

CHANGE



Definition: To take action or alter a situation in order to cause something, someone, or circumstances to be different.

Synonyms: transform, alter, adapt

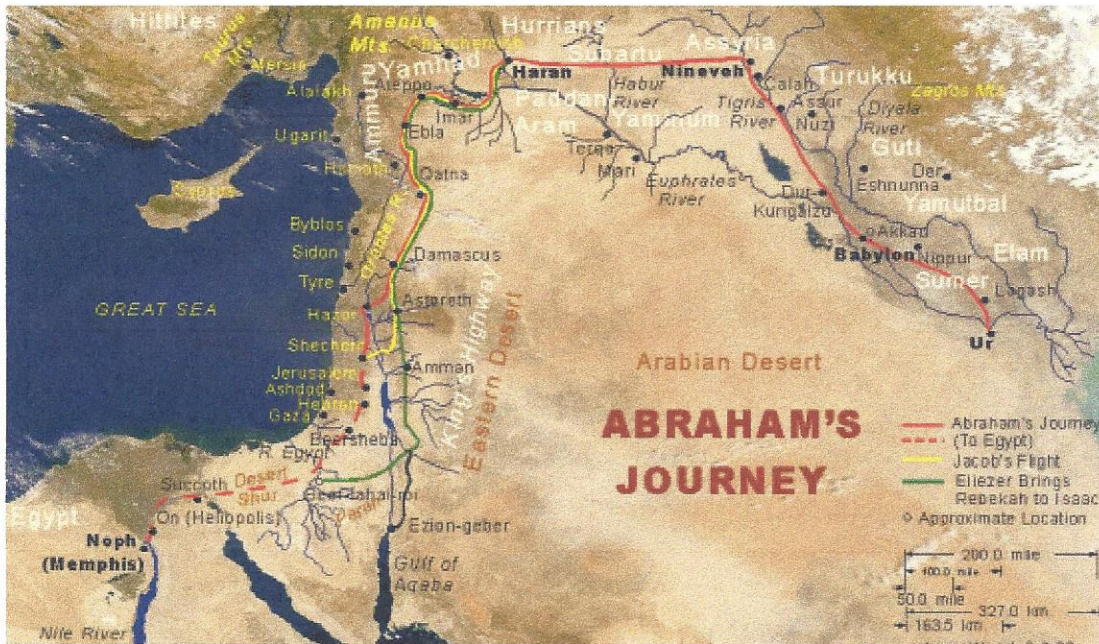
The blog post this week discusses how our own lives might change others' lives now and for the future. So I thought we would keep this theme going for the week. So the word of the week is change!

Since my weekly email goes out on Tuesdays, this devotion begins on Tuesdays and ends on Mondays.

DAY 1 - Tuesday

Read Genesis 12: 1-9

Abram was called by God to move from the land and the people he had known all his life and start over. Keep in mind he was seventy-five years old at the time. But notice verse 4 tells us that Abram departed as the LORD instructed. No arguments, no questions. Complete obedience.



Thinking about this big change, I realized that many people make this type of change in modern times too. How many elderly are forced to leave their lifetime homes and churches and move closer to their children because they need care? Or how many are forced into nursing homes in their old age because of poor health?

However there is one big difference. Today we have phones, face time, and mail to keep in touch. When Abram left home he had none of those modern conveniences. He probably never saw most of his family and friends again.

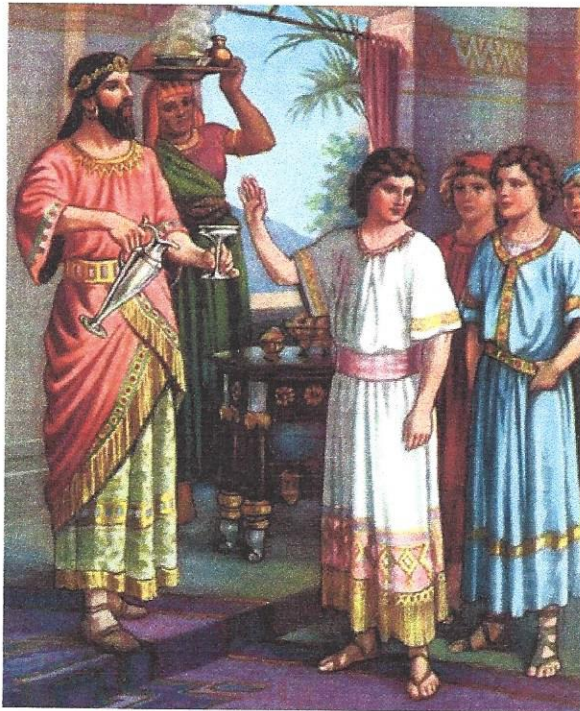
THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

When God wants you to make a change, do you obey willingly?

DAY 2 – Wednesday

Read Daniel Chapter 1

Daniel was a teenager when taken captive to a strange land with a different language, culture, and religion. This young man's faith in the one and only God kept him centered. He chose his battles. He trained as the king ordered with one exception – the food. Eating the food ordered by the king would cause him to disobey God's laws. It was here he drew a line. God honored Daniel's obedience and provided protection. At the end of the training period the king was impressed with Daniel's abilities, knowledge and health.



Daniel didn't resist change just for the sake of opposing something different. He did, however, resist change that caused him to violate God's laws.

When a change is suggested at church or work, do you evaluate what is important and what doesn't really matter? Do you choose your battles? Sometimes change can bring good results. Don't fight change just because it is different.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

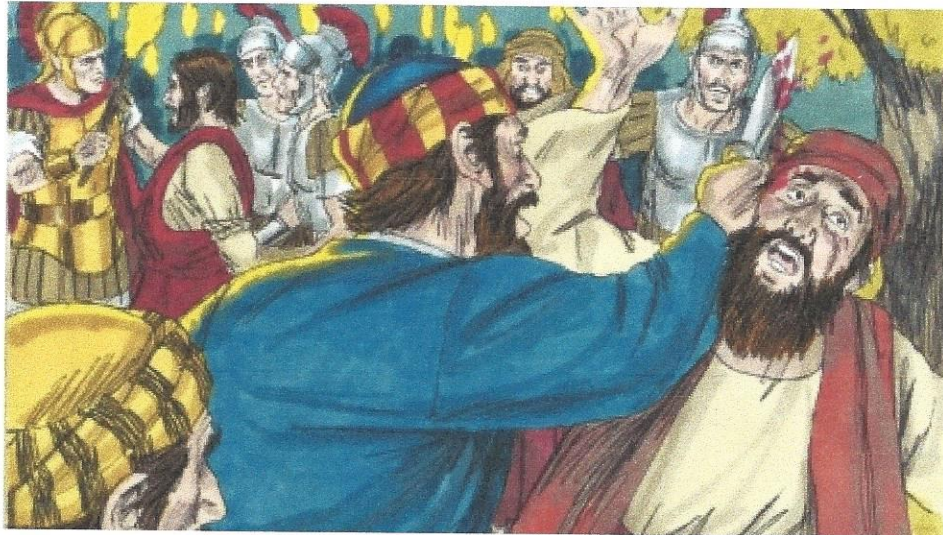
When change is forced upon you, do you adapt or resist?

DAY 3 - Thursday

Read Mark 8: 31-33 and John 18: 3 – 11

Peter actually reprimanded Jesus when he spoke about how He must suffer and die for the salvation of mankind. Peter did not want to accept that he would no longer have Jesus as teacher and leader. He wanted Jesus to change the world the way Peter's human mind could comprehend.

Despite Jesus' rebuke at Peter's attitude, he continued to deny the real mission of Jesus. When the soldiers came to arrest our Lord, Peter pulled his sword to fight the soldiers. He still thought he could rescue Jesus from arrest and death and bring about change his own way.



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Do you resist changing your thinking to God's way?

DAY 4 – Friday

Read Genesis 18: 1-15

God promised a child to Abram and Sarai many times. When Abram was first called he was told the land would go to his descendants. (Genesis 12:7) Again in Genesis 15:4-5 God told Abram there was a son to come.

But like many of us the couple thought change would never occur, so they decided to take matters into their own hands. Sarai gave Abram her maidservant Hagar and Ishamel was born. This, of course, was a mistake of epic proportions. (Genesis 16: 1-4)

God comes again to Abram and Sarai and changed their names to Abraham and Sarah. Abraham meant father of many and with Sarah's new name she was promised to be the mother of many nations. (Genesis 17: 4-6 and 15-16)

Yet despite all these assurances, Sarah laughed when she heard that the child was only one year away. Sometimes God brings change slowly – at least what we consider slow. But when God promises change we can be assured it will happen.



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Do you doubt or have faith when waiting on God's changes in your life?

DAYS 5 & 6 - WEEKEND REFLECTIONS (Saturday and Sunday)

Like Abram, do you make changes willingly when God calls? It is easy to use old age as a reason not to change, but remember that Abram was seventy-five when he was called to make a major change. Noah was an old man (at least five hundred-years-old – Genesis 5:32) when called to build the ark. (Genesis 6:17-22) Noah did everything exactly as God commanded. There is no retirement from changes in life or obeying God.

Daniel's story is also about change; however, it was not a call from God, but change that was forced upon him. Another example in the Bible is Joseph, who was cruelly sold into slavery by his brothers and ended up in Egypt. Like Daniel, Joseph adapted to his new environment without accusing or hating God for his circumstances. He too rose to high ranks in this foreign land. (Genesis 37: 28 and Chapter 39: 1-6)

Sometimes change is forced upon us. Do we make the best of our situation or spend valuable time blaming God? Notice in these examples both Daniel and Joseph were young men – most likely teenagers. So change is a part of life for both young and old. No matter what our age we honor God when we adapt to change and make the best of our circumstances.

As we see in Peter's example sometimes change is a matter of our thoughts. We determine in our minds how things should be and, like Peter, stubbornly stick to our beliefs. Sometimes God needs a sledgehammer to break through.

Lot is another example of this type of thinking. He thought living in the grand city of Sodom was better than God's desire for a different life. Lot had to be led out by the hand in order to save his life, and still didn't trust God. Instead of going where the angels led he asked to be allowed to go to Zoar. God was very patient with Lot. (Genesis 19: 12-25)

And then, of course, there is Sarah our doubter. It is understandable why she doubted, but it also showed her lack of faith. Does your faith remain strong as you wait on change that you know God has ordained?

Gideon is another doubter in the Bible. Like Sarah he doubted that God could change him from the "least in his family" to a military leader and judge. (Judges 6:15-16) Our position in life only limits *our* thinking when it comes to change. Because God walks with us, He is able to make changes despite our position in life or perceived abilities. When we depend on Him success is assured.

Day 7 – Monday

Take this day to focus on your Sunday sermon, spending additional time in prayer to prepare for your week. Tomorrow print off the next "word of the week" devotional.