

(Life of Abram) God Needs No Help – Part 7



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We have now come to the 16th chapter of Genesis in our study of the life of Abram. In this chapter we have an eyes view of what happens when we allow our flesh to rule instead of the spirit man.

Trying To Do God's Work (Genesis 16:1-3)

"Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. ²And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. ³And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife."

Abram is so excited about God's covenant promise of a son. He couldn't wait to share this exciting news to Sarai. Sarai listened attentively to Abram's news, then she replied "the Lord hasn't blessed me in all these years with a child, so perhaps, she says to Abram, God wants us to use my handmaid to bring about this promise." After all, it has been ten years since God promised us a son, and now once again God has reminded you of the promise of a son. So Sarai and Abram agreed to bring about God's promise of a son through their own efforts by using poor, unsuspecting Hagar, Sarai's Egyptian handmaid. During Biblical days this was not an uncommon practice. When a wife couldn't bare children, the husband would take the female servant of their home to raise up an heir for the family. Please note, this was a pagan custom and not God's will for Abram and Sarai. God didn't approve this action, but He allowed it because God will never override our choices.

The Flesh Never Succeeds (Genesis 16:4-6)

"And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes. ⁵And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the Lord judge between me and thee. ⁶But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face."

Abram so excited at the possibility of having a son to hold in his arms didn't hesitate with Sarai's purposed plan. He takes Hagar as his concubine and as he hoped, she conceived! When Hagar knew she was with child, she became prideful and turned against Sarai. She flaunted herself before Sarai displaying that she was able to do what Sarai couldn't do, conceive a child!

Sarai now realizes her big mistake, *"the flesh never profits anything but a painful heartache."* She approaches Abram in tears confessing her wrongful decision of the flesh. Realizing the consequences of her decision, she wants to undo the works of the flesh! I think we can all relate to this! Friends, when God blesses His children He adds no sorrow with it! Poor Sarai was experiencing the sorrow of operating in the flesh instead of the spirit. Sarai's solution to resolve the pain she felt in her heart was to be very harsh with Hagar. This harsh treatment caused Hagar to run away.

God To The Rescue (Genesis 16:7-9)

"And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. ⁸And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. ⁹And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands."

Hagar flees to the wilderness! With her mind is full of confusion, she ponders what is going to happen to me and my baby? I didn't ask for this trouble, I did what was told of me! Where will I go, how will I live? Then the most awesome thing that can ever happen to anyone happens to Hagar! The Angel of the Lord appears to her. Friends, don't miss this! This visitor is a theophany of none other than a visible manifestation of Jesus. He kindly questions Hagar giving her an opportunity to explain herself. Jesus knowing the potential danger she has placed herself in, encourages Hagar to return to Sarai and to submit to Sarai for the safety of herself and the unborn child. Notice how Jesus cares about those that have been mistreated!

God's Prophetic Message To Hagar (Genesis 16:10-12)

"And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. ¹¹And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with

child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. ¹²And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

The Angel of the Lord comforts Hagar and speaks to her prophetically. He tells Hagar she will bare a son and to name him Ishmael because the Lord has heard her affliction. The angel of the Lord also revealed to Hagar that she will be a mother of a multitude of people that will come forth from her son and that her son will be a man of war or a man of violence. This prophetic word was fulfilled in the nation of the Ishmaelites/Arabians.

Hagar Believes God (Genesis 16:13-14)

"And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? ¹⁴Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered."

Hagar was of Egyptian origin and she was used to worshipping creatures and gods created by man, so one can only imagine how taken Hagar must have been to have experienced an unspeakable, visible manifestation of "the God who sees!" She said, *"I have looked at the God who see!"* For her to know and understand this angel of the Lord to be God, 1) she probably heard Abrams testimonies of God's appearances, 2) or for one to be in the presence of the living God, you will know assuredly without a doubt this is "God!" I believe the latter to be true. Hagar knew without question she was in the presence of the Living God! How awesome! She had an encounter with the Living God who cared enough about her to protect her and Abram's unborn son of the flesh! Unfortunately, nowhere in the Bible does it record that Hagar and Ishmael accepted the Lord God as their God of worship.

Birth of The Flesh (Genesis 16:15-16)

"And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. ¹⁶And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram."

Abram's desire for a son became a reality! Hagar gave birth to a son and named him Ishmael. Holy Spirit records Abrams age for a reason (86 years old), which we will understand why in a later chapter.

Principles To Learn From This Chapter:

- God doesn't need help! Whatever God promises, He will bring about.
- The flesh never profits anything good in our lives, that's why we are to crucify the flesh.
- God never overrides our choices.
- There are consequences for our choices, good or bad.
- God cares about everyone, even those poorly treated.

- Whatever God has promised you, wait patiently for it, don't allow your flesh, which is the form of doubt to rule in your life.
- God makes Himself know to all, including the lost.

Observation: Although Hagar didn't serve the Lord God as her personal God, God still cared about her well-being. The same is true of today! The Bible tells us that *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"* (2 Peter 3:9).

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