

MISTAKES

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Mistakes are made daily by all. Some are deliberate, and some are not. Mistake is an (intentional) wrong action. A wrong word or statement will be likened to a mistake also. Nowadays, according to the way the word is used, any wrong statement or action is termed a mistake. Mistake is any incorrect thought or action.

Mistake normally brings consequences. It may be negative, it may be positive. Sometimes, the consequences depending on the mistake can be so destructive that one will groan all his life, or break up completely under its weight. We all have to live with the consequences of our mistakes daily. That is why we want to study this subject.

Mistakes and consequences of mistakes are supposed to be lessons from which we learn not to do the same thing again. In fact, the purpose of the documentation of the history of the Jews in relationship with God is for us to learn and be careful not to fall into the same mistakes

“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea. And were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. And did all eat the same spiritual meat. And did all drink the same spiritual drink. For they drank the spiritual Rock that followed them. And that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our example. To the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them: as it is written. The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it”. (1 Cor.10:1-13 KJV)

When wounds heal, the scars remain. So are some mistakes we make. We live and groan under the burden of the mistakes we have already made and even repented of.

**MISTAKES THAT HAVE DAMAGING EFFECTS
MAY BE FOR A LONG TIME OR SHORT TIME**

Some scars are small and unnoticeable. Some are small and noticeable depending on the part of the body that the scar is on. And some scar are bold and noticeable, almost disfiguring the person, so also are mistakes.

Some are not bordered about their scars. And some are too conscious of their scars. So also are mistakes and their consequences in the life of a man.

We want to look at some people in the Bible, their mistakes and the consequences of their action.

1 ADAM AND EVE

Adam and eve were the first to make this kind of mistake. They disobeyed the instructions of God, and ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil which God has commanded them not to eat off. Today man is still reaping from the consequences of their action

Because of their actions, evil entered into man, Satan took over the authority that God gave to man over the earth, and man was separated from God (Gen.3).

2. CAIN

Cain was the second, he killed his brother Abel. As a punishment for that mistake he led all his life as a vagabond, a wonderer on the whole earth. He was never able to stay in a place. Any land he went to rejected him (Gen.4:1-16).

You may wonder why I call sin a mistake. A mistake is any wrong action. And sins are wrong actions, though most of them are intentionally committed. It is a mistake to sin because the consequences are grave, it is indeed a mistake because most of the time, what we get is not what we bargained for. What Cain got was not what he expected. So it was a mistake for him to have killed his brother though he felt justified at the time the crime was contemplated and executed.

1. HAM

After the flood, Noah planted a vineyard, made harvest and got drunk with the wine from it and lay naked on the ground. Ham one of his sons saw him instead of covering him, he went and told his brothers mocking him. His brothers will not even look at his nakedness and covered him with a cloth. When Noah woke up from his stupor, he was told what happened. He cursed the son of Ham called Canaan. He made him slave under Shem the forefather of Israel. The land of Canaan was what God gave to Israel a descendant of Shem to fulfill that curse: (Gen. 9:20-27)

4. LOT

Lot the Nephew of Abraham made a mistake out of selfishness and chose the land of Sodom and Gomorrah because he felt it was like the “garden of the lord” because it was well watered. Instead of insisting that his uncle Abraham should choose first as the senior, he chose so that he does not loose what he called the “garden of the Lord” (Gen. 13).

First, he and his household among the entire city were captured by four kings that teamed up to attack Sodom and Gomorrah. It was Abraham that rescued him (Gen. 4:1-24).

Secondly, Sodom and Gomorrah was destroyed by God with fire. He left with nothing but his two daughters and his wife who became a pillar of salt on the way as she looked back against the instruction of the angels of God to them (Gen. 19:29).

Thirdly, as a result of what happened, fear set into Lot and he went and lived in a cave now as a very poor man. His daughters made him drunk for two successive nights, and slept with him one after the other in order to have children since there is no man around to marry. The result was Moab and Benammi who is the father of the Ammonites. God called them Bastards. And as bastards they were not permitted into the congregation of Israel until the tenth generation.

5. ABRAHAM

Abraham made mistake by taken Sarah's advice and sleeping with Hagar. Though Ishmael the child of that relationship was sent away from Abraham's house, he became a problem, and is still a problem to Israel today Gen. 16:1-12. Most Arab nations are Abrahamites. They are still at war till date with Israel.

6. MOSES

Moses as close as he was to God made a terrible mistake that robbed him of the opportunity of taking the people into the promise land as earlier promised because he struck the rock for water to come out instead of speaking to it as he was instructed by God. Num.20:1-13., Deut.32:48-52

7. ESAU

Esau lost his birth right because of food, and later his blessing to Jacob his junior brother who outsmarted him – Gen.25:27-34; Gen.27.

FAILURE TO DISCIPLINE YOUR CHILDREN

Eli as the High Priest of God knew the immoral sins of his sons (who were also Priests) were grave before God. And according to the law, they ought to be put out of the temple and killed. There are no sacred cows with God.

On the day of Aaron and his son's first Priestly function after the consecration days was over, his sons Nadab and Abihu were killed by God for offering to God unauthorized fire; not to talk of the immoral acts of Eli's sons inside the temple.

God killed Eli and his sons the same day, and took the high Priesthood from his lineage. God cursed him and his descendants – poverty, early death and no old age, removed Priesthood from him 1 Sam.2:22-36, 4:10-22.

Failure to discipline your children will result in terrible consequences.

DISOBEDIENCE

Saul king of Israel performed the duty of the Priest which it was not lawful for him to do. And for that, God took the kingdom away from him – 1 Sam. 13:1-15.

Again, he was instructed to destroy the Amalekites and everything they own. He spared their king – Agag and all the fat animals. Because of his disobedience, he lost the kingship to David 1 sam.15:1-35.

BACKSLADING

At the beginning of king Asa's reign over Judah, he sought the Lord and depended on him for everything (2 Chron.14). In chapter 15:2, God told King Asa that he is with him when King Asa is with him. King Asa served God with Zeal and brought about great reforms. Later, he did not trust the Lord as before. And God was angry with him. He took silver and gold from the temple of God and sent it to Benhadad king of Syria to break his treaty with king Baasha of Israel and support him because Baasha had come against him. It worked, but God was angry. God sent a prophet to him. He put the prophet in prison. He was afflicted with a disease on his feet He still did not seek the Lord, but the physicians. He died and never recovered – 2 Chro.15:16.

IMMORALITY

Reuben slept with his father's wife, and lost his birthright as firstborn to the sons of Joseph – Gen.35:22; Gen. 49:1-4; 1 Chron. 5:1-3

David committed adultery with Bethseba. To cover it up, he had the husband killed in war, and married the woman. His punishment lasted thirteen years – his son raped one of his daughters, violence, division, murder came into the family. Absalom, his son overthrew him as king and David ran away for his life. Absalom defiled David's concubines by lying with them on the roof top before all Israel. After Absalom was killed however, David returned to his throne – 2 Sam. 11-19

GOD USES OUR MISTAKES TO WORK OUT HIS GOOD AND PERFECT WILL IN OUR LIVES.

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28 NIV)

1. The mistake of Joseph's brothers in selling him to slavery was what God used to bring Joseph to the throne of Prime Minister in Egypt in order to save Israel and Egypt from the famine that was to hit the world at that time – Gen. 39.39.40-49.

2. Moses killed an Egyptian thinking he could help his people and stop the oppression. He ended up being a wanted man. He ran for his life to the land of Median. God used his mistake to take him to the wilderness to train him on how to take care of sheep which is a type of the people of Israel. When his training was complete, he was commissioned. Exod. 2,3

HOW TO TURN YOUR MISTAKE INTO TESTIMONIES OF TRIUMPH

1. Analyze the mistake you have made and the consequences suffered or still suffering.
2. Identify why you made the mistake you have made and how.
3. Find out how you can avoid such mistake in future.
4. Learn the lessons inherent in the mistakes and consequences.
5. Determine in your heart to apply the lesson learnt, and never to fall into the same mistake again.
6. Free yourself from guilt, and settle down to live with the consequences you cannot change.
7. Change what you can change. And what you cannot change, learn to live with it. Be at peace.
8. Pray for forgiveness and that the Lord will change your situation in mercy. And with all your heart, vow not to repeat same mistake again. And the Lord will give you a testimony.

COUNSEL

Be careful how you live your life from now on. Always remember that you will always reap what you sow whether it is good or bad. All actions and words will always bring back a response. Watch your words. Watch your steps. Look before you leap. Be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to react. Mistakes cannot be reversed. Once a deed is done, it is done; you only wait for the consequences.

Live by the word of God. Make Jesus Christ your Saviour and friend. Depend on the Holy Spirit and fellowship with him. Pray regularly and give your eyes and ears to the word of God.

Be wise. Walk prudently always. Show discretion in all your ways, and you will have no regrets. God bless you.