

giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

- ✧ Charles H. Spurgeon said, *"A Bible that's falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't."*
- 4) God urges us to test all decisions with the Bible. Use 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 as your standard. (*Prove all things...*) Former US President Ronald Reagan wisely said, *"Within the covers of the Bible are the answers for all the problems men face."*

Abram and Sarai missed God's best because of ...

5. Prayerlessness

a. Abram and Sarai failed to pray before acting

- 1) We find no mention of either of them asking God for wisdom about this decision.
- 2) Instead of praying, they made an impatient, selfish, rational and imprudent bad decision.
- 3) As a result, Abram got a son, Ishmael. God promised to multiply Ishmael's seed exceedingly (v.10). He became the father of the Arab nations, the Jew's enemies. **Sad!**

b. Prayerlessness will cause us to miss God's best

- 1) We must pray and continue to pray until we are sure that we **know** the mind of God. If not, we may get what we want, but it may not be God's best.
- 2) *Our prayers must not be an attempt to twist God's arm, but a submissive desire to discover God's will.*
- 3) We must have an attitude like the Psalmist who said: (Psalms 86:11) *"Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name."*

Conclusion: God forgave Abram and later gave him a son by Sarai, but the consequences caused by his poor choice to marry Hagar continues to this day. Do not miss God's best for your life. **Be patient, selfless, biblical, prudent, and prayerful.** Put God first in your life. If God shut the door, and you climbed in the window, confess your sin and seek God's best from now on. If you do not know Christ as Saviour, humbly trust Him this evening. I would be delighted to show you how.

Song: Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord - 337

Do Not Miss God's Best

30 May 2021 PM – Genesis 16:1-16 – Gen2021 – Scott Childs

Introduction: Someone has said, *"When God bolts the door, don't try to get in through the window."* God had not yet opened the door for Abram and Sarai to have a son, and they chose to "climb through the window" to get a son **their** way. They missed God's best in their lives.
Transition: So that we can avoid the same mistake, I want us to consider several reasons that Abram and Sarai missed God's best.

Abram and Sarai missed God's best because of ...

1. Impatience

a. Abram and Sarai became impatient with God.

- 1) Sarai was barren and this frustrated her greatly (v.1).
- 2) Abram was frustrated that he had been in the Promised Land ten years and still had no child (v.3).
- 3) God promised to give them a son, but the promise was not yet fulfilled. They began to question God's promise. They became impatient.

✧ Chuck Swindoll wisely said, *"True patience is waiting without worrying."* Growing Strong, p. 124.

b. Impatience will cause us to miss God's best

✧ *A man's car stalled in the heavy traffic as the light turned green. All his efforts to start the engine failed, and a chorus of honking behind him made matters worse. He finally got out of his car and walked back to the first driver and said, "I'm sorry, but I can't seem to get my car started. If you'll go up there and give it a try, I'll stay here and blow your horn for you."*

- 1) If we are not careful, we will get impatient with God as well. We will jump ahead of God's best for our lives and end up in a mess.
- 2) God urges us to wait on Him rather than to get impatient. (Psalms 27:14) *"Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD."* (Isaiah 40:31) *"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."*

2. Selfishness

a. Abram and Sarai were thinking of themselves

- 1) Sarai wanted a child. To be barren was a shame.
- 2) Abram did not love Hagar, but he wanted an heir (v.6).
- 3) The selfishness of both Abram and Sarai caused them grief. They got what they wanted, but they missed God's best.
- 4) We find many examples in the Bible of others whose selfishness caused them to miss God's best: **Achan, Absalom, Jonah, Ananias and Sapphira.**

b. Selfishness will also cause us to miss God's best

- 1) Selfishness is like looking through a telescope; you can only see what you are focussed on. God wants you focus to be on Him.
- 2) Jesus urges us to deny ourselves. (Mark 8:34) "*And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*" Jesus lived this in His own life. Before his crucifixion, He prayed, (Luke 22:42) "*Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.*"
- 3) If you make life's choices based on what pleases yourself, you will nearly always miss God's best.

3. Rationalism

a. Abram and Sarai followed human reasoning

- 1) From a rational point of view (based on reason), Sarai knew that her chances of having a son were slim.
- 2) She reasoned, since polygamy was an accepted practice among the surrounding heathen, that she could help God fulfil His promise by giving her handmaid to Abram as a second wife. She would then raise the child as her own.
- 3) Abram hearkened unto her (v.2-3). He followed the sinful human reasoning of society.

b. Rationalism will also cause us to miss God's best

- 1) It is dangerous to think we know better than God.

- ✧ *Years ago, I met a young man who claimed to be a Christian. He was living with his girlfriend. I asked him what God said about that. He said, "I know God said it is wrong, but I believe God understands my situation."*
- 2) That kind of thinking may be rational, but it is not biblical. God's way is always right and best.
- 3) God said in (Isaiah 55:8-9) "*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*"
- 4) God sees the beginning and the end. He knows what is best for us. If we base our decisions on reason, many times we will miss God's best for our lives.

4. Imprudence

a. Abram and Sarai lacked biblical caution

- 1) I realise that Abram did not have a Bible, but he did have an understanding of the ways of God. He heard about God's hand in the events of creation, the fall, the flood, and Babel from his ancestors. God had actually talked to him more than once. God promised him a son.
- 2) He should have used prudence or caution when Sarai urged him to take Hagar as his second wife (v.2). He knew that God created only one wife for Adam, not several.

b. Imprudence will cause us to miss God's best

- 1) We have God's Word, the Bible. **It is God's mind concerning everything that we need to know to please Him in this life and to live with Him in eternity.**
- 2) **Every** decision we make must be in harmony with the Bible. **You may not find your specific situation in the Bible, but I assure you that if you look, you will find a Bible principle that will guide you.** "A principle is a timeless truth or guideline that reveals the mind of God on contemporary issues."
- 3) Let the Bible be your guide! (Psalms 119:105) "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*" (James 1:5) "*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that*