Women of the Bible

Block 5: Hagar

Hagar was an Egyptian slave girl in Abraham's tribe. Hagar belonged to Sarah, Abraham's wife. In Block 2, we told the story of Sarah, Abraham's wife, who gave birth to Isaac when she was advanced in years. Sarah tried to conceive for years, and when it was clear that she was barren, she offered her slave, Hagar, to Abraham as a surrogate. This was common practice during the time. Once Hagar gave birth to Ishmael, Sarah became fiercely jealous of her slave and her Abraham's relationship with Ishmael. For fourteen years, Ishmael was considered Abraham's heir. Later, when Sarah miraculously gave birth to Isaac, she was worried that Ishmael might hurt her son in order to secure his place as Abraham's only heir. Sarah convinced Abraham to turn Hagar and Ishmael out. 

So she said to Abraham, “Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac.” Genesis 21:10 The New Oxford Annotated Bible Revised Standard Version.

Hagar was given her freedom, and she and Ishmael were turned out into the desert, given only bread and a “skin” of water. Hagar & Ishmael stumbled through the desert, attempting to return to her native land, Egypt. She searched for water, but found none. Near death, Hagar left Ishmael near some bushes because she did not want to see him take his last breath. Hagar called to God for help. God opened her ideas and she discovered a deep well. Years later, Hagar found an acceptable Egyptian wife for Ishmael. According to the Koran, Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael were the ancestors to the Arab nation. The Koran says that Hagar was at Mecca when God saved her and Ishmael from death. Ishmael ultimately became the ancestor of the Arab nation, in accordance with God’s promise to Abraham, just as Isaac was the ancestor of the Jewish nation.

Women are highly sensitive to the opinions of others. At different times in our lives, we have experienced the feeling of not fitting in or being accepted. This is particularly true for women who fall into a minority because of their race, nationality or religion. We pray that God will grant us the strength to endure the hardships that we face, perceived or actual. God answers our prayers, but sometimes, we must endure hard times before our prayers are answered.
Instructions:

1. Begin by constructing the modified square-in-a-square blocks using Dark 5-1/2” squares and Light 3” squares. Place a Light 3” square into two opposite corners of the dark square. Stitch diagonally, as shown. Trim seams to 1/4” and press seams toward the Light squares. Then place a Light 3” square in one of the remaining corners of the Dark square. Stitch diagonally, trim seams and press toward the Light square. Make (2) Medium blocks and (2) Dark blocks.

2. Stitch a Dark and Medium block together matching center seams. Press seams open. Make (2) units.

3. Complete the block by stitching the rows together as shown. Press seams open.
Women of the Bible

Block 5:
Hagar
Finished 10”

I chose Hard Times to represent Hagar. In the Old Testament, Hagar represents women of the Bible who are despised or excluded from society. This might happen because they are childless (like Sarah was before Isaac’s birth) or because they are a slave (as Hagar was before she was given her freedom and turned out). The hard times that Hagar faced alone with her son, Ishmael, would have been daunting, to say the least.

The space below is provided for your personal reflection.

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________