

# Episode 96

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*'Leave your country and your people,' God said, 'and go to the land I will show you.' So he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Harran. After the death of his father, God sent him to this land where you are now living.*

- Acts 7.3-4

Stephen drops a bombshell when he opens his speech to the Sanhedrin. He claims that Abraham, the father of our faith, had a rather rocky start to his faith journey. Rather than the picture of radical obedience, Stephen points out that Abraham had some difficulty following God's instructions.

God had called Abraham to follow him to Canaan, the promised land. The instructions were clear. Abraham was to leave behind his country, his people, and his father's household. Instead, he stayed in Assyria, settled among his people, and had his father, and presumably his entire household, along for the ride. To make it worse, Harran is believed to be the ancient seat of worship of the moon-god that Abraham was believed to have worshipped, the junction of key trade routes that led to Abraham's rather significant wealth and possibly the reason he chose to settle, and for reasons untold, was staying in Harran and led to his father's death. What a place to choose rather than the land of obedience?

However, what I want to point out is that this very same Harran is where Laban would one day live, and where Abraham's grandson Jacob would face his own time of trials and testing. It's a sobering reminder that what we face in our lives often comes around in the lives of our kids. These battles we face and decisions we make seem to linger longer than we'd like to admit.

But the opposite is also true. Those areas of faith where we hold on when everyone else is abandoning ship, the victories that come after years of pain and prayers, the generations of disfunction that are restored and redeemed mean that our children can ride in on the shoulders of our victories and not have to wrestle in Harran as we did.

We can draw courage from the fact that it is for freedom that Christ has set us free, and this freedom extends beyond our immediate circumstances into the generations that will come after us. The battles we face are not just ours to win, but they flood into the lives of our children and their children. When we lay hold of God's promises and cling to his presence, the resulting work of God in our lives is not just for our benefit, but for a thousand generations and your family and your children and their children and their children.

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