



Faith Over Doubt

ABRAHAM: GENESIS 12–22

‘The mass of men lead lives of
quiet desperation.’

—Henry David Thoreau, *Walden* (1854)

The God Who Sees

GENESIS 16

1. The Desperation of Doubt.

2. The Courage of Faith.

Key Questions:

- *What makes you feel desperate?*
- *In what ways do you feel invisible?*
- *In what ways would you like God to give you courageous faith?*

‘Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; so she said to Abram, “The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.”’

—GENESIS 16.1–2

‘Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; so she said to Abram, “The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can **build a family** through her.”’

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‘Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.’

—GENESIS 16.2

‘Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.’

—GENESIS 16.2

‘To Adam, [God] said: “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife....”’

—GENESIS 3.17

‘Sarai... **took** Hagar... and **gave** her **to her husband.**’

—GENESIS 16.3

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—GENESIS 16.3

‘When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she **took** some and ate it. She also **gave** some **to her husband**...’

—GENESIS 3.6

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**What quiet desperation
is there in your life?**

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‘The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. And he said, “Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?”’

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‘Then the angel of the LORD told her,
“Go back to your mistress and submit
to her.”’

—GENESIS 16.7–8

‘The angel added, “I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.”’

—GENESIS 16.7–8

‘The angel of the LORD also said to her:
“You are now pregnant and you will
give birth to a son. You shall name him
Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your
misery.”’

—GENESIS 16.11

‘She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen the One who sees me.”’

—GENESIS 16.11

Literary Structure of Genesis 16–22

God's call; blessing promised (*Genesis 12a*)

Abraham in a foreign land; wife-sister motif (*Genesis 12b*)

Lot in danger; Sodom (*Genesis 13–14*)

covenant (*Genesis 15*)

Hagar & Ishmael (*Genesis 16*)

covenant (*Genesis 17*)

Lot in danger; Sodom (*Genesis 18–19*)

Abraham in a foreign land; wife-sister motif (*Genesis 20*)

Hagar & Ishmael (*Genesis 21*)

God's call; blessing confirmed (*Genesis 22*)

Adapted from John Goldingay's commentary.

God hears you.

God sees you.

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