

GENESIS 16:1-11, 15-16

LESSON: ABRAM'S FIRST SON — June 30, 2019

INTRODUCTION:

15:17-21 In Abram's vision, it had gotten dark, and he saw a smoking firepot (furnace) and a flaming torch (burning lamp) passing between the split animal carcasses representing the manifestation of God's divine presence passing through the sacrifice alone; showing that He was and would be their God of covenant and light of His people; in the completion of this covenant. We would see in Exodus that God would be their pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night. His very presence would be more than enough! Abram just had to believe God, while God made the promises; committing Himself to everything. In that same day God declared that He alone made this covenant with Abram. He declared that He was giving the land from the river of Egypt (the Nile) to the great Euphrates River, the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites.

Chapter 16 covers the birth of Ishmael out of the impatience of Sarai and Abram in spite of God's assurance.

LESSON:

I. FAMILY CONFLICT GENESIS 16:1-4

16:1 Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. We now are in the chapter **16** and we first see that Sarai was barren in **11:30**. He was told to leave his father's house in **12:1**. God would make him a great nation and bless him in **12:1-2**. God affirmed about his seed in **12:7**. And in spite of Abram and Sarai's mess-up with Pharaoh at the end of chapter **12**, God lets them come out of Egypt very rich in chapter **13**. The separation of he and Lot occurred and God speaks to Abram about his seed in **13:14-17**. God even gives Abram great victory against the kings in chapter **14** rescuing all the captives and goods, even his nephew Lot. But he refused to take any of the goods, but gave back to the men who had helped him fight this battle. Now, in chapter **15:1** God assures him that He is his shield and his exceeding great reward. But, Abram grows concern and asks if his servant Eliezer born in his own house could be his heir **15:2-3**. God said a firm "No", and that should have been the end of it. God made it plain for Abram and Sari that his heir would come from his own bowels **15:4**. Out of all this assurance from God, now in **16:1**, Sarai comes up with a plan—to use her Egyptian handmaid by the name of Hagar.

16:2 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 hearkened to the voice of Sarai. It's one thing to think about sin, but expressing it, outwardly; declaring it to be, now it's going into motion because Abram hearkened to her voice.

1. Iniquity is the desire of sin; desire to act.
2. Transgression is the moment my will sins; deliberate rebellion.
3. Sin is walking out on; acting out on the iniquity; immoral action.

Sarai went to Abram with this plan giving him permission to act out on it. When she said that the fault was the Lord's because He had restrained her from bearing is a sign of impatience.

- She failed to see God's timing instead of taking Him at His Word.

- She failed to acknowledge who God was: Creator of life at anytime in her womb, and any place.
- She failed to acknowledge the covenant God had made with Abram at the end of chapter 15:18.
- She failed to wait on God. Her biological clock was ticking as we would say today.

If God had told Abram that their child was not coming from his servant in his household, it surely was not going to come from her handmaiden. Is Abram stuck between a rock and a hard place as we would say? Well, he didn't want to displease his wife, though being a man of God, he was still a man of flesh, for I know the Egyptian handmaiden appealed to the lust of his eyes, and the lust of his flesh. And Abram listened to his wife.

16:3 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.

- Impatience leads us to take matters into our own hands and do our own thing.

They have transgressed and sinned against God. I don't hear any objection here from Abram. Sarai literally took Hagar to Abram. Abram and Sarai had been dwelling in the land for 10 years of childlessness and Sarai's impatience has gotten the best of her. Sarai resorts to the custom of the day by which a barren wife could get a child through one of her own maidservant. And then the maidservant would become his second wife. Now, Sarai is going ahead of, and beyond God's plan. Abram was 85yrs old and Sarai was 75yrs old.

16:4 And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes. He obeyed his wife rather than God. The conception of the child occurred and a second wife to bring forth the promised seed was not God's plan.

- Sarai failed to see the consequences in her plan.
 - This was not God's plan and the consequences of disrespectful behavior came forth from the maidservant.
 - This was not God's plan and the consequences of strain came upon the family causing jealousy and later blame, instead of love.

16:5 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. At this point Sarai knew she had done wrong and said, "*My wrong...*", but still places the blame—"be upon thee...": on her husband. She begins to rehearse what has gone on (to her husband) so he can confront Hagar and get them out of this mess because she is being disrespected in the eyes of the maidservant because of this conception! The maidservant thinks she has the upper hand now over the barrenness of Abram's wife. She probably wants to be number one because she can conceive children. Now, Sarai wants God to be the judge between her and her husband: "*May the LORD judge between you and me!*"

16:6 But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thine hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face. But, Abram told Sarai that Hagar was in her power, so do to her what she pleased. So, Sarai did harshly with Hagar, and Hagar flees from her presence, taking refuge somewhere else.

II. DIVINE INTERVENTION GENESIS 16:7-11, 15-16

16:7 And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. We're never too far from God's reach. After Hagar fled from the presence of Sarai into the wilderness because of the harsh treatment from Sarai, "*the angel of the Lord*" found her by a spring in the wilderness, by the fountain along the road to Shur (a place or district on the border of Egypt). The word "*angel*"

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE



means messenger. Throughout the Old Testament, the supreme messenger of God is His own Son, Jesus Christ. *"The angel of the Lord"* is never mentioned in the New Testament. It seems Hagar was headed back home to Egypt; fleeing from the household of believers; fleeing from hope, and returning back to the unbelievers of the world

16:8 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. *"The angel of the Lord"* called Hagar by name, asking her questions: where you come from and where are you going? He knew where she came from, for He called her Sarai's maid. This was asked because He wanted to see if she had a plan. But she didn't. She just had to get away from the harsh treatment of Sarai her mistress. She failed to see the disrespectful actions of her behavior would lead to mistreatment of herself.

16:9 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. There is nothing else to do when in the presence of the Almighty, but to repent. Two wrongs don't make a right. So the sound counsel given to her was to return and submit under the hand of her mistress Sarai. God still had a plan for any child coming from the bowels of Abram. Even if the child is out of wedlock, God has a plan. *Children are a heritage of the Lord* (Psalm 127:3a). *Blessed are the children after him* (Proverbs 20:7b).

16:10 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. *"The angel of the Lord"* comforted Hagar and assured her that her child would be blessed. He would increase her seed exceedingly, and that it would be too numerous to count.

16:11 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. *"The angel of the Lord"* lets her know that He knows that she was pregnant and would bear a son, and to call his name Ishmael (meaning God hears) because the Lord had heard her affliction, and will always hear her cry of distress and meet her need if she would only call upon Him—the only true and living God.

NOT APART OF THE LESSON VERSES 12-14

16:12 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. Ishmael would have a very special nature. *"The angel of the Lord"* described Ishmael to be a wild man; his hand will be against every man and every man against him. He was to be violently aggressive: constantly at odds with other people and nations. And he will dwell in the presence of all his brethren, (Israel), but will never subdue Israel. Ishmael was the very first Arab.

16:13 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?—At this point Hagar recognized that *"the angel of the Lord"* was actually the God of Abraham. She called on the name of the Lord who spoke to her—He looked upon her and saw her.

16:14 Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered. The well she had stopped at was later named *"The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me"* between Kadesh and Bered.

BACK TO THE LESSON

16:15 And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. Hagar has placed herself under the authority of Sarai and Abram's son is born, calling him Ishmael.



16:16 And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram. Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bore Ishmael, Abram's son.

SUMMARY:

¹In this passage, we find a couple who refuses to take God at His Word, and so decides that they need to help God out. The conduct of Abram and Sarai was forbidden; but according to the legal custom of the day, a barren woman could give her maid to her husband as a wife. And Sarai allowed Hagar, an Egyptian to sleep with her husband, Abram to conceive a child God had promised to them, and Abram agreed. The bottom line is that this solution to their barrenness was an effort of the flesh, and not of God. Hagar conceived, and when Sarai saw that she had conceived Hagar looked with contempt toward her. At that point Sarai knew she had done wrong and said, "*My wrong...*", but still blamed her husband. But, Abram told Sarai that Hagar was in her power to do what she pleased. So, Sarai did harshly to Hagar. (16:1-6).

and Hagar fled into the wilderness where the angel of the Lord found her by the fountain along the road to Shur. The angel of the Lord called her by name, asking her questions, then telling her to return to her mistress Sarai and submit herself under her hand. The angel of the Lord told Hagar that He would increase her seed exceedingly; too numerous to count. He lets Hagar know that she was pregnant with child and will bear a son and call his name Ishmael (meaning God hears) because the Lord had heard her affliction (16:7-11).

Hagar bore Abram a son and named him Ishmael. At that time Abram was 86 years old (16:15-16).