

## Obeying God's Call

*Exodus 34-36*

In reading through the account of Moses and the Israelites in the desert, there are many lessons to be learned about the blessings of obeying God, as well as the consequences of disobedience. In looking just at chapters 34-36 of Exodus, we see a number of examples of what it means to obey God's call:

1. Obedience results in **confidence**. In Exodus 34:23-24 God says, "Three times each year every man in Israel must appear before the Sovereign, the Lord, the God of Israel. I will drive out the other nations ahead of you and expand your territory, so no one will covet and conquer your land while you appear before the Lord your God three times each year". The Israelites had to leave their homes and property to meet together before God three times a year, which would seem to leave them vulnerable to attack. But God promises to protect their land while they are following His instructions. My instructions from God may be different from those of the Israelites, but in whatever He directs me to do, I can obey with confidence because I know that all of my loved ones and possessions are HIS concern and are under HIS guardianship and protection.
2. Obedience involves **cost**. In Exodus 35:4, Moses says to the Israelites, "This is what the Lord has commanded: Take a sacred offering for the Lord..." In order to build the tabernacle that God directed them to build, everyone joined together in sacrificial giving to see the purpose accomplished. Obedience often involves sacrifice, but those sacrifices pale in comparison to the joy and privilege of being a participant in God's great plans!
3. Obedience is marked by **cheerfulness**. Throughout Exodus 35, we see the response of the Israelites marked by words like these: "moved", "stirred", "willing", "eager", and "freely". The whole community came together to joyfully give to the work of the tabernacle! II Corinthians 9:7 says that "God loves a person who gives cheerfully". What kind of attitude characterizes my obedience?
4. Obedience involves a **commitment** to worship. Exodus 35:25 says "All the women who were skilled in sewing and spinning prepared blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine linen cloth." A great deal of time and energy was required to build the tabernacle, but the people threw themselves into this task; a task that was solely dedicated to the worship of God. Everything that they did as a community revolved around the central purpose of worshipping the God of the universe. We, too, must offer up our lives to Him with wholehearted commitment. As Romans 12:1 tells us, this is our expression of worship.

*"And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all He has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind He will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship Him." Romans 12:1, NLT*