

# The Book of Genesis

## Chapter Sixteen

### *The Fruits of Unbelief!*

**Lesson Verse: Mark 9:24**

#### I. Lesson Introduction

- A. There are some very important lessons in this chapter that we Christians should learn and apply to our lives when we find ourselves in similar situations as Abram and Sarai. Here we learn how Abram went in unto Hagar and she became his second wife. Also we learn that once the act was over and she was with child, all was not rosy in Abram's tent. Not "waiting on the Lord" always brings \_\_\_\_\_, just as not asking the Lord what His will is for us to do. Abram finds this out the hard way by thinking he would help out God. God does not need our help. He needs only our \_\_\_\_\_ and our wills.
- B. In *Genesis 15* Abram is known as the man of faith, for he \_\_\_\_\_ the LORD.
- C. In *Genesis 16* instead of harkening to the voice of the Lord, he \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Summary of Abram's compromise (16:1-15).
1. Sarai persuades Abram to father a child through her Egyptian maiden girl Hagar. (Notice the word maiden, which always implied a VIRGIN, not just an unmarried girl). They would then adopt this child as their own.
  2. Hagar became pregnant and her arrogant attitude soon caused trouble, resulting in her dismissal from Abram's household by Sarai. This one verse alone refutes the doctrine of polygamy. God permitted it, but never approved it. (See Gen. 2:23; 1 Tim. 3:2.)
  3. Hagar was found by the angel of the Lord beside a desert spring and was commanded to return to Abram and Sarai. The sex (male) and name (\_\_\_\_\_) of her unborn child were prophesied by this angel.
  4. This is the first mention of the \_\_\_\_\_. Some theologians believe that when this title is found in the Old Testament, it is actually identifying the Lord Jesus Christ.
  5. Hagar does not fare well in the Bible, for she possesses little or no spirituality; is brazen, hateful, proud, disrespectful, and is a poor mother. Yet God loves her, and sends his blessed messenger to help her.
  6. Ishmael is born. Abram was \_\_\_\_\_ years old at this time.

#### II. Lesson

- A. **Barrenness and The Birth Of \_\_\_\_\_** (16:1-3).
1. The events in chapter 16 take place about ten years after the events in chapter 15. Sarai still is barren. Her inability to conceive is one reason she uses to justify giving her handmaid to Abram.
  2. Hagar, the servant, is \_\_\_\_\_ and was added to the household while they lived in Egypt.
  3. Sarai yielded to the Eastern custom of multiple wives. God's plan for the institution of marriage set forth at creation was not considered in this decision. *Gen 2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*
    - a) One \_\_\_\_\_
    - b) One \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_ are an important part of life
    - a) Most people only want companionship - partners
    - b) And only self-gratification – pleasure
    - c) Few want responsibility
    - d) Fewer still want the joy of being a family, and being fulfilled God's way
  5. Barrenness is God's tool to show His grace and power to the sinful soul in order for them to \_\_\_\_\_ to be saved, and on the Christian to be used of God (John 15)
  6. Sarah uses her flesh (old nature), and another woman's flesh to answer \_\_\_\_\_ need (whew!)
    - a) Sarah \_\_\_\_\_ God instead of trusts God
    - b) \_\_\_\_\_ her attitude, and actions
    - c) Bitter attitude
    - d) Misunderstanding God, and His timing

- e) Her own scheming
  - f) Involves a slave gotten while in Egypt
  - g) Notice the amount of impatience
7. Some women barren in the Bible who were mightily blessed!
- a) Sarai
  - b) Rebekah (Gen 25:21)
  - c) Sampson's mother (Judges 13:1,2)
  - d) Hannah – Samuel's mother (1Sam 2)
  - e) Leah and Rachael (Gen 29:31)
  - f) Elisabeth (Luke 1:7)
8. Abraham \_\_\_\_\_ his wife
- a) He used to obey who? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) A wife is to be a \_\_\_\_\_ – not a dictator – she could be right about what you should do, but it always should be prayed about and tested, not just done
  - c) Abraham did NOT pray about her suggestion
9. Polygamy here – means “more than one wife”
- a) Started with \_\_\_\_\_ back in Gen 4:19
  - b) It is NOT God's way
  - c) It was allowed by God in circumstances with kings, like David
  - d) Adultery is the attempt of a man who already has a wife, to have another!

#### B. The Back-Firing (Gen 16:4-6)

1. Principle: Goods Gotten In The World Are Not Always Good.
- a) Many times we look to the world to supply our needs. Paul told us that \_\_\_\_\_ was in the business of supplying what was needed, **Phil 4:19**.
  - b) Abram and Sarai obtained some 'goods', Hagar, from a country (Egypt) that spiritually represents the world. These goods are now going to test his faith. Will He pass the test or will he have some regrets for the rest of his life?
  - c) As a sub-point to consider, each born again child of God must seriously consider and act accordingly concerning where THEIR goods come from. Every good gift comes from the Father, **James 1:17**. Just because the world offers us an attractive gift, is no reason to accept it.
2. Hagar was an Egyptian.
- a) Her name means *flight, fugitive, or immigrant*.
  - b) She did become such. The Bible does not say what Hagar thought about conceiving a child from Abram. As a slave she did not have much say in the matter.
3. Hagar was the first \_\_\_\_\_ mother on record.
- a) She has the distinction of being the first surrogate mother.
  - b) Substitute motherhood caused problems then and it continues to do the same today. Man tries his best to beat God at the game of life. God will not be bested. These time tested principals and precepts are displayed before us from the word of God to save us much heart ache and woe. All we have to do is follow the directions by faith.
4. The Woman Sarai.
- a) Sarai is a word that means “\_\_\_\_\_”
  - b) She becomes a great example for the apostle Paul. It was Paul that compared the bondwoman, Hagar to the free woman, Sarah, as illustrations of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, **Gal. 4:22-31**. She also had respect for Abram and addressed him as “\_\_\_\_\_”.
  - c) Another great thing about her is she is also the only woman in the Bible whose specific age was stated. Sarai is 80 years old when God told her husband that he would have a son. Of all the women in the Bible, why would the Holy Ghost go to so much effort to insure that her exact age is recorded? I believe it is because of what God is going to do in their lives that He wants people to realize that He has a plan and for us to not grow weary in well-doing. **Gal 6:9** *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*

- d) Even though things do not happen as quickly as we want them to take place, we must not be selfish for other lives are involved. *Rom 14:7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.* Sarai thought she was too old to do God's will. Her thinking was much like that of the Apostle Peter's when the Lord told him to kill and eat, *Acts 10:11-15*. Both these people thought they knew better than God. Do they remind us of anyone we might personally know? Do we sometime think that we are too old to do God's will? Do we sometimes think the common things are unclean and we should shy away from them?
5. Helping God Along.
- a) God made a promise to Abram and Sarai. After about ten years passed and no heir, these parents decide to take matters into their hands.
- b) Sarai suggested...
- 1) Just what would persuade Sarai to offer Hagar to Abram, the Bible does not say exactly. We can safely speculate that Satan used the weaknesses of the flesh to thwart the plans of God. We can assume that Sarai considered her age and that of Abram and that of Hagar, and looking at it from the eyes of man, which of the three was better able to take care of a child? Hagar of course.
  - 2) What Sarai failed to realize, grasp, understand, or comprehend was the power of God. If God intended to use this couple, *and He did*, then Sarai should have realized that God will give her the strength to do what He wanted done.
  - 3) Nothing is too hard for Him. Paul made this fact know to the church at Philippi that regardless of the work Christ wanted done, He would provide all that is needed to accomplish the tasks, *Phil 1:6, 2:13*. Sarai failed to consider just Whom it was that had made them a promise.
  - 4) The question each of us must ask and answer is, Have I listened to the voice of Satan and failed to recognize the power of God in my life? Am I making excuse instead of making headway into the will of God for my life?
- c) Abram listened.
- 1) Sarai suggested. Abram listened. He did not even try to talk her out of this silly suggestion and did not murmur that it was a bad idea. He was a willing candidate. Ten years ago he listened to the Lord and the Lord accounted his faith as righteous. Now look at where he is.
  - 2) Here is a very important thing that we must apply to self. If we will think back in our lives about where we failed God, we will realize that each failure occurs after we had one of our best heart to heart conversations with Him. Observe Abram today and where he was ten years ago.
  - 3) Not only does Satan deal with men after their great experiences with God, but look at the situation Jesus is in at *Mat. 3:17*. It is here that a voice from heaven proclaims Him to be the son of God. Now where is He in *Mat. 4:3*? He is facing the liar of all times about this very claim made by God the Father just a few days prior. If thou be the son of God...If thou be in God's will...
  - 4) Abram listened. Jesus did NOT listen. What will we do? Will we wait on the Lord, *1 Pet 2:20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*
6. Here we see how Satan attempts to thwart God's plans, v. 11-12.
- a) You don't have to look far to find the hand of *the wicked one* in this situation. Satan thought by using Abram, Hagar, and Sarai, that he would cause God to change His plans or cancel them all together. What would be better than making God so mad that He would kill Abram? God would then have to start all over.
  - b) God is \_\_\_\_\_ going to use Abram. Abram is the friend of God. God is not going to abandon His friend. Abram believed God. God believed Abram. It takes longer for Abram to get where God wants him, but Abram is still willing to be used in spite of his mistakes.
  - c) What we must ask ourselves is are we still willing, even after we have erred so badly that we cannot hold our head up in public to repent and cast ourselves at His feet and be willing to be used? Are we willing to endure the ridicule of unbelievers until we establish ourselves again?
7. Hagar's Positions and Troubles.

- a) When Hagar was with child, she was despised in the eyes of Sarai. Sarai turned to Abram and \_\_\_\_\_ him for the situation. Abram throws it all back at Sarai and told her to do with Hagar as she wanted. *Prov 30:21-23 For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear: 22 For a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat; 23 For an odious woman when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.*
- b) A Handmaid. Hagar was just a young woman when she conceived Abram's child. Suddenly she is no longer a servant girl. She now bears Abram's child in her womb. Her status has elevated over that of Sarai. Instead of caring for Sarai, she must now have someone care for her! WOW!
- c) A Wife
  - 1) Sarai realizes she made a bad mistake by suggesting Abram go in unto Hagar. She must now share him. Instead of humbling her heart and saying she made a mistake, she blamed Abram.
  - 2) We can only wonder at what Abram was thinking when he agreed to Sarai's suggestion. He must have thought this would have been a fine idea for he did not object. What he failed to realize was Hagar now has something to use against Sarai, and begins to chide her for being unable to conceive. This makes Sarai more jealous and she begins to deal harshly with Hagar.
- d) A Servant. Hagar's status as wife did not last long. The child is not even born and already there are family problems. The persecution became so great, she left Abram's tent before the child was born. It did not take long after the sin was committed for things to go bad at Abram's home. How long does it take at our homes?
- e) Abram lets \_\_\_\_\_ deal with the problem
  - 1) Harsh with Hagar
  - 2) Tries to kill her
  - 3) Hagar flees for her life

**C. The Grace of God - God Intervention's With Hagar (Gen 16:7-14).**

1. Hagar Fled From Sarai. Things got so bad for Hagar that she fled.
2. The Angel of the Lord appears to this Egyptian slave
3. God reason's with her
  - a) She is desperate
  - b) She is defeated
  - c) She has no hope
  - d) And that's when the Lord shows up in her life
  - e) The angel questioned Hagar, "Where are you coming from and where are you going?" These are two very important questions we need to ask and answer within ourselves. If we would be honest in our answers, it might just prevent us from going astray. If we would ask and answer before we leave, we might not get so far away from the Lord.
4. God's Instruction's.
  - a) Submission – don't run – obey God, and stay under authority
  - b) Trust the promises of God
  - c) Ishmael means, " \_\_\_\_\_ "
    - 1) He will be the father of the Arabs
    - 2) He will be a wild man – no fear
    - 3) God knew the problems Ishmael would cause.
      - (a) God could have permitted Hagar to die in the wilderness and His plan would not be affected. However, God choses people to do His will, and He will not be put off by the ploys of Satan. If it takes a willing man 100 years to do God's will, God will continue to work with that soul until that person performs God's will.
      - (b) There is one sure way to shorten our lives - by simply refusing to do the will of God.
      - (c) There is one sure way of enjoying life to its fullest - by performing the will of God.
      - (d) What is the Lord going to do with Ishmael? He is going to make his descendants a mighty nation.
5. Hagar personalises God – she actually names God " \_\_\_\_\_ "
  - a) "Thou God, seest me"

- b) And I have seen YOU!
  - c) You Know me
  - d) You see and watch over me, and care for ME
6. That well became a place in her life, and for all the people around a testimony of WHO God was
- D. **The Birth of a Nation** (Gen 16:15,16) – the first of many nations that Abraham would produce
1. Living with the error of our ways.
    - a) Abram is 86 years old when Ishmael was born. It will be \_\_\_\_ more years before the birth of Issac, *Gen. 21:5*.
    - b) Fourteen years of living with Ishmael in the house. Fourteen years of Hagar raising Ishmael in front of Sarai and harassing her about Ishmael being the chosen son; the son she could not bear. Fourteen years of waiting on the Lord because he took matters into his own hands. Fourteen years for his wife to live with the deed she suggested. Fourteen more years of not being able to conceive. Fourteen years of settling disputes between two women. Fourteen years of Sarai wishing Hagar was not in her domain.
  2. The Son Born Under The Law.
    - a) Paul in his letter to the *Galatians* explains the difference in being under the Law and under Grace. He used the sons of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac, as examples of each; Ishmael being under the law and Isaac under Grace, *Gal 4:22-31*.
    - b) Ishmael the son of the bond woman is born. He has been and his seed continues to be a power to reckon with.

### III. Conclusion

### IV. Study Questions

- A. What are the steps leading up to failure in a Christian's life?
  1. Impatience with God's timing
  2. Attempting to work out plans to obtain what you think is God's will
  3. Forcing your way on others
- B. What name do you have – your old name which is the characteristic of your old nature, or your new name that takes on the character of Jesus – Christian?
- C. What is the worst part about our sin
  1. Having to live with the results of it
    - a) If not saved, live in hell for all eternity
    - b) If saved or lost, living with the scars and results
      - 1) Like marrying the wrong person
      - 2) Like trying to commit suicide and failing – living with the damage to your health
      - 3) Like living with aids, or VD, etc
  2. Having the results of our sins limit our ability to live for God like He had originally designed