

Genesis 16.1-16

"God Blesses Some Messes"

EVER BEEN TO CHURCH - FELT CLOSE TO GOD - STRONG IN FAITH  
GET HOME > ARGUE WITH SPOUSE - YELL AT KIDS - ACT UNCHRISTIAN

ABE: MARVELOUS ENCOUNTER w/ GOD IN CH. 15/ NOW REST OF STORY

BIBLICAL RECORD NOT HEROIC BIOGRAPHY OF ABRAHAM  
IF SO, BIOGRAPHER WOULD HAVE LEFT THIS STORY OUT

HIRE BIOGRAPHER > GOOD DEEDS, WORDS / NOT REVEAL SINS

ABE - REAL MAN, REAL STRUGGLES, REAL PROBLEMS, FAILURES  
MAGNIFIES THE GRACE AND MERCY OF GOD – Love and Forgiveness

“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

Romans 15.4

“These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.”

1 Corinthians 10.11

BAD EXAMPLE EVEN SERVES AS POSITIVE INSTRUCTION FOR US  
WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF A LIFE OF FAITH??

## 1. Evidences of Faith

a. Timing of God BELIEVE GOD IS IN CHARGE OF ALL THAT HAPPENS

God is NEVER EARLY / NEVER LATE > Always Right on Time

Abe's Great Grandson > JOSEPH > Horrible Experiences at hands of his Brothers  
Looked at those Brothers: “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.” Genesis 50.20

DISCIPLE NAMED SARAI DID NOT SEE THINGS SO CLEARLY -

v. 1 “Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar; so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children.

ABRAM NOW 85 - TEN YEARS HAD PASSED AND STILL NO CHILD BORN

## A DELAY IN GOD'S PROMISE IS NOT A DENIAL OF GOD'S PROMISE

### GOD ORDERS AND DIRECTS ALL HISTORY

15.13 Then the LORD said to him, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years.

### *DELAY IS REALLY FROM OUR LIMITED PERSPECTIVE*

IMPATIENT MAN NAMED PETER > after years of walking with God writes:

“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”  
2 Peter 3.8-9

### b. Word of God    GOD HAS GIVEN A STANDARD FOR OUR FAITH

v. 2,3 “Go, sleep with my maidservant...So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.”

THIS WAS LEGAL IN ABE'S DAY - SERVANT GIRL AS SURROGATE WIFE

GRANDSON JACOB HAD HIS OWN HAREM - Leah, Rachel, Bilhah, & Zilpah  
THESE WERE PRACTICES COMMONLY DONE AND ACCEPTED

JUST LIKE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE > legal in some of our Homelands, incl. Mine  
WHY NOT - IT IS THEIR CIVIL RIGHT - WERE NOT HOMOPHOBIC - LEGAL

Just Like ABORTION - WOMAN'S RIGHT TO TAKE LIFE of Child in Her Womb  
SUBTLE AND SOMEWHAT UNDERSTANDABLE TEMPTATION

ABE WONDERED "I know I'm going to be father > Clear Message from God:

15.4 “a son coming from your own body will be your heir”

But God said nothing about Sarai’s body...and the Body of this Little Egyptian!

I BETTER OBEY MY WIFE AND GO SLEEP WITH THIS YOUNG LADY!

BELIEVER’S STANDARD NOT Society, Government, Courts, Church, Pastor  
STANDARD >> THE WORD OF GOD ALONE

Another Watchword of the Reformation SOLA SCRIPTURA > Scripture Alone

15.1 "the Word of the Lord came to Abram" / HE WAS A PROPHET

ULTIMATE PRAGMATIST - BUILD YOUR LIFE ON WORD OF GOD

Because: "Heaven & earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away"

Luke 21:33

c. Glory of God SARAH'S AGENDA WAS HER WILL BEING DONE

v. 2 "perhaps I can build a family through her."

Plan of God > NOT for Sarai to BUILD FAMILY > God Plan's to Build it Himself

GOD with whom Nothing is IMPOSSIBLE, Will DO the IMPOSSIBLE

Romans 4.17 "As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed--the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were."

PLAN OF GOD IS NOT FOR US TO BUILD A CHURCH

LORD JESUS: "on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it"

Matthew 16.18

SHAME of not HAVING CHILDREN can REALLY be PRIDE > "my will be done"

v. 5 "she despises me - I AM BEING MOCKED BY MY SLAVE!!"

CULTURE THAT IS A SHAME CULTURE - worried about what people think

MAY REALLY BE CULTURE FULL OF PRIDE - worried about own reputation

d. Peace of God v. 2 "Abram agreed to what Sarai said." // Adam followed Eve

DOES THAT MEAN MEN ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO AGREE WITH WIVES!?!?

MEANS > HUSBAND AND WIFE TOGETHER ARE TO AGREE WITH GOD

FOR ABE PEACE W/ WIFE WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN PEACE W/ GOD

ESSENCE OF COMPROMISE path of least resistance WAY OF THE WORLD

SOME PEOPLE ARE NEVER HAPPY - NO PEACE

OTHER PEOPLE ARE HAPPY WITH WRONG THINGS - FALSE PEACE

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Phil 4.6-7

## OBJECTIVE BASIS FOR SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE / REASON FOR PEACE

Romans 5.1 “Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”

## JESUS CHRIST MADE PEACE WITH GOD FOR US - OUR PROPITIATION

### 2. Evils of Faithlessness

SIN IS ULTIMATE HOME WRECKER GOD to CAIN > STILL TRUE TODAY

“sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.”

Genesis 4.7

#### a. Blame NOT FACING OUR WRONG DOING

v. 5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "*You are responsible* for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in *your arms*, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between *you and me*."

BLAME GAME > OLD AS GARDEN OF EDEN - now spoken by Sarai

MAN NAMED ADAM - this woman who you gave me / BLAMED GOD & EVE

SARAI HAD DEvised THE ENTIRE PLAN / BLEW UP IN HER FACE  
WE'RE NEVER WRONG / ALWAYS SOMEONE ELSE'S FAULT / VICTIMS

Last 20 years > asked Dr.'s “Don't our boys need some medication, Riddlin? ADD?”  
Little Sinners > Image of Big Sinner > Mother! > and Bigger Sinner > Father!!

“The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them.”

1 Timothy 5.24

THE PROBLEM WITH BLAMING IS YOU WILL LOOSE YOUR BLESSING  
THERE IS NO FORGIVENESS WITHOUT FACING YOUR WRONG DOING  
SIN IS NOT REMOVED WITHOUT REPENTANCE

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

1 John 1.8,9

## b. Irresponsibility NOT FACING OUR OBLIGATIONS

ABE WAS SITTING ON THE COUCH - BUSY WATCHING SPORTS ON T.V.  
SODOM WAS PLAYING GOMORRAH IN THE CHAMPIONSHIPS

v. 6 "Your servant is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

JUST AS ADAM WAS HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, SO WAS ABRAHAM  
1 Corinthians 11.3 "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."

Irresponsibility > SIN OF OMISSION - WHAT WE HAVE LEFT UNDONE  
Blame > SIN OF COMMISSION - WHAT WE HAVE DONE

BY NOT GETTING UP FROM THE COUCH - TURNING OFF THE T.V.  
ABE STARTED THE MODERN DAY ARAB - ISRAELI CONFLICT

ISHMAEL'S NATURE – Perhaps Provoked by Father's Neglect  
v. 12 "He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers."

## c. Rebellion HAGAR: NOT ONLY SINNED AGAINST, ALSO A SINNER

v. 4 "When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress."

EVEN ANGEL OF THE LORD CALLED HER A SERVANT OF SARAI

v. 8 "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from..."

EVEN THOUGH HER EMPLOYERS WERE NOT TREATING HER RIGHT  
SOLUTION TO PROBLEM IS NOT REBELLION BUT RESPECT

EVEN A SLAVE CAN FIND PERFECT FREEDOM IN SERVING JESUS:

"Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Colossians 3.22-24

DIFFICULT EMPLOYERS - QUIT, COMPLAIN, HIRE LAWYERS  
SOMETIMES THIS IS NECESSARY AND RIGHT

SOMETIMES YOU NEED TO ENDURE - GOD AT WORK IN SITUATION  
TO CHANGE YOU AND TO CHANGE OTHER PERSON

v. 9 Then the angel of the LORD told her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her."

HARD WORD > Go Back! > VERY DIFFICULT > But this is the Way of Blessing!

“When we have run away from something, we never want to go back to it. But if you have made a wrong turn in the direction of your life, as we often do, the only thing to do is to return to the point where you went wrong and start over. Anything else only takes you farther and farther away. In the same way, if we have rebelled against one proper authority, our problem is never solved by continuing in that rebellion or even seeking out another authority.”  
James Boice

### 3. Example of a Faithful God

Old Story > Modern Problem: Domestic Dispute > Love TRIANGLE-Other Woman

GOD BLESSES SOME MESSES - NOT ALL MESSES  
Persistent Rebellion CAN RESULT IN BEING GIVEN OVER TO SIN BY GOD

GOD DID NOT GIVE UP ON ABE > THAT'S COVENANT FAITHFULNESS

a. God Intervenes ONLY ONE LASTING REMEDY TO FAMILY PROBLEMS

PROBLEM WOULD CONTINUE TO INCREASE - CANCER WOULD GROW  
EXCEPT FOR THE INTERVENTION OF GOD - WHAT ALL FAMILIES NEED

Joshua 24.15 “But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

vs. 7,8 “The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. And he said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered.

FIRST TIME IN BIBLE - ANGEL OF THE LORD - APPEARS

GREAT MYSTERY – PERHAPS Pre-Incarnate Appearance of LORD JESUS  
v. 13 for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me."

SEEING THE ANGEL OF THE LORD = SEEING GOD HIMSELF

GOD makes first DRAMATIC APPEARANCE > Runaway Slave, Pregnant, Alone  
NOT Adam, Abel, Enoch, Methuselah - NOAH - MELCHIZEDEK - ABRAHAM  
BUT TO A YOUNG GIRL IN TROUBLE - HOMELESS & DESITITUTE

b. God's Ishmael THIS GRACIOUS GOD SEES AND HEARS HIS PEOPLE

v. 11, 13-16 "The angel of the LORD also said to her: "You are now with child and you will have a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your misery...She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me." That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered. So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael."

THERE IS AN IMPLIED RESTORATION OF HAGAR AND THE FAMILY

ABRAHAM NAMES HER SON THE NAME GOD GAVE HER = "God hears"  
God NEVER told Name to Abe > Abe believed Hagar > SAW Her Changed Life

NAME REMINDS ABE & SARAH AS THEY GRUMBLE - GOD HEARS

LASTING IMPLICATIONS OF CHOICES WE MAKE - esp. marriage & kids  
THERE IS ALWAYS A DOORWAY OF GRACE

George MORRISON "The victorious Christian life is a series of new beginnings"

TODAY OVER A BILLION PEOPLE ARE SONS OF ISHMAEL - MUSLIMS  
CONSIDER THE FATHER OF THEIR FAITH - IBRAHIM  
KORAN - ABRAHAM (Ibrahim) offered up Ishmael, not Isaac on ALTAR

c. God Increases STRANGE THAT THIS UNION COULD BE BLESSED

v. 10 The angel added, "I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count."

ESSENCE OF GRACE - GOD BRINGS GOOD OUT OF EVIL  
NO SUCH THING as a BASTARD IF A PERSON HAS A HEAVENLY FATHER

PRINCIPLE OF SANCTIFICATION AND BLESSING

1 Corinthians 7.14 "For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy."

ISHMAEL BECAME A SON ABE LOVED - HINDERED God's Greater Plan

17.18 Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!"  
PLEA WE NEED to PRAY for BILLION ISLAMIC SONS OF ISHMAEL TODAY

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION CAME THRU ANOTHER SON > ISAAC  
21.9-12 "Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking (Isaac), and she said to Abraham, "Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac." The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. But God said to him, "Do not be so distressed about the boy and your maidservant. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. "

A RIGHT TIME IN THE PLAN OF SALVATION TO SEND THEM AWAY  
DIFFERENT WAY TO GOD - WAY OF WORKS = ISLAM / NOT GRACE

2000 yrs Later > Apostle Paul writes Believers trying to earn favor w/ God by Works  
Galatians 4.28-30 "Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. At that time the son born in the ordinary way persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now. But what does the Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son." Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.

Galatians 4 > DIFFICULT CHAPTER OF BIBLE > Apostolic Commentary Gen 16  
Abe and Sarai > Inviting HAGAR > ACTING ON THEIR OWN > Self Directed

RESULT > Mess, God graciously Blessed > But NEVER FULLY REPAIRED

Abraham & Sarah > ISAAC > God Thing! > Humanly Impossible > Waiting on Him  
Waiting on the Lord > Trusting Fully in Him > THAT is the WAY OF BLESSING