

What Happens When You Make A Mistake?

Purpose: to show that being a difference maker does not mean that we will not make mistakes, but simply that we learn from them.

Ever make a mistake? More than one? Ever make a big mistake? All of us have done so at various times in our lives. But just because you may make a mistake in your life does not mean that you can no longer be a ‘difference maker’. Sometimes when faced with difficult circumstances we make the wrong decisions while other times a mere moment of pleasure can lead us into a long period of problems. Even decent people make mistakes! In Chapter 16 even the great man Abram seems to have made a mistake. Perhaps we can learn something from what happened to him and how he responded.

Abram & Sarai Had A Problem

Sarai has borne no children – yet God had promised Abram that he would be the father of many.

[Gen 16:1](#) Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.

Sarai is past the age of bearing children.

[Gen 16:2a](#) So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children.

Sarai's Solution

His wife urges him to do something that is lawful and is in accordance with the custom of the day (“...perhaps I shall obtain children by her”).

[Gen 16:2b](#) Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.

What Sarai suggests to Abram is not sinful. In fact,

- It was a legitimate way to bear children for a woman who has a slave
- They waited until it was no longer physically possible for Sarai to have children (after 10 years of dwelling in the land)
- She recognised that God had prevented her from bearing before resorting to this

But:

- They did not enquire of God concerning this
- They wanted to see the fulfilment of their desire for children desperately
- God had not at this point clearly stated that Sarai was to have children
- Sometimes we try to make things happen instead of letting God make them happen – we “jump the gun”

Sarai's Resulting Problem and Solution

Hagar lost respect for her

[Gen 16:4](#) So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes.

Sarai blames her husband

[Gen 16:5](#) Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The LORD judge between you and me."

- She feels that Abram is too close to Hagar ("...I gave my maid into your embrace...")

With Abram's permission, Sarai deals with her harshly, running Hagar away

[Gen 16:6](#) So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please." And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence.

At this point, what can we learn?

- Abram was a difference maker, yet he still had to learn to trust God.
- They tried to bring God's plan to pass by their own means instead of waiting on Him to do it. This caused them problems
- They didn't ask God about their decisions. Never proceed without asking God!

What Happened to Hagar?

Remember:

- She is the "other woman"
- She had a problem with her attitude toward Sarai
- She ran away from Sarai

God met with her, the other woman!

[Gen 16:7](#) Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.

[Gen 16:8](#) And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."

- This is the first time that the Angel of the LORD is mentioned in the bible

What did God say to her?

He gave her a direct command:

[Gen 16:9](#) The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand."

He gave a direct prophecy concerning her descendants.

[Gen 16:10](#) Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude."

He told her that she would have a son and gave him his name.

[Gen 16:11](#) And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction."

He told her what he would be like and how he would live.

[Gen 16:12](#) He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

How did she respond?

- From then on, she called God "the God who sees me"
- The well was named "The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me."

What can we learn from all this?

- Regardless of your circumstances or mistakes, God sees you!
- Even if you make bad decisions or judgements, God can turn them for good!
- God will take you through difficulties in order to teach you to trust Him. Don't be discouraged!