

## Cultivate Genesis Study

### Chapter 16

Read and meditate on Genesis Chapter 16  
and prayerfully answer the following questions before Tuesday's class.

In Chapter 16, we find Sarai, like Eve in Genesis 3:6, lead her husband to make a decision that has devastating consequences for the future.

It's easy to say now, "Sarai where is your faith?" Remember by this time Abram was eighty-five! And Sari was seventy-five! It is very difficult and painful in so many ways for a woman who desires to be a mommy but is unable to conceive.

Would it be safe to say that Sarai became weary in her faith? \_\_\_\_\_

If you were Sarai's friend back then how would you have ministered to her? Do you know of a married couple who is trying to conceive? Lift them up in prayer and **continue to pray them through**.

It is one thing to believe a promise, at the first, and quite another thing to wait quietly for the accomplishment thereof.

"God makes a promise, faith believes it; hope anticipates it; patience waits quietly for it."

C. H. Mackintosh

See how easily, it appears, that she was able to have Abram's ear. As women, we need to be mindful of this. We may get what we want but the price to pay can be so costly, especially when our disobedience grieves the Spirit of God. Sarai thought she could help God out with the situation but that was simply a result of impatience. When we try to force something, God has promised us instead of waiting on Him, we usually experience heartache and trouble.

Have you been like Sarai, unfortunately choosing to do what your flesh demanded instead of waiting on the Lord? Not only that, but you encouraged another to join you? Have you taken that to the Lord yet?

"According to your estimate of God, will be your estimate of His promise; and moreover, the subdued and patient spirit finds its rich and full reward in waiting upon Him for the accomplishment of all that He has promised." - C.H. Mackintosh

Genesis 16:2 *"Abram listened to the voice of Sarai."*

Genesis 3:6, *"... and he (Adam) ate it"*

After all the years of being barren, unable to produce the promised heir to Abram, Sarai offers her Egyptian servant Hagar, as a second wife who will be able to birth a son to Abram.

Barnes Notes on the Bible

"The faith of Sarah had not yet come fully to the birth. Abram yields to the suggestion of his wife and complies with the custom of the country. Ten years had elapsed since they had entered the land they were to inherit. Impatience at the long delay leads to an invention of their own for obtaining an heir."

If faith were easy, would it be faith? When it seems that the Lord is not coming through with His promise(s) do you wonder if He is procrastinating or too preoccupied to attend to your needs?

Was there ever a time in your life when you needed to wait on God but were tempted to take matters into your own hands? Are you going through something right now?

Jon Courson notes that the Lord may be preparing us by providing opportunities for the muscle of faith to be exercised. If there is no struggle, faith never soars. Hebrews 6:11-12, "*And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*"

1. What are some ways that you can work out in the 'gym of faith'?

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This sinful act by Sarai, led to the birth of Ishmael. The sons of Ishmael and the sons of Isaac (God's intended heir) have been in conflict for thousands of years. God could have prevented Hagar from conceiving. He could have prevented Ishmael. But in his knowledge to infinity future, He allowed the event that brought such conflict in motion.

Sometimes God does not intervene. Even including the horrors that were thrust upon His chosen people during the Holocaust, in World War Two. As hard as that is to comprehend, those events caused the World to move toward establishing the Nation of Israel.

This fulfilled the prophesy in Isaiah 66:8, "*Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once?*"

2. Do you ever struggle when you *do not see* God intervene against evil in the world?  
Read Isaiah 46:9-10. And Galatians 6:7 What is the reminder?

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For more encouragement read Job 38 Then the Lord answered Job out of the storm. He said: 2  
*"Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? 3 Brace yourself like a  
man; I will question you, and you shall answer me..."*

Read Genesis 16:4

As soon as she conceived, Hagar despised her mistress. She must have seen herself as of more value, now, than Sarai as she (Hagar) would bear an heir to Abram. There can be a temptation to become full of pride over things we truly have no power over. Hagar could not create life any more than Sarai could! How foolish we are to think we can take credit and elevate ourselves over something that has been gifted to us.

Read 1 Corinthians 4:7

There are many instances in the Bible where there is a stigma attached to a woman unable to conceive a child, like Hannah in 1 Samuel 1:3-8.

3. Read Genesis 25:21, Genesis 29:31, Judges 13:2, 1Samuel 1:6, Luke 1:7

Ruth 1:4, Ruth was barren for 10 years, while married in Moab. Ruth 4:13, 17

Take note of which babies the Lord eventually provided in each instance. God's timing is always purposeful.

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Notice that in verse 5 Sarai now blames Abram for the misery she is suffering! Wow! I wonder if Sarai realized her sin in blaming Abram, once she came to her senses. Isn't it true that our flesh nature is always looking to cast the blame onto someone else?

“To err is human; to blame it on someone else is even more human!” Skip Heitzig

Do you make a habit of blaming others for your own misery?

Read Genesis 16:6

Hagar ran away when Sarai delt harshly with her. Hagar was running away from her problems and running into the barren desert. She would have died without the Lord’s help. Running away from problems rarely solves them.

Are you the kind of person who runs from your problems? Instead, call on the Lord God to help you **during** your problems rather than running away from them.

Seek God’s Word for strength and write down the Scripture that speaks to you most.

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Genesis 16:7 is the first mention of ‘the angel of the Lord’.

Who is this?

4. Search your Bible for instances of this angel- **THE angel**.

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The precise identity of the “angel of the Lord” is not given in the Bible. However, there are many important “clues” to his identity. There are Old and New Testament references to “angels of the Lord,” “an angel of the Lord,” and “the angel of the Lord.” It seems when the definite article “the” is used, it is specifying a unique being, separate from the other angels. The angel of the Lord speaks as God, identifies Himself with God, and exercises the responsibilities of God.

Note 1: Word- for- word translations and paraphrased Bible translations may read differently

Note 2: The appearances of ‘**the** angel of the Lord’ cease after the birth of Christ. Angels are mentioned numerous times in the New Testament, but “**the** angel of the Lord” is never mentioned in the New Testament after the birth of Christ.

Info taken from <https://www.gotquestions.org/angel-of-the-Lord.html>

5. What is the definition of a Christophany?

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Read Genesis 16: 9-11

The angel of the Lord appeared to Hagar and promised her a son, and even gave her his name, Ishmael.

What is the meaning of the name Ishmael? \_\_\_\_\_

Ishmael's name would always be a reminder to his mother that it was not her gods in Egypt, to which she had started to return that saved her, but it was the God who sees.

Verse 12 God also told Hagar that the nature of her son, would literally be "a wild ass of a man." One who would perpetually conflict with others.

The Genesis Record, says, "The long history of the Arab peoples, who are descended from Ishmael, is an obvious commentary on the fulfillment of this ancient prophecy, seen most vividly at present in the current Israeli-Arab hostilities."

6. Do a little extra studying on the Arab peoples and share what you learned. Make sure it stays from a Biblical view.

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Read Verse 13-14

7. What do you think Hagar's purpose was for naming the well?

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Read Verses 15-16

This story in the Bible was painful not only for the people in these pages but for the readers! We are reminded that we are all sinners and in need of help, but what is awesome is that our beautiful Savior already knows what our needs are and in His wonderful providence He will work all things out for His glory and purpose and our good.

8. What does the word providence mean? What are your thoughts on the meaning of this word?

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“Even when we won’t let God rule, He always overrules!” Skip Heitzig