

# God Sees You!

Genesis 16:3-6, 10-14

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## A. Caught Up (16:3-4):

1. Live – After living a nomadic life, fighting the king of Chedorlaomer, Abraham made Canaan a place of residence. The family finally had stability. Sometimes the more comfortable we become, the worst things can become. Sometimes we want to run from the challenges that God gives us for a normal life only a normal to lead us away to make us apathetic in our faith.

a) It was a serious matter for a man to be childless in the ancient world, for it left him without an heir (we see Abram, bring up Eliezar; Gen. 15:2). But it was even more calamitous for a woman: to have a great brood of children was the mark of success as a wife; to have none was ignominious failure. So throughout the ancient East polygamy was resorted to as a means of obviating childlessness. But wealthier wives preferred the practice of surrogate motherhood, whereby they allowed their husbands to “go in to” (בוא אל) their maids, a euphemism for sexual intercourse (cf. 6:4; 30:3; 38:8, 9; 39:14). The mistress could then feel that her maid’s child was her own and exert some control over it in a way that she could not if her husband simply took a second wife. So Sarai here expresses the hope that she may “have sons through her.” “The verb as it stands (אבנה) can only mean ‘I shall be built up.... At the same time, however, it is an obvious word play on בן ‘son’ ” (Speiser, 117).[\[1\]](#)

b) Lived in Canaan ten years. Sarai was tired of waiting on God especially since in her day it was especially very embarrassing that she did not have a child.

- Abram was now 85 years old.
- Although advanced (12:4 – 75 yrs. Old) in age at the time of his call, Abram would live for another full century (25:7).
- Abraham was 86 when Ishamel was born (16:16).

2. Took – Hagar was not given an option as to whether she would be a surrogate mother or not. She was taken by Sarah to be given to Abraham to have a child for Sarah. There was nothing that was going to stop Sarah. Other people's decisions, like parents, may have allowed your life to be challenging.

- a) Notice the passage said that Abraham listened to the voice of his wife.
- b) Slave women or bonds women were considered both property and legal extensions of their mistress. As a result it would be possible for Sarai to have Hagar perform a variety of household tasks as well as to use her as a surrogate for her own barren womb.
- c) Sarai took over the leadership of the home and Abraham decided to be a passive husband to somehow create peace. Jesus is hungry Satan sought to take leadership (Luke 4:1-11); turn the stone to bread.
- d) Peace is not a feeling. Peace is a person, the Holy Spirit (John 14:27). We must trust God's Word, remain in His Word in order to have peace.

3. Given you – Hagar was placed before Abraham to produce a child no matter how long took. Hagar was going to be the woman sleeping with Abraham (she became his second wife) from this time forward until Hagar became pregnant.

- a) Hagar was an Egyptian woman who belonged to Sarai who gave her to Abram to provide for him and God the promised child. The Nuzu tablets reveal that this practice was common, and some of the marriage contracts specify that a barren wife must provide a woman for her husband for the purpose of procreation. This probably explains why God, who did not provide Abram a written law, did not become angry with Abram, and why Abram did not refuse the process.

4. Abraham went into Hagar - Abraham did not pray about this matter, seek godly advice maybe from Melchizedek, if not God. Abraham with no hesitation sought to fulfill Sarai's wishes. Like

Adam, Abraham, under pressure, followed his wife's lead. When Satan is going to make a move he always reverses God's order.

- a) And he went in unto Hagar. Sarai was acting in thorough accord with the customs of other people in her day (cf. the Nuzu tablets). But Abram and Sarai were expected to hold themselves to a higher standard than that of the people around them. Abram, the friend of God, exercised a richer faith and was bound by a purer code. (The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: Old Testament (Ge 16:4). Moody Press)

5. Conceived - In their lack of faith and disobedience God allowed Hagar to be pregnant (Psalm 127:3).

- a) Abraham refuse to take leadership and things went from bad to worse (vs. 6).

6. When she saw conceived – Hagar came to a complete understanding that God made her pregnant and Sarai is not. Hagar acted as if this made her more of a wife to Abraham than Sarai.

7. Was despised in her sight - Hagar gave Sarai no respect Sarai as her superior. She continuously did not take any directive Sarai gave her seriously. In all this Abraham said nothing.

8. Was despised in her sight - Many times relationships become messy because we choose not to wait for God to fulfill His Word. We choose to lean to our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5-6).

- a) All three of the persons in the triangle suffered. Sarai blamed Abram for the whole trouble, but he had only carried out her suggestion. Jealousy changed the atmosphere completely, Peace, harmony, and happiness could not exist in that home. And the home was on the point of breaking up. Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: Old Testament (Ge 16:4). Moody Press.

9. Was despised in her sight - When we choose to disobey God things may not work out the way we planned but our plans can work out the way we didn't plan for it to do so. We can decide to do whatever we plan to do but it is God who controls the results.

a) Baby momma drama began and exist today.

## B. Thrown Down (16:5-6):

1. A Sarai said to Abram – Sarai could not take Hagar’s attitude any longer so she came to her husband and repeatedly kept telling him how Hagar was behaving.
2. May the wrong done to me be upon you; unrighteous – Sarai viewed how Hagar was threatening her was an injustice. Sarai followed the Nuzu Law so Hagar was still her handmaiden so the way Hagar was acting was very disruptive and Abram was not doing anything about it.
3. Given MY maid into YOUR arms – By using the personal pronouns, Sarai implies that Abram had complete control of Hagar so now that Hagar was mistreating Sarai he is the one with authority to stop her especially when Hagar is disrespecting her.
4. When she saw she had conceived – Women viewed themselves, once becoming a wife, as being completely a wife when they in turn become a mother. So once Hagar came to a complete understanding that God made her pregnant and not Sarai she was more a complete wife to Abraham than Sarai. This led Hagar, a person not ordained by God, to look down on Sarai. Again Abraham does nothing.
5. Abram said - Abram listened to Sarai but continually said he will not take on Hagar.
6. Behold, your maid is in your power – Abram response to Sarai demonstrates that he was not going to take responsibility for what Sarai did.
7. What is good in your sight - Abram told Sarai she has the authority to do whatever she believes is best for how Hagar’s attitude is addressed when Hagar is in her presence.
8. Harshly; Afflicted – Sarah constantly tried forcefully (may have included inflicting pain) to get Hagar to submit to her.

- a) Afflicted her. Hebrew *ānâ* means to “oppress, depress, afflict.” In this case it may mean to “persecute or ill-treat.” Sarai may have persecuted Hagar with heavy duties or bodily punishment. Whatever the persecution, it so angered, shamed, or embarrassed her as to drive her from her mistress’ presence. Passionate jealousy and bitterness set the two women against each other. And Abram was not much help to either of them. Conditions grew worse by the moment.[\[2\]](#)
  - b) Sarah after giving birth to Isaac ask Abraham to send Ishmael away. According to the Nuzu tablets, such action was prohibited, and this may be the reason Abraham was so reluctant to expel Ishmael until God Himself gave him permission to do so. Hagar and Ishmael were sent away with only bread and a skin of water.
  - c) The word implies that, in her violent bursts of resentment, Sarai frequently had, or threatened to have, recourse to blows, until at length Hagar, perceiving the hopelessness of maintaining the unequal strife, resolved to escape from what had become to her in reality, as well as in name, a house of bondage. (from Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by Biblesoft)
9. Fled – Hagar refused to accept how Sarai was treating her so they determinatively ran from being the presence of Sarai.
- a) Hagar never returns to her country probably because she knew that she would not be accepted back. So goes to get a wife for him in Egypt but she never stayed. How many women became pregnant and there is no home?

### **C. Built Up (16:10-14):**

- 1. Angel of the Lord – Because any child from Abraham will be blessed. The mysterious messenger of God who sometimes is described as the Lord Himself (Gen 16:10-13; Ex 3:2-6; 23:20; Judges 6:11-18) because He speaks for God in the first person directly communicates with Hagar concerning her son.

- a) It may be, however, that , as the Lord's personal messenger who represented him and bore his credentials, the angel could speak on behalf of (and be identified with) the One who sent him (see especially 19:21; 18:2, 11; 19:2). Whether this "angel" was The second person of the Trinity remains there therefore uncertain. Shur -- located east of Egypt (see 25:18: 1 Sa. 15:7).
2. He said - The Angel of the Lord verbally communicated to Hagar with every intention to gain her attention and obedience.
- a) The “angel’s” heartening word to Hagar was that she should go back to the hard situation she had left, take up her burden, wait for the fulfillment of the divine plan, and look for the day when her son, Ishmael, should become the head of an important tribe. Ishmael (*God heareth*) was to be a “wild ass of a man,” with strength and daring, and a ferocious disposition. He would live wild and unshackled, in the wilderness, without friends or loyalties. His descendants were destined to grow into a mighty horde of Bedouins, wild, free, treacherous, reckless men, roaming the open spaces of the desert.[\[3\]](#)
3. Behold – The Angel of the Lord knowing Hagar was distressed and homeless demanded her attention to explain to her He is watching over her.
- a) Single and parenting is burdensome; Hagar and Ishmael were homeless and hopeless:
- Hagar had the burden of feeding and caring for her son without any support (Gen. 21:14) -- lack of provision.
  - Hagar had no place to go (Gen. 21:14) -- lack of direction
  - Hagar was afraid (21:17) -- lack of protection

4. The Lord has given heed – The Lord who is always in control and has authority over all things told Hagar that He knows about everything she is going through.
  - a) Why was Ishmael blessed (16:10)? Because the Abrahamic covenant stated that any offspring of Abraham would be blessed, even if that offspring was not received according to the promise. The descendants of Ishmael are modern-day Arabs, blessed with incredible wealth that silently existed beneath their tents even at the time of Hagar: the wealth of oil.[\[4\]](#)
  
5. Affliction – The Lord was not just aware of Hagar and her son He also was well aware of her emotional pain and physical punishment. God’s silence during her pain did not mean He was absent.
  - a) The verb "treat harshly" or "afflict," was used in 15:13 in the prediction of Israel's enslavement in Egypt. Tribble says, "It characterizes, for example, the sufferings of the entire Hebrew population in Egypt, the land of their bondage."
  
6. A wild donkey, people will be against Him – God knows what He has in store for us, how He will protect us and bless us.
  - a) The pain of the child being separated from his father and the father being separated from the child (Gen. 21:10-13, 17; 17:18, 23-27; 25:9).
  - b) Ishmael (*God heareth*) was to be a “wild ass of a man,” with strength and daring, and a ferocious disposition. He would live wild and unshackled, in the wilderness, without friends or loyalties. His descendants were destined to grow into a mighty horde of Bedouins, wild, free, treacherous, reckless men, roaming the open spaces of the desert.[\[5\]](#)

7. Then she called the name of the Lord – Hagar responds to the Lord by shouting loudly the name of the Lord. It is as if she is acknowledging that the Lord has His authority based on His reputation to make things come through. Hagar so acknowledges the Lord’s power and authority she returns to Sarai. This exposes to us how much she believes in who the Lord is.
  - a) This is a common Semitic name meaning “El [God] has heard” the parents and given them a son, or “May El [God] hear” the boy and help him. The particular interpretation given here is closest to the first, “The Lord has noticed [lit. ‘heard’] your oppression.”
  - b) “You are El, who sees me.” In Scripture when God sees, he cares (cf. 29:32; Exod 3:7). In appearing to Hagar, the Lord has shown he cares for her. Note though that she calls God El, whereas the narrator calls him the Lord, Yahweh, the name of God revealed to Moses (Exod 3:14–15; 6:3). The God who rescued Hagar in the wilderness is the one who redeemed Israel from Egypt.[\[6\]](#)
8. Spoke; speaking – By saying ‘the Lord who spoke to her’ is a way of making sure everyone knows that she did hear His voice. This is not a dream. This took place in space and time.
9. You are a God who sees – Hagar was exposed to many gods in Egypt. To now hear from the Lord God who tells her about her son, explains her future and provides her His promise to care for her causes her to become convinced that the Lord God has eyes through which he can clearly see and understand all that is taking place.
  - a) Hagar was overjoyed to recognize God in the experience, and to see him to be a gracious, kindly, thoughtful observer of a poor individual in dire need. She responded with reverent faith. The well or spring was named Beer-lahai-roi. This name has been variously translated and amended. Perhaps as good a rendering as any is The well of the living one who seeth me. Hagar was moved mightily by the realization that she had been in the very presence of the mighty God and that she was still alive. Perhaps the well was in the vicinity of Kadesh (cf. 16:14), about fifty miles south of Beer-sheba. The boy was born, and the name Ishmael was given to him by Abram, then eighty-six years old. Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: Old Testament (Ge 16:13). Moody Press.



10. She said – Hagar is completely convinced that the only reason she is alive is because she met with the God who sees and He is a true God.
11. After seeing Him – Hagar claims to have a complete understanding of who God is.
12. When she saw – God is faithful to serve us in our worse times and provide us hope for a great future if we continue to listen to Him.

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[1] Wenham, G. J. (1994). [Genesis 16–50](#) (Vol. 2, p. 7). Word, Incorporated.

[2] Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). [The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: Old Testament](#) (Ge 16:6). Moody Press.

[3] Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). [The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: Old Testament](#) (Ge 16:9). Moody Press.

[4] Hughes, R. B., & Laney, J. C. (2001). [Tyndale concise Bible commentary](#) (p. 16). Tyndale House Publishers.

[5] Pfeiffer, Charles F.: *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary : Old Testament*. Chicago : Moody Press, 1962, S. Ge 16:9

[6] Wenham, G. J. (1994). [Genesis 16–50](#) (Vol. 2, p. 11). Word, Incorporated.