



Abram's Bad Decision that Broadened His Future Miseries: His Adultery, Hagar's Pregnancy, Sarai's Cruelty, the Lord's Grace, Gen 16:1-6, 9

- 39) This account reminds us of Adam's fall in Eden. Sarai doubts the faithfulness, the veracity, the omnipotence, and the immutability of the Lord who gave His Word that Abram would sire a child from his own loins (Genesis 15:4).
- 40) Sarai has an impatient desire to bring this about by any means. She suggests a solution that does not seem unreasonable to Abram in an effort to get the family started on her schedule instead of the Lord's.
- 41) Sarai lusted to be the matriarch of a great nation but became worried that Abram would soon grow too old to sire a child and thus in order to move things along she tempts Abram with an idea from back home: "How about hooking up with a concubine? Say, for instance, Hagar?"

Genesis 16:3 - And after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram's wife [**יִשְׁשָׁק** 'Ishshah], Sarai, took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to her husband [**יִשְׁ** 'Ish], Abram, as his wife [**יִשְׁשָׁק** 'Ishshah].

- 42) This is yet another satanic device. In Eden, Lucifer's strategy was to lure Ishah into violating a divine mandate thus bringing about the fall, an apparent victory in the appeal trial but which was trumped by the Lord's grace provision of salvation in Genesis 3:21.
- 43) In Genesis 16 we see yet another woman who rebels against the plan of God, on this occasion by doubting His timing. Human viewpoint concluded that something must be done to speed the process along and the idea presented to Abram involved not only adultery but also a form of polygamy.
- 44) This began a cluster of sins committed by both Sarai and Abram. She is guilty of doubting God and suggests a solution that will destroy the integrity of their marriage: she entices Abram to fulfill a divine promise by committing sins.
- 45) This is exactly what Ishah did to Adam and in both cases the men involved were too weak to provide the proper leadership to control their wives.
- 46) Like Ishah, Sarai also has ulterior motivations, hers for self-aggrandizement as matriarch of a great nation, although by proxy. She compromises her husband's position as head of their household by tempting him into a sin that not only jeopardizes their marriage but led to a complication that continues to plague the Jews until this day.
- 47) Abram is guilty of following bad advice from his wife that leads not only to adultery but also polygamy. Although the arrangement was an accepted cultural practice at the time it is in direct violation of the principle of monogamy established with Adam and Ishah:

Genesis 2:24 - For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and he shall have sexual relations face-to-face with his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

- 48) Further, Sarai's motivation was wrong. It showed a lack of patience in the promise of the Lord which betrayed a lack of faith in His veracity.



- 49) Together this famous couple makes a series of bad decisions that result in creating the ultimate family conflict. After Hagar became pregnant with Ishmael she is said to have “despised” Sarai. The word is the Qal stem of **לָלַץ** *qalal* which means that Hagar projected an air of superiority over Sarai because she remained childless.
- 50) Sensing an attitude that her maid looked upon her with less prestige than should be expected from a domestic Sarai became fearful that Abram might adopt the child making Hager the bloodline for the promise of a great nation given in Genesis 12:3.
- 51) Sarai now thinks the plan she devised is not so good after all. She is incensed at Hagar’s behavior toward her and then accuses Abram of being responsible for it:

Genesis 16:5 - And 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.

v. 6 - But Abram said to Sarai, “Behold, your maid is in your power; do to her what is good in your sight.” So Sarai treated her harshly, and she fled from her presence.

- 52) Note that Abram is responsible for the child Hagar is carrying yet he blithely ignores Sarai’s unjust treatment of Hagar forced her to flee alone into the *Jornada*.
- 53) Hagar is an innocent victim. She, being a slave, did what she was told. She was bound by custom to submit herself to Abram’s advances and then was abandoned by him to be placed under the harsh treatment of Sarai.
- 54) Note the righteousness and justice of the Lord. He doesn’t hold Hagar responsible for what has happened to her. Where Abram failed to protect her from Sarai the Lord in His grace does do so.
- 55) In verse 7 we learn that Jesus Christ in a theophany finds Hagar by a spring in the wilderness and instructs her to return to Sarai:

Genesis 16:9 - Then the angel of the Lord [**Jesus Christ in a theophany**] said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority.”

- 56) Although Hagar was Sarai’s maid she was also bearing Abram’s son. Therefore, the Lord sends her back under Sarai’s authority but also under Abram’s care as father of the child.