

## “Beware of Shortcuts” (Genesis 16:1-16)

Are you a patient person? One of the best ways I know to determine your level of patience is to ask you to consider your driving habits. Does it kill you to decrease your speed in 25 mph zones? When you are waiting for a parking space in a busy parking lot, does your heart rate increase? When you see the traffic light turn yellow, do you floor it through the intersection? It is easy to think you are a fairly patient person until you ask yourself hard questions about your driving habits.

Richard Hendrix said, “Second only to suffering, waiting may be the greatest teacher and trainer in godliness, maturity, and genuine spirituality most of us ever encounter.”<sup>1</sup> If Hendrix is correct, and I believe he is, if we want to grow in godliness, we must grow in patience. We must learn to wait on God. In Genesis 16:1-16,<sup>2</sup> we will discover two principles that will help us to avoid the temptation to “make things happen.” First...

**1. Wait on God’s promises (16:1-6).** Moses begins our chapter with these words, “**Now Sarai, Abram’s wife had borne him no children, and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar.**” Verse 1 begins by identifying Sarai as “**Abram’s wife.**” Why is this necessary? The reader knows who Sarai is. We shall quickly see that this point is made for emphasis. God had promised Abram a son (12:2). But in Abram’s impatience, he adopted his servant girl’s son and named him Eliezer, which means, “God of help” (15:2-3). However, God rejected Eliezer and reaffirmed His promise to give Abram a son out of his own body (15:4). But ten years later, Abram is still waiting! Abram is 85 and Sarai is 75 years old. Undoubtedly, they must have been discouraged and disillusioned by the problem of Sarai’s barrenness (cf. 11:30). Sarai is likely feeling like a failure...when all of a sudden she remembers her Egyptian maid, Hagar. It is nearly certain that Sarai has acquired Hagar during their sojourn in Egypt (cf. 12:16).

So Sarai says to Abram, “**Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I will obtain children through her.’ And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.**” Sarai’s words are very telling. She acknowledges that the Lord has prevented her from bearing children. Yet she conjures up a solution to help God out. It is important to realize that God had indeed sovereignly prevented her from having children, not to frustrate Abram and Sarai, but to test them and to magnify His glory. But Sarai allowed her feelings to get the best of her and she made a tragic mistake. She suggested a pagan custom be followed and that Abram should get a child through Hagar.<sup>3</sup> Sarai was acting without sense, without foresight, without guidance, and without assurance. She could only say, “**...perhaps I will obtain children through her**” (16:2). This seems to be an ancient variant on the expression, “God helps those who help themselves!”

So what was Sarai’s rationale? First, Sarai likely said, “God made the promise that you, Abram, would have a son. He didn’t specifically say that *we* would have a son.” Second, “We are old! My biological clock is winding down! If we don’t do something soon, God’s promises won’t be fulfilled!” Finally, “This is a culturally acceptable practice.<sup>4</sup> No one will think any less of us.” Ancient documents reveal that when a woman could not provide her husband with a child, she could give her female slave as a wife and claim the child of this union as her own.<sup>5</sup> But just because something is culturally or even legally acceptable doesn’t make it right for the believer.<sup>6</sup> For example: abortion, adultery, and pornography are all legal but they are not moral or biblical.

Sarai asked Abram, her husband, to commit adultery and polygamy.<sup>7</sup> Tragically, Abram was all too happy to oblige. Maybe he said, “Well, honey, if that’s what you think is best, I’ll make the sacrifice for the good of the family. I’ll sleep with this young and attractive Egyptian.<sup>8</sup> It’s a tough job, but I guess I’ll

do it.” Now men, what would you have done? In our more fleshly moments, many of us would have followed in Abram’s footsteps. Would you have had the discipline and self-control to refuse your wife’s request? The phrase **“listened to the voice”** is a Hebrew idiom meaning “obeyed” (cf. 3:17). Abram listens to the voice of his wife and ignores what God has already told him (see Gen 15). For Abram, this was the beginning of failure. The same is true in our lives. When we pay more attention to the voices of human beings than to the voice of God, we are setting the stage for spiritual failure. Ignoring God and working problems out on our own only makes a bad situation worse. The consequences can be devastating (cf. Gal 6:7-8).<sup>9</sup>

Abram and Sarai could have avoided this predicament if they had waited on God. Unfortunately, they took matters into their own hands. Like Abram and Sarai, the first question we usually ask when we face a wall of frustration is, “What can I do?” Not, “What does God want me to do?”<sup>10</sup> There are times when this question cannot be answered quickly. Therefore, we must wait on God.

In 16:3, Moses pens these fateful words: **“After Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram’s wife Sarai took<sup>11</sup> Hagar the Egyptian,<sup>12</sup> her maid, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife.”** There is an ironic reversal here. Down in Egypt, trustless Abram had given Sarai over to the Egyptian Pharaoh (12:10-20). Now in Canaan, untrusting Sarai gave Abram over to her Egyptian servant. It is ironic how the tables have been turned. In Genesis 12, Abram’s unbelief caused him to agonize while Sarai was in Pharaoh’s palace. Now, Sarai is left to ponder what is going on in Hagar’s bedroom. Abram’s fiasco in Egypt was costly indeed.<sup>13</sup> Hagar was given a promotion. While Hagar was not on equal standing with Sarai, she did become a slave wife. If she produced the heir, she would be the primary wife in the eyes of society.<sup>14</sup>

The following chart draws several parallels between Genesis 16 and Genesis 3.<sup>15</sup>

Sarai spoke to her husband, Abram (16:2a)	Eve spoke to her husband, Adam (3:2)
Abram listened to the voice of his wife (16:2b)	Adam listened to the voice of his wife (3:17)
Sarai took Hagar to Abram (16:3a)	Eve took the fruit (3:6a)
Sarai gave Hagar to her husband (16:3b)	Eve gave the fruit to her husband (3:6b)

The results of Abram and Sarai’s sin were pride (16:4), jealousy (16:5), misery (16:6), and injustice (16:6).<sup>16</sup> In 16:4, Abram **“went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight.”** If Sarai’s volunteering Hagar as her surrogate scandalizes us, Abram’s passive, compliant conduct is even more offensive. He, not Sarai, had heard the voice of God. He had led them from Ur. Abram had had no divine directive to employ Hagar. Otherwise he would have led the way.<sup>17</sup> And Abram was fresh from the fiery presence of the Lord (15:12-21). But he did not question her idea. He did not object.<sup>18</sup>

Abram made at least four mistakes:

- 1) Abram failed by doubting the promise of God (Heb 11:5-6). Hudson Taylor, a famous missionary to China, said, “God’s work, done in God’s way, will never lack God’s supply.”
- 2) Abram failed by listening to his wife’s ungodly advice. Having said that let me also say that many marriages are in trouble because the husband doesn’t listen to his wife. Your wife is your helpmate and you would be wise to pay attention to her counsel.

- 3) Abram failed to test his wife's advice and counsel against God's Word. If your wife suggests something that is contrary to clear teachings of Scripture, then you must reject that counsel and follow what the Word teaches (cf. Acts 5:29).
- 4) Abram failed to pray for God's wisdom or guidance. Sometimes the prayer-less decisions we make seem so insignificant and harmless. But often these prayer-less decisions come back to haunt us. If Abram had stopped to think through this situation and consult God, he would have never gone through with it. He would have realized the outcome would be disastrous.

After Hagar conceived, Sarai was "**despised in her sight.**"<sup>19</sup> In Hagar's opinion Sarai had been demoted. This began the first martial triangle in biblical history. And it all came about because of impatience and disobedience.

Proverbs 30:21-23 says, "Under three things the earth quakes, and under four, it cannot bear up: Under a slave when he becomes king, and a fool when he is satisfied with food, under an unloved woman when she gets a husband, and a maidservant when she supplants her mistress."

In 16:5, Sarai became volcanic. The shaking ground erupted in anguished jealousy and bloodcurdling blame.<sup>20</sup> Though Sarai had initially given Abram the green light, she is now flashing raging red.<sup>21</sup> In her anger, Sarai said to Abram, "**May the wrong done me be upon you. I gave my maid into your arms, but when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her sight. May the LORD judge between you and me.**" [A contemporary rendering of this would be: "God will get you for this."<sup>22</sup> Logically, Sarai was wrong to place all the blame on Abram. After all, it was her idea. But actually she was right. He was the patriarch. He was the head of the home. God had spoken to him, not to her. He should never have allowed the situation. Abram was truly responsible for the "**wrong**" (lit. "violence") she was suffering.<sup>23</sup>

Abram is between the proverbial rock and a hard place. Unfortunately, he chooses the easy way out. In 16:6a, Abram said to Sarai, "**Behold, your maid is in your power; do to her what is good in your sight.**" Letting Sarai have her way was a dereliction of duty on the part of Abram. He was an accomplice to this sin by refusing to resist it or to rebuke Sarai. Sarai's stinging rebuke should have been a wake-up call, but it served only to cause Abram to retreat further. Rather than leading his wife out of the mess he had allowed to occur, he dodged his responsibility, preferring to pass the buck to Sarai. I think it can safely be said that, at this point, Sarai was wearing the "tunic" in the family.<sup>24</sup> Abram becomes a passive, sissified male that abandons headship of his home (Eph 5:23).

With Abram "washing his hands" of the conflict between his two wives, Sarai began treating Hagar harshly<sup>25</sup> (16:6b). The word translated "**harshly**" is used later to describe how the Egyptian slave masters would treat Israel. As a result of Sarai's harsh treatment, Hagar fled from her presence (16:6b). Running away from our problems is never the answer. Barnhouse writes, "If we seek to change our circumstances, we will jump from the frying pan into the fire. We must be triumphant exactly where we are. It is not a change of climate we need, but a change of heart. The flesh wants to run away, but God wants to demonstrate His power exactly where we have known our greatest challenge."<sup>26</sup>

The next time you are tempted to sprint ahead of God's best for you, run your dilemma through these simple checks:<sup>27</sup>

- 1) Walk a little slower. Exercise patience. Don't rush God's plans for your life. Learn to practice the arts of biblical meditation, silence, and solitude.

- 2) Ask God for patience. My favorite book title is *I Prayed for Patience and Other Horror Stories*. We laugh at this only because we can relate. But what would happen if you and I seriously prayed that God would grant us greater patience to fulfill His will. Do you think this is a prayer that God will answer (John 14:13-14; 1 John 5:14-15)? Absolutely!
- 3) Imagine the worst-case scenario. Think how a poor decision will impact you and others—not only short-term, but long-term as well. Chances are the ramifications of that decision will be far more devastating than you could possibly predict.

[God has called us to wait on His promises. Now we will learn that we are to...]

**2. Watch for God's intervention (16:7-16).** After fleeing from her master, Sarai, Hagar naturally headed west toward Egypt. In 16:7-8, we read, **“Now the angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur [a word meaning “wall”].<sup>28</sup> He said, ‘Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from and where are you going?’<sup>29</sup> And she said, ‘I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.’”** Here in Genesis 16 is the first appearance of “the angel of the Lord” in the Bible. There is debate about who this angel is, but I believe him to be the preincarnate Christ. The text seems to support this conclusion. First, He speaks authoritatively in the first person (16:10-12). Second, Sarai identifies Him as God (16:13). Later in Genesis, Joseph describes the angel of the Lord as “the angel who has redeemed me from all evil” (48:16). If this is Jesus, this is similar to the time in John 4 when Jesus sat with the woman at the well. Both women were not Jews and both were sexually sinful women. Yet, Jesus met them both with grace and mercy (cf. Ps 34:17-18).

The associations between Genesis 16 and Genesis 3 continue in this section of the narrative as well. Just as the Lord sought Adam and Eve in the garden after the fall (3:9), the angel of the Lord came searching for Hagar in the desert. The Lord asked Adam and Eve, “Where are you?” so the angel of the Lord found Hagar in the wilderness and greeted her with the similar question (16:8): **“Where have you come from, and where are you going?”** The key issue to note is that God actively seeks man out even when man does not want to be found. When man runs away, God chases him down. God is far more interested in man than man could ever be interested in God.

Did you notice that God is strangely absent from the first six verses? It is true that God was given the credit (or the blame!) for preventing Sarai from having children (cf. 16:2). But no one had consulted God or sought His will. No one had called to remembrance His promise to provide a son. More distressing is the fact that God has not yet spoken in our text. It would seem that since man had chosen to go his own way, God stepped aside to let him live with the consequences of disobedience. Only to Hagar did God speak. And He sought her while she was running away. God continues to do this in our lives today. He is a faithful God who chases His children down.

In 16:9, the angel of the Lord said to Hagar, **“Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority.”** Hagar is instructed not only to submit to Sarai’s authority, but to whatever mistreatment that involves. God calls for Hagar to humble herself. We cannot read this command without recalling Peter’s instructions to Christian slaves in his first epistle: “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a man bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God” (1 Pet 2:18-20).

When God finds us wandering, this is often what He says, “Return and submit!” It may be a bad marriage, financial debt, or broken relationships. However, one word of caution is necessary here. This verse does not mean that in a marital situation, if you are being physically abused, you ought to stay there and take the abuse. That’s not what this means at all. The underlying principle being taught is that you cannot run to Egypt to avoid your problems. You cannot run away from them.<sup>30</sup>

I believe the primary reason that God calls Hagar to return to Sarai is so that Ishmael will have a father during the formative years of his life. God calls Hagar back so that Ishmael can have his dad. God is taking care of the boy. He is thinking about the child. Did you know that 40% of children don’t have a dad? This is a horrifying statistic that is not bound to improve. Yet, God is always concerned about children, especially those that are fatherless. If you are a father, please invest well in your children. If you are not a father, invest in someone else’s children. One of the primary purposes of the church is to ensure that children are being cared for and developed in the Lord. You and I must each do our part.

In 16:10-11, the angel of the Lord said to Hagar, **“I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be too many to count.’ The angel of the LORD said to her further, ‘behold, you are with child, and you will bear a son; and you shall call his name Ishmael, because the LORD has given heed to your affliction.’”**<sup>31</sup> It is only in association with her return to Sarai and her submission to Sarai that the Lord offered Hagar a blessing. Abram, Isaac, and Jacob are given a similar promise but Hagar is the only woman that is given a promise like this. She was an honored woman. The name Ishmael means “God hears” or “God has heard.” This name served as a reminder to Hagar. Whenever she murmured or sang it to her baby, she would commemorate this event. Even when he was so difficult that she shouted his name, she recalled God’s intervention.<sup>32</sup>

In 16:12, the Lord goes on to say that Ishmael **“will be a wild donkey of a man, his hand will be against everyone, and everyone’s hand will be against him; and he will live to the east of all his brothers.”** The prophecy is not an insult. The wild donkey lived a solitary existence in the desert away from society. Ishmael would be free-roaming, strong, and like a bedouin; he would enjoy the freedom his mother sought. The word **“hand”** represents strength. His free-roaming lifestyle would put him in conflict with those who follow social conventions. There would not be open warfare, only friction because of his antagonism to their way of life.

In 16:13-14, Hagar called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, **“You are a God who sees’; for she said, ‘Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?’ Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.”** This is the only place in the Bible where a person names God. Hagar names God *El Roi*—the God who sees.<sup>33</sup> The Hebrew name **“Beer-lahai-roi”** means “The well of the living One who sees me.” The text suggests that God takes up the cause of those who are oppressed. In the midst of jealousy, cruelty, irresponsibility, impatience, and abundant sinfulness God’s grace stepped into the life of this despised slave girl, and showed her His kindness. From that point on, she would never forget what had happened to her. She now knew that God was the One who had been caring for her all along.<sup>34</sup>

God sees you where you are and He cares for you as you are.<sup>35</sup> God sees our mistakes and yet treats them with mercy. He sees our sufferings and in His appointed time has plans to bring them to an end. We may sometimes feel that God is unconcerned about us, but He is faithful and always hears and “sees” (Exod 3:7) the misery of His people.<sup>36</sup>

Our chapter closes with these words: **“So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to**

**him**”<sup>37</sup> (16:15-16). These verses make it clear that Hagar obeyed the Lord and returned to Sarai. Upon her return, she no doubt told Abram how the Lord had met her in the wilderness by the spring. Abram then accepted Hagar’s testimony and named the boy Ishmael at Hagar’s request.<sup>38</sup> There is no mention of Sarai in these closing verses. Even Abram responds to Hagar. It seems that Sarai’s intervention and Abram’s acquiesce may have delayed the promise for some thirteen years. Shortcuts do not promote God’s purposes.<sup>39</sup>

Ishmael became the father of all the Arabic peoples who to this very day are hostile toward the natural born son, Isaac, who would become the father of the nation of Israel. In fact, the current crisis in the Middle East can be traced back to Abram’s decision to “make things happen” by helping God fulfill His promise of a son.

The tragic truth is there are some sins that cannot be undone in this world. Some sins will have lasting consequences. So before you jump the gun...stand back. Take some time. Read God’s Word. Think. Pray. And obey the revealed will of God.<sup>40</sup>

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Preaching Today Citation: Richard Hendrix, *Leadership*, Vol. 7, no. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Sailhamer observes, "Chapter 16 appears to contain allusions to three other important passages in the Pentateuch: Genesis 3:6; 12:3; and Deuteronomy 7:1-6. By bringing the events of Hagar and Abram into the larger context of these other passages, the author enlarges the reference of the story beyond Abram and Hagar as individuals and ties their actions to the themes of the book as a whole." John H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*: EBC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), Electronic ed.

<sup>3</sup> This was a proposal that the wives of her grandson, Jacob, would later repeat to him (Gen 30:3-4, 9).

<sup>4</sup> Kaiser writes, "At the creation of the first couple, God had stated a strong case for monogamous relationships as being the norm for marriage. The first departure from this standard came with Lamech in Gen 4:19, when he took two wives. But the exceptions to this rule of one wife for each man are not so numerous as first impressions may seem. Apart from the kings of Judah and Israel (wherein other considerations were also operating, such as the possibility of using the foreign wife as a hostage in order to assure compliance with treaties), there are hardly more than a dozen and a half examples of polygamous marriages in the entire Old Testament." Walter C. Kaiser, *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997 [1996]), Electronic ed.

<sup>5</sup> Kaiser summarizes, "This can be seen from numerous clay tablets that come from this period of time. Thus, for example, the Code of Hammurabi, the Nuzi Tablets, the Alalakh Tablets and the Mari Tablets (all derived from approximately the larger Near Eastern area and a period of two to three centuries around the time of the patriarchs) provide for exactly the very eventuality listed here in this text. A barren wife could be credited with children that her maidservant bore to the wife's husband. Walter C. Kaiser, *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997 [1996]), Electronic ed.

<sup>6</sup> Constable writes, "Sarai tried to precipitate the will of God by seizing the initiative from God (cf. 3:17). She and Abram chose fleshly means of obtaining the promised heir rather than waiting for God in faith (cf. 25:21). They let their culture guide them rather than God." Dr. Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Genesis* (<http://www.sonlight.com/constable/notes/pdf/genesis.pdf>, 2005), 145.

<sup>7</sup> Polygamy is wrought with favoritism, jealousy, and mistreatment (e.g., Gen 25:28; 27:1-45; 35:22; 38:18-28; 2 Sam 3:2-5; 13:1-29; 15:1; 18:33; 1 Kgs 11:1-4).

<sup>8</sup> Undoubtedly, Hagar was an attractive woman. Pharaoh would not have given Abram a slave girl as part of a dowry if she were unappealing to look upon.

<sup>9</sup> Ed Dobson, *Abraham: The Lord Will Provide* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1993), 88.

<sup>10</sup> Gene A. Getz, *Abraham: Trials and Triumphs* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1976), 83.

<sup>11</sup> Towns points out, "The Hebrew verb *wattikach* here translated 'took' is a verb which is normally reserved to describe the violent taking of captives in battle and is in other places translated with such verbs as to seize, to lay hold of, to take from, to take away, to capture, and to conquer." Elmer Towns, *History Makers of the Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1989), 100.

<sup>12</sup> Particularly important in this regard are the similarities between Genesis 16 and Deuteronomy 7:1-6, the prohibition of taking foreign wives, a text that had enormous importance to later generations of Israelites (cf. Ezra 9).

<sup>13</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 239.

<sup>14</sup> See NET Study Notes. See [www.netbible.org](http://www.netbible.org).

<sup>15</sup> Sailhamer, *Genesis*, Electronic ed.

<sup>16</sup> W. H. Griffith Thomas, *The Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1985), 45.

<sup>17</sup> Abram's passivity contrasts with his earlier valiant action to save Lot from his captors (Gen 14:13-16).

<sup>18</sup> Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing*, 239.

<sup>19</sup> The Hebrew verb *qalal* means "to despise; to treat lightly; to treat with contempt." Sailhamer comments, "The repeated use of the verb 'to curse' (*qalal*) in 16:4-5 appears also to mark an intentional association of the passage with the patriarchal blessing in 12:3 since *qalal* occurs with a similar meaning only in these two passages in Genesis. It is mentioned twice within 16:4-5 that Hagar, the Egyptian 'despised' (*qalal*) Sarai, the very thing that 12:3 warned would end in God's curse: 'Whoever curses [*meqalleleka*] you I will curse [*'a'or*].' (It is noteworthy that one of the few other occurrences of the verb is Deut 23:5, a passage with long-standing association with Deut 7:1-6 and the theme of 'foreign wives' within the OT canon.)" Sailhamer, *Genesis*, Electronic ed.

<sup>20</sup> Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing*, 240.

<sup>21</sup> Charles R. Swindoll, *Abraham: The Friend of God* (Fullerton, CA: Insight for Living, 1989), 53.

<sup>22</sup> See NET Study Notes.

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<sup>23</sup> Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing*, 240.

<sup>24</sup> Bob Hallman, "Making It Happen!" (Genesis 16:1-16)

[http://calvarychapel.com/kauai/teachings/genesis\\_pdf/gen\\_16\\_notes.pdf](http://calvarychapel.com/kauai/teachings/genesis_pdf/gen_16_notes.pdf), 4 (5/30/2005).

<sup>25</sup> Sailhamer writes, "The key term throughout the chapter is 'misery' (*'oni*), which occurs as a noun in v. 11b and as a verb in v. 6 (*watte`anneha* 'mistreated') and v. 9 (*wehith`anni* 'submit'). Hagar was afflicted by Sarai (v. 6); she was told to put herself back under that affliction (v. 9); and the Lord heard her affliction (v. 11)." Sailhamer, *Genesis*, Electronic ed.

<sup>26</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Genesis: A Devotional Exposition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984).

<sup>27</sup> Swindoll, *Abraham: The Friend of God*, 54.

<sup>28</sup> Hagar stopped at a spring of water on the way to Shur, a site located east of Egypt (Gen 25:18; 1 Sam 15:7).

Ronald F. Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 166.

<sup>29</sup> I find it interesting that God spoke to Hagar in this chapter, but not to Abram or Sarai. In fact (as far as we know)

God did not speak to Abram for 13 years (cf. Gen 17:1).

<sup>30</sup> Dobson, *Abraham*, 91.

<sup>31</sup> An angel announces the birth of Hagar's son much like the angel Gabriel in Luke 1 proclaims the birth of Jesus. Both announcements are given to the mother (Hagar and Mary), both women are greeted, both are told that they will bear a son, both are given God's favor, both are given their son's name, the future achievements of each son are promised, and the women both respond with thanks to God.

<sup>32</sup> Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing*, 242.

<sup>33</sup> See 2 Chron 16:9 and Prov 15:3.

<sup>34</sup> Michael Eaton, *Experiencing God* (Carlisle, UK: OM Publishing, 1998), 83.

<sup>35</sup> James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis 12-36 Vol. 2* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985 [1998]), 569.

<sup>36</sup> Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 167.

<sup>37</sup> Paul wrote that this story contains (not is) an allegory (Gal 4:24). Hagar represents the Mosaic Covenant, and Ishmael is its fruit (slaves). Sarai is the Abrahamic covenant, and Isaac is its fruit (free sons). Children of the flesh persecute children of the promise (Gal 4:29).

<sup>38</sup> Boice, *Genesis 12-36*, 573.

<sup>39</sup> Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing*, 243.

<sup>40</sup> Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing*, 244.