

AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP - BIBLE STUDY
Study Series: Abraham: Friend of God, Father of Faith

Part 6: Impatience and the Birth of Ishmael
Text: Genesis 16

Wednesday, September 17, 2025
Teacher: Pastor Patrick Ahiadzipe

Introduction: Last week, we read in Genesis 15 how God made a covenant with Abraham, to give him a child and to give him many descendants. Abraham believed God and it was accredited to him as righteousness. Genesis 16 tells the story of Sarai's attempt to fulfill God's promise of descendants through her maidservant, Hagar, leading to conflict and the birth of Ishmael, Abram's first son.

Objective: Today's bible study will focus on the events that lead to the conception of Ishmael and the impact that it had on Abraham's family. We will learn biblical strategies on how to avoid the mistakes that Abraham made.

1. Sarai misleads Abraham

Genesis 16:1-3 (NIV)

1Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; **2**so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her." Abram agreed to what Sarai said. **3**So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife.

Question #1: How can we be sure that the guidance we are getting is actually from the Holy Spirit and not just our imagination or even from the devil?

2. Consequences of human solutions

Genesis 16:4-5 (NIV)

4He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. **5**Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me."

Question #2: How does Hagar's behavior towards Sarai tell us about human nature's tendency towards pride and conflict?

3. Gods care for the afflicted

Genesis 16:7-13 (NIV)

7The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. **8**And he said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered. **9**Then the angel of the Lord told her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her." **10**The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count." **11**The angel of the Lord also said to her: "You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard of your misery. **12**He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers." **13**She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me."

Question #3: What is the lesson in knowing God as "the God Who Sees"?

STRATEGIES TO CULTIVATE PATIENCE

- **Developing the fruits of the Spirit:** In Galatians 5:22 the New Living Translation lists patience as one of the fruits of the spirit. The Greek word for patience is Makrothumia, which also means longsuffering. Longsuffering is difficult because it is often accompanied by pain, heartache and shame. Growing in our faith is what produces the power to help us endure patiently. We develop the fruits of the spirit by having daily devotions and praying regularly.
- **Becoming like Christ:** Patience becomes part of our nature as we strive to become more and more like Jesus. One of the greatest attributes of Jesus Christ was his ability to endure patiently. 1 Peter 2:23, Isaiah 53:7-12 and Hebrews 12:3 describes the character of Christ and how he endured patiently. Jesus was rewarded for his patience and so will every believer be rewarded for enduring patiently (James 1:12, 1 Peter 1:6-7)
- **Trusting God:** Impatience often stems from our desire for control and our frustration when life does not proceed according to our plans. The Bible reminds us that "the Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you" (2 Peter 3:9).