there.”* (Hebrews 11:8)
 1. A *“leap in the dark”* suggests no reliable evidence for an action.
 2. *“Faith”* is based on the best evidence available – the Word of God. (II Tim. 3:16)
- C. In Genesis 12, Abraham faced a crisis point in his life.
 1. A crisis is a turning point in your life.
 2. Abraham chose to believe God and obey Him.
- D. While God did not reveal His entire plan to Abraham at that time, He did lead him step by step as Abraham continued to obey.
 1. Considering Abraham’s example, how should we react to God’s guidance?
 2. Obedience or Disbelief?

II. The Failure Of Unbelief. (Three examples)

- A. Abraham faced failure because of partial obedience.
 1. Notice the particulars of his calling. (Genesis 12:1)
 - a. **“Get thee out of thy country.”** (Obedient)
 - b. **“Get thee . . . from thy kindred.”** (Partially obedient)
 - c. **“Get thee . . . from thy fathers house.”** (Disobedient)
 - d. **“Get thee . . . unto a land that I will shew thee.”** (Side-tracked)

2. It was after the death of his father that God spoke to Abraham a second time.
 - a. The Lord had to prod Abraham and get him going again.
 - b. In grace, the Lord him another opportunity to respond in obedience.
 - c. There is never an excuse for partial obedience.
- B. Abraham faced failure because of half-truths.
 1. Abraham finally arrived in Canaan. (Genesis 12:8)
 - a. His first major stop was at Bethel.
 - b. Abraham built an alter there and called upon the name of the Lord.
 2. In Genesis 12:10, we find that Abraham went down to Egypt.
 - a. There was no command to go.
 - b. Note the direction that Abraham went: **“He went down into Egypt.”**
 3. While in Egypt, Abraham faced telling a half-truth. (Genesis 12:11-20)
 - a. Abraham’s actions were indications of a heart that did not trust the Lord.
 - b. When we resort to deceitfulness, we displease the Lord. (Proverbs 12:22)
- C. Abraham faced failure because of his own impatience.
 1. God is always on time.
 - a. Unknown – *“What may seem to be a time of disappointment may really be a timely appointment from God.”*
 - b. God had promised Abraham that he would have a son and that He would bless his seed. (Genesis 12:7, 15:1-4)
 2. When Abraham was 86, Sarah and Abraham took things into their own hands and decided to help God out, thus the birth of Ishmael. (Genesis 16:1-2)
 - a. But this was not God’s plan. (Genesis 17:15-22)
 - b. God made it very clear that Ishmael was not the son of promise.
 3. Abraham may have stumbled in not waiting for God, but he learned that God always keeps His promises – and He keeps them on time. (Genesis 21:1-3)

III. The Triumph Of Faith.

- A. Throughout Abraham’s life, his faith was tested many times.
 1. After providing the *“miracle son,”* Isaac, God asked Abraham to do something that seemed unreasonable: offer him as a sacrifice. (Genesis 22:1-19)
 2. Look at the New Testament commentary on this event. (Hebrews 11:17-19)
 - a. Abraham thought he would have to sacrifice his son.
 - b. Abraham responded with no partial obedience, no half-truths, and no delays.
- B. He had learned that no sacrifice was too great for the God he served.
 1. God had stayed Abraham’s hand at the last moment, and He provided a ram for the offering.
 2. God responded to Abraham’s faith with a commendation. (Genesis 22:12).
- C. After Abraham had offered the ram in place of Isaac, he named the place **“Jehovah-jereh.”** (Genesis 22:14)
 1. The name means, *“The Lord will provide.”*
 2. The Lord met Abraham’s need with a substitute sacrifice instead of his son.

Conclusion: Abraham had learned from firsthand experience that, in a moment of crisis, God does provide. In whatever crises we encounter, we can trust **“Jehovah-jereh.”**