

Genesis 16:1-16

Genesis 16:1 – Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar.

wə·lāh	lōw;	3205 [e] yā·lə·ḡāh	3808 [e] lō	87 [e] 'ab·rām,	802 [e] 'ê·šet	8297 [e] wə·sā·ray
וְלָהּ	לּוֹ	יָלְדָהּ	לֹא	אַבְרָם	אֵשֶׁת	וְסָרַי
and she had	to him	had borne [a child]	not	of Abram	the wife	And Sarai
Conj-w Prep 3fs	Prep 3ms	V-Qal-Perf-3fs	Adv-NegPrt	N-proper-ms	N-fsc	Conj-w N-proper-fs

אֵשֶׁת = ish-shah, "woman", "wife"

1904 [e] hā·ḡār.	8034 [e] ū·šə·māh	4713 [e] miš·rīt	8198 [e] šip·hāh
הָגָר:	וְשִׁמָּה	מִצְרַיִת	שִׁפְחָה
Hagar	and her name was	an Egyptianess	a maidservant
N-proper-fs	Conj-w N-msc 3fs	N-proper-fs	N-fs

1. Previous chapter connected the promise of land with a descendent
2. Sarah was not producing a descendent.
3. Hagar’s origin was mentioned in 12:16 -
“And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, **female servants**, female donkeys, and camels.”
4. Hagar is Egyptian
5. Every time in 16:1-6 Sarah is mentioned along with her title of “wife”

16:2 – And Sarai said to Abram, “Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her.” And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.

3068 [e] Yah-weh	6113 [e] 'ā·šā·ra·nī	4994 [e] nā	2009 [e] hin·nêh-	87 [e] 'ab·rām,	413 [e] 'el-	8297 [e] sā·ray	559 [e] wat·tō·mer
יְהוָה	עָצָרְנִי	נָא	הִנֵּה	אַבְרָם	אֶל-	סָרַי	וַתֹּאמֶר
Yahweh	has restrained me	now	See	Abram	to	Sarai	So said
N-proper-ms	V-Qal-Perf-3ms 1cs	Interjection	Interjection	N-proper-ms	Prep	N-proper-fs	Conj-w V-Qal-ConseclImperf-3fs

4480 [e] mim·mên·nāh;	1129 [e] 'ib·bā·neh	194 [e] 'ū·lay	8198 [e] šip·hā·tī,	413 [e] 'el-	4994 [e] nā	935 [e] bō-	3205 [e] mil·le·ḡeṭ,
מִמֶּנָּה	אֲבֹנָה	אוּלַי	שִׁפְחָתִי	אֶל-	נָא	בֹא-	מִלֵּדָת
by her	I shall obtain children	perhaps	my maidservant	to	please	go in	from bearing [children]
Prep 3fs	V-Nifal-Imperf-1cs	Adv	N-fsc 1cs	Prep	Interjection	V-Qal-Imp-ms	Prep-m V-Qal-Inf

שִׁפְחָה = shiphchah /shif-khaw/ = "maidservant", "female servant", "handmaid", "female slave"

8297 [e] sā·rāy.	6963 [e] lə·qō·wl	87 [e] 'ab·rām	8085 [e] way·yiš·ma'
סָרַי:	לְקוֹל	אַבְרָם	וַיִּשְׁמַע
of Sarai	the voice	Abram	And heeded
N-proper-fs	Prep-l N-msc	N-proper-ms	Conj-w V-Qal-ConseclImperf-3ms

1. Hagar never called by name in these conversations. Only referred by title
2. YHWH opens and closes the womb
3. The practice around 2200-1500 BC
 - a. Hammurabi Code -

“When a free man married a priestess and she gave a female slave to her husband and she has then borne children, if later that female slave has claimed equality with her mistress because she bore children, her mistress may not sell her; she may mark her with the slave-mark and count her among the slaves.”
 - b. Nuzi Text -

“If Gulimninu (the bride) will not bear children, Gilimninu shall take a woman of N/Lullu land (where the choicest slaves are obtained) as a wife for Shennima (the bridegroom).”
 - c. Old Assyrian Marriage Contract –

“Laqipum took Hatala, the daughter of Enisru in marriage. In the country Laqipum shall not take in marriage another woman, but in the city of Ashshur he may take in marriage a priestess. If within two years she has not procured offspring for him, only she may buy a maid-servant and even later on, after she procures somehow an infant for him, she may sell her wherever she pleases.”
 - d. New-Assyrian text -

“If Subetu does not conceive and does not give birth, she may take a maidservant and as a substitute in her position she may place here. She (Subetu) will thereby bring sons into being and the sons will be her sons. If she loves the maidservant she may keep her. If she hates her she may sell her.”

16:3 – So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife.

1. Hagar is “taken” and “given”. She has no choice.
2. Marriage original purpose was companionship, not production of children

16:4 – And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress.

1. Hagar immediately conceived. Clearly Abram was not the problem.
2. Hagar has gained status and Sarah has lost status
3. Both the writer and Sarah make the same conclusion about Hagar’s attitude.

16:5 – And Sarai said to Abram, “May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my servant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the Lord judge between you and me!”

16:6 – But Abram said to Sarai, “Behold, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please.” Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her.

1. Abram is passive
2. Proverbs 30:21-23 includes this line:

“Under three things the earth trembles; under four it cannot bear up: a slave when he becomes

king, and a fool when he is filled with food; an unloved woman when she gets a husband, and a maidservant when she displaces her mistress.”

16:7 – The angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur.

5869 [e]	5921 [e]		4057 [e]	4325 [e]	5869 [e]	5921 [e]	3068 [e]	4397 [e]		4672 [e]
hā·'a·yin	'al-		bam·mig·bār;	ham·ma·yim	'ên	'al-	Yah·weh	mal·'aḵ		way·yim·šā·'āh
הַעַיִן	עַל-		בַּמִּדְבָּר	הַמַּיִם	עַיִן	עַל-	יְהוָה	מַלְאָךְ		וַיִּמְצָאָהּ
the spring	by		in the wilderness	of water	a spring	by	of Yahweh	the Angel		And found her
Art N-cs	Prep		Prep-b, Art N-ms	Art N-mp	N-csc	Prep	N-proper-ms	N-msc	Conj-w V-Qal-ConseclImperf-3ms 3fs	

7

7793 [e] 1870 [e]
 šūr. bə·de·reḵ
 :שׁוּר בְּדֶרֶךְ
 Shur on the way to
 N-proper-fs Prep-b | N-csc

מָצָא = matsa /maw-tsaw/ = "to find", "to discover",
 "to encounter", "to obtain"

1. “matsa” means to find by searching, not find accidentally
2. “Shur” is located on southern boundary of Canaan
3. “Angel of Lord” 48x in OT; “Angel of God” 11x in OT
 - a. This angel is both equal to being God and being a messenger of God in:
 - i. 16:7-9 with Hagar
 - ii. 21:17 with Ishmael
 - iii. 22:11-12 with Abraham
 - iv. 31:11-13 with Jacob

16:8 – And he said, “Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?” She said, “I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai.”

1. Hagar is asked two questions:
 - a. Coming From?...Hagar has an answer
 - b. Going To?... Hagar has no answer meaning she has no plan and no destination (God will now give her direction!)

16:9 – The angel of the Lord said to her, “Return to your mistress and submit to her.”

1. Hagar is sent back like Onesimus was to Philemon
2. Hagar is sent back to her place, her authority, her consequences
3. Hagar is given a purpose, a plan and a mission which includes submitting to Hagar and obeying God.

16:10 – The angel of the Lord also said to her, “I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude.”

1. Numerous descendants to Hagar through this child
2. Three verses in a row (16:9-11) begin with, “The angel of the Lord said to her.”

16:11-12 – And the angel of the Lord said to her,

**“Behold, you are pregnant
and shall bear a son.
You shall call his name Ishmael,
because the Lord has listened to your affliction.
12 He shall be a wild donkey of a man,
his hand against everyone
and everyone's hand against him,
and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen.”**

1. Hagar now has:
 - a. Son
 - b. Name for Son
 - c. Promise for son
 - d. Identification and description of descendants
 - e. Promise for future generations

16:13 – So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, “You are a God of seeing,” for she said, “Truly here I have seen him who looks after me.”

16:14 – Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; it lies between Kadesh and Bered.

1. Kadesh is in NE Sinai on southern border of Zin; Bered is only here in OT

16:15 – And Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.

1. People mentioned in closing verses:
 - a. Abram – 4x
 - b. Hagar – 3x
 - c. Ismael – 2x
 - d. Sarah – 0x
2. Abram's listens to Hagar's story and Abram names Ismael

16:16 – Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.