

FINAL STUDY NOTES - *GENESIS CHAPTERS 15 & 16* 6/3-4/2024

CLASSROOM LOCATION AND ZOOM – SIGN IN INFORMATION:

Phil Twente ptwente@gmail.com cell 714 425 9221 www.ptwente.com - Audio & notes - previous studies
PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE ONLINE (ZOOM) STUDY!

MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM DAYLIGHT SAVING Time (US and Canada)
THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY WILL BE MEETING ON ZOOM ONLY UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484

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TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM DAYLIGHT SAVING Time (US and Canada).

- **Beginning Tuesday, June 4, 2024, TUES MORNING MTG PLACE:**
- **1201 KEY WEST, CORONA DEL MAR** (shown as 1201 KW, Corona del Mar, CA 92625) on Global Positioning System (GPS) in automobiles. For driving directions from your starting point, Suggest using **WAZE** (waze.com/live-map) or **MapQuest** (mapquest.com),
- **AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!**

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OPENING PRAYER

Genesis Chapter 15 – God’s promises to Abram - The Call of Abram

(Gen 12:1-3) Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. [2] I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. [3] I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Last time in Chapter 14 of Genesis, there was a northern confederacy of powerful kings from the area of Babylon, who had invaded towards the south, conquering many cities. Five kings of the Jordan plain confederated against them, but were defeated by them. They took the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, sacking the cities and they took

hostages, among them was Lot, the nephew of Abram. When Abram received word that Lot and his family were taken hostage, he armed three hundred and eighteen of his servants trained in his own house and they pursued after them and caught up with them at Dan. In a surprise attack they fought against them from two sides, discomfited them, defeated them, and pursued them all the way to a little north of Damascus. Abram was able to take Lot and deliver him with his family and the other hostages. He also took all of the spoils that they had taken. As Abram was returning passing by Jerusalem, the King of Righteousness, Melchizedek, came out to meet him, giving him bread and wine, blessing Abram. Abram gave him tithes of all that he had. There the king of Sodom expressed to Abram his appreciation for what he had done. He told Abram to keep all the spoil. All he wanted was the hostages back. Abram declared, (*Gen 14:22b-23*) *I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, [23] that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.*

Abram believes! God's Covenant with Abram

Gen 15:1 After these things the word of the LORD (first use – 262 X in Bible) **came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."**

- A lot of times we do things on sort of an impulse. There is a need and we don't stop to really think of the dangers. We're responding and acting to the need. A house is burning, you hear someone in the house calling, you don't think of the danger, you run into the house to see if you can help. Afterwards you may stand outside and shake and say, "Man, that was a foolish thing, or that was a scary thing to do." Afterwards you begin to be frightened by your action.
- **What if they regroup? What if they come back to get revenge?** Surely I don't have the strength to meet them. I don't have that kind of force. These fellows have been taking the walled cities and we're just out here in our tents. Abram probably became a little fearful as he began to think of, "What have I done now?"
- **So, the LORD came to him, speaking in a vision saying, "Do not be afraid."** "Fear not!" How often Jesus said to His disciples, "Fear not."
- **The LORD appeared to Abram in a vision. A vision is spiritual insight.** We're surrounded by spirit beings, and the spirit world is real. Once in a while God will open up a person's eyes to behold the spirit realm. When God opens your eyes to see the spirit realm, that is a vision. It is while a person is in a state of being awake that he suddenly sees the spiritual realm, like in a movie screen.
- **God speaks to people through dreams and in the Old Testament** we find that God often spoke to people through dreams. Again, sort of an insight into the spirit realm. Now, it is important to realize that the spirit realm is timeless, and only we dwell within the time continuum. The spirit realm is outside of the time zone. So then, when a person is able to see in the spirit realm, either by vision or dream, it is not unusual for them to see into the future, because you are into the timeless realm. Oftentimes, even speaking of the future as though present.
- **God spoke to men through visions. God spoke to men through dreams.** God spoke to people directly; Moses face to face. So often we read, "The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, the prophet, saying..." We wonder just how did God say it to Jeremiah. With Elijah, it is interesting to me that when God finally spoke to him, as he was down in the area of Mount Sinai, He spoke to him through the still small voice. I have found that ***for the most part, that God speaks to me through His Word and through that still small voice.***
- **There were times when the angel stood by Paul and encouraged him.** The angel came to deliver Peter out of the prison. God spoke to them through angels. When in Jerusalem, at a time of crisis, (*Act 23:11*) *But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.* So, the Lord spoke directly to them. They were spoken to by angels. And the prophecy of Joel (*Joe 2:28*) *"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.*
- **For the most part, God speaks to me though through His Word.** I believe that this is true for all of us. ***It is always exciting when God causes His Word to come alive within my heart and suddenly I begin to see and understand the word that is there. It just seems to be illuminated by the Spirit to my heart, and I begin to see things in it that I have never seen before, and that is exciting!***
- Now the LORD spoke to Abram in a vision. "Do not be afraid," indicating he was afraid, or that there

was the potential for his being afraid, "for I am your shield." He's probably thinking, "I don't have any defense against these armies." God said in (*Deu 33:29*) *Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, The shield of your help And the sword of your majesty! Your enemies shall submit to you, And you shall tread down their high places.*" Abram probably was also having seller's remorse from giving back all of the loot to the king of Sodom. Maybe he was maybe sort of remorseful over that vow that he had taken before God, the Lord declared unto him, "*I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.*"

"You've got Me, Abram; you don't need anything else!" How true that is. The LORD is the inheritance. "You have Me." ***Oh that we would understand that the person who possesses the LORD, possesses the resources that can never fade or be diminished!*** How sad, the person who relies upon his own strength, though he be the strongest man in the world, his strength is still limited. ***How blessed the man who has learned to trust in the strength of the Lord, no matter how weak he is. He is never without strength if he is trusting in the LORD.*** That's the whole idea: The LORD is my strength; the LORD is my keeper. "*I am your exceedingly great reward.*"

Gen 15:2 But Abram said, "Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"

- **Abram was already very rich.** Coming out of Egypt, the Pharaoh of Egypt had enriched them so much that a strife came between the herdsmen. The land wasn't big enough for the two of them anymore. Now, the LORD is saying, "Abram, I am your exceedingly great reward." Abram said, "Yes, but what good is that? I don't have any heir to pass it on to, and I've got more than I can ever spend. I'm childless, no one to leave it...the heir is my servant, Eliezer of Damascus, who has been born in my house."
- **The name Eliezer is an interesting name, which means, "God my help." Here is where we find the name of the servant of Abram.** He was Abram's chief servant, head over the servants. Later on, we'll find that he is the one that Abram sends back to Syris to get a wife for his son Isaac. So he becomes a beautiful picture here. Abram, a type of the Father, sending Eliezer, whose name is the comforter, or God our help, sending him back to get a bride for his son. Do you begin to get the picture? The work of the Holy Spirit in the world today, the parakletos. What is He doing? He's getting a bride for the Son! He comes with gifts, as Eliezer took gifts, and said, "My master's house is rich. He offered Rebekah the gifts and so forth, putting bracelets upon her. The gifts of the Holy Spirit, by which we're adorned and drawn unto our bridegroom by the high servant Eliezer, the Holy Spirit."
- **When Abram returns from the mount** after God stopped the sacrifice of Isaac and provided the ram, we read that Abram came back to the servants and they journeyed back to Hebron. There is no mention of Isaac. No doubt he came back with Abram, but the Holy Spirit is silent and doesn't tell us that. In fact, after the sacrifice, Isaac is not brought into the record again until Eliezer is returning with the bride. Even so, Jesus, after His sacrifice, ascended into heaven and is out of the picture on earth, until the Holy Spirit has prepared the bride, to bring the bride to Him. Then shall He arise to meet His bride.
- **This is the only place where Eliezer's name is mentioned.** When he is sent by Abram to get the bride, it doesn't tell us his name, it just tells us that he was the chief servant. So even as the Holy Spirit inspired the type in the Old Testament, He is careful not to include His name in His ministry of getting the bride. So we wouldn't even know the name, except it was given to us here in the record, but when he is ministering to bring the bride back, his name is not mentioned.
- **The true witness of the Holy Spirit is always that of Jesus Christ. His ministry is the exalting and the declaring of Jesus Christ.** Eliezer didn't go to sell himself to Rebekah; he came to sell his master's son to Rebekah, and he testified of the riches of his master's kingdom!

Gen 15:3 Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!"

Gen 15:4 And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir."

Gen 15:5 Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants (seed) be."

- **Eliezer, servant of Abram is not to be the heir!** *And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.*
- **Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them."** *And He said to him, "So shall your descendants (seed) be."* Crystal clear skies, no smog. No

air pollution in those days. No lights of the cities to distract or to diminish, just the black darkness of the desert illuminated only by the canopy of stars. As Abram looked up and saw the heavens stretched above him, the billions of stars that were there, of course not all visible to the human eye, but the whole sky it would seem was just like the Milky Way, illuminated with that soft glow of the galaxies and the stars.

Looking up God, said to him, "*So shall your descendants (seed) be.*" ***How many times has God taken you and me alone to say something to us?***

- There are those who suggest that when God said, "Count the stars if you are able to number them," the word used for *number* there is not really to count, but it is to set into an order. Many suggest that God has placed the gospel in the stars and that astrology is only a sad perversion of the truth that God has placed within the heavens!
- The book *The Gospel in the Stars*, by Bollinger, and also one with a similar title by Seiss, in which they go through the Zodiac and show that originally God intended it to have the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We remember in Psalm 19, "*The heavens declare the glory of God.*" We usually say, "Well, that's the vastness of His creation and all," but it is also possible, what is the real glory of God? It is the redemption of man! So, they say that the story of redemption is there in the Zodiac.
- We have come to shy away from astrology, and rightfully so, because it deals in areas that God never intended man to deal, and was forbidden in scripture by Isaiah the prophet. It is foolish to think that they have an influence upon your life and to govern your life by the charts of the Zodiac and so forth, the vibes that are hitting you on a particular day of the month. That is very well a perversion of the real message of the gospel.
- The wise men were guided by the star. They were able to read a message that others did not read. It is quite possible when God is challenging Abram to number the stars that is to consider the gospel that is in the stars, because God said, "*So shall your seed be.*" Seed is singular, *zera*. Paul picks this up as he talks about this experience of Abram looking up into the stars and receiving the promise of God. (*Gal 3:16*) *Now to Abram and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "AND TO YOUR SEED," who is Christ!* It is important to note this because the next verse tells us that--

Gen 15:6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

(*Rom 4:3*) *For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS ACCOUNTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS."* (*Gal 3:6*) *just as Abram "BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS ACCOUNTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS."* (*Jas 2:23*) *And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "ABRAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS ACCOUNTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS."* And he was called the friend of God.

- Abram, he believed in the LORD! It does not say that Abram believed the LORD. It does not say that Abram believed what the LORD said. It says "he believed in the LORD! There was something about God right then that Abram rested in. The word *believe* means to lean upon, to bear all of your weight on something. To consider it so dependable that you can put all of your weight on it! It says, right then Abram believed in the LORD! It was just something then that broke through to his heart of the One with whom he had to do and he believed in the LORD. It doesn't say he believed the Lord because he's going to take Hagar. He is going to make some mistakes trying to do this himself. Still he believed in the LORD at this point in time and accounted it to him for righteousness. The it was the fact that he believed in the LORD who was making the promises to him! The first use of condition of salvation. Saved by grace through faith.
- It isn't that he just believed that God was going to give him a lot of kids, a lot of descendants. It isn't that he just believed that God existed. Just faith that God exists does not save. Just faith that the promises of God are true does not save, but ***it is the faith in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, which brings salvation!*** The faith that He died for my sins. So, Abram by faith believed this promise of God that His seed would come.
- We read in Romans concerning Jesus, who was of the seed of Abram. (*Rom 1:2-4*) *which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, [3] concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, [4] and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.* (*Mat 1:1*) *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abram:* That is important because He was the promised Seed, the One that Abram believed in and the One because of Abram believing in Him, God declared him righteous.
- God declares us righteous by the same action of believing in the same One. Abram looked forward, believing the promise of God that it would be. We now look back at the fulfillment of the promise in the coming of Jesus Christ. But by our believing that Jesus died for our sins, paying the penalty for our guilt,

taking our place, becoming a substitution for us in His death upon the cross! By our faith in Him that death and in His resurrection, we are accounted righteous before God! Abram was not accounted righteous because of his works, though he had many good works. He was not accounted righteous by his keeping of the law, because it was not yet given. He was not accounted righteous by the right of circumcision. That was not yet given. ***So we are not accounted righteous because we keep the rituals of the church. We are not accounted righteous because we keep the laws of the church. We are not accounted righteous because we have good works. We are accounted righteous when we believe the promise of God through His Son, Jesus Christ. Salvation would come to man!*** And that belief in the promise of God concerning the Seed that would come was the thing that God accounted to him for righteousness!

- Abram's faith was not perfect. There were many failures. Even in the very next chapter, even after he believed and God accounted Abram righteous, a righteous man, even in the very next chapter we find Abram lapsing in faith as Sarah suggested to him that he might take her handmaiden, Hagar, in order that he might have an heir of his own body. In a few more chapters, where he goes down to the area of King Abimelech, (Gen 20:2) Now Abram said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. And yet, ***God accounted his faith for righteousness, even as God accounts your faith for righteousness though it also may be imperfect!***

Gen 15:7 Then He said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."

- After God accounted him righteous, God is now reaffirming His promise to Abram. This is the reward of his faith. He believed God! God accounted it to him for righteousness and now the LORD reaffirms the promise. Your descendants, your seed will inherit this land!

Gen 15:8 And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"

- Abram is asking for a sign! By this time, Abram surely believed: He is seeking fuller explanation and assurance as to details. God in His grace granted his request, by means of a most remarkable ceremony.

Gen 15:9 So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon."

- One each of the five acceptable sacrificial animals, God appointed that each of the animals used for this service should be three years old, because then they were at their full growth and strength. ***God must be served with the best we have, for He is the best!***
- We notice that the requirement for female sacrificial animals was required for the common people for the sin and trespass offerings. (Lev 4:28) or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, then he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed. (Lev 5:6a) and he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD for his sin which he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats as a sin offering.

Gen 15:10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.

- ***He brought all these to Him.*** Abram brought as God appointed him, though as yet he knew not how these things should become a sign to him. This was not the first instance of Abram's implicit obedience.
- ***He cut the animals in two, dividing them, according to the ceremony used in confirming covenants, (Jer 34:18) And I will give the men*** (into the hands of their enemies -Babylon) who have transgressed My covenant (treatment of their Hebrew slaves), who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it—This cutting of the animals in two and laying opposite each other. This was a method by which a covenant was made. People would make a covenant with each other. Now to seal or to bind that covenant they would cut an animal in two and they would lay it out opposite and then they would pass between these in a circle eight, repeating the terms of the covenant. In so doing they were bound to the covenant that was made!

Gen 15:11 And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

- Abram, standing by his sacrifice, waiting for the manifestation of God, who had ordered him to prepare for the ratification of the covenant, drove them away, that they might neither pollute nor devour what had been thus consecrated to God.

Gen 15:12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, upon him.

- Abram was put to sleep so that he should have no part in it, and that the Covenant should be unconditional, in which "God was the One" and only contracting party (*Gal 1:3-4*) Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, [4] who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

Gen 15:13 *Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.*

Gen 15:14 *And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.*

- Here the LORD is telling Abram of the fact that his descendants are going to go down to Egypt where they are to be afflicted for four hundred years. We know, from (*Exo 12:40*) *Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years*. People are always looking for some contradiction in the Bible. "Aha! I found one. Four hundred years it says here, but we know it was four hundred and thirty years." All right, just read carefully. They'll be afflicted four hundred years. The first thirty years they had good treatment; Joseph was next to the Pharaoh. It wasn't until after Joseph died that they began to be afflicted. So cross off another one. Interestingly enough, the LORD here tells them that they will come out with great possessions. You remember the night of the Passover, the LORD said, (*Exo 12:35-36*) *Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing. [36] And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.*

Gen 15:15 *Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age.*

- You won't have this great period of great darkness and all in your life, but your descendants will! It wasn't long after Abram that Joseph was sold by his brothers and then he brought the family down into Egypt, the seventy souls, and how that during that sojourn a total of four hundred and thirty years of which four hundred years was affliction. They multiplied, becoming a nation in Egypt before God brought them out with a heavy hand into the land.

Gen 15:16 *But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.*"

- In the fourth generation they shall return. How long is a Biblical generation? Here it happens to be a hundred years. If you'll go to the genealogical records you'll find that Levi was in Egypt, one of the sons of Jacob and that Moses is the fourth generation from Levi. So just as the LORD said to Abram, it was four hundred years. It was only four generations from Levi to Moses.
- For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete. Now, as they come back they are going to wipe out the Amorites. But the time for the judgment of the Amorites is not yet come. Though they were wicked, their wickedness was not yet complete.
- God is so long-suffering as He deals with man, I can't understand it. God is so patient and so long-suffering. I get upset with Him over this sometimes. Often I say, "Oh Lord, how long are you going to put up with this?" You read about these people who are exploiting children. How violent and wicked can man become before You step in and judge? Know this, that the judgment of God is coming, though it may seem to be delayed! Here God was so patient with the Amorites, and He said they'll go down there for four hundred years before they come back, because the sin of the Amorites is not yet complete. They had not arrived to that depth of wickedness they would afterwards, and did, which brought on their ruin, making way for the posterity of Abram to inherit their land!
- We are told in the book of Revelation that the cup of the indignation of His wrath finally overflows. But it's being filled. Man thinks he is getting by with his wickedness because God has not intervened. They tragically misinterpret that as: God doesn't see, or God doesn't care, or the most blasphemous of all, God approves! He's so patient, so patient! He was giving the Amorites time. He gave them another four hundred years in the land, in order that they might continue until the cup of indignation was filled and then His judgment and His wrath was poured out.

Gen 15:17 *And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.*

- A smoking oven. (*Deu 4:20*) *But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be His people, an inheritance, as you are this day. (*Isa 48:10*) Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.*

- **A burning torch.** (1Ki 11:36) And to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there. (Isa 62:1) For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, And her salvation as a lamp that burns.
- It is typifying of God passing. You remember later on, God manifested Himself to the children of Israel in the cloud and the pillar of fire. So Abram, as it got dark, saw this *smoking oven*, which signified the affliction of his seed in Egypt and a burning torch, denoting comfort (the light of salvation) in this affliction, that passed between those pieces, as the covenant was established. These items symbolized the presence of God, who solemnly promised by divine oath to fulfill His promises to Abram by alone passing through the animal pieces!

Gen 15:18 On the same day the LORD made (karath, to cut) a covenant (eternal and unconditional commitment of the land to his descendants, given 430 years before the law) with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—

- On the same day, in that instant, that day never to be forgotten, the LORD made a covenant with Abram, that is, He gave a promise to Abram, saying, To your descendants I have given this land. The LORD had said before that He would give them this land. Now, He is giving the promise of it, the covenant is sealed and delivered, and cannot be annulled! The Land is given to Israel! No Palestine until about 100 years after Christ, by the Roman Emperor Trajan. Palestine is never mentioned in the Bible. Israel is in the Bible over 2,500 times!

Gen 15:19 *the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites,*

Gen 15:20 *the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim,*

Gen 15:21 *the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."*

- The ten principal nations inhabiting this area are here enumerated. God now marks out the land that He is promising to Abram. By the way, **what did Abram promise to do? Nothing! He believed God. And God will save you—save you by His grace—if you will believe what He has done for you!**

Sarai and Hagar helping God out! God's grace to Hagar!

Gen 16:1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.

- Abram was eighty-five years old. She was seventy-five.
- **Maidservant Hagar. Remember when Abram went down into Egypt?** He shouldn't have done that. It was a lapse of faith. He didn't have confidence that God could sustain him in the land of promise, so he went down to Egypt. He came back stained, marked. One of the things that they picked up in Egypt was Hagar, a maidservant for Sarah.

Gen 16:2 So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.

- We read earlier that Adam heeded the voice of Eve. Both Adam and Abram got into trouble for listening to their wives. But to really balance off, we find later on the LORD said in (Gen 21:12) But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called."
- Sarah suggested the use of Hagar the handmaiden as a means by which they could help God perform His promise. **They find themselves in the position of seeking now through natural means to accomplish the purposes of God, to help God out! That is always a mistake! How many times we have sought by natural devices to accomplish the purposes of God?** We always have the same kind of results! We end up making a total mess out of things.
- Many times I have put myself in the position of God's little helper. I give Him opportunity to work. I give Him a time deadline. "Lord, if you don't do it in this length of time, then I'm going to be forced to do something myself." Here we find Sarah saying, "Look, Abram, let's give up. It's not going to happen." "Let's help God, you know, He needs our help now."
- Have you ever been told that God needs your help? **Know, that is not true! The opposite is**

true. I need His help continually! The Lord is my helper. I need His help. He doesn't need mine.

God has done a fantastic job of running the world before I came along, and He'll continue His great job long after I'm gone. He doesn't need me. I need Him! But there are times when we get caught in the trap, "Well, the Lord needs us to help Him." So Abram listened to Sarah.

Gen 16:3 Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan.

- Surrogate parentage was somewhat common in the ancient world and may have been acceptable to God on other occasions; but it wasn't for Abram, the friend of God and the man of faith! God had a different path for him. **Abram was to be obedient, to wait and to trust in Him, even as we are!**

Gen 16:4 So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes.

- **So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived.** It somehow did something to Hagar. She began to despise Sarah, to look upon her with scorn. Perhaps there was the question that maybe there was an impotency on the part of Abram that they could not have children, maybe that was the suggestion. But now here is proof that it was not Abram's impotency, but it was because of Sarah. She was the one unable to conceive. Whatever it was, Hagar began to look upon her in a disdainful way. She was despised by Hagar.

Gen 16:5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The LORD judge between you and me."

- Come on Sarah, you're the one who told him to do it. Now she's blaming him. Why did you do that? "My wrong be upon you." She's now throwing the blame on Abram for what happened.

Gen 16:6 So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please." And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence.

Gen 16:7 Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.

Gen 16:8 And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."

- **Hagar –The Angel of the LORD** (First mention; 6X Genesis; 64 X in Bible) **addressed Hagar by name.** Though He had called Abram and had given him special promises for a special work, He is interested in every individual, including Hagar, and the child she would bear. It had not been God's will for this union between Abram and Hagar to take place; but now that it had, He would make a gracious promise to their descendants. He promised Hagar a son, and even gave her the name for him, Ishmael, promising him also an abundant progeny! He will have 12 sons!
- **Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going? May we consider those two question and answers for ourselves!**

Gen 16:9 The Angel of the LORD said (10x in Bible) to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand."

Gen 16:10 Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude."

Gen 16:11 And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction.

- **Now the Angel of the LORD.** Now this is the first mention in the Old Testament of *the angel of the LORD*. We will find the angel of the LORD appearing many times in the Old Testament, and many bible scholars do believe that this reference "*angel of the LORD*" is a reference to a theophany, an appearance of Jesus Christ appearing in a form to man.
- **Found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.** She was heading back to Egypt, stopping at this spring of water. The Angel of the LORD said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from? and where are you going? She said, I'm fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai. So the angel of the LORD said to her, Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand. Then the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude." And the angel of the LORD said to her, Behold, you are with child, and you

shall bear a son, and you shall call his name Ishmael; because the LORD has heard your affliction. Ishmael means, "God hears." The LORD has heard your affliction.

Gen 16:12 *He shall be a wild man (wild, aggressive, independent donkey); His hand shall be against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."*

- **The Arab people today are the descendants of Ishmael.** God's promise that He would cause her descendants to multiply and not be able to be counted for multitude. But they were going to be a wild man, a wild donkey. "And his hand will be against every man." Today much of the crisis that exists at the present time centers around the Arab people. The conflict between Ishmael's and Isaac's descendants go way back!
- **(Col 3:11) where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.** We know of no more beautiful people in all the world than the Arab people when they love the Lord. They are delightful and charming when they walk with Jesus Christ. But on the same token, when they don't walk with Jesus Christ, they are very volatile and difficult to deal with. ***What a difference Jesus makes for all of us!***
- **Each racial group has its own characteristics and temperament.** But when we come to Jesus, all of that is erased. Now we have a whole new origin for our existence. **(2Co 5:17) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.** He is neither Jew, Arab, Greek, whatever; he now relates himself back to Christ, and he's a Christian! That's a whole new race of people. They also have their own ethnic characteristics. Oh, what love they have for each other, what a caring, what a concern they have for each other. What a sweetness and what a peace marks their lives! What beautiful ethnic characteristics belong to Christians! ***Thank God, we can make a break with that past when we are in Christ!***

Gen 16:13 *Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are- the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees (cares) me?"*

(Exo 3:7-8a) *And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. [8a] So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians.*

- **Hagar caught a glimpse of God, the one who saw her.** "You are the God Who sees (and cares!)" And cares! He saw the desperateness of her heart. Here she is carrying the child of Abram. She doesn't know what to do and Sarah's really giving her a bad time, and she fled heading back towards Egypt, but that's a long Negev desert to go through, and perilous. She's sitting there by the spring and the LORD comes and says, "Turn around and go back. You're going to have a son. Call him Ishmael, the LORD hears, for the LORD has heard your cry." The LORD not only hears, but He also sees! So, she called Him, "*The God Who sees.*" ***Do you really believe the LORD sees all things? That He hears all things; Knows all things! Jesus came to deliver us!***

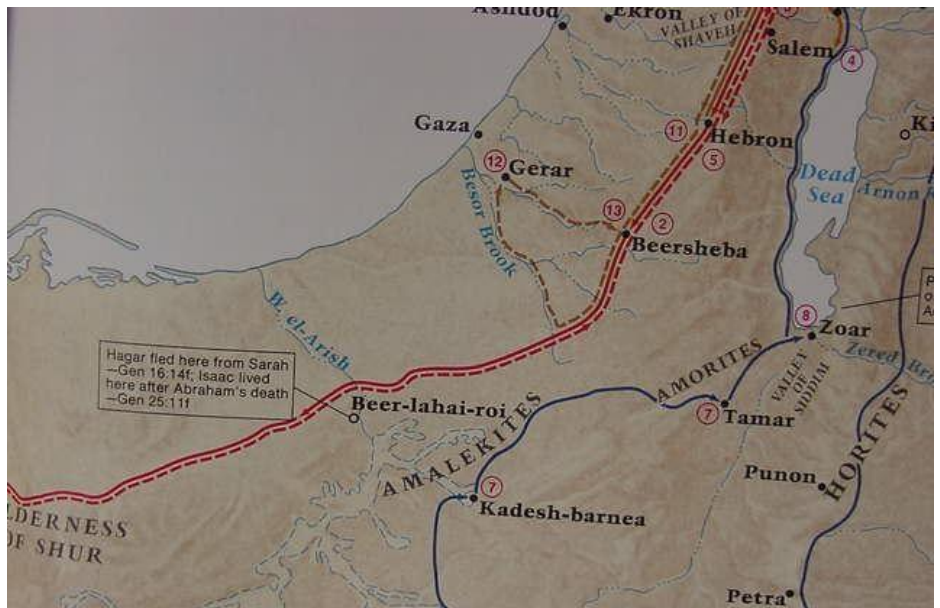
Gen 16:14 *Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; observe, it is between Kadesh and Bered.*

- Which means, "the well of the God who sees." Beer is "well." Beersheva, so many times you get the word beer in the scriptures. It means "the well," and this is the well of the God who sees. Beer Lahai Roi.

Gen 16:15 *So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.*

- Abram honored the name that was given by the angel: *Ishmael* --God hears!

Gen 16:16 *Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael*



to Abram.

- **God doesn't speak to him for thirteen years.** There are thirteen years between verse 16 of chapter 16 and (Gen 17:1a) *When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram.* When God speaks again, He has many interesting things to tell him, and we'll get into that next week when we continue chapters seventeen and eighteen.

SUMMARY:

- **Abram believed in the LORD:** (Gen 15:6) *And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.*
- **God's Wonderful, Eternal, Covenant with Abraham:** (Gen 18) *On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—*
- **Sarai and Hagar "helping God out"!** (Gen 16:2) *So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.*
- **Problems with "helping God out"!** (Gen 16:5,7) *Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The LORD judge between you and me. [7] Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.*
- **God's Grace!! The Angel of the LORD speaks to Hagar and blesses her!** (Gen 16:10-11) *Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude. [11] And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction.*
- **Oh, the grace and mercy of the LORD! Do you really believe that?**

CLOSING SONG:

Gen 15:6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

THIS I BELIEVE - (The Creed) (3:43/3:46) Hillsong

Our Father everlasting The all-creating One God Almighty

Through your Holy Spirit Conceiving Christ the Son Jesus our Saviour

(Refrain) I believe in God our Father I believe in Christ the Son I believe in the Holy Spirit

Our God is three in One I believe in the resurrection That we will rise again

For I believe in the Name of Jesus

Our Judge and our Defender Suffered and crucified Forgiveness is in You

Descended into darkness You rose in glorious light Forever seated high (Refrain)

I believe in You I believe You rose again I believe that Jesus Christ is Lord

I believe in life eternal I believe in the virgin birth I believe in the saints' communion

And in Your Holy Church I believe in the resurrection When Jesus comes again

For I believe in the Name of Jesus (Refrain)

For I believe in the Name of Jesus.

CLOSING PRAYER:

NEXT WEEK: Read and study Genesis Chapters 17 & 18!