

# Playing the Waiting Game

## Sabbath

**Do** Do this week's activity on page 24.

*Waiting. It's such a hard thing to do. Wait for Christmas. Wait for your birthday. Wait till school's out. Wait till you can drive. "Be patient," your parents say, but sometimes they're not very good at it either. Even parents get tired of waiting for help and plow ahead themselves. But the results of impatience are usually a disaster. (See Genesis 16; Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 145-147.)*

Abraham and Sarah lived at a time when a large family was a great honor. But at the age of 75 they were still childless. By then they had probably given up on having children. Then

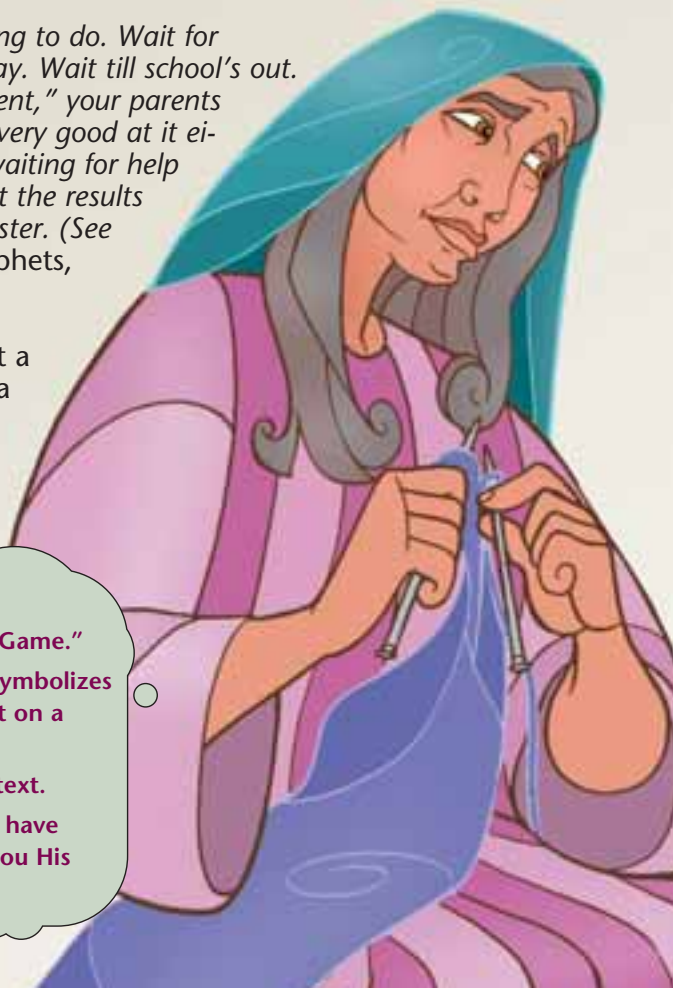
## Sunday

**Read** Read "Playing the Waiting Game."

**Choose** Choose something that symbolizes patience and write your power text on a piece of paper next to it.

**Learn** Begin to learn the power text.

**Pray** Pray that God will help you have patience to wait for Him to show you His plans.



# THREE

## POWER POINT

Following God's guidelines helps us avoid conflict situations.

## POWER TEXT

"And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised"

(Hebrews 6:15, NIV).

God spoke to Abraham and told him he would be the father of a great nation. No doubt the promise gave Abraham and Sarah new hope, and the waiting began again. Yet even several years after the promise, no child was born.

"Are you sure I'm going to have a son?" Abraham finally asked God. "I'm beginning to think my servant will get the inheritance."

"No," said God. "Your own son will be your heir. Your children will be as many as the stars, for I will make of you a great nation." So they waited and waited and waited some more. Ten years went by, and still there was no baby. Abraham and Sarah finally ran out of patience. They decided to take matters into their own hands. They thought they'd give God some help.

### Monday

**Read** Read Genesis 16:1-4.

**Search** Search the newspaper and find a story in which people have chosen to solve a problem their way rather than God's way.

**Clip** Clip out the story and bring it to Sabbath School next week.

**Pray** Pray for the people involved in the story you have found.



"Take my servant girl, Hagar, as your wife," Sarah said to Abraham. "She will have that son for you."

Even though he lived among heathens who thought nothing of marrying several wives, until now Abraham had not adopted their customs. It was common not only for a man to have more than one wife, but also for a woman who didn't have children to give her servant to her husband.

The Bible doesn't tell us how long Abraham thought about the idea; however, we can be sure he didn't ask God about the plan. He was desperate. He had run out of patience. He took Hagar as his second wife, and sure enough, it wasn't long until she was pregnant. Abraham might have thought that would solve his problem, but he was mistaken. Disregarding God's plan for his family was disastrous.

## Tuesday

**Read** Read Genesis 16:5-6.

**Identify** Who is passing the buck? Who won't take responsibility for their actions? Who runs away? Who vents her anger?

**Write** Write some modern parallels to these people in your Bible study journal.

**Pray** Pray that you will be willing to wait on God and avoid conflicts.



## Wednesday

**Read** Read Genesis 16:7-10.

**Think** How do people sometimes run away from family problems today?

**Share** Share Psalm 40:1-3 with someone who may be struggling with family conflicts.

**Pray** Pray for those who feel that they can't cope.

In no time at all wife number one and wife number two were not getting along. Hagar was expecting the child that Sarah couldn't have, and she probably reminded Sarah about it every chance she got. Can't you just imagine how it might have been?

"Hagar, would you please bring me my—."

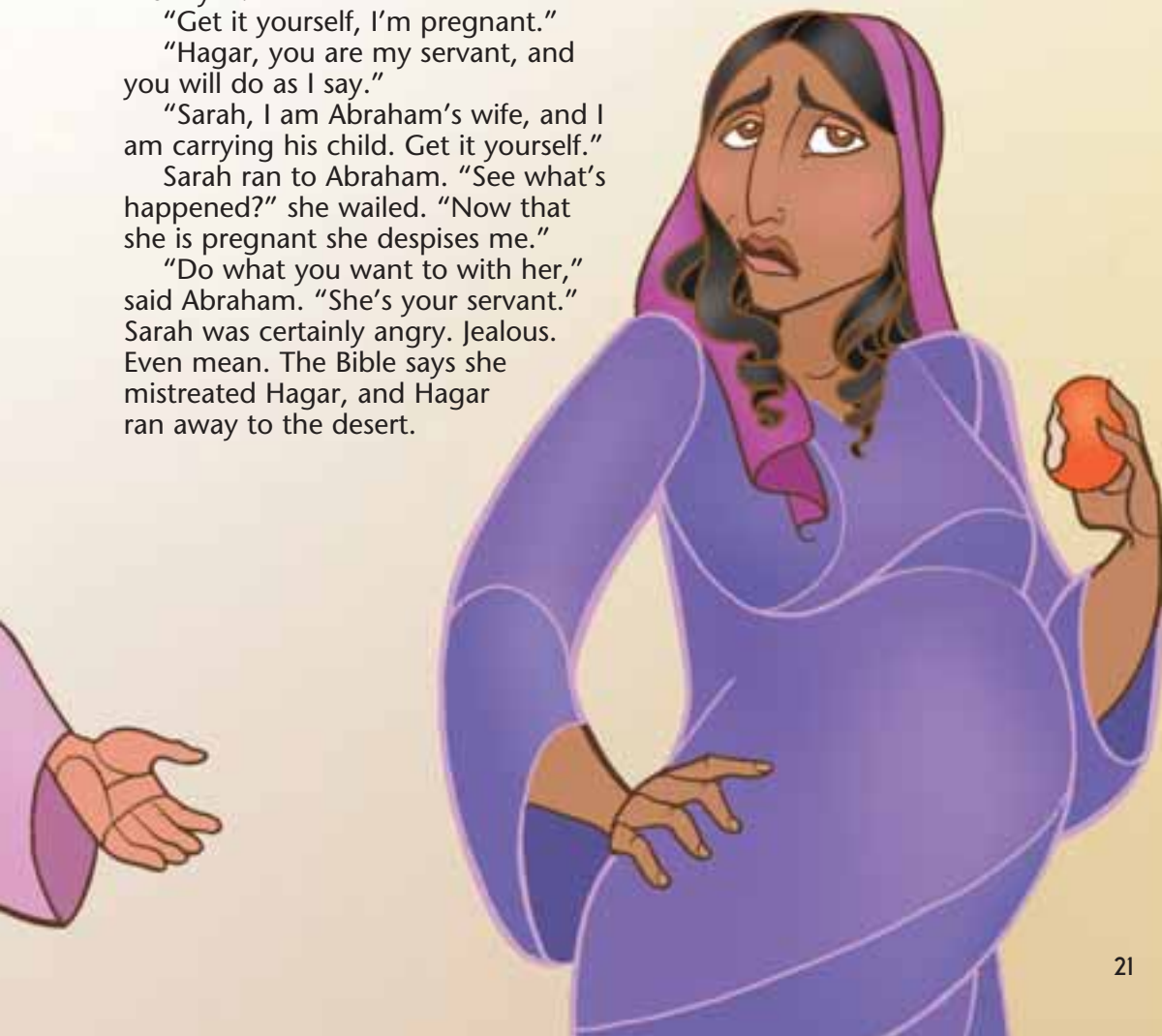
"Get it yourself, I'm pregnant."

"Hagar, you are my servant, and you will do as I say."

"Sarah, I am Abraham's wife, and I am carrying his child. Get it yourself."

Sarah ran to Abraham. "See what's happened?" she wailed. "Now that she is pregnant she despises me."

"Do what you want to with her," said Abraham. "She's your servant." Sarah was certainly angry. Jealous. Even mean. The Bible says she mistreated Hagar, and Hagar ran away to the desert.



Out there in the desert, near a spring, an angel found Hagar all alone.

"Go back to Sarah, your mistress," he said. "Submit to her. You will have a son, whom you will name Ishmael." So Hagar returned, and Ishmael was born. At long last Abraham had a child, a son whom he loved, and things seemed to settle down.

But just as a roof that's been fixed the quick, impatient way keeps things dry for only a while,

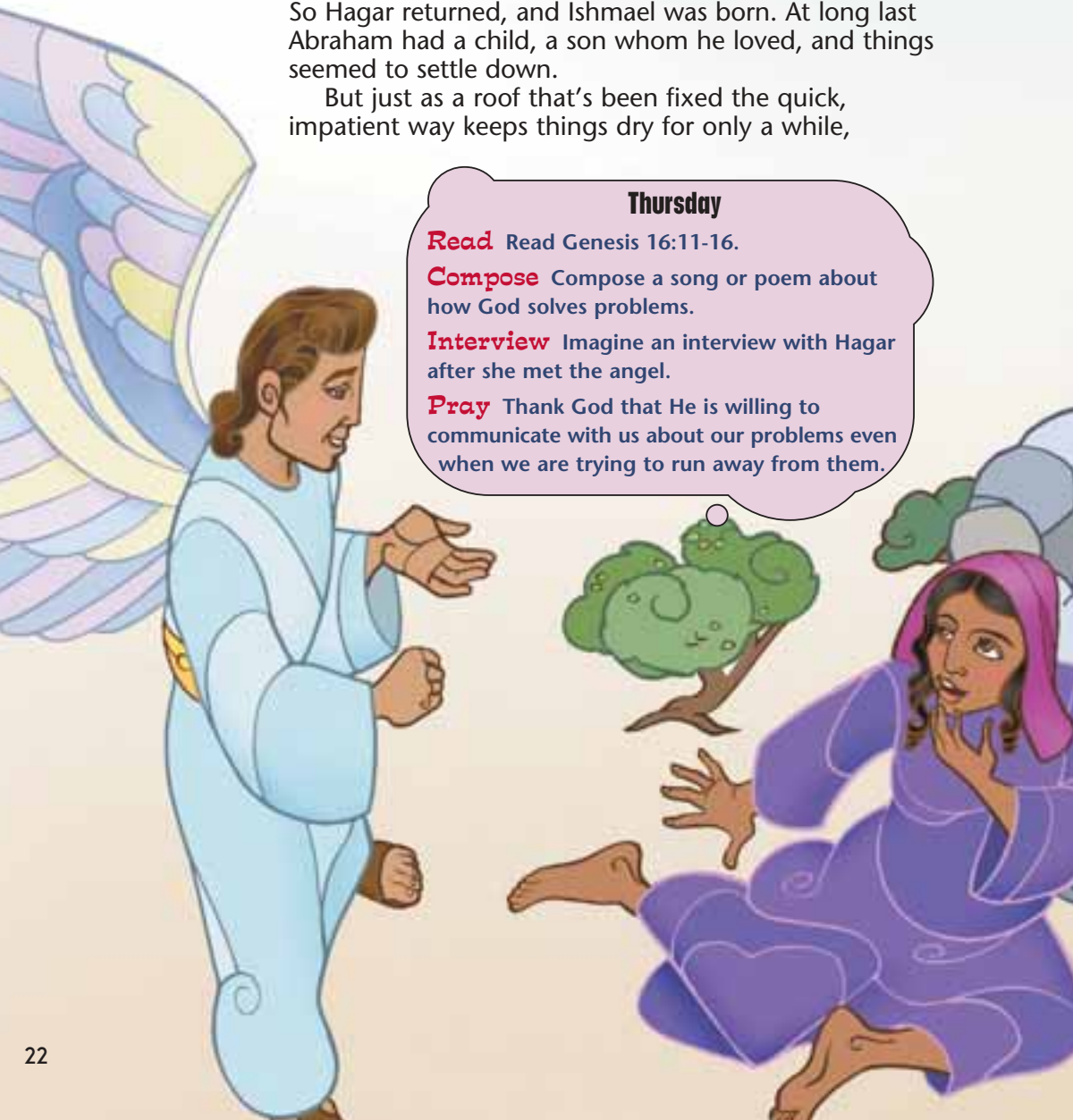
### Thursday

**Read** Read Genesis 16:11-16.

**Compose** Compose a song or poem about how God solves problems.

**Interview** Imagine an interview with Hagar after she met the angel.

**Pray** Thank God that He is willing to communicate with us about our problems even when we are trying to run away from them.



Abraham's family problems were far from over. It wasn't until several years later when Isaac was born to Sarah that Abraham found out how big a mistake he'd made. The conflicts between his two wives and their sons became unbearable and tore his family apart. If only Abraham had trusted God. If he had waited for Him to fulfill His promise in His own time, Abraham could have saved himself a lot of grief.

Abraham was desperate for the heir God had promised and charged ahead with his own plan for a son. It wasn't until he was an old man that he finally learned he could trust God with everything in his life, even what was most precious—his family.

### Friday

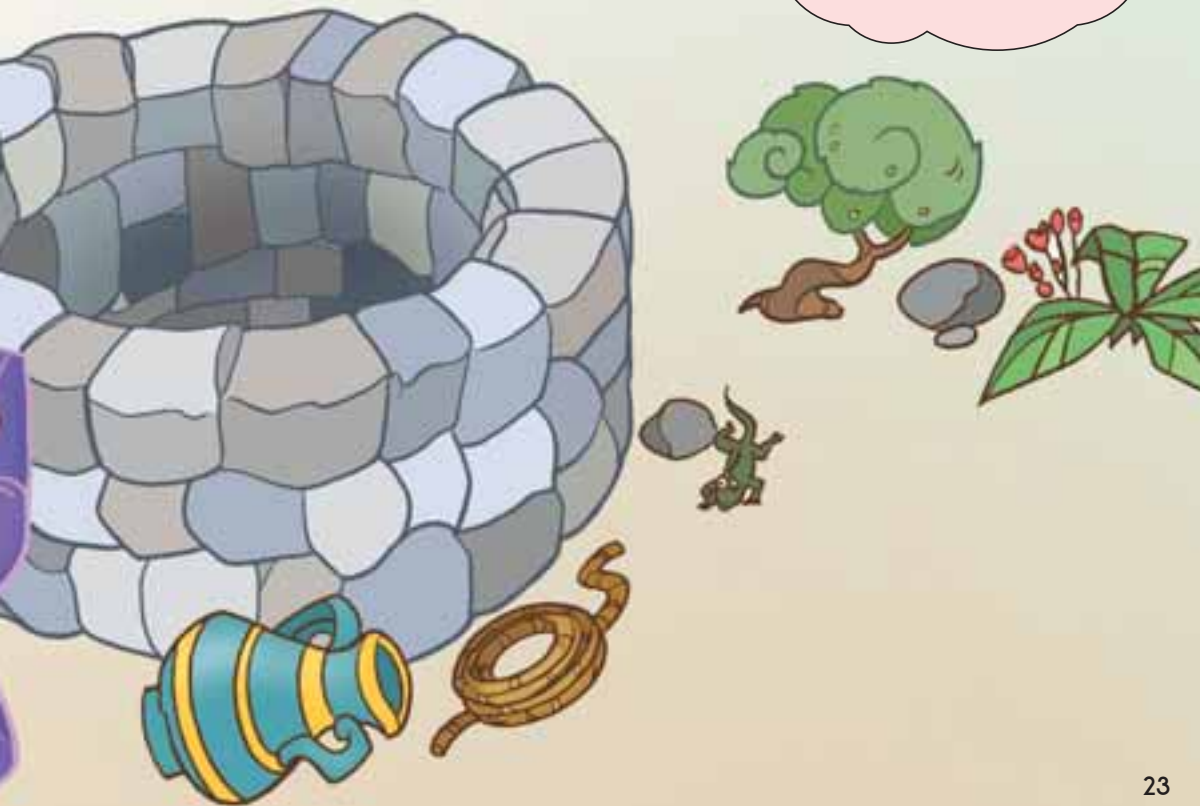
**Read** Read Psalm 40:1-3.

**Share** Share the song or poem that you wrote yesterday with your family.

**Act** Act out the story of Hagar and the angel.

**Discuss** Discuss how you can, as a family, be better at managing conflict.

**Pray** Thank Jesus for giving you safe guidelines for solving conflicts.



## God's Command

Below is a Bible quote and four clues.  
The numbers (which represent letters) in the  
clues match the numbers in the verse.

“  
 1    2    3    4            5    6    7            8    9    10  
 11   12   13   14    ”

### CLUES

1    3    5    10

What Eve was to Adam.

9    2    7    14

Difficult.

13    12    8

Decay.

11    6    4

Abraham's nephew.

## Keep the Unity of the Spirit

Consider the following Bible verse:

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the **bond of peace**” (Ephesians 4:3, NIV).

Can you find 24 four-letter or greater words generated by using the letters from the phrase: “BOND OF PEACE”? Do not use a letter more often than it appears in the phrase.

_____	_____	_____
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