

“Now Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children; and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing; I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram harkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram’s wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes. And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee; I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes; the Lord judge between me and thee. But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; to do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face. And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai’s maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction (meaning, God shall hear). **AND HE WILL BE A WILD MAN; HIS HAND WILL BE AGAINST EVERY MAN, AND EVERY MAN’S HAND AGAINST HIM; AND HE SHALL DWELL IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL HIS BRETHREN. And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me; for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi (which signifies, The Well of Him that liveth and seeth me; that is, The Living and All-seeing God, Who had taken a special care of her, and favored her with a peculiar discovery of His Love to her; and revealed to her others of his holy attributes, such as His Faithfulness and His Omniscience – all of which was really quite wonderful and comforting to Hagar, then in her fugitive status as a runaway Egyptian slave girl, alone in the desert, and pregnant with her master’s child).” Gen. 16:1-14.**

Indeed, it appears that Abraham was developing a strong fondness for Ishmael, seeing in him Abraham’s most probable SEED through whom all the promises of God would be fulfilled, considering Abraham’s and Sarah’s advanced age.

“And Hagar bare Abram a son; and Abram called his son’s name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.” (Gen. 16:15,16)

Time goes by, about 13 years, during all which time, Abraham apparently believes he will never have another heir than Ishmael; and both he and Sarah actually laugh when the Lord God presses the point; to wit:

1) Abraham. ***“And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly ...And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, AND GIVE THEE A SON ALSO OF HER; yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.”*** – (It is well known that Sarah herself laughed upon receiving the same improbable news from the Lord as Abraham did. But listen to what precedes Sarah’s laughter; to wit:) – ***“THEN ABRAHAM FELL UPON HIS FACE, AND LAUGHED, AND SAID IN HIS HEART, SHALL A CHILD BE BORN UNTO HIM***

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THAT IS AN HUNDRED YEARS OLD? AND SHALL SARAH, THAT IS NINETY YEARS OLD, BEAR?" Gen. 17:1-2,15-17.

2) Sarah. *"And they" – (i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ, with two angels, in Abraham's tent, in the heat of the day, in the plains of Mamre, bound for Sodom to burn Sodom! Gen. 18.) – "And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. THEREFORE SARAH LAUGHED WITHIN HERSELF, SAYING, AFTER I AM WAXED OLD SHALL I HAVE PLEASURE, MY LORD BEING OLD ALSO? And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh. And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom; and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way." Gen. 18:9-16.*

And so it was that both Abraham and Sarah laughed the laughter of unbelief, in a matter of great importance, under conditions that were extremely unsavory, involving some bald-faced lying to God and man, and some adultery-agreed-upon, with some sleazy conniving in the Hagar/Ishmael foolishness – yet both Abraham and Sarah landed amongst the champions of the faith in the **Hebrews 11** Great Hall of Fame; and, indeed, the Lord Jesus pulled the curtain aside in **Luke 16** to reveal a glorified Abraham, not only IN Heaven, but also in a position there of great honor and authority; to wit:

"There was a certain rich man, (probably Mr. Dives), which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (Lk. 16:19-31)

Thus we have irrefragable proof that Abraham is God's Elect and is already in Heaven, having been carried there by the angels *"into Abraham's bosom;"* plus, Abraham is a part of Holy Writ, being listed favorably with the other saints in the Great Hall of Fame; to wit:

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out; not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises (i.e., the things promised), but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, AND CONFESSED THAT THEY WERE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son. Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called; Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” (Heb. 11:8-19)

Another sordid incident in the lives of Abraham and Sarah – which further highlights the doctrines of Total Depravity of all mankind, and Unconditional Election as the only hope of even God’s Elect – involves King Abimelech’s dangerous love-attraction for Sara, aggravated by Abraham’s cowardly deception; to wit:

“And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister; and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man’s wife. But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? And she, even she herself said, He is my brother; in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me; therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live; and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine. Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears; and the men were sore afraid. Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife’s sake. And yet indeed she is my sister, she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father’s house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother. And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee; dwell where it

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***pleaseth thee. And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver; behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and with all other; thus she was reprov'd. So Abraham prayed unto God; and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bear children. For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife."* (Gen. 20:1-18)**

Thus you see, Beloved, another faithful portion of sacred history preserved for us by the Holy Ghost. Wherein, In addition to being another episode of somewhat tacky conduct by Abraham and Sarah, several more issues surface; like incest – (i.e., Abraham marrying his sister or half-sister, Sarah!) – cowardice, shameful mistrust of God, etc.

Enter, one Royal Bob Ingersoll (1833-1899), famous professional Atheist for hire, one of a Satanic class of clever and witty men – (ala, Mark Twain, Bob Ingersoll, et al.) – who specialize in speaking reproachfully and blasphemously in the wake of outstanding saints who get caught up in compromising positions; to wit:

***"And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child that is born unto thee shall surely die."* (2 Sam. 12:13,14)**

***"I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some have already turned aside after Satan."* (1 Tim. 5:14,15)**

"And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him (or, to be his adversary)." (Zech. 3:1)

Take a closer look at Satan's dark angel (or, messenger), Royal Bob Ingersoll; to wit: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Robt. Green Ingersoll (1833-1899), U.S. orator, politician, and lawyer, who popularized the higher criticism of the Bible, a humanistic philosophy, and a scientific rationalism which qualified him as the "bull dog" for Charles Darwin in the United States. In other words, Beloved, Royal Bob was demon-possessed. His father was a Jonathan Edwards-school Congregational minister, and he was raised in a strict 5-point Calvinistic home; and said, "God so loved the world that he made up his mind to damn a large majority of the human race."

He seems to have been especially disgusted with Abraham and Sarah; to wit: "I compared Zeno, Epicurus, and Socrates, three heathen wretches who had never heard of the Old Testament or the Ten Commandments, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, three favorites of Jehovah, and I was depraved enough to think that the Pagans were superior to the Patriarchs – and to Jehovah himself." Royal Bob, p. 28.

"When the graduating class of 1896 at the University of Kansas invited Ingersoll to deliver the traditional oration, their action was disallowed. Senior law students at the University of Missouri were overruled by the faculty when they requested permission to schedule an Ingersoll lecture on the campus. At Northwestern University a professor entered a demerit mark against each student who attended Ingersoll's lecture at Chicago in the fall of 1882." Royal Bob., p. 31.

Note: the Satanic brats of Royal Bob's day damned posterity.

I love you.

Amen.