



“Returning to the Place of God's Blessing”

Genesis 16:1-16

“In the beginning” - God created everything and it was all really good. *Genesis 1:1*

- Our faith can be challenged and undermined when life doesn't go how we hoped it would.
- God orchestrated Abram's life in ways that would both test and grow his faith.

Abram & Sarai face a faith-crisis over the gap between God's promise & their reality. *Gen. 16:1-3*

- Faith struggles when our reality doesn't match our expectations or God's Word. *John 10:9,10*
- Wavering faith leaves us vulnerable to implementing human tactics to solve our problems.

Healthy faith is grounded on what God declares to be true. *Romans 10:17*

- Sarai's need for a child was so great that God's declared truth fell victim to her desire.
- Abram had heard the voice of God but chose to yield to the desperate demands of Sarai.

A family in chaos: Anger, pride, blame shifting, passivity, hurt, and manipulation. *Gen. 16:4-6*

- Abram's family was at war with each other because they had edged God out.
- Positive first step: We can't control others but we can get ourselves right with God.

It seems highly unlikely God would have a runaway slave named Hagar on His mind. *Gen.16:7-16*

- Hagar is blessed with a son, Ishmael (“God hears”) and a multitude of descendants.
- Hagar is the only O.T. character to give God a name - “*a God who sees.*”

It's not enough to be stirred. We must surrender to the Lordship of Christ. *Genesis 16:9*

- God calls Sarai to a very difficult and radical obedience that leads her back in the fire.
- Trust in God - He goes before you, follows you... places His hand of blessing on you. *Ps.139:5*

Further Study and Pondering:

1. What kinds of circumstances in your life tend to challenge or undermine your faith?
2. Why do you think Abram and Sarai chose to ignore God's truth and go their own way?
3. Do you have any personal needs/desires that are so great you have chosen to ignore God?
Return to what God declares to be true about your circumstances. Confess and repent.
4. Read and meditate on Psalm 139:1-18. This is how God views you. Accept it by faith.
5. Memorize Psalm 139:5. Apply it moment-by-moment to the tests and challenges you face.

“You go before me and follow me, You place Your hand of blessing on my head.” *Psalm 139:5 N.L.T.*