

Dr. Swil Meets Abraham

By John Cospers

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CHARACTER

Dr. Swil- Know-it-all talk show host

Sarah- Abraham's wife

Abraham

Hagar- Sarah's maid

Isaac and Ishmael- Fighting brothers

Dr. Swil and Sarah are on stage, seated.

SWIL- Hi there. I'm Dr. Swil. Today, we're talking about family. I have here in the studio with me today Sarah. Sarah has been married to the same man for more than eighty years.

They were unable to have any children. This was hard for you, wasn't it?

SARAH- Yes, Dr. Swil, it was. Abraham and I always wanted children, but I was barren.

SWIL- It's just like I always say. An empty nest gathers no moss.

SARAH- Yeah... something like that.

SWIL- Sarah, you wanted children badly. And the Lord had promised he'd give you children. Isn't that right?

SARAH- Yes, Dr. Swil. I prayed for it to happen, and one day, some visitors told my husband the Lord would give me a child.

SWIL- But you didn't believe them!

SARAH- I thought it was a joke. I was already an old woman. How could I have kids?

SWIL- Obviously you never heard me say that the squeaky wheel keeps the doctor away.

SARAH- What?

SWIL- Any-who, you decided to take matters into your own hands, didn't you?

SARAH- Yes I did. I had this servant named Hagar. She was hot, and she was fertile. So I asked my husband if he'd have a child with Hagar.

SWIL- Now what possessed you to do that?

SARAH- I wanted a child, Dr. Swil! What was I supposed to do?

SWIL- You should have stopped, taken a deep breath, and remembered that Patience is a lousy boy's name, but okay for a girl.

SARAH- What??

SWIL- Please welcome my next guest, Sarah's servant Hagar.

Hagar enters. She and Sarah look at one another, then look away. Hagar sits beside Sarah, away from Sarah.

SWIL- Hello, Hagar. Is that a family name?

HAGAR- Yes. My father was in slacks.

SWIL- And a man in slacks is a man who knows the facts.

HAGAR- What?

SWIL- You worked for Sarah for a number of years, then she comes to you with the unusual request: to sleep with her husband and give him a son.

HAGAR- That's right.

SWIL- How did that make you feel?

HAGAR- Well, it's not every day your boss asks you to sleep with their husband. I don't know if I'd have gone to work for her if I had known that.

SWIL- Carpe diem, right?

HAGAR- Carpe diem?

SWIL- Yeah, you know. Buyer beware?

HAGAR- Doesn't that mean seize the day?

SWIL- I expect you would interpret it that way. You seized the day and hopped in bed with your boss's husband.

HAGAR- Yes, I did.

SWIL- Even though you didn't feel good about it.

HAGAR- She was my boss. What could I say?

SWIL- How about, you can't teach an old coon dog about the Gross National Product?

Hagar looks at Sarah, confused.

SARAH- You got me.

SWIL- So you gave birth to a son.

HAGAR- That's right. My boy Ishmael. And Abraham loved him. Until she got pregnant.

SWIL- That's right. Little Ishmael was on his way to becomin' a man, when the pitter patter of sibling rivalry was heard.

SARAH- I don't know how it happened, but I got pregnant. Abraham and I finally had an heir.

SWIL- Well now, wait a minute. Your husband already has a first born. And you know what they say. The victor never falls far from the tree.

SARAH- I'm sorry, but, what exactly does that mean?

SWIL- I think it's pretty obvious.

HAGAR- No, really. I think we need some explanation.

SWIL- Let's see if we can get some from the father of your babies, Abraham.

Abraham enters. He sits by Sarah.

SWIL- Abraham, you're at the center of this. Explain how this second son of yours is the one who's gonna get all your stuff.

ABRAHAM- Well, Dr. Swil, the Lord made us a promise that Sarah and I would have a child. So Isaac's my boy, not Ishmael.

SWIL- Well you can't just erase Ishmael. Like my old pappy used to say, if a tree falls in the woods, sailor take warning.

ABRAHAM- Wow. That's the same thing my father always said!

SWIL- Let's see what the kids think of this. Can we bring 'em out? Ishmael and Isaac?

Isaac and Ishmael enter. Both carry teddy bears. They start wailing on each other.

SARAH- Ishmael! You cut that out!

HAGAR- Stop yelling at my child!

SARAH- Fine! You control him!

HAGAR- Why don't you control your child?

SWIL- Whoa, whoa, whoa! Let's all have some remote control. If we don't store nuts for the winter, the lady is a tramp.

ABRAHAM- You are so right, Dr. Swil.

HAGAR- Are you serious? The man's a crack pot!

ABRAHAM- Hagar, they don't give TV shows to crack pots. I guess that's hard for an illiterate servant girl to understand.

SARAH- No really, honey. He's crazy.

SWIL- Hey, I'm not the one who fixed up my husband with my servant. For one thing, I'd be living a totally different lifestyle, and for another, If you stick your head in a bull's hindquarters--

SARAH- Okay, enough of the Dr. Swillisms. We need real advice here. What can we do to save this family?

SWIL- Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, you have two beautiful children. And two beautiful children in hand are worth fish in a barrel. But a gallon of prevention is not gonna get your ducks in a row. It's time we turn off the lights in the basketball gym of ennui and pull the wool over our plowshares.

ABRAHAM- That is so true.

HAGAR- Could you repeat all that in, you know, normal language?

SWIL- I know things are tough, but you're gonna get through this. I mean, it's not like thousands of years from now, the ancestors of these two boys will be constantly at war, with one child's descendants forced to defend a tiny strip of land against the hatred and ire of his brother's much larger family of descendants who want to destroy them.

ABRAHAM- You're probably right.

SWIL- I know I'm right. And some times, right does make lemonade. But never forget, you can lead a horse to water, but narrow is the road that leads to Baskin Robbins. And that's the road for me. I'm Dr. Swil, and I'll have the Jamocha Almost Fudge. Race you there, Oprah!

Dr. Swil takes off his mic and dashes off. Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar take their time leaving with the kids.