

GENESIS 16: ABRAM AND HAGAR

I. OVERVIEW

- A. 10 years after leaving Haran
 - i. Sarai sees she has no children
 - ii. She offers servant Hagar to Abram
 - a. Abram took her and got her pregnant
 - iii. Hagar began to treat Sarai with contempt
 - a. Sarai began to abuse her so she fled
- B. Angel of the Lord found Hagar by a spring in the wilderness
 - i. Tells her to return to Sarai and submit to her
 - ii. Blesses her
 - a. Tells her to name her son Ishmael
 - iii. She returns to Abram and Sarai

II. EGYPTIAN SERVANT – V. 1

- A. Obtained from his deception in Egypt
 - i. Genesis 12:16 **And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels.**

III. THE LORD HAS PREVENTED ME – V. 2

- A. Sarai blames God
- B. Reveals the pain in her heart¹

IV. SERVANT – V. 2

- A. Barren wife could offer her slave girl as wife to husband
- B. But she was second-class wife because she's still owned by first wife
- C. All children from concubine become children of first wife
- D. She can't receive inheritance because she's a slave
 - i. But she can't be sold because she's a wife
- E. Essentially, sex slavery for purpose of producing children²
- F. Egypt is a picture of slavery to sin

¹ Guzik, David. "Study Guide for Genesis 16." *Blue Letter Bible*, 2018, www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/genesis/genesis-16.cfm. Accessed 23 May 2023.

² Armstrong, Stephen. "Genesis 2011 - Lesson 16A." *Verse by Verse Ministries International*, 9 Oct. 2011, versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_16a. Accessed 24 May 2023.

- i. This Egyptian slave girl places Abram and Sarai in bondage to sin once again
- ii. This is morally acceptable according to their culture but morally unacceptable to God³

V. ABRAM LISTENED – V. 2

- A. Just like Adam listened to his wife and took the fruit
- B. Even though he heard God's voice several times⁴

VI. TEN YEARS – V. 3

- A. God is establishing His authority over them
- B. But they take authority over the situation

VII. SHE CONCEIVED – V. 4

- A. Abram and Sarai's plan was a success
 - i. But it wasn't what God wanted
 - a. Produced results but unprofitable⁵
 - b. John 6:63 *It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.*

VIII. SHE LOOKED ON ME WITH CONTEMPT – V. 5

- A. Hagar looked down on Sarai
- B. She saw herself as more blessed than Sarai

IX. MAY THE LORD JUDGE BETWEEN YOU AND ME – V. 5

- A. This was Sarai's idea but Abram should have stopped it
- B. God will determine who shares greater blame
 - i. This is the meaning of headship of a family
 - a. Who is accountable to God, not who has power over the other⁶

X. ANGEL OF THE LORD – V. 7

- A. Called an angel through verse 12
- B. Then Hagar calls the angel Yahweh in verse 13
- C. First appearance
 - i. Later appears to prophets and kings

³ Armstrong, Stephen. "Genesis 2011 - Lesson 16A." Verse by Verse Ministries International, 9 Oct. 2011, versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_16a. Accessed 24 May 2023.

⁴ Armstrong, Stephen. "Genesis 2011 - Lesson 16A." Verse by Verse Ministries International, 9 Oct. 2011, versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_16a. Accessed 24 May 2023.

⁵ Guzik

⁶ Armstrong, Stephen. "Genesis 2011 - Lesson 16A." Verse by Verse Ministries International, 9 Oct. 2011, versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_16a. Accessed 24 May 2023.

- ii. But first appears to a pregnant, arrogant Gentile slave girl

XI. SHUR – V. 7

- A. On Sinai Peninsula – on her way to Egypt

XII. GOD ASKS TWO QUESTIONS

- A. Where have you come from?
- B. Where are you going?
- C. Not because He didn't know the answer, but to get Hagar to think

XIII. GOD GIVES TWO COMMANDS

- A. Return to your mistress
- B. Submit to her
- C. Offensive to our modern sensibilities
 - i. She was depriving Abram of his child
 - ii. Two wrongs don't make a right⁷
 - iii. God implied protection for her

XIV. GOD GIVES SIX PROMISES

- A. Your offspring will be multiplied
 - i. Ancestor of Arab people
 - ii. Same promise as the one given to Abram
 - a. Ishmael is still Abram's child
- B. You will have a son
- C. You will call him Ishmael
 - i. First one given his name before he was born⁸
 - ii. Means God will hear⁹
 - a. God heard the cries of an Egyptian being oppressed at the hands of Hebrews
 - b. Later God will hear the cries of Hebrews being oppressed at the hands of Egypt¹⁰
- D. He will be a wild donkey
 - i. Nomadic, independent
- E. He will be at conflict with everyone

⁷ Armstrong, Stephen. "Genesis 2011 - Lesson 16B." *Verse by Verse Ministries International*, 17 Oct. 2011, versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_16b. Accessed 24 May 2023.

⁸ Guzik

⁹ Guzik

¹⁰ Armstrong, Stephen. "Genesis 2011 - Lesson 16B." *Verse by Verse Ministries International*, 17 Oct. 2011, versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_16b. Accessed 24 May 2023.

- i. The Arab people have been in near constant conflict with Jews, Christians, and themselves
- F. He will live “over against” his brothers
- i. Or, in the presence of
 - a. To be in conflict with Israel always
 - ii. Some commentators say, to the east of

XV. YOU ARE A GOD OF SEEING – V. 13

- A. Or, You are a God who sees me
- B. She knows who her true Master is

XVI. POINTS TO JESUS

- A. Abram’s seed that blesses the world must be rooted in God’s promises, not in human effort
 - i. Ishmael will contrast human effort with God’s grace
 - ii. Human effort will always fall short but Jesus’ blood brings blessing and light to the whole world
- B. Just as the God-Who-Sees was with Hagar, Jesus is always with us
 - i. Matthew 28:20 ***And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.***
- C. Angel of the Lord – preincarnate Jesus
 - i. Angel – messenger (bringer of a word)
 - ii. Jesus – Word became flesh (John 1:14)

XVII. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- A. What did Sarai do wrong when she doubted God’s promise?

- B. How do we respond when God’s promise is delayed? Do we try to obtain it some other way?

- C. Do we judge our actions based on the results or based on our obedience to God's word?

- D. How does it make you feel for God to ask Hagar to return to an oppressive situation? How would you respond if God asked you to do the same? How does this challenge your view of God?

- E. Was God more interested in changing Hagar's circumstance or changing her heart?

- F. How does knowing God is our true Master affect us when we face injustice or oppression?

- G. How does a face to face encounter with God change us?

XVIII. **FURTHER STUDY**

- A. This entire chapter is a chiasm. Outline each level of the chiasm. Refer to chapter 11 for the definition and an example of a chiasm. Remember, it looks like a triangle on its side, with the center point of the triangle being the central message the author is trying to convey. What is the central message of this chapter? What does the author believe is the most

important thing we should learn about God? Hint: There are four levels to this particular chiasm including the center.

- B. In what way is Abraham being compared to Lamech in Genesis chapter 4? What is the message that is being communicated about marriage?

- C. What does Paul say we should learn from Hagar and Ishmael in Galatians 4:21-31?

- D. The word Sarai uses for “obtain children” in verse 2 is the same word used in Genesis 2:22 when God “made” the woman and in Genesis 4:17 when Cain “built” a city. What could Sarai be comparing herself to by using this play on words? Hint: What was the purpose God gave for providing Eve? What was the purpose for Cain building a city?

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- E. What are the similarities between Hagar and Sarai's relationship and Hannah and Peninnah's relationship in 1 Samuel 1? How did Hannah respond differently than Sarai and what can we learn from this?
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