

Great People Failing Greatly | Abraham #2

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The Bible does not hide the weaknesses and follies of its characters. Abraham had just had a wonderful experience of God's goodness to him. He was given the promise to become the father of a nation that would bring blessing to the entire world. But then a trial showed up in his life and exposed a weakness.

Temptation Often Comes After Triumphs

Genesis 12:10-12 *Now there was a famine in the land, and [Abraham] went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are. When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live."*

A famine came upon the land where Abraham lived, so he moved to Egypt. When he entered Egypt, Abraham became fearful that his life would be threatened, so he lied. Picture yourself having a great moment with God on Sunday, but then on Monday you have to face a boss after you made a mistake. You're concerned that if you tell the truth you'll be fired or face a stiff penalty. So you lie. We all face these moments where we're tempted to lie or do something else that God's word prohibits.

[Related: [Abraham and the American Dream](#)]

Lying Demonstrates a Lack of Trust in God

Genesis 12:14-15 *When [Abraham] came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was a very beautiful woman. And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace.*

Abraham was fearful for his life. He was convinced that if the Egyptians discovered that Sarah was his wife, they would kill him. So he told the Egyptians that she was his sister. Sarah was a beautiful woman. When she entered the new country, news of her arrival reached the ears of Pharaoh. Pharaoh liked how Sarah looked and took her as one of his concubines. Pharaoh gave Abraham an abundance of goods to thank him for giving Sarah to him. Of course, this put Sarah in a terrible place while Abraham is sitting in the lap of luxury.

Abraham was clearly doubting the promise God had made to him. He had to go into another country and was fearful for his life. We can fall into the same trap when difficulties come into our lives. We can feel that God has lost control or that he's not going to come through on his promises. So we make the situation worse by resorting to something that God does not want us to do.

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With God, Failure Is Never Fatal

Genesis 12:17 *But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of [Abraham's] wife Sarai.*

God came back to Abraham to bring help to a dire situation. This episode of his life could have been far worse if not for God coming to his aid. Abraham had just been caught lying to the most powerful leader of Egypt. Let's not forget that Abraham was a man with no rights in a foreign country. After Pharaoh welcomed Sarah into his palace, several diseases were inflicted on him and his family. Pharaoh did not appreciate this. He was able to see that this was a result of Abraham's lie. He told Abraham to leave Egypt at once lest something worse happen. God provided protection to the man he called to represent him to the world.

We will see Abraham's journey with God go three steps forward and two steps back. As time went by, Abraham saw the undeserved faithfulness of God and began to trust him more. God acts the same way to his people today as he did with Abraham. We begin to mature in Christian character as we see God's goodness and loyal love to us. God actually turns our failures from being fatal, to being transformative.

[Related: [How to Forgive Yourself](#)]

Discussion Questions:

1. *Watch the video together or invite someone to summarize the topic.*
2. *Can anyone think of a famous person who was undone by lying?*
3. *Read [Genesis 12:10-12](#). Can you relate to how Abraham was tempted after having an encounter with God? What happened?*
4. *Read [Genesis 12:14-15](#). Talk of a time when a trial in your life tempted you to not follow God.*
5. *Read [Ephesians 4:25](#). What impact does lying have on our relationships? What impact does telling the truth have on relationships?*
6. *Read [Genesis 12:17](#) and [12:20](#). Talk about how God provided rescue to Abraham. How has God come to your aid when you messed up?*
7. *What's your response to the phrase, "With God, failure is never fatal"?*
8. *Write a personal action step based on this conversation.*