# Character Study: Abraham Part 5 – Things Get Complicated Genesis 16

### What's happening?

- After another ten years passed, Abraham and Sarah still had no children. Convinced that she was unable to bear children, Sarah devised a plan. She gave her <u>maidservant</u> (Hagar) to Abraham to be his wife in hopes she would bring a <u>baby</u> into their family. (16:1-3)
- Before long, Hagar was with child, but this did not make things better. Hagar began to <u>despise</u> Sarah, and Sarah blamed this on Abraham. Sarah began <u>mistreating</u> Hagar so badly that Hagar decided to leave. (16:4-6)
- The Angel of the Lord saw Hagar's pain and visited her. He told her to return to Sarah and <u>submit</u> herself to her. He said that she would have a son, and that he should be named <u>Ishmael</u>. She was warned that this son would live in <u>conflict</u> with all the people around him. She was also promised that she would have many descendants one day. (16:7-14)
- Abraham was <u>68</u> years old when this son was born to him, and the boy was named Ishmael. (16:15-16)

# What's God doing?

- > God knew what He was doing, but because of Sarah's <u>doubts</u>, she decided she needed to step in and take matters into her own hands. Though her action was a customary way of adopting a son in that day, it was not what God desired. His plan would be accomplished as He <u>intended</u> and in His <u>timing</u>.
- > God had <u>compassion</u> on Hagar since she was thrown into the middle of Sarah's problem and had to face the brunt of Sarah's frustration.

### What's to learn?

- $\rightarrow$  When God asks us to do something, He desires <u>obedience</u>, but when God says He will do something, He desires <u>trust</u>.
- → Sarah could have avoided many problems had she understood that God did not need her manipulating things in order to accomplish what He was going to do. Such efforts to "help" God only <u>complicate</u> things. Rather than taking matters into our own hands, we must learn to <u>surrender</u> our concerns over to His sovereign hand. Only then are we able to witness the full glory of His <u>will</u> unfolding in the circumstances around us.

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