Your Name

WA # 1

Instructor Name

Course Number

Date

The Fight: Conflict and Brokenness in Abraham’s Family – *Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar*

*“Behold, your maid is in your power; do to her what is good in your sight.”*

Of all that I had to endure, of all that I had to suffer through, these lines by my master and my husband proved to be my undoing. I was born in Egypt, and given as a handmaiden to a gentle lady, who was to be called “Sarah” by God’s will. Abraham, her husband, was a kind and a gentle man as well, who cared for his household. Thus, when my lady presented me to him to bear his children, I was honor bound to comply with her wishes. It was our tenth year in Canaan, when I was given to my master, who took me as his wife under God’s will. Soon after my marriage, I was with child.

Both, my new husband and I were blissfully happy over the news. However, my mistress did not share in with our joy. The choice to give me to her husband was hers and hers alone, but the idea of having a child through me no longer made her happy. She had always been kind towards me and her other maids. We had heard tales of mistresses being cruel to their maids, of punishing them and treating them unjustly. Yet, we never witnessed such acts, since they never took place at our household. We loved our mistress and cared for her to the best of our ability and she cared for us in return. She was unfailingly kind to her, always.

However, she could barely stand my sight once I became pregnant. She couldn’t give her husband the one thing both of them yearned for, while I could and about to fulfill his wish of an heir. It broke my heart to see her hurting in the way that she did, but there wasn’t much I can do. I could only suffer quietly and bear my pain and the despise she felt for me silently. This silent suffering found a voice when she decided to tell her husband how she felt. She told our husband how my presence made her feel, despite trying not to feel the way it did.

She was 90 years old, and barren, never capable of having a child of her own. Being a woman myself, I could completely understand how she felt and the reasons she had for acting the way that she did. Thus, when my master spoke those fateful words that became my undoing, my mistress’ plight was lifted. He gave my mistress the choice of treating me the way she deemed fit and she, in response, began to treat me harshly. She asked me to do more than my fair share of work, even when I had a baby in my womb to care for. Thus, one day, when it all became too much for me, I ran away. I ran right into the desert away from everything and everyone that I knew or cared for. In my effort to get away, I did not see where I was going until my steps faltered near a spring. I was lost in my own pain when an angel sent from the Lord appeared to me. He was a brilliant and beautiful creature, dulling the beauty of everything around him. He asked me to return to my mistress so that I may bear a son, a son that would bring glad tidings for his father and be the blessing that the Lord had promised Abraham. He was to be named Ismael, according to the God’s will. This gave me courage, and I returned back to my household.

I bore my master a son, whom he loved greatly. He was a source of great joy to his father, who had yearned for an heir for so long. He was blessed by the Lord, just like his father and was to be a father of many nations. My son was my salvation. I had never beheld something so pure in my life and there was nothing more perfect than my son in my eyes. All went well for me from that point forward. My mistress still treated me badly, worse than any other maid. However, my son became my reprieve and my shelter, and I trusted my Lord to always be there for me and my son.

Years later, when my son became older and stronger, an angel brought glad tiding to my household once again, telling my master that he and my mistress Sarah were to have a child. Even though Abraham was 100 years old, with Sarah 90, God wanted them to have a child, which would be a boy who would be here by the next season. Here, I believed that the animosity between my mistress and I would reduce. However, the tensions only increased, especially after the birth of her son, which was called Isaac. There was a celebration on the birth of Isaac, where I, just like everyone else, was overjoyed at the birth of the baby. But, my son, in typical fashion of a teenage boy made faces at his little brother, which often made Isaac laugh, a sound that tinkled like bells around the household.

However, my mistress did not like the idea. She though Ishmael was mocking Isaac, an idea that was not tolerable by her. Thus, as soon as the celebrations weaned, Sarah demanded that my son and I be sent away. She also added that Ishmael was not to share in Isaac’s inheritance. I saw that these demands greatly distressed Abraham, but God told him to comply with Sarah wishes, and he did. The next day, he gave my son and I bread and water and send us off into the wilderness of Bersheba. Neither of us knew the land, so we wandered aimlessly until both food and water ran out.

Having been abandoned by my husband and sent off into the wild, I had no choice but to weep in despair. My son, aware of our predicament, began to cry as well and our cries were heard by none other than our Lords. He came to our rescue and as soon as be wiped the tears from our eyes, we saw a well of water before us. God saved us and gave us glad tidings that my son will have a great nation to himself.

Finally, I had something to call of my own. I settled with my son in Egypt, where I found him a wife. Life, unexpectedly moved on the way it always did.