

Count The Stars

**The Great Controversy
As Demonstrated In The Life
Of Abraham**

By
Jim Pappas
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(Begin with opening theme music combined with slides of the universe which begin at the edge of space and work their way to earth. As music draws to a close narration begins)

Narrator: Earth - battlefield of the universe. On this great field of conflict two mighty Princes thrust and parry for the souls of men. One seeks allegiance-the other control.

By the dim glow of dawn's early light we enter in at the Eastern Gate. By the golden glow of the westering sun we exit in the west. The battle is over and the banner of the victor waves triumphant over our soul. If our battle was bravely fought we exit the blood-stained field wearing garlands of victory. If fought poorly, or if not fought at all, we hobble out of the arena in fetters of steel.

In the annals of this great conflict there lies the record of one whom His Master named "The Father of a multitude." His enemy called him "Coward." What follows is a brief chronicle of their warfare for the mind of this man. The man named Abraham.

Scene I

Mime

(Enter traveler - at Satan's instigation two robbers waylay him and leave him for dead.

The story of the good Samaritan is reenacted in mime and ends with Abram caring for the man and taking him home to care for him. This man becomes his servant, Eliezar)

God: (Voice Over - Hereafter referred to as V.O. God's voice is always offstage) Have you seen my servant Abram, how he loves me and obeys my every command?

Satan: Does he serve you for nothing? No! You have made him rich. You have thrown up a hedge of safety about him and promised him descendants without number. Who would not serve you under those conditions?

God: He serves me because he loves me.

Satan: Words are cheap. Give me evidence.

God: He has just risked his life to help a stranger.

Satan: Nonsense. He knows that no thief would dare to rob a man as powerful as he. Give me more.

God: If I asked him to, Abram would give up everything and become a homeless wanderer.

Satan: Sure, if he knew where he were going.

God: Then I will give him no reasons and no directions. Only the command.

Satan: All right. Your move. (Enter Abram)

God: Abram.

Abram: Yes, Lord?

God: Abram. The city is not a fit place for your family. Sell all that you cannot carry and go.

Abram: Go, Lord?

God: Yes, Abram. Go.

Abram: Go where, Lord?

God: Where I shall send you.

Abram: And where is that?

God: You shall see.

Abram: But can't you at least give me the general direction? I mean, what will I tell my family?

God: Tell them you have spoken to God. Goodbye, Abram.

Satan: My move?

God: Your move.

Scene 2

Nahor: You are mad! You hear a voice from the sky and you're ready to give up everything you've ever worked for!

Abram: Nahor, my brother, listen to me. It is but a small price to pay for God's friendship.

Nahor: You don't even know where you're going.

Abram: No.

Nahor: What about the soil? Is it fertile?

Abram: I don't know.

Nahor: He doesn't know. Is the climate healthful?

Abram: He didn't say.

Nahor: He didn't say. Perhaps he had more important business to attend to. Can you at least get wealthy there?

Abram: I don't know that either.

Nahor: So you're going to leave your business and country and break up our family all on the basis of some promise that floated in on an evening breeze.

Abram: It was God's command.

Nahor: Well, you can move if you want. As for me and my house, we will stay here.

Abram: God has commanded us!

Nahor: God has commanded you. I've got gods of my own. When they say 'move on',e then I'll go.

Abram: Gods of wood and stone never speak.

Nahor: That appears to be an advantage. Have a nice journey, Abram.

Scene 3

God: Have the people seen how Abram has obeyed my voice and gone out, not knowing where I would lead him?

Satan: Let not the universe be overly impressed with this small act of Abram's. He is still young and searching for adventure.

God: He is in his eighties.

Satan: Well, just wait until he sees what God has led him into. Then we will see his true colors.

Havila: This is crazy.

Eliezar: Abram knows best. He speaks with God.

Havila: Well, it's one thing to be religious, but he should use his reason too.

Eliezar: He is.

Havila: How? By packing up and running every time some God says to?.

Eliezar: It is not some god. He serves the true God.

Havila: I sure hope so. We sure had it good back in Ur.

Eliezar: Yes, but look at this land. It has streams and forests and pasture that Ur never dreamed of. Look at those beautiful trees on top of that hill.

Havila: Yeah, and listen to that beautiful music. (A drum -done live by actor backstage- has been beating in the background slowly increasing in tempo and volume.) I thought we were leaving Ur to get away from that stuff. At least there we could close our doors! (A distant scream is heard) And at least there they didn't offer human sacrifice. I say we go home!

Eliezar: God has a reason for us being here.

Havila: You're starting to sound like Abram.

Eliezar: I hope so.

Havila: Well, you dream your foolish dreams if you want. I'm going to talk to Lot. At least he still has some sense left.

Scene 4

Lot: Uncle, we should go back. The people are all afraid.

Abram: But God has brought us here.

Lot: Why?

Abram: He hasn't said.

Lot: I wish I had stayed in Ur.

Abram: It is a beautiful land, my son.

Lot: Yeah, sure, it's great. But look at the people. Burning their children to idols. Having drunken orgies every chance they get. Better to live in a desert.

Abram: Please help with the unpacking. I shall speak to God.

Lot: (Sullenly) Yes, Uncle.

Abram: Dear God. You are so great and I so small. I walk the sands while you walk among the stars. But if I may ask a question of you: Why here? It is a good land, but the people...

God: Abram, be not afraid. I will give this land to your children.

Abram: Yes, Lord, God!

Satan: Abram, do you really think it was wise for God to bring you out here? Look around you,-what do you see?

Abram: Groves for idol worship and high places for sacrifice.

Satan: Human sacrifice, Abram. And listen to that music. Think of the influence on your young people.

Abram: It is terrible. Lot!

Lot: Yes, Uncle?

Abram: This is a time of trial. Please call all the camp together for special prayer.

Lot: Uncle, they want to go home, not pray.

Abram: Please, Lot.

Lot: (Sullenly) Yes, Uncle.

Abram: Have them gather around my tent.

Lot: Yes, Uncle. Come on everyone. Time to pray.

Havila: Pray! We should be packing up to leave.

Eliezar: I say we support our master.

Meshech: I say go home.

Eliezar: Look on the bright side. At least we have plenty of pasture for our flocks. They're growing larger than they've ever been.

Lot: Well, at least we won't go home with nothing. C'mon. Let's go pray.

Meshech: I guess we gotta. Let's go.

Havila: What a waste. I could be getting something to eat.

Scene 5

Satan: Now, Universe, watch what happens when things really get tough. (Music over slides of a land in the early stages of drought)

Havila: Master Abram. The last well is almost dry. What shall we do?

Lot: Uncle, my cattle are so thin I can count their ribs. Let us return home before it is too late.

Eliezar: Master, the cattle are beginning to die. If we stay longer you will lose everything. (Second slide of more advanced famine)

Satan: Abram, why have you been so foolish as to leave the safety of home in Ur?

Abram: God told me to.

Satan: Are you sure it was God?

Abram: Of course I'm sure.

Satan: God led you out here to certain death, eh?

Abram: I am here at God's command. He will watch over me.

Satan: Is this how God watches over his own? Don't you think you should return to Ur where the springs flow freely and the grain is waving golden in the sun?

Abram: No! This is where God wants me to be. (Third famine slide)

Satan: I thought your God was a God of love.

Abram: He is.

Satan: Is he? Would a God of love command that these sheep and cattle and children dry up and die this way?

Abram: God has not done this. It is the work of an enemy.

Satan: There is no enemy. Only God. Go home! (Fourth famine slide)

Sarai: What will you do, husband?

Abram: I don't know, Sarai. God has given no direction.

Sarai: Why does God test us so?

Abram: I don't know, Sarai. But I know he never tests us beyond our strength. He will answer soon.

Sarai: Reason says we should return to Ur. Shouldn't we do what is reasonable?

Abram: Not when it goes against the word of God.

Sarai: Husband, I don't understand our God as well as you, but I want you to know that wherever He leads you, I'll be there.

Abram: Even if it's not reasonable?

Sarai: God has a purpose. Who knows? Perhaps our story will give courage to someone else.

Abram: I hope so, Sarai. I hope so. (Fifth famine slide)

Havila: Master, our children will die if we don't do something.

Lot: Uncle, we will both be ruined if we don't go home now!

Eliezar: Master, you must decide tonight. Only your cheerfulness and confidence in God has prevented a rebellion, but the time has come to act. Please!

Satan: Go back, Abram. God has forgotten you (Begin music - "In My Hour of Need" - sixth slide).

Havila: Master, our children!

Lot: Uncle, our cattle!

Eliezar: Master, decide! (Music volume up. At first Abram prays alone. Near the middle of song he is joined by Sarai. Towards the end Eliezar joins followed by all the rest of group. Last famine slide has slowly died out and as the music begins to fade they all join

hands in the center of a kneeling prayer circle. Dim lights and exit cast. Abraham & Sarah remain)

Sarai: Husband, what will we do?

Abram: I'm not sure yet, Sarai. I've asked God for ideas, but.. (He gets a flash of inspiration) Egypt! We will go to Egypt until the famine ends!

Sarai: Egypt! Of course. (The news spreads back stage-ad lib)

Scene 6

God: Have the people seen how Abram has neither disobeyed God nor neglected his family?

Satan: Well, if Abram weren't down on his knees talking to you all the time, he wouldn't do so well.

God: But he does talk to me - all the time.

Satan: Well, Egypt is home for me and it's my move, so don't get your hopes up. Watch this. (Enter Abram) Isn't Sarai beautiful, Abram?

Abram: (Gazing at Sarai across stage while she works) Oh, indeed. In fact some say she is perhaps the most lovely woman in all the world.

Satan: I don't doubt it. It's too bad beauty is such a dangerous thing though.

Abram: Dangerous? How can beauty be dangerous?

Satan: Oh, you know how kings are, Abram. They get what they want. If Pharaoh should desire your wife, why, he wouldn't hesitate to kill you to get her.

Abram: I'd never thought of that. Oh, now what should I do?

Satan: Well, Sarai is your half sister. Tell him the truth.

Abram: The truth. Yes, the truth.

Scene 7

Satan: There, you see! Satan always wins. Selfish, cowardly little Abram thinks more of his own skin than of his wife or you.

God: Abram is only a man.

Satan: So! He has sinned and he is mine. Your laws are impossible to keep.

God: Abram is only a man.

Satan: You said that. Now hand him over. I have proved that man cannot keep your foolish laws.

God: Abram is only a man.

Satan: (Angry) Why do you keep saying that?

God: Men make mistakes. But if they ask me to, I can forgive them.

Satan: You mean you aren't going to give Abram over to me?

God: Of course not. I never give men over to you unless they ask me to.

Satan: But you must! He has lied to the king of Egypt! He has sinned.

God: All men have sinned. But the war for the soul is not decided in one battle.

Satan: This is unfair. You forgive men their mistakes. but not me mine.

God: I forgave you over and over again, Lucifer. I forgave you until you stopped asking to be forgiven. I begged you to accept my love and return to me but you refused. If I am to be fair to men, I must give them the same chances.

Satan: All right! All right! Next move. This will prove that God's friend is not only a cowardly liar, but selfish as well.

Havila: Well, look who's here.

Eliezar: We got here first. You men go somewhere else!

Havila: You saw that we were planning to come here for pasture and you snuck ahead of us!

Eliezar: Dog of a liar!

Havila: Just because you are Abram's servant doesn't give you first pick of all the pasture.

Eliezar: You are greedy, just as your master Lot is greedy!

Havila: Call my master greedy, will you! (Fight begins, - actors freeze, - lights drop)

Abram: Lot, my son, there seems to be a problem among our herdsmen concerning pasture for our flocks. We have both grown so large that there is no room for us to dwell together any longer.

Lot: (Suspicious, sullen) And I suppose you want me to move out into the desert or something.

Abram: Of course not, my son. That is why I have asked you to come up on this hill with me so we can survey the land and choose between us which way we shall go.

Lot: No doubt you will want to move on to the Jordan Valley where wealth comes with ease.

Abram: It matters not to me, my son. You look and choose where you wish to go. If you choose the left, I shall take the right and be well content. Only let us not strive together, for we are kinsmen and children of God.

Lot: You mean I get first choice?

Abram: If you wish.

Lot: And you'll abide by my decision?

Abram: Of course.

Lot: No matter what?

Abram: No matter what.

Lot: (Greed barely disguised as he looks towards the Sodom Valley) Well, I... (His displeasure barely hidden as he looks towards the country) I mean, uh...(To Sodom smiling) Well, you know...(To mountains with barely disguised sour look) I mean the land is all about the same, I guess. I suppose I'll be happiest near Sodom. It seems to have a bright future.

Scene 8

God: Have the people seen how my friend, Abram has given first choice to his nephew, Lot?

Satan: Bah! When a man is as rich as Abram, it is easy to give away a little.

God: Oh? It has been my observation that the more a man gets, the harder it is for him to give.

Satan: Abram just doesn't like city life, that's all.

God: If you would look with an open mind, you would see that...

Satan: (Interrupting) If the universe will turn their attention to my next move they will see beyond a doubt that Abram is a coward and very selfish.

God: If I may speak first. I would like to talk with my friend before you pursue him further.

God: Abram. Abram!

Abram: Speak, Lord.

God: Look around you, Abram. Look north and south and east and west. All the land that you see will I give to you and your children forever. You will have children without number. As difficult to count as the dust of the earth or the stars of the sky. Go forth in good hope, Abram, for I will give all of this land to you.

Abram: Yes, Lord. It is a wonderful land. Thank you for your promise, for your word is true.

Satan: Now?

God: Now.

Havila: (Running up exhausted and out of breath) Master Abram! Master Abram!

Abram: Havila. Is it well with Lot?

Havila: No, master. Lot has been captured by the king of Elam!

Abram: Oh, no! We must save him. Eliezar! Eliezar! Come here! Hurry!

Eliezar: What is it, master?

Abram: Lot has been captured and we must save him. Get all the men and youth together immediately. Havila, you go to my allies and have them come quickly. Hurry now. There is no time to lose.

Both: Yes, master. (Exit)

Abram: Oh, Lord, give me wisdom.

Satan: Are you actually going to risk your neck for Lot?

Abram: Of course. He is my brother's son.

Satan: But he's selfish and mean-hearted. Let him get his due reward.

Abram: No! I must save him.

Satan: After he chose the best land and then didn't even thank you?

Abram: He is still young in the Lord. He is learning.

Eliezar: (Enter Eliezar) Ready, master.

Havila: (Enter Havila) Ready, master.

Abram: How many are we?

Eliezar: Only 318, master.

Abram: God will fight for us. Let us pray. Our dear God. We thank you for your love and leadership as we seek to save those we love. Watch over these children as they meet the enemy we pray. Amen. Forward, men! To free the captives!

All: To free the captives! To free the captives!!

Scene 9

God: Have you seen my servant Abram? How he has risked his all to save his nephew?

Satan: So! What's so brave about that. You did all the fighting for him.

God: I do all the fighting for all my friends if they ask me to.

Satan: Abram is a coward.

God: Surely you must admit that it takes a certain amount of courage to take a few hundred shepherds against several thousand warriors.

Satan: He is a coward. Just listen to his prayer. He sounds like a woman.

Abram: Oh, Lord God. I thank you. Only you could have given the victory against so many. But, Lord God, I am fearful. My ears still hear the shrieks of the dying and my eyes see the blood spilled on the earth. I am unable to sleep for what I have seen. And worst of all, I am growing old and I have no son.

God: Don't be afraid, Abram. I will watch over you and protect you. I will give you a rich reward.

Abram: Lord, why do you speak to me of reward when my heart longs for the promised son? I walk ashamed before men and all that I have I must one day leave to my servant.

God: Your servant shall not be your heir. Your heir shall be of your own flesh and blood. Abram, come outside with me. (Star slide with hundreds of stars) Look up and count the stars. (Abram begins to count) How many do you see, Abram?

Abram: I cannot tell, Lord.

God: Why not, Abram?

Abram: I keep losing count, Lord.

God: (Second slide with thousands of stars) Keep trying, Abram. When you have finished counting all the stars, you will know how many children you will have.

Abram: Yes, Lord. I believe. But how shall I inherit the land seeing that it belongs to others?

God: You will not obtain the promise of land for yourself in this life. I will give this land to your children. For you, there is a better land. I will walk with you there one day soon. On that day we shall talk of many things, you and I. That will be a good day, Abram.

Abram: Yes, Lord. A good day. (Begins to count the stars)

God: What are you doing, Abram?

Abram: I'm trying to count my children, Lord.

God: When you finish, count all the dust of the earth and add the two. Good night, Abram.

Abram: Yes, Lord. Good night, Lord. (Fade lights with Abram counting)

Scene 10

Satan: That was a nice little chat you had with Abram.

God: Someday we will be able to have little chats more often.

Satan: Only if he preserves his false integrity, which he won't.

God: He did well on your last test.

Satan: He is young and searching for adventure.

God: He is in his eighties.

Satan: He had no choice. It was for his nephew that he was brave.

God: You always have an answer, but the fact remains that your charges concerning Abram have been proven false.

Satan: Well, with you there to help him all the time, anyone could have done the same!!

God: That's what I've been saying all along! Anyone can live a life free from sin - if they let me help them.

Satan: Hmmm. I can see it's time we move on to the next test. Let's see. . .Waiting. . . That's it! Few men can endure the test of time.

God: Waiting? Waiting for what?

Satan: For the promised child. What else?

God: He has already waited years since leaving home and many years before that.

Satan: Longer.

God: How long?

Satan: Until it is impossible for him to have a child.

God: How long must that be?

Satan: Oh, let's say until he is 100. (Long pause) Well, what's wrong?

God: It hurts me to make him wait longer.

Satan: You mean you're afraid he can't do it.

God: He can do it, if he lets me help him. But a childless home is a desolate place.

Satan: Forget the talk. He must wait until he is 100.

God: (Sadly) If that will prove my point then Abram shall wait until he is one hundred years old.

Satan: Now, universe, watch this. There is no way Abram can wait that long. He wants a child more than anything and he'll jump at any idea that will get him one. Abram.

Abram: Yes?

Satan: Where is your son?

Abram: (Ashamed) I have no son.

Satan: No son yet? But didn't God promise?

Abram: Yes, God promised.

Satan: Do you believe him?

Abram: Yes.

Satan: You really think an old man in his eighties is going to have a son, eh?

Abram: (Not so sure) Yes. . .

Satan: How?

Abram: God will provide a way.

Satan: Using you and Sarai?

Abram: Yes, I . . .think so.

Satan: Oh, come now, Abram. Use your head. You are both too old to bear children. Besides that, Sarai is as barren as the desert sands.

Abram: But God promised.

Satan: Sure God promised. God promises a lot of things, But we have to help God out sometimes. Do our part. God helps those who help themselves, you know. Think about it, Abram. Sarai.

Sarai: Yes?

Satan: Do you love Abram?

Sarai: Of course I do. With all my heart.

Satan: Then why don't you give him a child to make him happy in his old age?

Sarai: I want to. With all my heart I want to, but I cannot. I have failed him in the most important thing.

Satan: It's God's fault, not yours. Fortunately, there's a way to get around God, if you're creative enough.

Sarai: How?

Satan: The most important thing to Abram is that he have a son. If it were not yours, he would be a little disappointed, but not overly so. There are servant girls who could bear the child and then give it to you to raise as your own. You see how beautiful it is? He'll have a son of his own and you'll have one to adopt. Nothing can go wrong. Nothing.

Sarai: Hmmm.

Satan: Why not use Hagar?

Abram: Hagar!

Sarai: It is a custom in this land that a mistress can have children by her maid and adopt them as her own.

Abram: Yes, but. . .

Sarai: No buts about it. I have informed Hagar and she will obey me.

Abram: I don't know, Sarai. God promised a child by you and I. This would be calling God a liar and doubting.

Sarai: We have to do our part to help God out, Abram. God helps those who help themselves, you know.

Abram: Where did you learn that?

Sarai: I probably heard it somewhere. Why?

Abram: So have I, but I can't quite place where.

Sarai: Well?

Abram: Well what? Oh, your idea. Let me think about it.

Sarai: Hagar will be ready when you decide.

Abram: Dear God, help me to know what to do. Shall I take Hagar?

Satan: (To God) Aren't you going to answer him?

God: Of course not.

Satan: Why not?

God: Abram knows right from wrong in this case. He doesn't need to ask me.

Satan: But he is asking you.

God: He is not asking about right or wrong. He is asking for permission.

Satan: Why not grant it?

God: And plunge my friend Abram into misery? Never.

Satan: Why don't you stop him then?

God: It has to be his choice. I cannot force him. Only advise him.

Satan: Do it, Abram. By this time next year, you will be laughing with a son in your arms. Nothing can go wrong. Nothing.

Abram: (Going you edge of stage representing Hagar's tent) Ahem.

Hagar: Who is it?

Abram: Uh...Master, Abram.

Scene 11

Satan: There, you see? Make a man wait a few years and his faith crumbles. Aw, look, friends. God is embarrassed. I can see why. Here Abram is supposed to be God's friend with all God's power at his fingertips, and yet he couldn't wait for God to act. He has mistrusted God, which is the base from which all sin grows. Now he is mine.

God: Abram is only a man.

Satan: Here we go again. And I suppose that is an excuse for his sin.

God: There is no excuse for sin.

Satan: Therefore he is mine now.

God: He is yours only if he keeps on sinning. If he asks, I have the right to forgive him.

Satan: What right?

God: I have created man and I have redeemed him.

Satan: Redeemed him!

God: Yes.

Satan: How?

God: By giving myself to die in his place.

Satan: You haven't done that yet. You can't apply that to Abram.

God: To me the present is the same as the past is the same as the future.

Satan: You mean you've already saved Abram from his sin by something you're going to do.

God: Precisely.

Satan: You're just going to forgive him and let sin go unpunished?

God: I will forgive him if he asks, but there is no such thing as a free sin.

Satan: What?

God: There is no such thing as a free sin. No one can sin and escape the consequences. Not ever.

Satan: Abram has. He has committed adultery and this very minute he sleeps in an adulterous bed unpunished. He has gotten off free.

God: Has he? Let's let nature take its course and see.

Scene 12

Sarai: Hagar, dear. Would you please get some cheese for me.

Hagar: (Polishing nails or primping)

Sarai: Hagar, did you hear me?

Hagar: Um hm.

Sarai: Then please hurry. It is almost time to eat.

Hagar: Mistress, I think it's time you run your own little errands.

Sarai: Hagar, what's come over you? You've been so insolent these past few days.

Hagar: Funny that you should be the last to know. It was your idea.

Sarai: What was my idea?

Hagar: My baby.

Sarai: Oh. So that's what all the whispering has been about.

Hagar: Yes, mistress. I'm going to have a baby. Abram's baby.

Sarai: Well, I'm very happy for you, Hagar. But you're still my maid and I want you to get the cheese for me.

Hagar: Get it yourself!

Sarai: Hagar!

Hagar: I'm just as good as you are now and I don't intend to take orders any more. The facts are that it's about time you should begin waiting on me.

Sarai: Let's remember something, Hagar. You're having that child for me, as my maid.

Hagar: No! I'm having this child for myself as Abram's wife.

Sarai: Wife!

Hagar: I'm just as important as you are, Sarai.

Sarai: 'Mistress' to you.

Hagar: Not any more, Sarai. We are equals. (Enter Abram)

Sarai: You are a promiscuous wench!

Hagar: And you are a barren old biddy whose time has come and gone.

Sarai: How dare you speak to. . .

Hagar: Oh come on!

Abram: Ladies! Ladies! What on earth is going on? Arguing like two little children! I'm shocked at both of you.

Sarai: Husband, this insolent maid has been. . .

(Together)

Hagar: She's been treating me like a slave. . .

Sarai: She refuses to take orders anymore. . .

(Together)

Hagar: She treats me like some kind of. . .

Abram: Wait, slow down. One at a time, please.

Sarai: She must be beaten until she will obey. . .

(Together)

Hagar: I'm just as good as she! Why should I. . .

Abram: Stop, I say. Sarai, what's wrong?

Sarai: I gave you this... this slave girl here to be the mother of our child. Now that she's pregnant, she. . .

Abram: Pregnant?

Sarai: Now that she's going to have a baby, she. . .

Abram: (Excited) Are you going to have a baby, Hagar?

Hagar: Yes, master.

Abram: Wonderful! She's going to have a baby, Sarai!

Sarai: (Feeling frustrated and inferior) That's what I was trying to tell you, husband.

Abram: Wonderful! Tremendous! Now I will have a son! Isn't that great, Sarai?

Sarai: (Bitterly) Great, Abram. Just great!

Abram: I'm sorry, Sarai. I said that wrong. Now we are going to have a son.

Sarai: First of all, I had nothing to do with it. Secondly, I hope it turns out to be a girl.

Abram: Now, Sarai, don't act that way. After all, it was your idea.

Sarai: I thought of it in a moment of weakness. May God forgive me. But you. . . You certainly didn't put up much resistance to the thought!

Abram: I did so. You hounded me with your brainstorm for days and days and now that you have what you wanted, you blame me for it!

Sarai: Yes, I do blame you. If you had been content with one wife as God planned, this never would have happened. May God judge between us who is right and who is wrong. And as for this wench, I want her to submit to me as she should!

Hagar: I will not submit! I am Abram's wife!

Abram: No! First you are Sarai's maid. You will obey her or I will punish you myself. Sarai, I expect you to continue to treat Hagar as a daughter. But if she is disobedient, you take whatever measures you must.

Sarai: Yes, husband. (Exit Abram) Hagar, dear. I need my cheese.

Scene 13

Havila: Hey, have you heard the latest?

Meshech: Now what?

Havila: Master Abram's wives are at it again.

Meshech: Again? Poor man. Doesn't know which way to turn, does he.

Havila: It's bad. Really bad. Sarai comes in and complains about how disobedient Hagar is, and Hagar comes in and complains about how strict Sarai is and poor master Abram is caught in the middle.

Meshech: Boy, am I ever glad I just got one wife.

Havila: You can say that again!

Meshech: Boy, am I ever glad I just got one wife.

Havila: Wise guy.

Scene 14

Orpha: I don't blame Sarai one bit, I don't. Imagine, having a fine young man like Abram all these years and then have to share him with some young upstart maid that got bought outta Egypt.

Maacah: Being barren don't help none either. Poor woman prays and cries to God for a baby all these years and nothing. Then this little slave girl takes her place for one night and (Snaps fingers) right away she starts to put on weight!

Orpha: She's takin' it real good if you ask me If it were me, I'd snuck in with a knife and cut her throat.

Maacah: Aww. . . .

Orpha: I would, girl! For sure! I told my hubby that too. The good Lord knew what he was doing when he only took out one rib!

Scene 15

Havila: Well, Abram has a son now.

Meshech: A son! No kidding! When's the celebration?

Havila: I don't think there's going to be one.

Meshech: No celebration! Why not, man?

Havila: It was terrible, my wife said. Here's Abram: nervous, ya know. Pacin' up and down outside the maternity tent and then he hears the baby cry! "A boy! A boy!" , He hears. . .

Havila: (Blend Havila into Orpha) Master Abram has a new baby boy.

Orpha: Master Abram! Master Abram, look!

Abram: He's. . .uh. . .

Orpha: Well, whaddaya think, Master?

Abram: He. . .uh. . .He seems quite intelligent.

Orpha: A real beauty, this one is, all right. Here, hold him.

Abram: Me?

Orpha: Sure. He's yours, ya know.

Abram: Yes. . .but. . .

Orpha: But what?

Abram: Well, I'm not very good at that sort of thing.

Orpha: Yer 86 years old and ya don't know how to hold a kid yet? Here, just like this.

Abram: Oh, Oh my!

Orpha: There ya go. Just like a pro!

Abram: Say! That's easy enough. Can I show Sarai?

Orpha: Sure ya can. (Then, realizing that a heart is about to be broken) Uh. . .that is uh. . .
.Maybe you'd better. . .

Abram: Sarai! Sarai! Come here! Sarai, come see!

Sarai: (Trying to hide that she has been crying) Yes, Abram?

Abram: Sarai, look at my. . .at our new baby! Sarai, what's wrong? You've been crying.
Sarai, what's wrong? (Exit a crying Sarai) Sarai, please come back!. . .Dear God, what
have I done? Will I never find peace again? (Music up)

Scene 16

God: As I said, there is no such thing as a free sin. I have forgiven Abram, but the results
of this one sin will go on until the end of time.

Satan: Oh, come on.

God: It is true. Every act of a man's life has effects that reach far beyond his knowledge.
Every act of yours, Satan, has results that even you cannot imagine. I wish. . .

Satan: Wish what?

God: Nothing.

Satan: No, go on. Wish what?

God: I wish you had believed me when I tried to tell you that in the beginning of your rebellion. But you had to find out by experience, so here we are.

Satan: You look sad.

God: I guess I am sad.

Satan: Why?

God: Why? I am sad for you and for Abram.

Satan: What for? What happens to people doesn't affect you.

God: They are my children. I love them. Everything that happens to them affects me.

Satan: I don't understand you. Here you have unnumbered galaxies to work with and yet you spend most of your time and energy caring for the people on earth. Why not forget them and be satisfied with the unfallen billions.

God: I can't.

Satan: Why not?

God: I guess it's like a shepherd who has lost one sheep. He leaves all the others and searches for the lost until late at night. When he finds it, he carries it home rejoicing.

Satan: That doesn't make sense.

God: It does to me.

Satan: If you say so. Shall we continue?

God: By all means.

Satan: Your move.

God: All right. Abram, Abram.

Abram: Yes, Lord?

God: I have come to make you a promise.

Abram: Speak, Lord, for your child listens.

God: You shall be the father of many nations. I am changing your name to Abraham which means, "The Father of a Multitude." And I am changing Sarai's name to Sarah which means "Princess." I will bless her, and give you a son by her.

Abraham: (Laughs to himself - we played this laughter scene beginning from a mild chuckle to an all-out roll on the floor belly buster) Can a 100 year old man have children by a 90 year-old woman? (He laughs some more)

God: I will bless her and she shall be the mother of nations. The kings of many peoples shall spring from her.

Abraham: Yes, Lord. I understand what you mean. You will bless Ishmael in a special way.

God: No! Abraham. That isn't what I said! I said, your wife, Sarah, will bear you a son. He will be bringing joy to your tents by this time next year and you shall call his name, "Laughter".

Satan: You're really going to do it, eh?

God: I said I would.

Satan: It will take a miracle at their age.

God: For God, nothing is easier!

Scene 17

Abraham: Sarai.

Sarai: Yes, husband.

Abraham: What's a good name for a baby?

Sarai: Why? Is Eliezar having another?

Abraham: No.

Sarai: Who?

Abraham: Just some close friends.

Sarai: Who?

Abraham: Abraham and Sarah.

Sarai: Abraham and Sarah?

Abraham: Yes.

Sarai: We don't know any Abraham and Sarah.

Abraham: Yes we do. By different names.

Sarai: What different names?

Abraham: Guess. . .

Sarai: Abram, it's. . .

Abraham: That's one!

Sarai: One what?

Abraham: One of the names.

Sarai: But you're the only Abram around and you're not...You're not are you?

Abraham: (Nods yes)

Sarai: But Abram, don't you remember what happened with Hagar? Do you think a woman my age can stand to suffer that again! How could you!

Abraham: Sarai, don't jump to conclusions.

Sarai: But you said you were the father and. . .

Abraham: Sure I am. And Sarah is the mother.

Sarai: We don't know any Sarah.

Abraham: Sure you do. She's my best friend.

Sarai: But you're not supposed to have any best friends but me.

Abraham: I don't.

Sarai: Then who's this Sarah person?

Abraham: She's you!

Sarai: Husband, please. Don't mock me.

Abraham: I'm not. God just talked to me and changed our names. You are to be called Sarah!

Sarah: "Princess?" God called me "Princess"?

Abraham: Yes. And I am to be called Abraham.

Sarah: "Father of a multitude"?

Abraham: Yes, And we are going to have a baby.

Sarah: Sure we are.

Abraham: It's true!

Sarah: Uh huh. And the desert is going to sprout lilies.

Abraham: Wife, you've got to believe.

Sarah: Husband, my time is long past. Go to sleep.

Abraham: Sarah, God didn't name you "Princess" for nothing. Be patient.

Sarah: Abraham, at my age, patient is all I can be. Good night. (She chuckles)

Abraham: Lord, help Sarah to believe.

(As the lights dim we hear one last chuckle from Sarai)

Scene 18

Hagar: (Looking out of tent flap) Who are those men, Sarah?

Sarah: (A bit bitter towards Hagar) I'm sure I don't know, Hagar.

Hagar: They're sure handsome. Especially the tallest one.

Sarah: They are nice looking young men, Hagar. But I'm far too old to care about such things.

Hagar: One is never too old to appreciate fine art, Sarah. (Pause) That is, if she was ever a woman. (Looking out) Now they're talking about you.

Sarah: Nonsense.

Hagar: Listen. (Sarah comes to flap)

God: Where is your wife, Abraham? (God and Abram done as voices)

Abraham: Inside the tent.

God: About this time next year, Sarah will have a baby son.

Sarah: (Laughs to herself) Me, have a baby? At my age?

God: Why did Sarah laugh?

Abraham: I didn't hear anything.

God: Sarah laughed.

Abraham: Sarah, dear. Come out here.

God: Sarah, why did you laugh?

Sarah: (A bit frightened) Begging your pardon, sir. I didn't laugh.

God: Yes, you did laugh. You said in your heart, "Shall I have a child at 90 by a 100 year old man?" Where is your faith, Sarah? Is anything too hard for the Lord? (She shakes her head) Next year you will be laughing again-with a child in your arms. Your child! (Sarah nods and backs into tent)

Hagar: Who was that man, Mistress?

Sarah: I don't know, Hagar.

Hagar: What was he talking about? You having a baby?

Sarah: I don't know, Hagar. . .(Faith and hope beginning) Unless. . .

Hagar: Unless what?

Sarah: Unless Abraham was right.

Hagar: About what?

Sarah: About me having a baby next year.

Hagar: He told you you would have a baby?

Sarah: Yes. He had a vision. God told him that I would have a baby. And now this man says the same. (Hope growing) Oh, Hagar! Do you think it could be true? Do you?

Hagar: No, Sarah. I don't. Children are for those who are still women.

Sarah: (Lost in dreams now and not noticing the cut) God did promise. (Enter Abram)

Hagar: You're talking foolishness, Sarah. Ishmael is the heir.

Abraham: Not any more, Hagar. Please go to your tent.

Hagar: (Sullenly) Yes, master.

Abraham: Did you hear, Sarah?

Sarah: I heard, husband. And I feel. . .

Abraham: Yes?

Sarah: I feel. . .it can't be.

Abraham: Feel what, Sarah?

Sarah: I feel young enough to appreciate fine art again.

Abraham: I don't understand.

Sarah: You will. Who was that man?

Abraham: That was not a man, Sarah. That was Almighty God Himself!

Sarah: God!

Abraham: Yes, Sarah. God.

Sarah: God came to our home for dinner!?

Abraham: Yes, Sarah. God came for dinner.

Sarah: If I had known that, I. . .What did he want?

Abraham: He is on his way to Sodom, to see its wickedness. If it is as evil as he has heard, then he will destroy it.

Sarah: Destroy it! But what about Lot? And his family? They'll all be killed!

Abraham: Don't worry, Sarah. (Confident) I have prayed for Sodom and saved it. All God has to do is find 10 righteous people there and he will spare it.

Sarah: Oh. Thank God!

Abraham: Yes, thank God.

Scene 19

Eliezar: (Urgently from outside of tent) Master Abraham! Master, Abraham!!

Abraham: (Sleepy) Yes, yes. . . I hear you.

Eliezar: (Thunder is beginning to be heard and occasionally lightning both of which increase till the end of the scene) Please hurry master.

Abraham: Eliezar, can't you let an old couple on their second honeymoon sleep in?

Eliezar: It's important, Master. Hurry!

Abraham: Oh, all right. Hang on.

Sarah: What's wrong, dear?

Abraham: Oh, I don't know. Eliezar probably lost his sheep or something.

Sarah: You're funny.

Abraham: Nothing's funny this time of day. (Bends down to put on slippers-Sarah gives him a friendly push) Hey! Be careful how you treat an old man.

Sarah: You're pretty healthy for an old man! (Pushes again)

Abraham: Hey! Stop that! (Pushes again) Sarah! What's wrong with you anyway? (Pushes again) Oh, I get it. Feeling young again, eh? Well Papa Abraham isn't too old for a run around the pasture you know! (Begins to chase Sarah around the tent. The thunder continues to get louder)

Eliezar: Master!

Abraham: Coming! (Catches Sarah)

Eliezar: (Desperate) Master!!

Abraham: What?!

Eliezar: Master, hurry! It's very important!

Abraham: Eliezar, have you no sense of timing? Sarah hasn't acted like this in 40 years!

Eliezar: Master, this is no time to play. Sodom and Gomorrah are being burned up!

Abraham: What? (They exit tent)

Sarah: Oh, how awful!

Abraham: Not even 10.

Sarah: What about Lot?

Abraham: God is watching over him.

Eliezar: Master, I knew God was powerful, but this. . .

Scene 20

God: Have you seen my servant Abraham, how he has prayed for a city of strangers?

Satan: So Abraham prays for someone. Very significant.

God: Yes, highly significant. It proves to the whole universe that Abraham has love for others. He even prays for strangers.

Satan: Why didn't you answer his prayers?

God: I did. The answer was no.

Satan: I'd say it was! You burned that whole plain down to nothing! That was my city and you just up and burned it. You are unfair!

God: I am unfair! You know there are limits beyond which sin cannot go unpunished. And yet you led the people of Sodom past those limits. You knew I was going to destroy the city and yet you did not warn so much as one person to leave. Time will show who is unfair.

Satan: (Claps) A very pretty speech. But be sure that I shall point to Sodom for all time to come as evidence that you are cruel.

God: Those who are honest will see through your lies.

Satan: I doubt it. What about Abraham?

God: Abraham has believed my promise. Now I have a right to answer his prayer. He has proved that he can endure waiting.

Scene 21

Orpha: Hey, have ya heard?

Maacah: Heard what?

Orpha: Sarah's pregnant!

Maacah: Sarah?

Orpha: Yeah.

Maacah: Sarah who?

Orpha: Our Sarah. Master Abraham's wife!

Maacah: Yer kiddin'!

Orpha: I am not. She's gonna have a baby.

Maacah: Wowie! Pregnant at 90! I can't believe it!

Orpha: It's true! She told me herself.

Maacah: You know, she has been acting a lot different since those angels came to talk to Abraham.

Orpha: And she does look a lot younger. In fact she's even looking beautiful again!

Maacah: Yeah. Well what are we doing here? Let's go tell the rest of the girls.

Orpha: We can have a shower for her. Oh, I'm so excited!

End of Sample.

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