

**The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.  
The Tree of Life for week ending 12/16/01.**

**The Lord Jesus Christ meets a woman at an Oasis.**

*Our corrected translation of Gen 16:1-6 reads “Now Sarai, wife of Abram, did not become pregnant for him, and she had a female slave, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar, Now behold, Jehovah has prevented me from bearing children [or an heir for you Abram]. Please go in to my female slave; perhaps I shall obtain children through her. And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. And after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian, her female slave, and gave her to her husband Abram as his mistress. And he fornicated with Hagar, and she became pregnant; and when she was aware that she had become pregnant, her mistress was unimportant in her eyes or in her thinking. And Sarai said to Abram, The wrong done me should have been judged by you. I have given my female slave into your arms; but when she saw that she had become pregnant, I was despised or unimportant in her eyes or her thinking. May the Lord judge between you and me. But Abram replied to Sarai, Behold, your female slave is under your authority; do to her what is good in your sight. So Sarai treated her harshly, and she fled from her presence.”*

We now continue with verse 7 “*Now the angel of the Lord found her*”

The Hebrew verb for *found* is *matsa* and it means to meet, catch, deliver, find or encounter. Hagar has come to the end of herself, now Jesus Christ comes to her, and when Jesus Christ comes to you, it means a solution is on the way.

Hagar is an unbeliever and notice who initiates the action for the solution, the Lord found her, the Lord comes to her. We should all realize that Jesus Christ was so occupied with all of us in eternity past that He did not consider His equality with the other members of the Trinity a treasure to be retained so He took upon Himself a human nature, Phi 2:5-7.

Hagar did not come to the Lord initially, she ran out into the desert, and when she stopped by an oasis to get water, that's when the Lord came to her.

When the angel of the Lord, The Lord Jesus Christ found Hagar, grace and justice met, as they always do, where the situation is hopeless.

Hagar has no illusions about solving her problem. She can't solve her problem her way, so God's grace and justice meet her at the point of her hopelessness.

As long as a person is scheming and trying to solve their problems with their own plans and strategy, trying to solve a wrong with a wrong, or trying to build their happiness on someone else's unhappiness, they will never solve a thing.

This passage also teaches that man can foul up his life, but only God can straighten it out, only the Lord Jesus Christ can resolve the dilemma.

The complications from sin, (such as the sins of Abram, Sarai and Hagar) demand greater justice than any believer out of fellowship could ever possess.

With Hagar we see an unbeliever in a hopeless situation. Therefore, the intervention from the presiding judge of heaven, The Lord Jesus Christ becomes necessary. All injustice demands correction from divine justice. Man's injustice to man, can only be corrected by God's justice to man, Rom 12:17-18 ***“Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”***

Back in Gen 16:7-9 ***“Now the angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from and where are you going? And she said, I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai. Then the angel of the Lord said to her, return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority.”***

Here we see the principle that if a man has responsibility and authority over a woman and doesn't fulfill that authority, THE MAN, The Lord Jesus Christ will take over.

Abram ran away from the problem and he hopes that it will disappear. When it doesn't, he turns the problem over to his wife for a solution. If anyone is less qualified than Abram to handle the solution, it is his wife.

Therefore, as we have noted in Hos 8:7 ***“For they sow the wind, And they reap the whirlwind.”*** The whirlwind has intensified.

This situation demands that the supreme court judge, the Lord Jesus Christ comes in and judges the situation. We can never avoid authority and solve a problem. Authority isn't always fair because everyone in authority has an old sin nature. Therefore, authority isn't always going to do the right thing, but no matter how unfair it is, we don't rebel against it. Abram had authority and he was unfair.

Sarai had authority over the female slave and she was unfair.

Back in Gen 16:7 the phrase “the angel of the Lord” needs to be noted. The Hebrew says ***“ma`lak Jehovah matsa”*** which is, ***“the angel of Jehovah found her.”*** This is the Lord Jesus Christ and this is known as a Theophany.

We know that this is the Lord Jesus Christ because of some of things that He says in this passage. In Gen 16:10 ***“Moreover, the angel of the Lord said to her, “I will greatly multiply your descendants.”***

Then in verse 11, He reveals His omniscience, ***“The angel of the Lord said to her further, “Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son;”***

In verse 13, Hagar called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, ***“Thou art a God who sees”; for she said, “Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?”***

As we have noted many times, Jesus Christ is God. Jesus Christ is called the image of the invisible God in Col 1:15 ***“And He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.”***

However, according to the Bible no man has ever seen God. They've seen the Lord Jesus Christ but that was His humanity that they were looking at. There are many passages that say that a man has seen God, This may seem to be a contradiction but it is not. In our main passage in Gen 16:13 ***“Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, Thou art a God who sees; for she said, Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?”***

There are others, in Gen 32:30, when Jacob wrestled with the Rock and in Num 12:5-8 the form of the Lord is beheld.

In these passages what Hagar, Jacob and Moses saw is known as a theophany!

A theophany is a manifestation of the person and work of Jesus Christ in His pre-incarnate state. This is a theological category for the appearances of Jesus Christ before the First Advent. Theophanies demonstrate the fact that Jesus Christ is the God of Israel.

While "angel" was the primary form in which Jesus Christ was manifest to people in the Old Testament, there are other Theophanies as well.

He also appeared to Abraham as a man, Gen 18:1-33.

He was the wrestler with Jacob in Gen 32:24-32, also mentioned in Hosea 12:4.

He appeared as a man to the elders of Israel in Exo 24:9-11.

All these references are important to understand certain principles in the Old Testament, and to understand that there are direct statements that Jesus Christ is our Redeemer in the Old Testament.

Therefore, throughout the Bible Jesus Christ takes on forms for individuals to see but they were not permanent until He took on the form of true humanity. When the Incarnation and Hypostatic Union occurred, there were no longer any Theophanies.

From that point on, there are Christophanies, which were appearances of Christ in His resurrection body from the time of His resurrection until the time He ascended.

So back in Gen 16:7 ***“Now the angel of the Lord [Jesus Christ] found her or confronted her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.”***

This spring of water in the wilderness is really an oasis in the desert on the road to Shur. The word for *spring* is the Hebrew noun *ayin* which is also the sixteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet and it represents the eye of the Individual or ones outlook or perspective on life. Shur is in the desert and it is on the road Egypt, Hagar was going home to Egypt and she was going from the frying pan to the fire, because if she had gone home she would be a runaway slave, and she would be in for more trouble. But, she's so desperate she could care less.

When people are desperate they always go back to something they know, something that they are familiar with, even though they know that what they're going back to is worse than what they left, but they're desperate.

2Pe 2:22 ***“It has happened to them according to the true proverb, A dog returns to its own vomit, and, A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.”***

So far then the corrected translation, Gen 16:7 ***“Now the angel of the Lord [Jesus Christ] found her or confronted her by the oasis in the desert, by an oasis on the way to Shur.”***

Jesus Christ found Hagar in a hopeless situation, minus water, that's why she stopped, minus food, inadequately clothed, and add to all that, pregnant, exhausted, helpless in the desert. Hagar did not find Jesus Christ, but Jesus Christ found Hagar, this is grace. This is the justice of God the son, and He went to her because His justice was free to do so. She's an unbeliever and in a hopeless situation, God deals with unbelievers as well as believers, 2Pe 3:9.

He does not come to discipline her, He's going to come and help her. The first solution is going to be salvation, and then she's going to receive me doctrinal information from the Lord.

Her real problem is on the verge of being solved. She is hopeless, helpless and Jesus Christ, in His justice is free to come to her because she is ready for salvation. We all come to a point where the justice of God can come to us and it may come in the form of someone witnessing to us. Whatever it is, there's always the right time for salvation, and its always one time.

**2Co 6:2 *"for He says, At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you; behold, now is the acceptable time, behold, now is the day of salvation."***

In our passage in Gen 16, we see that desperate situations are designed for the grace of God, because the grace of God means the action of the justice of God.

Remember love does not produce the action of grace, Justice does. Little does Hagar realize that the water of life is closer to her, than the literal water that she is drinking. She is drinking the literal water to slay her thirst, but the water of life is about to materialize in the form of the angel of Jehovah.

**Gen 16:8 *"And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from and where are you going? And she said, I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."***

We begin with the phrase "he said" which is the Hebrew verb *amar* which indicates that Jesus Christ initiated the conversation as well as the fact that He kept it going. The Lord Jesus Christ broke the silence, and again that's grace. Jesus Christ is God and in eternity past He knew that she would be there.

Jesus Christ knows the situation, He understands the circumstances so the question is not for the sake of learning something from Hagar, but of telling Hagar something about herself. It is imperative that the believer, at all times face reality in order to meet the circumstances of life. Here it is imperative that Hagar face the circumstances in order to see the solution about to be offered.

**Gen 16:8 *"And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from"***

That's half of the question, the rest of it will bring her to the point of reality, ***"where are you going?"***

There are a few principles to note from this phrase:

Divine interrogations are not for the purpose of information. This Divine interrogation is to bring Hagar to the realization of her total helplessness.

As long as she is running, she is not quite to the point of total helplessness, she has to stop running. As long as people are running they don't face reality but rather always think of some other way to handle the problems. They will try anything but the Lord's solution, because they don't like His or they try His way for a while and become

frustrated because He didn't give them what they wanted in their time. However the truth is they have to stop running and let the Lord do the solving. As long as we try to solve our problems, the "grace of God principle applies," which is the fact that God will not step in and solve them because grace and human energy of the flesh are mutually exclusive, each rejects the other. Running away avoids reality and is never a solution. So it is grace which interrogates Hagar but in the next verse it is justice which advises her and which commands her.

In verse 8 Hagar responds ***"I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."***

Hagar, when faced with the issue, is honest, and that's the beginning of a true solution.

No one ever solves a problem by avoiding reality or ignoring reality.

Dishonesty and perjury postpone solutions.

Hagar must face the facts before she's ready for the justice of Jesus Christ to work on her behalf. She must face facts before she is ready for the sound advice and the judgment of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In her answer, Hagar faces the reality in the situation by being honest with herself and therefore answering the question in an honest way, no excuses, no blame. There are no solutions for those who blame others for their problems.

This is why rebound is so beautiful, in rebound we say we have committed the sin, and we specify the sin privately to God, it's no one else's business.

Rebound is taking the responsibility for our own volition it is facing the facts.

When we take the responsibility for what we know, God forgives us for the sins we have committed in ignorance. They are still sins, and our volition was involved.

Hagar, therefore being free from this trap of self-vindication is ready for the solution presented by the Lord Jesus Christ, Gen 16:9 ***"Then the angel of the Lord said to her, Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority."***