

Genesis 16: Man's Plan will always lead to Sin

God is Worthy of Patient Obedience

Section 1: 16:1-3

Abram's wife, Sarai, had not borne any children for him, but she owned an Egyptian slave named Hagar. ²Sarai said to Abram, "Since the Lord has prevented me from bearing children, go to my slave; perhaps through her I can build a family." And Abram agreed to what Sarai said. ³So Abram's wife, Sarai, took Hagar, her Egyptian slave, and gave her to her husband, Abram, as a wife for him. This happened after Abram had lived in the land of Canaan ten years.

Sarai

- (1) Sarai presumes on the Lord.
- (2) Sarai relied upon her own wisdom.
- (3) Sarai wanted her own family.

Abram

- (1) Abram followed his wife's plan rather than God's Word.
- (2) Abram multiplied wives.
- (3) Abram had grown impatient.

Proverbs 14:12 (CSB) - *There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way to death.*

Discussion Questions

- ❖ Why is it so dangerous to "make your own way"?
- ❖ Why is man's wisdom vastly inferior when compared to God's wisdom?
- ❖ How should Abram have responded to Sarai's request to marry Hagar?
- ❖ Abram should have been leading Sarai spiritually. Why is the biblical role of the husband and wife so important?

Section 2: 16:4-6

⁴He slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When she saw that she was pregnant, her mistress became contemptible to her. ⁵Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for my suffering! I put my slave in your arms, and when she saw that she was pregnant, I became contemptible to her. May the Lord judge between me and you." ⁶Abram replied to Sarai, "Here, your slave is in your power; do whatever you want with her." Then Sarai mistreated her so much that she ran away from her.

Sin is never the solution. Disobedience to God's Word will always come with a price. Sarai's problem wasn't fixed. The problem only got worse. That's how sin works...it promises you the moon and gives you moldy cheese.

Sarai begins mistreating Hagar. Why? Because sin will always produce characteristics more in line with Satan than with God. You can't expect to plant sin and reap a harvest of spiritual fruit. [Galatians 6:7-10]

Sarai rightly and wrongly blames Abram. Yes, ultimately Abram failed as the spiritual leader to remain faithful to God's Word, but God also allowed Sarai to experience the consequences of her actions. Sarai should have never made the plan to create "her family". They both equally ignored the Word of God for personal desire.

Jeremiah 17:9 (CSB) - *The heart is more deceitful than anything else, and incurable—who can understand it?*

Psalms 119:9 (CSB) - *How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping your word.*

Discussion Questions

- ❖ What role should repentance play in the believer's life?
- ❖ Why does sin always grow when left unrepented from?
- ❖ What role does God's Word play in our repentance?

Section 3: 16:7-12

⁷The angel of the Lord found her by a spring in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸He said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She replied, "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai." ⁹The angel of the Lord said to her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her authority." ¹⁰The angel of the Lord said to her, "I will greatly multiply your offspring, and they will be too many to count." ¹¹The angel of the Lord said to her, "You have conceived and will have a son. You will name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard your cry of affliction. ¹²This man will be like a wild donkey. His hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand will be against him; he will settle near all his relatives." ¹³So she named the Lord who spoke to her: "You are El-roi," for she said, "In this place, have I actually seen the one who sees me?" ¹⁴That is why the well is called Beer-lahai-roi. It is between Kadesh and Bered. ¹⁵So Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son (whom Hagar bore) Ishmael. ¹⁶Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him.

Ishmael

- (1) He will be like a wild donkey.
- (2) He will create conflict with everyone
- (3) Everyone will create conflict with him.
- (4) He will be at odds with all his relatives.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ What role should obedience to God play in the believer's life?
- ❖ The Angel of the Lord comforted Hagar. Why is that significant?
- ❖ Ishmael and Isaac will be at odds. Abram's sin is going to impact generations. Why is it important for believers to remember that their sins will impact future generations?