

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Calvert, Ms. Dannels, Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Dowling, Mr. Hadley, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Owens, Mrs. Siota, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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“Have I also here seen Him who sees me?”

By Derek Long

Sarai and Abram had been waiting on the promised child of God for many years. Sarai suggests a plan of having Abram go into Sarai's maidservant and having a child by her (Genesis 16:1-2). Abram goes along with Sarai's suggestion and Hagar, the maidservant, conceives. After Hagar has conceived a child, Sarai becomes despised in her eyes (Genesis 16:4). Sarai is upset, deals harshly with Hagar, and Hagar flees from Sarai (Genesis 16:6). As Hagar is fleeing from Sarai, the Angel of the Lord appears to her and asks, “where are you going?” (Genesis 16:8, NKJV). Hagar replies, “I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai” (Genesis 16:8, NKJV). The Angel of the Lord instructs her to return to her mistress and submit to her (Genesis 16:9). Let's pause here to make a few observations before continuing on with the text of Genesis 16.

Sarai and Abram demonstrate what happens when we take matters into our own hands instead of waiting on God. Sarai and Abram had waited on God for several years to fulfill His promise of giving them descendants. It is easy to think when we don't see the type of results in the time frame we think we should see them that God's plan needs to be improved upon. Problems arise though when we follow our own plan instead of trusting in God's way to handle problem. Remember

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (NKJV). Let’s resist the temptation of panicking when things do not happen when we think they should. One application I can think of is when young people begin to panic about not being able to find a mate. They may wait for years to find a spouse and eventually wonder if they will ever be able to found a mate. Sometimes these people are tempted to lower their standards that are based on God’s word and marry someone who is not spiritually what they ought to be. Let’s see the danger in not waiting on God by looking to the story of Abram and Sarai!

Hagar despises her mistress when she can conceive and yet her mistress cannot. Let’s be careful not to think too highly of ourselves and look down upon others who are less fortunate than we are. Obviously, God expected Hagar to continue to remain submissive to her mistress (Genesis 16:9).

Sarai deals with Hagar harshly and Hagar flees from her mistress. It is easy to want to flee when things get rough in life and yet sometimes we need to patiently endure suffering. Hagar was not free to just leave Sarai. 1 Peter 2 seems to give instructions to servants in the New Testament who might be serving a master who treats them harshly. It says, “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God” (1 Peter 2:18-20, NKJV). Hagar needed to make sure she con-

ducted herself correctly and we should too. Hagar needed to not run away but patiently endure if she suffered for doing good and we should too.

Returning back to Genesis 16, we see God through the Angel makes some promises to Hagar about her child (Genesis 16:10-12). Her descendants would be multiplied, the child would be named “Ishmael,” and he would be a wild man. Hagar responds to all this by asking, “Have I also here seen Him who sees me?” (Genesis 16:13, NKJV). She recognized God saw her. God knew what she was going through as well as what she was doing. Let’s remember God sees us too (Proverbs 15:3; Hebrews 4:13; Psalm 139:7-12)! God’s seeing us should remind us He knows when we are doing something that is wrong and will hold us accountable for it (Romans 2:16; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). God’s seeing us should remind us He knows our hardships, struggles, and difficulties. God notices when a sparrow falls and He also notices what we go through as well. Jesus taught in Luke 12:4-7, “And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him! Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows” (NKJV).