

Genesis - Lesson 16

Genesis Chapter 16

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Memory verses for this week: *2Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 2Th 2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*

Introduction: We continue our study on the book of Genesis this week as we cover the birth of Ishmael.

I. Sarai, Abram and Hagar

Gen 16:1 Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

Gen 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.

Gen 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.

Verses one and two record the plea of Sarai. She was disappointed that she had no child and loses her faith and patience with God. God had made a promise to she and Abram, and God does not fail to come through on His promises. Her handmaid, Hagar, was an Egyptian, and is a type of a person in the world. She was a slave brought back from the ill-fated trip to Egypt, recorded in Gen. 12:10-20. We remember this trip as one of those times when Abram looked to the world for sustenance rather than just trusting the Lord.

Gen 12:10 And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

Gen 12:11 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:

Gen 12:12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

Gen 12:13 Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

Gen 12:14 And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair.

Gen 12:15 The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

Gen 12:16 And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.

Gen 12:17 And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife.

Gen 12:18 And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife?

Gen 12:19 Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way.

Gen 12:20 And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

Hagar means "flight, fugitive or immigrant." Sarai attempts to help God to keep his word. God does not need man to accomplish His Will with his children. He may sometimes use man, but God accomplishes whatever He sets out to do. Even the King's hearts are in His hand to accomplish His will.

Pro 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Isa 28:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Abram left Haran when he was 75, and was 86 when Ishmael was born. He was 100 years of age when Isaac was born.

Gen 21:5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

The 15th chapter has been called Abram's faith chapter. If this be so, perhaps the 16th is his chapter of unbelief. It is just as dangerous for Christians to do this today, as it was in Abram's day. Some seek to run ahead of God by winning souls by scare tactics, salesmanship and human persuasion. How much better to do our part, and wait for the Holy Spirit to do His work. Then we can know for certain that the person really is saved, because without the drawing of the Holy Spirit, the bible is clear that no man can be saved. We need not fear, God can keep his promises.

Joh 6:64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

Joh 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Verse 2 says that Sarai thought the child would be legally hers. Abram listened to her, instead of hearing from God. Abram was tested many times, and most times trusted by faith in God, but this is one of the tests that he failed. Hagar as a slave

had little choice in the matter.

John Gill in his commentary spoke of how Hagar was perhaps the best of all the handmaids that Sarai had.

Gen 16:1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bare him no children,.... She is before said to be barren, and he to be childless, Gen 11:30; God had promised him a seed, but as yet he had none, which was a trial of his faith; he had been married many years to Sarai his wife, she was his wife when they came out of Ur of the Chaldees, and how long before cannot be said; they stayed and dwelt some time at Haran, the Jews (x) say five years, and they had been now ten years in the land of Canaan, Gen 16:3; and were advanced in years, the one being seventy five, and the other eighty five, so that there was no great probability of having any children, wherefore the following step was taken:

and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar; no doubt but she had many, but this was a principal one, that might be over others, and was chiefly entrusted with the care and management of family affairs under her mistress; she might be the daughter of an Egyptian, born in Abram's house, as Eliezer was the son of a Syrian of Damascus, born there also; or she might be one of the maidservants Pharaoh, king of Egypt, gave to Abram, Gen 12:16; the Jews (y) have a tradition, that she was a daughter of Pharaoh, who, when he saw the wonders done for Sarai, said, it is better that my daughter should be a handmaid in this house.

II. Abram's Action and the Tragic Result.

Gen 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.

Gen 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.

Gen 16:6 But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

There is no doubt that Abram sinned when he went along with Sarai and failed to wait on the Lord. Although his action was consistent with the morals and practices of the time, yet he surely knew better. People today should beware of using Abram as an example, and committing this type of sin. God's ways are not fast ways and they are not the newest and greatest thing the world can offer. But they are God's ways and they are always right. Hagar despised Sarai after what she did it says in verse 4. She most likely felt jealous and superior. As is common with mankind, rather than accepting blame for failure, Sarai seeks to shift the blame to Abram. Abram does not try to correct the manner, but leaves Hagar in Sarai's care.

She dealt hardly with her handmaiden who had done nothing more than follow the requests of her master. Hagar fled, which was a thing forbidden to a slave. In the book of Proverbs, it says that it is better to dwell in a corner of a housetop than to live in a wide house with a woman that is difficult and unrelenting.

Pro 21:9 It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman

in a wide house.

III. Hagar's Flight.

Gen 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.

Gen 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.

Gen 16:9 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

Hagar In The Wilderness.

1. She was found in the wilderness by a well. The well is a type of Christ. "I am the water of life." A well is also a type of the Word of God. Eph. 5:25-27
2. She was found by the "angel of the Lord." (This was the Lord).
3. In this wilderness of sin, we may find Christ in His Word.
4. She is told to return and submit. This appears to reveal that God never recognized this marriage. She had to learn that the way of the transgressor is hard.

IV. The Promise Of The Lord.

Gen 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.

Gen 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.

Gen 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.

Gen 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?

Gen 16:14 Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

The seed of Hagar was also to be multiplied God promises Hagar in verse 10. This has been wonderfully fulfilled through the Arabs. God heard her affliction received from Sarai. The name Ishmael means "God heareth." He and his offspring were to be wild men. That is they were to be untamed and warlike. Today this is still going on as the Arabs and Jews fight on every hand. Hagar recognized the Lord in verse 13.

Matthew Henry said this about the good counsel Hagar received from the angel.

Gen 16:10-14

We may suppose that the angel having given Hagar that good counsel (Gen 16:9) to *return to her mistress* she immediately promised to do so, and was setting her face homeward; and then the angel went on to encourage her with an assurance of the mercy God had in store for her and her seed: for God will meet those with mercy that are

returning to their duty. *I said, I will confess, and thou forgavest, Psa 32:5.* Here is,

I. A prediction concerning her posterity given her for her comfort in her present distress. Notice is taken of her condition: *Behold, thou art with child;* and therefore this is not a fit place for thee to be in. Note, It is a great comfort to women with child to think that they are under the particular cognizance and care of the divine Providence. God graciously considers their case and suits supports to it. Now, 1. The angel assures her of a safe delivery, and that of a *son*, which Abram desired. This fright and ramble of hers might have destroyed her hope of an offspring; but God dealt not with her according to her folly: *Thou shalt bear a son.* She was saved in child-bearing, not only by providence, but by promise. 2. He names her child, which was an honour both to her and it: Call him *Ishmael, God will hear;* and the reason is, because the Lord has heard; he has, and therefore he will.

V. The Birth Of Ishmael.

Gen 16:15 And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

Gen 16:16 And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

Ishmael was born as Abram's son, but he was not the promised seed.

1Co 15:46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

Abram was 86 when Ishmael was born. When you look at his advanced age and also that of Sarai, you could understand their lack of faith. But when God promises a promise, it will come to pass. Nothing is impossible with God.

Luk 18:27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

Mat 19:26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

VI. Lessons from this Chapter.

A. The Spiritual Lesson Of Gal. 4:19-31.

Gal 4:19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

Gal 4:20 I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

Gal 4:21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

Gal 4:22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

Gal 4:23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the

freewoman was by promise.

Gal 4:24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

Gal 4:25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

Gal 4:26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

Gal 4:27 For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

Gal 4:28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

Gal 4:29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

Gal 4:30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

Gal 4:31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

1. Hagar and Ishmael represent a false law-works type of salvation.

- a. The covenant of Sinai leads to bondage.
- b. This represents an attempt to help God.
- c. There is no faith or grace involved.
- d. Ishmael born after the flesh.

2. Sarai and Isaac represent true grace-salvation.

- a. This is a matter of faith and trust in God.
- b. This leads to freedom and liberty in Christ.
- c. Isaac was born through promise.

3. Sarai (representing grace) had a handmaid, Hagar (typifying the law), who was her servant. The law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

Gal 3:22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Gal 3:23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

Gal 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Gal 3:25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

Gal 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

B. The Tragic Results Of Sin.

1. Thirteen years of barrenness for Abram.

Gen 17:1 *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou*

perfect.

2. The far reaching results of Abram's sin. This can be seen in the Israel-Arab conflict down through the centuries till now.

3. The Muslim religion and Mohammed, its founder, are all the offspring of Abram through Hagar.

4. Relate this to the world crisis today! Daily battles in the Gaza Strip.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who was Sarai's handmaid?

Hagar

2. Why was Sarai's handmaid in the wilderness?

She fled from Sarai due to conflict in the home.

3. Who was the son of the handmaid?

Ishmael

4. Of which race was Sarai's handmaid?

Arabs

5. According to Galatians, the handmaid and her son represent :

Law and bondage. Not a grace salvation, but works by the law which is not real salvation at all.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more

unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.