

# What Happens When We Try to Fix God's Plan

*Genesis 16:1–16*

An Expositional Sermon by Dr. Bradley Rushing

## Proposition

Trying to force God's promises on our timeline creates problems only His grace can repair.

Trying to fix God's plan...

## I. Leads us to trust human solutions over God's Word. (vv. 1–3)

- Sarai feels the pressure of barrenness and the delay of God's promise.
- Ten years have passed, and the promise seems less likely by sight, not more.
- Sarai offers a culturally acceptable solution, but not God's solution.
- Abram listens to Sarai's voice instead of holding fast to God's word.
- The real issue is not practicality. It is unbelief dressed up as wisdom.
- Faith does not manage God's promises. Faith waits for God to fulfill them.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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## II. Creates problems we cannot control. (vv. 4–6)

- Hagar conceives, and what looked like a solution immediately starts unraveling.
- Hagar looks on Sarai with contempt.
- Sarai blames Abram for the pain created by her own plan.
- Abram refuses to lead and hands the problem back to Sarai.
- Sarai deals harshly with Hagar, and Hagar runs into the wilderness.
- Sin always promises relief, but it produces chaos, blame, fear, and brokenness.
- When we force outcomes for God, we create consequences bigger than we can manage.

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **III. Can drive us into the wilderness where only God's grace can find us. (vv. 7–12)**

- Hagar is alone, pregnant, mistreated, and running.
- The Angel of the Lord finds her. She is not seeking God, but God seeks her.
- God calls her by name and shows that He sees her story clearly.
- God does not ignore her pain, and He does not let her disappear in the desert.
- Ishmael means “God hears.” Hagar learns that the Lord has listened to her affliction.
- God’s grace does not always remove hardship immediately, but it meets us in it with promise.
- The God who sees Hagar is still the God who finds people in the wilderness.

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### **IV. Cannot stop God’s purposes or cancel God’s mercy. (vv. 13–16)**


- Hagar returns changed because she has met the God who sees.
- She has learned that God is not distant, blind, or indifferent.
- Ishmael is born, but he is not the promised son.
- Abram and Sarai’s failure does not cancel God’s promise.
- Human failure cannot derail divine purpose.
- God’s mercy still moves in the middle of the mess we create.
- The future of God’s people does not rest on flawless obedience, but on the faithfulness of God.


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