

I Hate It Here: Stretching Seasons

- ✓ The seasons we want to run from are often the seasons God is using to stretch us, grow us, and prepare us.

Genesis 16:7-11, 13 (NIV) The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. ⁸ And he said, “Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?” “I’m running away from my mistress Sarai,” she answered. ⁹ Then the angel of the Lord told her, “Go back to your mistress and submit to her.” ¹⁰ The angel added, “I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.” ¹¹ The angel of the Lord also said to her: “You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard of your misery. ¹³ She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen the One who sees me.”

Three Ways To Submit To The Stretch:

1. Stop running.

Psalms 139:7-10 (NIV) Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. ⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

2. Take the next obedient step.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV) Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

3. Remember who sees you.

Genesis 16:11, 13 (NIV) ¹¹ The angel of the Lord also said to her: “You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard of your misery. ¹³ She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen the One who sees me.”

Psalms 34:17-18 (NIV) The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. ¹⁸ The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Genesis 16:10 (NIV) The angel added, “I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.”