**GOD CALLS ABRAM ABRAHAM**

**Genesis 16-17                                                                                   Lesson 12**

Key verse 17:5**5**No longer will you be called Abram[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16-17&version=NIV#fen-NIV-403f)]; your name will be Abraham,[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16-17&version=NIV#fen-NIV-403g)] for I have made you a father of many nations.

Abraham believed God’s promise, which was credited to him as righteousness. God was pleased with Abram and made covenant ceremony.

Since then 10 years left, nothing seemed to happen to Abram. Abram’s patience ran out and compromised with Sarah’s foolish advice, which put him into deep trouble. God intervened into this problem and helped Abraham.

The righteous will live by faith from the beginning to the end. Now God changed Abram’s name to help him to live as Abraham, a father of many nations, not as an exalted father.

We see how Abraham rode a roller-coaster.

**1. Read 16:1-3. Why did Sarai and Abram think it was reasonable, and even God's will, for Abram to take Hagar as a concubine? What was wrong with this?**

**16**Now 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.

**Sarah’s suggestion sounded reasonable because 10 years had passed since God promised a son. She meant that God is responsible for her bareness, it is God’s fault.**

**Sarah didn’t wait with patience. Heb 6:12-15 “…through faith and patience….And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.”**

**Satan’s lie---you will be like God. You are God. You don’t have to wait. Just do it as you think best.**

**2. Read 16:4-6. What problem arose in Abram's family after Hagar became pregnant? How did Abram and Sarai deal with this problem? Read v.7-16. How did God help Hagar and what can we learn about God who helped Abram?**

**4**He 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.”

**6**“Your slave is in your hands,” Abram said. “Do with her whatever you think best.” Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

**7**The 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,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16-17&version=NIV#fen-NIV-393a)]
    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[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16-17&version=NIV#fen-NIV-394b)] 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[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16-17&version=NIV#fen-NIV-395c)] the One who sees me.” **14**That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16-17&version=NIV#fen-NIV-396d)]; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

**15**So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. **16**Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.

**Hagar despised her mistress Sarah right after she became pregnant.**

**Sarah’s compromise didn’t work. Rather trouble arose among them in her family.**

**Abraham sided on Sarah, not on Hagar. Abraham was faithful, even though he made a mistake.**

**God intervened in the family problem and sided on Abraham. God took care of Hagar and Ishmael, too because Ishmael was also Abraham’s son.**

**Ishmael—the Son of Compromise. Isaac—the Son of Promise.**

**3. Read 17:1-8. How old was Abram when God appeared to him again and why did God say to Abram this in verse 1-2? Why did God change Abram's name to Abraham? What is the significance of this change?**

**The Covenant of Circumcision**

**17**When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16-17&version=NIV#fen-NIV-399e)]; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. **2**Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.” **3**Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, **4**“As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. **5**No longer will you be called Abram[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16-17&version=NIV#fen-NIV-403f)]; your name will be Abraham,[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16-17&version=NIV#fen-NIV-403g)] for I have made you a father of many nations. **6**I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. **7**I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. **8**The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.”

**When Ishmael was thirteen years old. Abraham got Ishmael when he was 86 years old. Ishmael became his idol.**

**God rebuked Abraham because he did not walk faithfully before God. He did not live as an ancestor of faith. He only enjoyed Ishmael.**

**God renewed his covenant with Abraham. As the sign, God changed his name from Abram to Abraham. Now his covenant became an everlasting covenant with Abraham’s descendants. The God of Abraham will be the God of his descendants. This means that God will give children to Abraham.**

**4. Read v.9-14. What did God tell Abraham to do as a sign and seal of the covenant? How did God affirm and expand the covenant promises? What is significant about an "everlasting covenant?" And "everlasting possession"?**

**9**Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. **10**This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. **11**You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. **12**For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. **13**Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. **14**Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

**Circumcision was the sign of their covenant with his descendants. God extended his covenant with Abraham’s descendants. Our God is everlasting God. He will bless Abraham for all generation.**

**Romans 2:28-29: the circumcision of the heart---Jesus is the one who can circumcise our hearts.**

**5. Read v.15-22. How did God bless Sarah? What was Abraham's response? Why did God choose to give the spiritual blessing to Isaac instead of to Ishmael? (Ro 9:6-9) What can we learn in these two chapters about God and his ways of working?**

**15**God also said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. **16**I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.” **17**Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, “Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?” **18**And Abraham said to God, “If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!” **19**Then God said, “Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac.[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+16-17&version=NIV#fen-NIV-417h)] I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. **20**And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. **21**But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year.” **22**When he had finished speaking with Abraham, God went up from him. **23**On that very day Abraham took his son Ishmael and all those born in his household or bought with his money, every male in his household, and circumcised them, as God told him. **24**Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, **25**and his son Ishmael was thirteen; **26**Abraham and his son Ishmael were both circumcised on that very day. **27**And every male in Abraham’s household, including those born in his household or bought from a foreigner, was circumcised with him.

### God’s Sovereign Choice

**6**It is not as though God’s word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. **7**Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham’s children. On the contrary, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+9%3A6-9&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28163a)] **8**In other words, it is not the children by physical descent who are God’s children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham’s offspring. **9**For this was how the promise was stated: “At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son.”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+9%3A6-9&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28165b)]

**God changed Sarah’s name from Sarai to Sarah, which means the mother of many nations. God prepared Sarah too for the sake of Abraham.**

**God works only through our faith in his promise. God does not work with our compromise**.

Isaiah 55:8-11. “ God’s word does not return empty but fulfill his will. …My thought is higher than your thought…”

We must accept God’s sovereignty.