

House On The Rock Life Group Study outline 2023

August: Divine Acceleration

Outlines for the month

Week 1: On your marks...✓

Week 2: Get set...

Week 3: Go!

Introduction

Imagine sitting in traffic, whether in a car, a train or a plane waiting to take off. This means you're already in a vehicle, with a set destination, and you've started on your journey. But something happened along the way and now you're stationary in a vehicle designed for movement. In this picture, we're only going to focus on what happens when you're finally out of the traffic and can continue on your journey. If you think through the motions, and what would actually need to happen for you to get back on your way, you will realise a couple of things.

First, as long as you're sitting in traffic, you are limited to the speed of the vehicles around you. It doesn't matter how much bigger your car's engine is or how much faster it could be; you cannot speed up without ending your journey prematurely.

Second, there are clear signs that will tell you when you can speed up your vehicle without risking a collision. For example, the air traffic controller clears your plane for take off, the train signal operator turns the light from red to green, or there is now sufficient space around your car for you to speed up and move ahead on your journey. Whatever it is, there will be a clear sign that tells you *it's time*.

Lastly, in order to start moving again, you have to increase your speed to a higher level to make progress in your journey. You have to shift gears into acceleration mode. Up to this point, other factors outside of your control determined how fast you could move. But once it's time to go, the only thing limiting you is whether you can accelerate, and how quickly you can do so.

Since we can't necessarily control when the time and chance will come, we need to first make sure that when they do come, we are ready to accelerate.

Pilot text

[Jer 12:5 \[NET\]](#) *The LORD answered, "If you have raced on foot against men and they have worn you out, how will you be able to compete with horses? And if you feel secure only in safe and open country, how will you manage in the thick undergrowth along the Jordan River?"*

- In our pilot text, God challenges prophet Jeremiah regarding his impatience to see a divine intervention and acceleration of God's judgment (verses 1-4). What can we learn about making the most of where we are, from God's response to Jeremiah?
 - **Learn to run at your current level (on foot, against men).** Test your speed in your current situation. It may not be where you want to be, but it can be a good time and place to practice your skill. You will not win a race against horses (the next level of speed when you accelerate) if you cannot keep pace with men running on foot.
 - **Learn endurance so you are not wearied out easily.** It's not just about speed, but also endurance. In order to ensure you're ready to accelerate, you must be able to endure long periods of waiting without losing your edge. If you're worn out by the wait, you may not have the strength to accelerate when it is time to do so.
 - **Push yourself outside of your comfort zone.** Acceleration brings a lot of change within a short time. A safe and open country, as in the pilot scripture, connotes a comfort zone. If we only feel secure and are able to function in a familiar environment, it can be very difficult to cope with the demands of acceleration.
- Questions for discussion (use scriptures to support your position):
 1. Should a Christian believe in luck? Why/why not?
 2. Complaining to God about our dissatisfaction with present circumstances shows a lack of faith. Strong faith means we never complain. Agree/disagree with reasons.
 3. Being ambitious is of the world, and is opposed to godly contentment. Christians should therefore avoid being ambitious. Agree/disagree with reasons.

House On The Rock Life Group Study outline 2023

July: Divine Reset

Outlines for the month

Week 1: On your marks...

Week 2: Get set...✓

Week 3: Go!

Introduction

A countdown timer at 10 seconds. The yellow light coming on at a red traffic light. The '**set!**' instruction to the athlete at the starting line. These are signals that are used to alert us to get set to accelerate. Whatever the form, they are simply signs that tell us what time or season we're in.

A countdown time tells you exactly when it will be time to go. A yellow traffic light coming on at a red light, to a driver on the road, means approximately 2 seconds before the green light comes on. These signs do not say that it's time to go, but they say to *get set*, because it will soon be time to go.

Sometimes it's not so easy to know how long we have before it's time to go. For example, the runner who has heard the instruction to 'get set' may not know exactly how long before it is time to go. But they do know that they have to be ready.

How do they respond?

The person with the countdown timer gets ready to take action. The driver shifts gear out of neutral, puts her foot on the accelerator, sets the handbrake to release and is ready to go. The athlete gets into the 'get set' position. They all recognise that the 'get set' phase is temporary. Although it is not the 'go' signal, it is a crucial part of the transition to the acceleration phase.

What should you do when you see the sign or hear the instruction to get set?

Pilot text

Acts 12:7-8a 7 Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands. 8 Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did..."

Ecc 11:6 In the morning sow your seed, And in the evening do not withhold your hand; For you do not know which will prosper, Either this or that, Or whether both alike will be good.

- What principles do we see from the pilot text about getting ready for divine acceleration?

- **We must take active responsibility for our part in the process (Acts 12:7).** Even though there was a divine intervention and empowerment by God (the angel 'raised him up'), Peter still had to 'arise'. This was a physical action, not just a mental assent. This was important, because Peter had to take responsibility of committing to and following through with his escape from jail. It is important we fully commit to and own our acceleration.
- **We must be intentional with our actions (Acts 12:8).** The angel asked Peter to 'gird' himself and tie his sandals. This was not a rushed escape where Peter left his possessions and clothing behind but a calculated and intentional activity, planned and executed step by step. The 'get set' phase gives us a chance to be intentional.
- **We must seize every opportunity to invest in the future we want to see (Eccl 11:6).** There is no harvest without planting, and so we must ensure that we don't miss any chance to invest in the future.
- Questions for discussion (use scriptures to support your position):
 1. 'Heaven helps those who help themselves'. Agree/disagree with reasons .
 2. Faith in God sometimes demands that we do not take action, even when there is a clear need for action. Agree/disagree with reasons.
 3. In life, a false start always leads to disqualification. True or false? Give reasons for your answer.

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Introduction

Finally, the light turns green. The countdown timer goes to zero. The starting gun sounds, and you hear the instruction 'go!' What a relief! Assuming you are prepared, this is the time you've been waiting for, and all you need to do is accelerate. If you're not prepared, you will likely be left behind and may even miss the window of opportunity.

So, what do you do when it's time to go?

Let's look at the example of Joseph. He had been waiting for his 'go' signal and, after two full years (Gen 41:1), it finally came. As a result of divine acceleration, Joseph went from being an imprisoned slave one day to prime minister of Egypt the next. When he got the 'go' signal, what did he do? The answer is simple – he did what he had been preparing for all those years. It should be the same for us. Whatever it is that God has been preparing us for, 'go' means it's time to do it. But, at the point of execution, is there a playbook to follow? Is there anything that we can learn from Joseph that can help us accelerate even faster?

Pilot text

Gen 41:14, 25, 33-36 [NKJV] 14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh.

25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do:

33 "Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. 34 Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years. 35 And let them gather all the food of those good years that are coming, and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. 36 Then that food shall be as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land may not [f]perish during the famine."

- Consider Joseph's experience in the pilot text. What can we learn from what he did when it was his time to go?

- o **He left the past behind and embraced the new.** Joseph understood that he was going to stand before Pharaoh. Although he was coming from prison, he needed Pharaoh to see him as he saw himself; not as a slave and prisoner, but as a free man, a prince and royal advisor. And so he shaved and changed his clothing, leaving prison garbs behind and putting on the clothing of the free in its place.
- o **He was confident of his God-given ability.** Joseph recognised that he was prepared for this chance because God had been his personal trainer. He knew where his gift came from (God), and had spent years honing, testing and perfecting it. When he spoke to Pharaoh, he also inspired confidence in that source.
- o **He spoke solutions, not problems.** Every time Joseph opened his mouth, he didn't stop speaking until he had proposed a sound solution. This is of course not about how long he spoke, but about his mindset. In the place of divine acceleration, every perceived problem is an opportunity for a divine manifestation.
- Questions for discussion (use scriptures to support your position):
 1. A fellow Christian tells you of how he managed to successfully pass an interview by 'speaking in faith' to claim certain skills or experience that he doesn't actually have. How would you respond?
 2. In order to seize the opportunity to accelerate we must be the very best at what we do. Agree/disagree with reasons.
 3. A Christian should never experience 'imposter syndrome'. Agree/disagree with reasons.