

# GENESIS 16

Written and compiled by Gary Kukis

**Genesis 16:1–16**

**Abram Fathers a Son by Hagar, Sarai's Slave Girl**

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God." (John 3:16–18). "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!" (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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This is a collection of the weekly lessons of Genesis ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) interspersed with the complete word-by-word exegesis of this chapter from the Hebrew with some information from Genesis ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) thrown in. Furthermore, the examination of this chapter has been expanded with additional commentary as well. However, much of this material was thrown together without careful editing. Therefore, from time to time, there will be concepts and exegetical material which will be repeated, because there was no overall editing done once all of this material was combined. At some point in the future, I need to go back and edit this material and consider other source material as well. Links to the [word-by-word](#), [verse-by-verse studies](#) of **Genesis** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

One more thing: **it is not necessary that you read the grey Hebrew exegesis tables**. They are set apart from the rest of the study so that you can easily skip over them.<sup>1</sup> However, if you ever doubt a translation of a phrase or a verse, these translation tables will tell you exactly where that translation came from.

<sup>1</sup> This was done as a result of the complaints of a close friend, now face to face with the Lord, who said that I intermingled the Hebrew and the explanation so much that he did not like it. Therefore, all of the Hebrew exegesis is visually set apart and may be easily skipped over.

**Preface:** Sarai suggests to Abram that her personal servant, Hagar, be used as a surrogate to produce a child. Trouble ensues.

This should be the most extensive examination of Genesis 16 available, where you will be able to examine in depth every word of the original text.

### Outline of Chapter 16:

#### Introduction

vv.	1–4	<b>Sarai Gives her Maid Hagar to her Husband Abram for the Conception of a Child</b>
vv.	5–6	<b>When Hagar Becomes Pregnant, Both She and Sarai Change their Mental Attitudes</b>
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#### Addendum

### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

Introduction	<b>The Prequel of Genesis 16</b>	
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v.	2	<b>Sarah presenting Hagar to Abraham (a graphic)</b>
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v.	6	<b>Map of the Way to Egypt</b>
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v.	9	<b>Lessons from the Doctrine of Slavery</b>
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v.	9	<b>The Geographical Will of God</b>
v.	12	<b>Ishmael Will Be a Wild Ass of a Man (a graphic)</b>
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v.	13	<b>“You are ’El Roi, a God of Seeing” (a graphic)</b>
v.	13	<b>Various Ancient Takes on Genesis 16:13</b>
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Summary	<b>Chapter Summary</b>	
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Addendum  
Addendum

**Word Cloud from a Reasonably Literal Paraphrase of Genesis 16**  
**Word Cloud from Exegesis of Genesis 16**

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Doctrines Alluded To			
The Angel of Jehovah			
The Geographical Will of God		Polygamy	

Chapters of the Bible Alluded To			

Many who read and study this chapter are 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob's contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. Also, I have developed a few new terms and concepts which require definition as well.

In addition, there are other more traditional yet technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

Sometimes the terms in the exegesis of this chapter are simply alluded to, without any in-depth explanation of them. Sometimes, these terms are explained in detail and illustrated. A collection of all these terms is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Definition of Terms	
<b>Blessing by Association</b>	Friends and relatives and associates of a spiritually mature believer receive some overflow of blessing from that believer.
<b>Divine Good</b>	This is good which is completely in accordance with the plan of God. In order for a person to do acts of divine good, they must be in fellowship and be thinking Bible doctrine. As a result, that which they do is divine good and moves the plan of God forward.
<b>Human Good</b>	Human good is what does not move the plan of God forward. This is anything done in the power of the flesh. This means that (1) a person is not in fellowship or (2) they are not thinking Bible doctrine. It is possible for the exact same act to be divine good on one day and human good on the next (such as, tossing a \$20 bill into the offering basket when it comes around).

Definition of Terms	
<b>Laws of Divine Establishment</b>	These are natural laws which apply to people and nations, which cause a nation to be preserved and a people to be perpetuated. These laws are designed for believers and unbelievers alike.
<b>Rebound (Restoration to fellowship with God)</b>	In the New Testament, this is naming your sins to God, so that you are both restored to temporal fellowship with God and are then filled with the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament, naming your sins to God would result in a restoration of fellowship and, in some cases, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit once again (the Holy Spirit was not given to all Old Testament believers). See the <b>Doctrine of Rebound</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).
<p>Some of these definitions are taken from</p> <p><a href="http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=1556">http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=1556</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.bibledoctrinechurch.org/?subpages/GLOSSARY.shtml">http://www.bibledoctrinechurch.org/?subpages/GLOSSARY.shtml</a></p> <p><a href="http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf">http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d">http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/termsanddefs.htm">http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/termsanddefs.htm</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics.html">http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.theopedia.com/">http://www.theopedia.com/</a></p>	

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## An Introduction to Genesis 16

**Introduction:** Chapter 16 shows a lapse in Abram's judgement. He decides, with the help of his wife, that in order to fulfill God's promise, he will have to have children by other women. This is a mistake and application of doctrine would have saved Abram from this error of judgement. God went to great pains to rescue Sarai from the Egyptian Pharaoh back in Genesis 12. He has also promised Abram specifically that a son would come from his loins and that his progeny would be uncountable (Genesis 15:4). For these reasons, Abram is doing nothing but bringing himself and his future race trouble by a few wrong decisions. Having made many wrong decisions in my youth and during the early portion of my spiritual life, I can testify that a simple mistake or error in judgement way back when can have devastating results Which last for decades. Whereas all bad decisions do not result in devastating results, many result in negative results that last for decades. God's grace can overcome all of this, but let's face it, it is easier to not touch a stove when we are told that it is hot than it is to touch the stove and have mom kiss the burned fingers.

So far, God has promised Abram several things: (1) God would make a great nation from him; (2) he would be a blessing to all mankind; (3) those who blessed him would be blessed and those who cursed him would be cursed; (4) Abram's offspring would be given the land of Canaan; (5) Abram's offspring would be like the dust of the earth or the stars in the sky. However, Abram finds himself getting old, and he realizes that he has to have a son in order for these promises to be fulfilled. So his wife convinces Abram to help God a little bit. That is what this chapter is about. Abram will act when no action is called for. He will try to help God, even though God does not need our help. This will be an act of human good, and God hates human good.

From what we read, it will become apparent that Abram did not keep these promises to himself, but that he shared them with his wife. "God came to me and told me that He would make a great nation of me." At no time did God indicate that these promises were to be kept secret, so we would expect that Abram would tell Sarai all of the details. every time that God appeared to him.

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It is important to understand what has gone before.

## The Prequel of Genesis 16

In Genesis 14, Abram enjoyed a great military victory over one of the greatest armies in the ancient world. He then did the right thing when interacting with the King of Sodom and with Melchizedek, the Priest of Salem.

In Genesis 15, God came to Moses and Moses began to question God's promises. All that God has promised Abram is based upon Abram having a son. If there is no son, then these promises, as magnificent as they are, do not mean very much. God, in that chapter, made a solemn covenant with Abram, sealing the covenant by walking through the midst of the sacrificed animals.

Genesis 16 will begin with Sarai, Abram's wife, suggesting that he raise up a son through her slave-girl.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

## The Principals of Genesis 16

Characters	Commentary
Abram	God has guided Abram to the land of promise; and God has given Abram many promises that will be fulfilled by Abram's descendants. However, in this chapter, Abram will allow himself to be guided by his wife rather than by the Lord God.
Sarai	Sarai is Abram's barren wife. They have been married a minimum of 10 years; we know that she is a very attractive woman; and that they have no children. She will suggest that Abram have a child by her slave-girl, which she would raise as hers.
Hagar	Hagar is the Egyptian slave-girl belonging specifically to Sarai. She is probably in her 20's and very likely a gift when Abram and Sarai were in Egypt. She will be offered to Abram to be a surrogate for Sarai to have a child.  Although she will agree to Sarai's idea, she will eventually flee Sarai's vicious and jealous behavior.
The Angel of Y <sup>e</sup> howah	The Angel of Y <sup>e</sup> howah is Y <sup>e</sup> howah; and He will speak to Hagar when she has begun her long trek to Egypt.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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## The Abrahamic Timeline for Genesis 16

Legend	
Birth or death	God speaks with Abraham
Historical incidents (most of which are related to Abraham)	
Parenthetical dates (2065 B.C.) simply refer to taking the date assigned by the chronologist and using Scripture to determine the next date.	

Brent MacDonald	Age of Abraham	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Event/Description
2164 B.C.	0	1967 B.C.	Genesis 11:26–27	Abraham is born Abram in Ur of the Chaldeans. Abram would be the 43 <sup>rd</sup> generation from Adam. Gen 11:26 Terah lived 70 years and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.
Reese occasionally supplies 2 dates in his Chronological Bible; the first is his and the second is Klassen's.				
		1957 B.C.		Birth of Sarai
		1927 B.C.	Genesis 11:29–30	Marriage of Abram to Sarai
		1907 B.C. 1927 B.C. (Klassen)	Genesis 11:28, 16	Abram's family travel from <b>Ur</b> to <b>Haran</b> , although their original intention had been to go to the land of <b>Canaan</b> . Gen 11:28, 16 Haran died in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans, during his father Terah's lifetime. Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (Haran's son), and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they set out together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan. But when they came to Haran, they settled there.
2089 B.C.	75	1892 B.C.	Genesis 12:1–4	Abraham leaves for <b>Promised Land</b> from <b>Haran</b> , after being so instructed by God. Gen 12:4 So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran.
Reese actually gives the date of Terah's death as April 1–4, 1892 B.C. and the date of Abram leaving Haran as April 5, 1892 B.C.				
		1891 B.C.	Genesis 13:1–4	Abram returns to <b>Bethel</b> in the land of <b>Canaan</b> , returning as a very wealthy man.
		1884 B.C. 1888 B.C. <sup>2</sup> (Klassen)	Genesis 14:5–16	Lot is taken captive and Abram delivers Lot.
		1882 B.C.	Genesis 15:1–21	God's covenant with Abram is given in greater detail.
	85	1882 B.C. 1881 B.C. (Klassen)	Genesis 16:1–14	Sarai gives Hagar, her Egyptian slave girl, to Abram in order to sire a son. Gen 16:3 So Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar, her Egyptian slave, and gave her to her husband Abram as a wife for him. This happened after Abram had lived in the land of Canaan 10 years.

<sup>2</sup> I had 1868 B.C.; I do not know if that is a typo on my part or if Klassen had a different order of events.

Brent MacDonald	Age of Abraham	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Event/Description
2078 B.C.	86	1881 B.C.	Gen. 16:15–16	Ishmael born to Abraham and Hagar in the land of Canaan. Gen 16:16 <b>Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him.</b>
(2065 B.C.)	99	1868 B.C.	Genesis 17:1–8	God renews His covenant with Abram and renames him Abraham. Gen 17:1 <b>When Abram was 99 years old, the LORD appeared to him, saying, "I am God Almighty. Live in My presence and be devout.</b>
(2065 B.C.)	99	(1868 B.C.)	Genesis 17:9–14	Circumcision is given as a sign of the covenant and of Abraham's faith in his covenant with God. Circumcision represents regeneration (the new birth).

The New Berkeley Bible has the events of Genesis 16 occurring in 2081 B.C.

### Bibliography

MacDonald's timeline is from: <http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63.htm> accessed October 11, 2011.

See <http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63dating.htm> for his justification of his timeline.

From: [http://www.christianshepherd.org/bible\\_study\\_guides/abram\\_to\\_the\\_exodus.pdf](http://www.christianshepherd.org/bible_study_guides/abram_to_the_exodus.pdf) (Christian shepherd)

*The Reese Chronological Bible*; KJV translation; Editor: Edward Reese; ©1977 by Edward Reese and Klassen's dating system ©1975 by Frank R. Klassen; ©1980 by Bethany House Publishers, South Minneapolis, MN; pp. 18–19, 54–74.

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[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Here is what to expect from Genesis 16:

### A Synopsis of Genesis 16

Since Sarai does not give Abram a child, she offers up her slave-girl Hagar, an Egyptian, as a surrogate mother for a child. Abram and Sarai apparently think they will help God in this way to fulfil His promises to Abram. Genesis 16:1–4a

Hagar becomes pregnant by Abram, and this causes Sarai some emotional anguish, which she takes out on Hagar. As a result, Hagar runs away. Genesis 16:4b–7

God comes to Hagar, and asks her where she has come from and where she is going to. God makes great promises concerning her descendants and the nature of the son she is carrying. God will send her back to Abram and Sarai. Genesis 16:8–12

Hagar is amazed that she has seen God and is still alive. The place where she is will be named after Hagar's thoughts. Genesis 16:13–14

Hagar will return and she will give birth to Abram's son, Ishmael. Genesis 16:15–16

Like all chapters of the Word of God, you need more than just the simple plot outline to understand what God wants us to know.



## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**Chapter Updates:**

I will use this space to indicate any format changes.

Every verse will be hyperlinked from the first page, so that you can easily go to a specific verse in this chapter.

At the end of the exegesis of every verse, I will make certain that there is a Kukis mostly literal translation and a Kukis paraphrase, both of them marked as such.

I have decided to add spacing between the translation and the commentary.

In the future, I would really like to add a few translations, fill in the translation of this chapter (at the end of this document); and provide additional sources at the end of this document.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

**Sarai Gives her Maid Hagar to her Husband Abram for the Conception of a Child**

Kukis slavishly literal:

**And Sarai a woman of Abram had not borne [children] to him. And to her a maid, an Egyptian; and her name [was] Hagar.**

Genesis  
16:1

Kukis moderately literal:

**And Sarai, the wife of Abram, had not given birth [to children] for him. She had a maid, an Egyptian, and her name [was] Hagar.**

Kukis not so literal:

**And Sarai, the wife of Abram, had not given birth to any children for him. However, she did have a maid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation<sup>3</sup>; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the

<sup>3</sup> I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use [www.latinvulgate.com](http://www.latinvulgate.com).



LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

I will only list the translation from the Dead Sea Scrolls if it exists and if it is different from the Masoretic text.

The Targum of Onkelos is actually the Pentateuchal Targumim, which are The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel. On the Pentateuch With The Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum From the Chaldee by J. W. Etheridge, M.A. From [http://www.becomingjewish.org/texts/targum/onkelos\\_genesis.html](http://www.becomingjewish.org/texts/targum/onkelos_genesis.html) and first published in 1862.

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum (trans. By Cook)	But Sara, the wife of Abram, had not borne to him. But he had a handmaid, a Mizreitha, and her name was Hagar, a daughter of Pharaoh, whom he gave to him as a handmaid at the time that he received her, being struck by the word from before the Lord.
Latin Vulgate	Now Sarai, the wife of Abram, had brought forth no children: but having a handmaid, an Egyptian, named Agar.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And Sarai a woman of Abram had not borne [children] to him. And to her a maid, an Egyptian; and her name [was] Hagar.
Peshitta (Syriac)	NOW Sarai, Abrams wife, bore him no children; and she had an Egyptian handmaid, whose name was Hagar.
Septuagint (Greek)	Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bore him no children; and she had an Egyptian maid, whose name was Hagar.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	<b>Hagar and the Ishmaelites' origins</b> Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to have children. Since she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar,...
Easy English	<b>A quarrel in the family, 16:1-6</b> Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had no children. She had an *Egyptian maid called Hagar.
<i>The Message</i>	Sarai, Abram's wife, hadn't yet produced a child. She had an Egyptian maid named Hagar.
New Berkeley Version	Sarai, Abram's wife, bore him no children, but she had an Egyptian maid named Hagar.
New Century Version	<b>Ishmael Is Born</b> Sarai, Abram's wife, had no children, but she had a slave girl from Egypt named Hagar.
New Life Version	Now Abram's wife Sarai had not given birth to any children. She had a woman servant from Egypt whose name was Hagar.
New Living Translation	<b>The Birth of Ishmael</b> Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar.
The Voice	<i>Despite God's promise, years went by.</i> Still Abram's wife Sarai remained childless. But she did have an Egyptian servant girl whose name was Hagar. <i>Sarai had an idea so she approached her husband.</i>

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Sara, Abram's woman, hadn't given him any children. However, she had an Egyptian handmaid whose name was Hagar.
Christian Community Bible	<b>The birth of Ishmael</b> <i>Sarai, Abram's wife had not borne him a child, but she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar, and she said to Abram, "Now, since Yahweh has kept me from having children, go to my servant; perhaps I shall have a child by her."</i> Abram agreed to what Sarai said. V. 2 is included for context.
<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	Sarai, Abram's wife, was not able to have children. She owned an Egyptian slave named Hagar.
New American Bible (2002)	Abram's wife Sarai had borne him no children. She had, however, an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar. [vv. 1–6] Sarah's actions are all in keeping with the laws of the time, as known from ancient extra-biblical sources.
New American Bible (2011) <sup>4</sup>	<i>Birth of Ishmael.</i> [16:1-16] In the previous chapter Abraham was given a timetable of possession of the land, but nothing was said about when the child was to be born. In this chapter, Sarah takes matters into her own hands, for she has been childless ten years since the promise (cf. 12:4 with 16:16). The story is about the two women, Sarah the infertile mistress and Hagar the fertile slave; Abraham has only a single sentence. In the course of the story, God intervenes directly on the side of Hagar, for she is otherwise without resources. Abram's wife Sarai had borne him no children. Now she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar. Gn 11:30.
NIRV	<b>Hagar and Ishmael</b> Abram's wife Sarai had never had any children by him. But she had a female servant from Egypt named Hagar.
Today's NIV	<b>Hagar and Ishmael</b> Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar; so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my servant; perhaps I can build a family through her." A portion of v. 2 is included for context.

<sup>4</sup> Also called the revised edition.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear	Sarai, the woman of Abram, never begot for him. Her handmaid, an Egyptian, was named Hagar.
Conservapedia	Now Sarai, the wife of Abram, bore him no children. She had an Egyptian personal maid named Hagar.
The Expanded Bible	<b>Ishmael Is Born</b> Sarai, Abram's wife, had no children, but she had a slave girl from Egypt named Hagar.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	<del>Sarai</del> advises Abram to marry <del>Hagar</del> . Sarai, Abram's wife, had given him no children, but she had an Egyptian maid named Hagar.
HCSB	Abram's wife Sarai had not borne him children. She owned an Egyptian slave named Hagar.
NET Bible®	<i>The Birth of Ishmael</i> Now Sarai [The disjunctive clause signals the beginning of a new episode in the story.], Abram's wife, had not given birth to any children [On the cultural background of the story of Sarai's childlessness see J. Van Seters, "The Problem of Childlessness in Near Eastern Law and the Patriarchs of Israel," JBL 87 (1968): 401-8.], but she had an Egyptian servant [The Hebrew term שפחה (shifchah, translated "servant" here and in vv. 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8) refers to a menial female servant.] named Hagar [The passage records the birth of Ishmael to Abram through an Egyptian woman. The story illustrates the limits of Abram's faith as he tries to obtain a son through social custom. The barrenness of Sarai poses a challenge to Abram's faith, just as the famine did in chap. 12. As in chap. 12, an Egyptian figures prominently. (Perhaps Hagar was obtained as a slave during Abram's stay in Egypt.)]. When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote.
NIV, ©2011	<b>Hagar and Ishmael</b> Now Sarai [S Ge 11:29], Abram's wife, had borne him no children [S Ge 11:30; Lk 1:7, 36; Gal 4:24-25]. But she had an Egyptian slave [Ge 21:9; 24:61; 29:24, 29; 31:33; 46:18] named Hagar [ver 3-4, 8, 15; Ge 21:14; 25:12]; so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children [Ge 29:31; 30:2]. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her." Most of v. 2 is included for context.

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	Now Sarai Avram's wife had not borne him a child. But she had an Egyptian slave-girl named Hagar; so Sarai said to Avram, "Here now, ADONAI has kept me from having children; so go in and sleep with my slave-girl. A portion of v. 2 is included for context.
exeGesés companion Bible	<b><u>SARAY AND HAGAR</u></b> Now Saray the woman of Abram births not to him; and she has a maid, a Misrayim, her name, Hagar:.
Hebrew Names Version	Now Sarai, Avram's wife, bore him no children. She had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.
Kaplan Translation	<i>Birth of Ishmael</i> Abram's wife Sarai had not borne him any children. She had an Egyptian slave-girl by the name of Hagar. The Kaplan Translation, particularly in Exodus through Deuteronomy, takes note of historic rabbinic opinions.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Now Sarai Avram's isha bore him no children; and she had a shifchah, an Egyptian, whose shem was Hagar.

The Scriptures 1998

And Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no child. And she had a Mitsrite female servant whose name was Haġar.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	Now Sarai, the wife of Abram, does not bear for him. Yet an Egyptian maid has she and her name is Hagar.
Context Group Version	Now Sarai, Abram's woman { or wife }, bore him no [ children ]: and she had a female slave, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.
Darby Translation	And Sarai Abram's wife did not bear him [children]. And she had an Egyptian maidservant; and her name was Hagar.
English Standard V. – UK	<b>Sarai and Hagar</b> Now [ch. 15:2, 3] Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar [ch. 21:9; Gal. 4:24].
The Geneva Bible	Now Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name [was] Hagar. It seems that she had respect for Gods promise, which could not be accomplished without issue.
Green’s Literal Translation	And Sarai, Abram's wife, did not bear to him; and to her belonged a female slave, an Egyptian, and her name was Hagar.
NASB	<b>Sarai and Hagar</b> Now Sarai [Gen 11:30], Abram's wife had borne him no children, and she had an Egyptian maid [Gen 12:16] whose name was Hagar.
New King James Version	<b>Hagar and Ishmael</b> Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.
New RSV	Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bore him no children. She had an Egyptian slave-girl whose name was Hagar, and Sarai said to Abram, `You see that the Lord has prevented me from bearing children; go in to my slave-girl; it may be that I shall obtain children by her.' A portion of v. 2 is included for context.
Syndein/Thieme	{Abram Fails to Wait on the Promise From the Lord - Abram is going to 'Help' God} Now Sarai {means contentious}, Abram's woman/wife {ishshah}, bore him no children {this is a test from God to see if Abram can wait on the promise of God or will he try and solve the problem himself}. And she had an handmaid/'personal maid', an Egyptian, whose name . . . {was} Hagar.
World English Bible	Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bore him no children. She had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.
Young’s Updated LT	And Sarai, Abram’s wife, has not borne to him, and she has an handmaid, an Egyptian, and her name is Hagar.

**The gist of this verse:** Sarai has not born any children to Abram, but she had an Egyptian maid named Hagar.

Genesis 16:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
Sâray (שָׂרַי) [pronounced saw-RAY or saw-RAH-ee]	my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai	feminine singular proper noun	Strong’s #8297 BDB #979

Genesis 16:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾīshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	woman, wife	feminine singular construct	Strong's #802 BDB #61
ʾAb̄erâm (אַבְרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
lô' (לֹא or לוֹל) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	to give birth, to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

**Translation:** And Sarai, the wife of Abram, had not given birth [to children] for him.

Up to this point, God has made several promises to Abram, that he would be the father of many peoples. However, his wife had given him no children.

Genesis 16:1b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
shiph <sup>e</sup> châh (שִׁפְחָה) [pronounced shif-KHAW]	maid, maid-servant, household servant, handmaid, female slave	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046
Mits <sup>e</sup> rîy (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced mits <sup>e</sup> -REE]	Egyptian, of Egypt; a Mitsrite, or inhabitant of Mitsrajim	feminine singular gentilic adjective	Strong's #4713 BDB #596

**Translation:** She had a maid, an Egyptian,...

It appears that Sarai knew the promises that God had made to Abram; and yet, she did not have any children. So, Sarah begins to determine what she needs to do; and she remembers that she had a personal maid, an Egyptian girl (possibly brought back from Egypt when she and Abram went there previously).

God's plan cannot be moved forward with the power of the flesh, and that is what Sarai is going to try to do. There is divine power (called **divine good**), which comes solely from God; and there is human effort (called **human good**), which comes solely from man.



## Genesis 16:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
Hâgâr (חַגָּר) [pronounced <i>haw-GAWR</i> ]	<i>flight, fugitive; transliterated Hagar</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #1904 BDB #212

**Translation:** ...and her name [was] Hagar.

The name of the Egyptian maid is *Hagar*, which means *flight, fugitive*.

One way to translate this verse is: **Now Sarai, the wife of Abram, bore him no children. However, she did have a maid, an Egyptian and her name [was] Hagar.** There are three waw conjunctions here which I have translated *now...however...and*. The KJV translated them *now...and...[nothing]* as did the NASB. The Amplified Bible and the NRSV only translate the first waw conjunction. It is the same conjunction in the Hebrew which continues the train of thought. Although different vowel points will be used, this is more dependant upon the following consonant rather than the meaning of the conjunction. In English, it would become boring to continually use *and* when that may not be the intention of the waw conjunction to begin with. Some of the conjunctions which could be used would be *and, but, now, furthermore, however, and [nothing]*.

God has not told Abram specifically that the child would be born through Sarai; Abram could have pieced that bit of information together on his own because of what happened in Egypt. However, while in Egypt, they happened to pick up Little Egypt (as Thieme was wont to say), Hagar. She was probably a gift to Sarai from the pharaoh of Egypt who tried to take her to wife. She was likely young, attractive and intelligent. Sarai is about to suggest something which falls outside of God's plan which will cause her a great deal of pain.

How would Abram know that Sarai ought to be the one to bear this child of promise? First of all, they are married and have a lifetime commitment to one another. Secondly, when they were in Egypt, it was a very big deal if Sarah was taken by another man. This would suggest that Abram must have this child by her. Thirdly, God never suggested that Abram get a surrogate wife; and Abram did not take any time to inquire of God about taking a surrogate wife.

Hagar is a type of the law and bondage whereas Sarah typifies the promise of God through grace. Hagar will bear Abram a child through human viewpoint and human works. This is dealt with in Galatians 4, then end of the chapter. This will be covered with a skosh more detail in the doctrine of Ishmael.

Sarai thinks about these promises which Abram has shared with her, and she apparently believes them, but she seems to think that God needs help. She and Abram have been married for some time at this point (I would guess 20–30 years; possibly more) and they understand how to have children, and they have certainly been having sex over the years (recall that, even at an advanced age, Sarai looked beautiful). However, Sarai had no children yet. But, Sarai has an idea:

Genesis 16:1 **And Sarai, the wife of Abram, had not given birth [to children] for him. She had a maid, an Egyptian, and her name [was] Hagar.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:1 **And Sarai, the wife of Abram, had not given birth to any children for him. However, she did have a maid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.** (Kukis paraphrase)

And so says Sarai unto Abram, "Behold please has restrained me Y<sup>e</sup>howah from giving birth. Go in, please, unto my maid; [and] perhaps I will be built up from her." And so listens Abram to a voice of Sarai.

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16:2

Sarai said to Abram, "Listen now—Y<sup>e</sup>howah has restrained me from giving birth. [Therefore] go in, please, to my maid; [and] perhaps I will be established on account of her." And Abram listened to Sarai's voice.

Sarai said to Abram, "Listen now: Jehovah has restrained me from giving birth. Therefore, go in unto my maid, please; and perhaps I will have children by means of her." And Abram listened to Sarai's voice.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)	And Sara said to Abram, Behold, now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing, go to my handmaid and set her free; perhaps I may be builded by her. And Abram hearkened to the word of Sara.
Latin Vulgate	She said to her husband: Behold, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: go in unto my handmaid, it may be I may have children of her at least. And when he agreed to her request.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Sarai unto Abram, "Behold please has restrained me Y <sup>e</sup> howah from giving birth. Go in, please, unto my maid; [and] perhaps I will be built up from her." And so listens Abram to a voice of Sarai.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Sarai said to Abram, Behold now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children; therefore go in unto my maid; it may be that I may be consoled by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Sarai said to Abram, Behold, the Lord has restrained me from bearing, go therefore in to my maid, that I may get children for myself through her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Sarai said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from giving birth, so go to my servant. Maybe she will provide me with children." Abram did just as Sarai said.
Contemporary English V.	...and Sarai said to Abram, "The LORD has not given me any children. Sleep with my slave, and if she has a child, it will be mine." Abram agreed,...
Easy English	So Sarai said this to Abram: 'Because the *Lord has not given children to me, have sex with my maid. Perhaps she will give birth to my sons for me.' Then Abram obeyed his wife.
Easy-to-Read Version	Sarai said to Abram, "The Lord has not allowed me to have children. So go with my servant Hagar. I will accept the child that is born from her like it is my own."
Good News Bible (TEV)	...and so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Why don't you sleep with my slave? Perhaps she can have a child for me." Abram agreed with what Sarai said.
<i>The Message</i>	Sarai said to Abram, "GOD has not seen fit to let me have a child. Sleep with my maid. Maybe I can get a family from her." Abram agreed to do what Sarai said.
New Berkeley Version	So Sarai said to Abram, "See here! The LORD has prevented me from bearing. Do go in to my maid; perhaps I may build up (a family) through her."
New Century Version	Sarai said to Abram, "Look, the Lord has not allowed me to have children, so have sexual relations with my slave girl. If she has a child, maybe I can have my own family through her."



New Life Version	Abram did what Sarai said. So Sarai said to Abram, "Now see, the Lord has kept me from having children. Go in to the woman who serves me. It may be that I will get children through her." Abram listened to what Sarai said.
New Living Translation	So Sarai said to Abram, "The Lord has prevented me from having children. Go and sleep with my servant. Perhaps I can have children through her." And Abram agreed with Sarai's proposal.
The Voice	<b>Sarai</b> (to Abram): You can see that the Eternal One has still not allowed me to have any children. Why don't you sleep with my servant girl? Maybe I could use her as a surrogate and have a child through her! Sarai's solution to her problem is not unique. Ancient Near Eastern custom allows for these kinds of arrangements. Abram listened to Sarai and agreed to follow her plan.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And Sara said to Abram: 'Look; Jehovah has kept me from getting pregnant, so [sleep with] my maid so I can have my children through her.' Well, Abram accepted Sara's advice.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And still Abram's wife Sarai bore him no children. But she had an Egyptian maid-servant, called Agar; and now she said to her husband, The Lord, as thou seest, denies me motherhood; betake thyself to this maid of mine, in the hope that I may at least have children through her means. So Abram consented to the wish of his wife, and she brought this Egyptian maid-servant of hers, Agar, and gave her to her husband as his mate, ten years after they had taken up their abode in the land of Chanaan. Vv. 1 and 3 are included for context.
New American Bible (2002)	Sarai said to Abram: "The LORD has kept me from bearing children. Have intercourse, then, with my maid; perhaps I shall have sons through her." Abram heeded Sarai's request.
New American Bible (2011)	Sarai said to Abram: "The LORD has kept me from bearing children. Have intercourse with my maid; perhaps I will have sons through her." Abram obeyed Sarai. The custom of an infertile wife providing her husband with a concubine to produce children is widely attested in ancient Near Eastern law; e.g., an Old Assyrian marriage contract states that the wife must provide her husband with a concubine if she does not bear children within two years. Gn 21:8-9; Gal 4:22.
NIRV	So she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go and make love to my servant. Maybe I can have a family through her." Abram agreed to what Sarai had said.
Revised English Bible	...and Sarai said to Abram, 'The LORD has not let me have a child. Take my slave-girl; perhaps through her I shall have a son.'

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Sarai said to Abram, "Please behold: Yahweh retains me from begetting. Please, come into my handmaid: perhaps I will build by her." Abram heard the voice of Sarai.
Bible in Basic English	And Sarai said to Abram, See, the Lord has not let me have children; go in to my servant, for I may get a family through her. And Abram did as Sarai said.
Conservapedia	Sarai told Abram, "Look: the LORD has stopped me from childbearing. Please take my maid to your bed. Maybe I can have children through her." And Abram listened to Sarai. This is the first recorded instance of surrogate motherhood. This story also illustrates why that practice is a very serious mistake and, hence, a sin.
The Expanded Bible	Sarai said to Abram, "Look, the Lord has not allowed me to have [prevented/restrained me from having] children, so have sexual relations with [go

to] my slave girl. If she has a child, maybe I can have my own family [reproduce; have a child; <sup>L</sup>build] through her [<sup>C</sup>taking a second wife or concubine was common for a childless couple at the time]."

Abram did what Sarai said.

Ferar-Fenton Bible

So Sarai said to Abram, " See, now, the EVER-LIVING has kept me childless, therefore go to my maid, perhaps she will have a son for me." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.

NET Bible®

So Sarai said to Abram, "Since [Heb "look." The particle הִנֵּה (hinneh) introduces the foundational clause for the imperative to follow.] the Lord has prevented me from having children, have sexual relations with [Heb "enter to." The expression is a euphemism for sexual relations (also in v. 4).] [The Hebrew expression translated have sexual relations with does not convey the intimacy of other expressions, such as "so and so knew his wife." Sarai simply sees this as the social custom of having a child through a surrogate. For further discussion see C. F. Fensham, "The Son of a Handmaid in Northwest Semitic," VT 19 (1969): 312-21. ] my servant. Perhaps I can have a family by her [Heb "perhaps I will be built from her." Sarai hopes to have a family established through this surrogate mother.]" Abram did what [Heb "listened to the voice of," which is an idiom meaning "obeyed."]" Sarai told him.

New Heart English Bible

Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing. Please go in to my handmaid. It may be that I will obtain children by her." Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.

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...so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children [Ge 29:31; 30:2]. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her [Ge 19:32; 30:3-4, 9-10]."

Abram agreed to what Sarai said.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible

...and Saray says to Abram, Behold, I beseech, Yah Veh restrains me from birthing:  
I beseech you, go in to my maid;  
perhaps I be built by her.

And Abram hearkens to the voice of Saray:...

Judaica Press Complete T.

And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing; please come to my handmaid; perhaps I will be built up from her." And Abram hearkened to Sarai's voice.

Kaplan Translation

Sarai said to Abram, 'God has kept me from having children. Come [Denoting intimacy, as in biyah (Ibn Janach).] to my slave, and hopefully I will have sons [Or, 'I will be built up.'] through her.' Abram heeded Sarai.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And Sarai said unto Avram, Hinei now, Hashem hath restrained me from bearing; go now in unto my shifchah; it may be that I may build family by her. And Avram paid heed to the voice of Sarai.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

American KJV

And Sarai said to Abram, See here, the Lord has restrained me from bearing [children]. I am asking you to have intercourse with my maid; it may be that I can obtain children by her. And Abram listened to and heeded what Sarai said.

Context Group Version

And Sarai said to Abram, Now seeing that YHWH has restrained me from bearing; go in, I beg of you, to my slave; it may be that I shall obtain [ children ] by her. And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.

English Standard Version

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.

The Geneva Bible	And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. She fails by limiting Gods power to the common order of nature, as though God could not give her children in her old age.
Green’s Literal Translation	And Sarai said to Abram, See, now, Jehovah has kept me from bearing; go in now to my slave-girl; perhaps I may be built up from her. And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.
Modern KJV	And Sarai said to Abram, Behold now, Jehovah has kept me from bearing. I pray you, go in to my slave woman. It may be that I may be built by her. And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.
New King James Version	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.
Syndein/Thieme	{Human Viewpoint Solution to Fulfil God's Promise to Abram} And Sarai said {amar} unto Abram, "Behold now, Jehovah/God has restrained me from bearing {blaming the Lord just like Eve did before her}. I request that you, go in unto my maid {idiom for sexual relations}. It may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram listened to the voice {advice} of Sarai. {Note: There is a lot of human nobility and human sacrifice. She wants her husband to be happy. All of that 'human nobility' is swept aside by one point. When God says He will do something, He will and He does NOT need our help!}.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And Sarai said to Abram, Now seeing that Yahweh has restrained me from bearing; go in, I pray you, to my slave; it may be that I will obtain [children] by her. And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.
World English Bible	Sarai said to Abram," See now, Yahweh has restrained me from bearing. Please go in to my handmaid. It may be that I will obtain children by her." Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.
Young’s Updated LT	And Sarai says unto Abram, “Lo, I pray you, Jehovah has restrained me from bearing, go in, I pray you, unto my handmaid; perhaps I am built up from her.” And Abram listens to the voice of Sarai.
<b>The gist of this verse:</b>	Sarai suggests that Abram have a child by her personal servant, and that Sarai would take as her own.

<b>Genesis 16:2a</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong’s #</b>
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
’amar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
Sâray (שרַי) [pronounced <i>saw-RAY</i> or <i>saw-RAH-ee</i> ]	<i>my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong’s #8297 BDB #979
’el (לְ) [pronounced <i>eh</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong’s #413 BDB #39

## Genesis 16:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾAbʿrām (אַבְרָם) [pronounced <i>ab<sup>v</sup>-RAWM</i> ]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
nâ' (אָן) [pronounced <i>naw</i> ]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609

Although BDB gives a list of several passages where these are found together (Genesis 12:11 16:2 18:27, 31 19:2, 8, 19, 20 27:2 Judges 13:3 19:9 1Samuel 9:6 16:15 2Samuel 13:24 2Kings 2:16, 19 4:9 Job 13:18 33:2 40:15–16), all they offer is *behold, I pray* as a translation of the two together. Gesenius offers *behold, now!*

ʾâtsar (אַצַּר) [pronounced <i>gaw-TSAHR</i> ]	<i>to confine, to detain, to restrain, to refrain to shut, to surround, to enclose, to hold back, to restrain by rule</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #6113 BDB #783
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>to give birth, to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #3205 BDB #408

**Translation:** Sarai said to Abram, “Listen now—Y<sup>e</sup>howah has restrained me from giving birth.”

Sarai seems to be completely aware of the promises of God, and she has some suggestions. She and Abram had been married for some length of time, and she has never had a child. It was not unusual, in those days, to look to a surrogate to have children by.

Notice Sarai's reasoning. It is God who is keeping her from having a child. Well, if God does that, then Abram must find a way to bring God's Word to pass without Sarai giving birth.

## Genesis 16:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bôw' (בֹּו) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>come [in], go [in], enter, advance</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #935 BDB #97



## Genesis 16:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
nâ' (נָא) [pronounced naw]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
Nâ' is used for a submissive and modest request. It is used to express a wish (Job 32:21: "Oh, that I may not respect any man's person"); to incite or to urge (Jer. 5:24); it is depreciatory when affixed to the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person with a particle of negation (do not, I implore you—see Genesis 33:10 19:18); with the it expresses a wish or request (Psalm 124 129:1 SOS 7:9), a challenge (Jer. 17:15), asking leave (Genesis 18:4), and depreciation with a negation (Genesis 18:32). In many of these examples, we would express this with the addition of the word <i>let</i> .			
'el (עַל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
shiph <sup>e</sup> châh (שִׁפְחָה) [pronounced shif-KHAW]	<i>maid, maid-servant, household servant, handmaid, female slave</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046

**Translation:** [Therefore] go in, please, to my maid;...

Sarai suggests her maid Hagar. This is a great temptation and it is clear that Sarai is going to have problems with the result of this union (although this is her suggestion).

This is not a suggestion far outside the norm. There was a custom of that day that, if a man died before siring a child by his wife, she could petition that his brother step in and impregnate her, with the child being the deceased brother's child. Therefore, it is not a great leap for Sarai to suggest that Abram have a child through a surrogate mother—her slave-girl, Hagar.

A hundred or so years later, Rachel will convince her husband, Jacob (Abram's grandson), to use her personal slave-girl as a surrogate. My point being is, this was within the societal norms of that day.



**Sarai, Hagar and Abram** (a graphic) from Biblical illustrations by Jim Padgett from [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Illustration_of_Sarai,_Hagar_and_Abram.jpg), accessed December 1, 2013.

## Genesis 16:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'ûwlay (אִי־לָא) [pronounced oo-LAHY]	<i>perhaps, unless, suppose; if peradventure</i>	adverb/conjunction	Strong's #194 BDB #19

## Genesis 16:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bânâh (בָּנָה) [pronounced baw-NAWH]	<i>to be built up, to be rebuilt, to be restored; to be set up, be established, be fixed; to be firmly established; to be established, be stable, be secure, be enduring; to be fixed, be securely determined; to be directed aright, be fixed aright, be steadfast; to prepare, be ready; to be prepared, be arranged, be settled</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #1129 BDB #124
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

**Translation:**...[and] perhaps I will be established on account of her.”

The verb here is the Niphal (passive) of bânâh (בָּנָה) [pronounced baw-NAWH], which means (in the Niphal) *to be built up, to be rebuilt, to be restored; to be set up, be established, be fixed; to be firmly established; to be established, be stable, be secure, be enduring; to be fixed, be securely determined; to be directed aright, be fixed aright, be steadfast; to prepare, be ready; to be prepared, be arranged, be settled*. Strong's #1129 BDB #124. She looks to become a part of this promise by means of Hagar her maid. However, God is not a part of any of this. God has come to Abram on several occasions, and not one time did God say to Abram, “You know Hagar, your wife’s maid...?”

So that there is no misunderstanding, there is nothing in Sarai’s suggestion that is particularly immoral. That is, God is not rejecting Sarai’s idea here because she is committing some great sin. The problem is, she is suggesting works of the flesh to bring God’s plan to pass. God’s plan can never depend upon the works of the flesh—not even to accomplish the tiniest item in that plan.

## Genesis 16:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâma <sup>c</sup> (שָׁמָע) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
ʾAb <sup>e</sup> râm (אֲבִרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## Genesis 16:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
קוֹל (קוּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
Sâray (שָׂרַי) [pronounced saw-RAY or saw-RAH-ee]	<i>my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #8297 BDB #979

**Translation:** And Abram listened to Sarai's voice.

Here is the mistake; Abram listens to Sarai's voice. This means that he does not just listen to her, but he obeys her.

*To listen* is the Qal imperfect of *shâma'* (שָׁמַע) [pronounced *shaw-MAHÇ*], which means *to listen, listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, listen and take heed to, listen and take note of, listen and be cognizant of*. Strong's #8085 BDB #1033. This is a very common word in the Hebrew and it means more than to simply hear something. The imperfect tense indicates that Sarai kept talking to Abram about this. The word *said* is also in the imperfect tense. So, this did not happen one time over the dinner table. Sarai either talked about this at length or brought up the subject several times, and Abram listened to what she said and thought about it.

**Sarah presenting Hagar to Abraham** (a graphic); oil painting by Adriaen van der Werff in 1699; taken from [Wikipedia](#), accessed December 1, 2013.

What Sarai suggests here is not out of the ordinary. It was a cultural norm for a barren woman to allow her husband to sire a child by a servant, and for the child to be raised as her own. We will find that again with Jacob (Abram's grandchild).



So, Sarah has been thinking about these promises of God, and she has no children, which is key to God fulfilling His promises to Abram. Therefore, she comes up with an idea. Abram needs to have sex with their slave girl so that they can fulfill the plan of God through Hagar. Their slave girl is younger, appears to be at the right age, and this is socially acceptable.

Between 1925 and 1930, the University of Pennsylvania spearheaded an archeological dig in Iraq where 20,000 clay tablets were unearthed. They dated back to the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries before Christ. Some of these tablets dealt with inheritance, and it was permissible for a man to "adopt" a son if his wife was barren (see Genesis 15:2–4) or it was the obligation of the wife to provide her slave girl to the husband. Therefore, what Sarai suggested was not only socially acceptable, but expected.

There were found the complete archives of a particular prince and the records and library of a successful business woman, among others. In the tablets were some which dealt with inheritance. If a man should be childless, it was allowed that he could adopt a son from outside the family, not unlike Abram's adoption of Eliezer (Genesis 15:2–4). Another solution to the problem of a lack of progeny was for a childless wife could allow her husband a slave as a mistress to bear children. According to the ZPEB, it was obligatory for a barren wife to provide her husband with



a slave woman in order to bear children. Furthermore, under that law, the children would be under the supervision of the wife and not of the slave which bore them.

Hammurabi's Code, ¶ 146, gives us another parallel; it asserts, in particular cases, that the slave woman who has borne children, may not assert herself over against the unproductive wife. She may not usurp the wife's position or achieve equality with the wife in this situation.

What is going to happen is pure rationalization; Abram is being offered the chance to sleep with another woman and he is given the opportunity to have the children he desires. Rather than think this through with the doctrine that he has, he decides that this is so easy and so simple and his wife herself has suggested it, so it must be God's will. Not everything which seems to fall into place and seems so easy to do is God's will. Abram, as has been explained, knows enough to realize that he is outside of God's will. God will fulfill His promises and He does not need any shortcut method in order to do so. Abram is going to have hell on earth under his own roof. One woman under one roof is difficult enough; two women, under these circumstances, is nearly impossible.

Sarai, prior to the act of conception, sounds as though she is thoroughly modern and grown up about this. However, she is going to have a great many negative feelings which will result from this. She will feel betrayed by Abram and betrayed by Hagar; she will be jealous of Abram's fling and jealous of Hagar's ability to bear a child; she will be angry with herself for suggesting such a thing. Certainly, Abram will ask occasionally, "What's wrong, honey?" usually right before Sarai reads him the riot act. If you are confused as to how Sarai could suggest this and then blame Abram and Hagar and feel bitter about them going through with her idea; if this confuses you, then you obviously have only male friends.

So, God has made specific promises to Abram, and at no time did Sarai's name come up in these promises. Sarai realizes this, and comes up with a plan. Her plan is for Abram to have sex with Hagar, their Egyptian slave girl, who is likely much younger than either of them, and probably reasonably attractive. Abram probably finds this plan/temptation to be to his liking. His wife is telling him to have sex with another woman in order to fulfill the promises of God.

You will note that Sarai does all of the talking and Abram does all of the listening (imperfect tense for each verb). There does not appear to be a conversation going on. If there was any discussion, Abram apparently had very little to offer. Because, as the verse tells us, Sarai kept talking and Abram kept listening. Finally, at some point, Abram said, "Sure, honey; for you, I'll do it."

Genesis 16:2 Sarai said to Abram, "Listen now—Y<sup>e</sup>howah has restrained me from giving birth. [Therefore] go in, please, to my maid; [and] perhaps I will be established on account of her." And Abram listened to Sarai's voice. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:2 Sarai said to Abram, "Listen now: Jehovah has restrained me from giving birth. Therefore, go in unto my maid, please; and perhaps I will have children by means of her." And Abram listened to Sarai's voice. (Kukis paraphrase)

**And so takes Sarai (a woman of Abram) Hagar the Egyptian, her maid (from an end of ten years to dwell Abram in a land of Canaan). And so she gives her to Abram her man to him to wife.**

Genesis  
16:3

**Sarai, the wife of Abram, took Hagar, the Egyptian girl, her maid (after ten years, Abram had lived in the land of Canaan). She gave her to Abram, her husband, to wife [lit., to him to wife].**

**Sarai, the wife of Abram, took Hagar, the Egyptian slave girl, and she gave her to Abram, her husband, to wife (Abram has lived in the land of Canaan for ten years).**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Targum (trans. By Cook)	And Sara the wife of Abram took Hagar the Mizreitha handmaid, when Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Kenaan, and set her free, and gave her to Abram her husband to wife.
Latin Vulgate	She took Agar the Egyptian her handmaid, ten years after they first dwelt in the land of Chanaan, and gave her to her husband to wife.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so takes Sarai (a woman of Abram) Hagar the Egyptian, her maid (from an end of ten years to dwell Abram in a land of Canaan). And so she gives her to Abram her man to him to wife.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Sarai, Abrams wife, took Hagar her Egyptian maid, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. This happened after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan.
Septuagint (Greek)	So Sarai, Abram's wife, having taken Hagar the Egyptian her handmaid, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, gave her to Abram her husband as a wife to him.

**Significant differences:****Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	...and Sarai gave him Hagar to be his wife. This happened after Abram had lived in the land of Canaan for ten years.
Easy English	Abram lived in Canaan for 10 years. After that, Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar, her *Egyptian maid. And Sarai gave her to Sarai's husband Abram. So then Hagar could act like a wife towards him.
Easy-to-Read Version	This was after Abram lived ten years in the land of Canaan. And Sarai gave Hagar to her husband Abram. (Hagar was her servant from Egypt.)
Good News Bible (TEV)	So she gave Hagar to him to be his concubine. (This happened after Abram had lived in Canaan for ten years.)
New Century Version	It was after he had lived ten years in Canaan that Sarai gave Hagar to her husband Abram. (Hagar was her slave girl from Egypt.)
New Life Version	So Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian, who served her, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife. That was after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan.
New Living Translation	So Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian servant and gave her to Abram as a wife. (This happened ten years after Abram had settled in the land of Canaan.)
The Voice	After they had lived 10 years in Canaan, Abram's wife Sarai took her servant girl Hagar, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram as a wife.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	So Sara (Abram's woman) took Hagar her Egyptian handmaid (after Abram had lived in the land of Canaan for ten years) and gave her to her man Abram, to be his woman.
Beck's American Translation	After Abram had lived in Canaan 10 years, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar, her Egyptian maid, and gave her to her husband Abram to be a wife.
Christian Community Bible	<i>Abram had been in the land of Canaan ten years when Sarai, his wife, took Hagar, her Egyptian maid, and gave her to Abram her husband as wife.</i>
New Advent (Knox) Bible	So Abram consented to the wish of his wife, and she brought this Egyptian maid-servant of hers, Agar, and gave her to her husband as his mate, ten years after they had taken up their abode in the land of Chanaan. A portion of v. 2 is included for context.

New American Bible (2002)	Thus, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, his wife Sarai took her maid, Hagar the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his concubine.
NIRV	After he had been living in Canaan for ten years, his wife Sarai gave him her servant Hagar to be his wife.
New Jerusalem Bible	Thus, after Abram had lived in the land of Canaan for ten years, Sarai took Hagar her Egyptian slave-girl and gave her to Abram as his wife.
Revised English Bible	...so Sarai brought her slave-girl, Hagar the Egyptian, to her husband and gave her to Abram as a wife. When this happened Abram had been in Canaan for ten years.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	At the end of Abram dwelling for ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's woman, took Hagar her Egyptian handmaid, and gave her to her man, Abram, as his woman.
Conservapedia	And so, after Abram had lived for ten years in the land of Canaan, his wife Sarai took her maid, Hagar the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband to be his common-law wife. The Hebrew for "woman" and "wife" are the same word. Here and elsewhere, we use the word wife to mean "lawful wife." A cohabiting woman who is not a lawful wife is a common-law wife, also known by its French word, "concubine."
The Expanded Bible	It was after he had lived ten years in Canaan that Sarai gave Hagar to her husband Abram as a wife [or concubine]. (Hagar was her slave girl from Egypt.)
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Therefore Sarai, the wife of Abram, took Hagar the Egyptian maid, at the end of the tenth year of Abram's residence in the land of Canaan, and gave her to Abram her husband, as a wife.
HCSB	So Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar, her Egyptian slave, and gave her to her husband Abram as a wife for him. <i>This happened</i> after Abram had lived in the land of Canaan 10 years.
NET Bible®	So after Abram had lived [Heb "at the end of ten years, to live, Abram." The prepositional phrase introduces the temporal clause, the infinitive construct serves as the verb, and the name "Abram" is the subject.] in Canaan for ten years, Sarai, Abram's wife, gave Hagar, her Egyptian servant [Heb "the Egyptian, her female servant."], to her husband to be his wife [sn To be his wife. Hagar became a slave wife, not on equal standing with Sarai. However, if Hagar produced the heir, she would be the primary wife in the eyes of society. When this eventually happened, Hagar become insolent, prompting Sarai's anger.].
NIV, ©2011	So after Abram had been living in Canaan [S Ge 12:5] ten years [S Ge 12:4], Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	But she had an Egyptian slave-girl named Hagar; so Sarai said to Avram, "Here now, ADONAI has kept me from having children; so go in and sleep with my slave-girl. Maybe I'll be able to have children through her." Avram listened to what Sarai said. It was after Avram had lived ten years in the land of Kena'an that Sarai Avram's wife took Hagar the Egyptian, her slave-girl, and gave her to Avram her husband to be his wife. A portion of v. 1 and all of v. 2 are included for context.
exeGesés companion Bible	...and Saray the woman of Abram takes her maid, Hagar the Misrayim, at the end of ten years of Abram settling in the land of Kenaan and gives her to her man Abram to be his woman.
Hebrew Names Version	Sarai, Avram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, after Avram had lived ten years in the land of Kena`an, and gave her to Avram her husband to be his wife.

Kaplan Translation After Abram had lived in Canaan for ten years [That is, when Abraham was 85 years old; see Genesis 12:4. This, then, was in the year 2033.], his wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian her slave, and gave her to her husband Abram as a wife.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And Sarai Avram's isha took Hagar her shifchah the Egyptian, after Avram had dwelt ten years in Eretz Kena'an, and gave her to her husband Avram to be his isha.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

*The Amplified Bible* So Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her Egyptian maid, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his [secondary] wife.

Concordant Literal Version And taking is Sarai, the wife of Abram, Hagar, the Egyptian, her maid, at the end of ten years of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan, and giving her is she to Abram, her husband, for his wife.

Context Group Version And Sarai, Abram's woman { or wife }, took Hagar the Egyptian, her slave, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to Abram her man { or husband } to be his woman { or wife }.

English Standard Version 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.

Green's Literal Translation And Sarai, Abram's wife, took her slave-girl, Hagar, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan.

NASB After Abram had lived [Lit dwelt] ten years [Gen 12:4] in the land of Canaan, Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife.

New RSV So, after Abram had lived for ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her slave-girl, and gave her to her husband Abram as a wife.

Young's Updated LT And Sarai, Abram's wife, takes Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, at the end of the tenth year of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan, and gives her to Abram her husband, to him for a wife.

**The gist of this verse:** Sarai gave her Egyptian servant to Abram to raise up seed. At this point, they had lived 10 years in the land of Canaan.

<b>Genesis 16:3a</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's #</b>
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i> ]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
Sâray (שָׂרַי) [pronounced <i>saw-RAY or saw-RAH-ee</i> ]	<i>my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #8297 BDB #979
'ishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAW</i> ]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #802 BDB #61

Genesis 16:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'Ab <sup>e</sup> râm (אַבְרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father;</i> and is transliterated <i>Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Hâgâr (הַגָּר) [pronounced haw-GAWR]	<i>flight, fugitive;</i> transliterated <i>Hagar</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #1904 BDB #212
Mits <sup>e</sup> rîy (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced mits <sup>e</sup> -REE]	<i>Egyptian, of Egypt; a Mitsrite, or inhabitant of Mitsrajim</i>	feminine singular gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #4713 BDB #596
shiph <sup>e</sup> châh (שִׁפְחָה) [pronounced shif-KHAW]	<i>maid, maid-servant, household servant, handmaid, female slave</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046

**Translation:** Sarai, the wife of Abram, took Hagar, the Egyptian girl, her maid...

Sarai suggested to Abram to use Hagar as a surrogate, and to have a child through her, which child would be raised as Sarai's.

Here is the first problem with this idea: Hagar is Sarai's maid; therefore the duty of raising this child would fall into her lap. Furthermore, this would be Hagar's desire as well. So, no matter how you look at it, Hagar would raise the child and it would be Abram and her child. So, Sarai is, in this way, completely cut out of the promises of God.

Genesis 16:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
qêts (קֵץ) [pronounced kayts]	<i>end [usually of time]; end, extremity [of space]</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7093 BDB #893
With min, qêts means <i>at the end of, after</i> .			
'eser (עָשָׂר) [pronounced GEH-ser]	<i>ten</i>	masculine numeral	Strong's #6235 BDB #796
shânîym (שָׁנַיִם) [pronounced shaw-NEEM]	<i>years</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510



Genesis 16:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yāshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH <sup>AV</sup> ]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit, to reside; to sit</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
ʾAb <sup>e</sup> rām (אֲבִרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>V</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʾerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
K <sup>e</sup> naʿan (כְּנָעַן) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> NAH- <sup>g</sup> ahn]	<i>which possibly means merchant and is transliterated Canaan</i>	masculine proper noun; territory	Strong's #3667 BDB #488

**Translation:**...(after ten years, Abram had lived in the land of Canaan).

Periodically, a time frame is thrown into this book, and here we are told that all of this took place 10 years after Abram entered the land of Canaan.

Abram certainly knows the promises made to him; and Sarai probably knows about these promises. If Abram is going to tell her the “God came to me;” then she is going to ask, “What did God have to say?” Abram cannot just clam up and say, “Secret.” Therefore, it is logical that Sarai knows all about the promises which God has made to Abram. Furthermore, she would be living a life of great blessing, because she and Abram obeyed God and came to the Land of Promise.

We do not know the time frame between chapters 15 and 16. However, between the end of chapter 12 and the beginning of 16, ten years have passed. Abram went to Egypt, things did not work out, so he returned to the promised land. He and Lot decided to part company and Abram got into a war with four kings in order to rescue Lot. After this great victory over the kings and particularly over the king of Sodom and his suggestion, God comes to Abram again and renews His promise concerning the son and concerning the land. These events had to take a few years; at least three. Another three or so may have passed where nothing was recorded, so we could guess that since God promised Abram a son and his land, approximately three or more years have passed. This has given Abram enough time to ponder god's promises and wonder how true they might be.

Genesis 16:3c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nāthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678

Genesis 16:3c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>her, it; untranslated generally; occasionally to her, toward her</i>	sign of the direct object with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾAb <sup>e</sup> râm (אֲבִרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural); with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #376 BDB #35
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #802 BDB #61

**Translation:** She gave her to Abram, her husband, to wife [lit., to him to wife].

So Sarai gives her maid, Hagar, to Abram. In this, she becomes his mistress.

This suggestion of Sarai's does not violate any established moral code, insofar as we know. God set up a precedent of right man and right woman, and Abram and Sarai have fulfilled that, but we do not know whether God has specifically established monogamy. What is occurring here is progressive divine revelation. That is, God has not revealed His entire plan to anyone even for that dispensation. In fact, until the OT canon was completed, there was a great deal of visions and Urim and Thummim and visitations by the angel of the Lord, etc. These things are unknown to us in our day, outside of mental institutions. Because man cannot believe that the world could be any different over a passage of time, man does not like to believe that either (1) there were visions and direct revelations from God in the past; and others do not want to believe that (2) these visions and revelations have stopped. However, we have already discussed that Abram should know that his seed will be raised up in Sarai.

God did tell Abram to come all the way to the Land of Promise. At no time did God ever tell Abram, "I want you to start considering the concept of a surrogate wife."

Genesis 16:3 Sarai, the wife of Abram, took Hagar, the Egyptian girl, her maid (after ten years, Abram had lived in the land of Canaan). She gave her to Abram, her husband, to wife [lit., to him to wife]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:3 Sarai, the wife of Abram, took Hagar, the Egyptian slave girl, and she gave her to Abram, her husband, to wife (Abram has lived in the land of Canaan for ten years). (Kukis paraphrase)



If I was writing this, I probably would have placed v. 3b at the very end: *Sarai, the wife of Abram, took Hagar, the Egyptian slave girl, and she gave her to Abram, her husband, to wife (Abram has lived in the land of Canaan for ten years).*

Most translations smooth out the Hebrew, because there are things in the Hebrew which are peculiar to that language, but not to ours (such as, the word *face* is always in the plural). So, a more literal translation of v. 3 is: *And so, Sarai, a woman [wife] of Abram, takes [seizes] Hagar the Egyptian her slave girl from the end of ten years Abram to dwell in a land of Canaan. And so she [Sarai] gives her to Abram her man [husband] to him for a woman [to wife].*

What is not quite as apparent in most translations is, this verse emphasizes the relationships of these 3 people. Sarai is Abram's woman; Abram is Sarai's man; Hagar is an Egyptian slave girl to Sarai. This is who and what they all are—these relationships are all made clear in v. 3. But then Sarai seizes Hagar and gives her to Abram—to him—for a wife (in the Hebrew, there is one word used for both *woman* and *wife*). For Sarai to seize Hagar and to give her to Abram changes everything. They all have specific relationships, clearly laid out in the Hebrew, and Sarai changes everything.

Abram and his wife left Haran when Abram was 75 years old (Genesis 12:4). It is 10 years later, and he is now 85 years old. In a year, he will have a son born to him by Hagar, and he will be 86 years old (Genesis 16:16).

In order to help you with the time frame, I have put together a timeline for Abram here:

<http://kukis.org/Charts/abrahamictimeline.htm> (a partial line was given in the introduction to this chapter).

<http://kukis.org/Charts/abrahamictimeline.pdf>

In this timeline, I give two very different views of the actual date (for instance, MacDonald has Abram being born in 2164 B.C. and Reese has him born in 1967 B.C.). Also, in this timeline, we have the various ages of Abram coinciding with different events of his life. Whereas, the dates may be suspect, the ages of Abram are accurate because they are given in the Bible.

What is happening here is strictly human viewpoint. Abram and Sarai have no children; God has promised them not just children, but a great legacy, and Sarai has developed a plan on her own to fulfill God's promises. One of the problems with this plan is, it involves introducing another moving part into the complex relationship of marriage. God created Adam, and then, through clone-manipulation, created the woman. God did not create 2 or 3 women for Adam. One woman was more than enough for Adam to handle. From that point on, monogamous relationships were the order of the day. We have already studied the first polygamous relationship in the Bible—Lamech and his two wives. Lamech was a folksinger, and he sang about killing two men, and how God would avenge his death more than Cain's (Genesis 4:19, 23–24). Lamech's line went nowhere, even though Lamech could father more children because he had 2 wives. Immediately, in the very next verse, the Bible presents, as a contrast, Adam and Eve who then have Seth, the line which will lead us to Noah (Genesis 4:25). If Abram thinks about the Scriptures (I believe that he is in possession of them at this time), then he knows about the polygamous relationship of Lamech versus the monogamous relationship of Adam and Eve, which produced Seth. Abram should have said, "Sarai, I think that this is a bad idea." That was, unfortunately, not Abram's reaction. He looked at Little Egypt (Hagar) in a different light, and obeyed the voice of his wife.

Nowhere in the existing Bible (the first 10 or so chapters of Genesis), does God give an equal standing to a polygamous union. Just as Adam listened and obeyed the voice of Eve before the fall, so would Abram listen to and obey the voice of his wife.

This in no way suggests that a man not listen to the voice of his wife. However, as the spiritual leader of the family (which is one of the man's roles), Abram needs to evaluate what Sarai has suggested and then reject this scheme of hers. There is no indication that God sponsors polygamy; there is no indication that God needs some additional assistance in order to make His promises come to pass; and God has not suggested at any time that Abram take up with a slave girl in order for His promises to be fulfilled.

What Abram is about to do is legitimate in his culture; it is socially acceptable by human viewpoint standards, and this represents human works. For these reasons, we know that this is a bad idea. By the words the Holy Spirit uses to define the proper relationships of Abram, Sarai and Hagar in v. 3, we know that this is a mistake.

**And so he goes in unto Hagar and so she conceives; and so she sees that she had conceived, and so is insignificant her mistress in her [two] eyes.**

Genesis  
16:4

**He went into Hagar and she conceived. When she saw that she had conceived, her mistress is insignificant in her eyes.**

**Abram went into Hagar and she conceived. When she realized that she had conceived, she considered her mistress, Sarai, as insignificant.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)	And he went unto Hagar, and she conceived; and she saw that she had conceived, and the honour of her mistress was despised in her eyes.
Latin Vulgate	And he went in to her. But she perceiving that she was with child, despised her mistress.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he goes in unto Hagar and so she conceives; and so she sees that she had conceived, and so she sees as trifling her mistress in her [two] eyes.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived, and saw that she was with child, and her mistress was dishonored before her.

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	He slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when she realized that she was pregnant, she no longer respected her mistress.
Contemporary English V.	Later, when Hagar knew she was going to have a baby, she became proud and was hateful to Sarai.
Easy English	Abram had sex with Hagar. And she became *pregnant. When Hagar knew that, she was unkind to her boss Sarai. She was unkind because she considered Sarai worse than Hagar herself.
Easy-to-Read Version	Hagar became pregnant from Abram. When Hagar saw this, she became very proud and began to feel that she was better than Sarai her master.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Abram had intercourse with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When she found out that she was pregnant, she became proud and despised Sarai.
New Century Version	Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When Hagar learned she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress Sarai badly.
New Life Version	He went in to Hagar, and she was going to have a child. And when she saw that she was going to have a child, she began to hate Sarai.
New Living Translation	So Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress, Sarai, with contempt.
The Voice	So Abram slept with Hagar. <i>It was not long before</i> she conceived. But as soon as she knew she was pregnant <i>with Abram's child</i> , <i>Hagar's attitude changed</i> and she became haughty toward Sarai.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Then [Abram] went in to [sleep with] Hagar, and she became pregnant. And when she realized that she was going to have a child, she started being disrespectful to her mistress.
Christian Community Bible	He went in to Hagar and she became pregnant. When she was aware of this, she began to despise her mistress.
God's Word™	He slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When Hagar realized that she was pregnant, she began to be disrespectful to Sarai, her owner.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Abram, then, had knowledge of her, and she, finding herself with child, began to look on her mistress with scorn.
New American Bible (2002)	He had intercourse with her, and she became pregnant. When she became aware of her pregnancy, she looked on her mistress with disdain.
New American Bible (2011)	He had intercourse with her, and she became pregnant. As soon as Hagar knew she was pregnant, her mistress lost stature in her eyes. Because barrenness was at that time normally blamed on the woman and regarded as a disgrace, it is not surprising that Hagar looks down on Sarah. Ancient Near Eastern legal practice addresses such cases of insolent slaves and allows disciplining of them. Prv 30:23 uses as an example of intolerable behavior "a maidservant when she ousts her mistress." See 1 Sm 1:6; Prv 30:23.
NIRV	He made love to Hagar. And she became pregnant. When Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to look down on the woman who owned her.
New Jerusalem Bible	He went to Hagar and she conceived. And once she knew she had conceived, her mistress counted for nothing in her eyes.
New Simplified Bible	Abram had intercourse with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress.
Today's NIV	He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear	He came into Hagar and she conceived. When she saw she conceived, she cursed her mistress in her eyes.
Bible in Basic English	And he went in to Hagar and she became with child, and when she saw that she was with child, she no longer had any respect for her master's wife.
Conservapedia	He had relations with Hagar, and she fell pregnant. And when she realized that she was pregnant, she held her mistress in contempt. The consequences of the mistake become manifest very early on: the surrogate comes between the husband and the lawful wife, and also considers that the baby belongs to her.
The Expanded Bible	Abram ·had sexual relations with [·went in to] Hagar, and she ·became pregnant [conceived]. When Hagar learned she ·was pregnant [conceived], she began to ·treat [look on] her mistress Sarai ·badly [with contempt].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	So he went to Hagar, and she conceived ; when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despicable in her eyes.
HCSB	He slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When she realized that she was pregnant, she looked down on her mistress.
NET Bible®	He had sexual relations with [Heb "entered to." See the note on the same expression in v. 2.] Hagar, and she became pregnant [Or "she conceived" (also in v. 5)]. Once Hagar realized she was pregnant, she despised Sarai [Heb "and she saw that she was pregnant and her mistress was despised in her eyes." The Hebrew verb קָלַל (qalal) means "to despise, to treat lightly, to treat with contempt." In Hagar's opinion Sarai had been demoted.].
NIV, ©2011	He slept with Hagar [S ver 1], and she conceived.

When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress [Ge 30:1; 1Sa 1:6].

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	Avram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she conceived. But when she became aware that she was pregnant, she looked on her mistress with contempt.
exeGesés companion Bible	And he goes in to Hagar and she conceives: and when she sees that she conceives, she abases her lady in her eyes.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	He cohabited with Hagar and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was lowered in her esteem.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And he came to Hagar, and she conceived, and she saw that she was pregnant, and her mistress became unimportant in her eyes.
Kaplan Translation	[Abram] came to her, and she conceived. When she realized that she was pregnant, she looked at her mistress with contempt.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her gevirah was despised in her eyes.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And he had intercourse with Hagar, and she became pregnant; and when she saw that she was with child, she looked with contempt upon her mistress <i>and</i> despised her.
Concordant Literal Version	And coming is he to Hagar, and pregnant is she becoming. And seeing is she that she is pregnant, and lightly esteemed is her mistress in her eyes.
Context Group Version	And he went in to Hagar, and she became pregnant: and when she saw that she had become pregnant, her mistress was ignored in her eyes.
English Standard Version	And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked [1 Sam. 1:6, 7] with contempt [Hebrew her mistress was dishonourable in her eyes; similarly in verse 5] on her mistress.
Green's Literal Translation	And he went in to Hagar and she conceived; and she saw that she had conceived, and her mistress was despised in her eyes.
NASB	He went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight.
Syndein/Thieme	And he {Abram} went in unto Hagar {sexual relations}, and she kept on being pregnant {harah}. And when she {Sarai} saw that she {Hagar} had become pregnant, her mistress kept on despising {Hagar} in her eyes {idiom: meaning 'in her thoughts' - mental attitude sin of jealousy and hatred}. {Note: The point here is antagonism between the two women.}.
World English Bible	He went in to Hagar, and she conceived. When she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.
Young's Updated LT	And he goes in unto Hagar, and she conceives, and she sees that she has conceived, and her mistress is lightly esteemed in her eyes.
<b>The gist of this verse:</b>	After Abram had sex with Hagar, she conceived. As a result, she began to look down on her mistress.

Genesis 16:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'el (לְא) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Hâgâr (הַגָּר) [pronounced haw-GAWR]	<i>flight, fugitive; transliterated Hagar</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #1904 BDB #212

**Translation:** He went into Hagar...

This is the common euphemism meaning that they had sex. In translating, I prefer translating a euphemism with a euphemism. The details, if any, can certainly be added later.

Euphemisms, when it comes to sex, are as old as the Bible. The verb *to go in* is the Qal imperfect of bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh], which means *to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter*. Strong's #935 BDB #97. This verb is found more than 2500 times in the Bible and it is used here, euphemistically, to refer to sex.

Genesis 16:4b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hârâh (הָרָה) [pronounced haw-RAW]	<i>to conceive, to become pregnant, to be with child; to conceive in the mind; to plan [something out], to devise, to plot</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2029 BDB #247

**Translation:** ...and she conceived.

At this point in time, there is nothing amiss with Abram's potency. The problem with conception is with Sarai.

*Went in* means *to have sex* and is in the Qal imperfect, meaning that it occurred several times. *Conceived* is in the Qal perfect tense; it only had to happen once.



Genesis 16:4c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (הָאָרָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
hârâh (הָרָה) [pronounced haw-RAW]	<i>to conceive, to become pregnant, to be with child; to conceive in the mind; to plan [something out], to devise, to plot</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2029 BDB #247

**Translation:** When she saw that she had conceived,...

When a woman conceives and when she knows that she has conceived are two different points in time. There does come a point where the woman realizes that she is pregnant, and this changes Hagar's attitude dramatically.

### Bible Query on, Does Genesis 16:3 provide us a link from Abraham to Mohammed?

Q: In Gen 16:3; 17:20; 21:13 does Hagar being the mother of Ishmael refer to Mohammed?

A: Hagar the concubine of Abraham and her son Ishmael are mentioned in the Bible. There is some uncertainty about 'Adnan (Mohammed's ancestor) descending from Ishmael though. The noted early Muslim historian al-Tabari vol.6 p.37 says, "The genealogists do not differ concerning the descent of our Prophet Muhammad as far as Ma'add b. 'Adnan, ... they differ concerning what comes after that." However, in the end this is a red herring, because Ishmael being in the Bible does not show Mohammed is from God.

Let me add that there is no genealogical line for Ishmael in the Bible; so there is no legitimate way to tie Ishmael to Mohammed. There is nothing which goes back that far.

From Bible Query; March 2006 version. Copyright (c) Christian Debater(tm) 1997-2006; Genesis 21:13.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Genesis 16:4d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## Genesis 16:4d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
qâlal (קָלַל) [pronounced kaw-LAL]	❶ <i>to be diminished</i> (note the passive meaning); ❷ <i>to be despised, to be contemned</i> (again, a passive meaning); ❸ <i>to be light, to be trifling, to be of little account</i> ; ❹ <i>to be swift, to be fleet</i> ; ❺ <i>to be lightly esteemed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7043 BDB #886
g <sup>e</sup> bereth (תַּרְבֵּג) [pronounced gheb-EH-rehth]	<i>mistress [of servants]; lady; queen; she is the opposite of a maid</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #1404 BDB #150
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced gay-nah-YIM]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

This phrase is literally *in her eyes*, but it can be translated *in her opinion, in her estimation, in her sight, to her way of thinking, as she sees [it]*.

**Translation:** ...her mistress is insignificant in her eyes.

Suddenly, Hagar gets an attitude. The verb is the Hebrew word qâlal (קָלַל) [pronounced kaw-LAL] and it means ❶ *to be diminished* (note the passive meaning); ❷ *to be despised, to be contemned* (again, a passive meaning); ❸ *to be light, to be trifling, to be of little account*; ❹ *to be swift, to be fleet*; ❺ *to be lightly esteemed*. Qâlal is in the Qal imperfect tense; Hagar continually depreciated Sarai. Hagar was her slave, her inferior, and now there was something that Hagar could do that Sarai could not do; Hagar could provide a child for her man. Hagar could have been the most innocent one of the trio. She is a slave as a slave must do what she is told to do by her masters. Both Sarai and Abram laid down the law that she was to have sex with Abram so she was obeying. However, now she filled herself with mental attitude sins of arrogance and she belittled her mistress, Sarai.

Here is a good object lesson when it comes to translation. Literally, this reads ...and so is insignificant her mistress in her [two] eyes. So, *her mistress* is the subject and the verb is used in a passive sense; so *her mistress is lightly esteemed* (or *insignificant*). Then we add in, *in her eyes*, which means, *in her opinion, in her estimation*. We can combine that final phrase with the verb, and give this more of an active meaning: ...she considered her mistress, Sarai, as insignificant. The verb *considered* is added to the concept of being *insignificant, unimportant* but with an active meaning; so it is Hagar, in this translation, which becomes the subject of the verb. So, we take the final words and roll them into the verb and give the verb an active sense. In this, we have better conveyed the meaning of this verse; but we have certainly not translated it literally. Quite obviously, when a translator does something like this, he is taking a chance that he might discard an important fact or word in reconstructing this sentence.

After first receiving excellent Bible teaching from R. B. Thieme, Jr., I began to treat paraphrased translations as trifling or insignificant. However, when I began to translate the Bible, then this took me to a whole new place. Sometimes a better understanding can be had with a less exact translation. This is what caused me, in fact, to give 3 translations. As a believer, I don't think that you are harmed by having a "reading" Bible and a literally translated Bible (e.g., *The Open Bible* and the New King James Bible. This way, if you read something in the NKJV which does not convey what is going on, then you look into your Living Bible and see how they understood



that verse to be. What is quite helpful is, there are several good websites where you have access to a dozen or more translations.

Here are some examples of texts which give us a better feel for what is going on between Hagar and Sarai:

Common English Bible	He slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when she realized that she was pregnant, she no longer respected her mistress.
Easy-to-Read Version	Hagar became pregnant from Abram. When Hagar saw this, she became very proud and began to feel that she was better than Sarai her master.
New Living Translation	So Abram had sexual relations with Hagar, and she became pregnant. But when Hagar knew she was pregnant, she began to treat her mistress, Sarai, with contempt.
The Voice	So Abram slept with Hagar. <i>It was not long before she conceived. But as soon as she knew she was pregnant with Abram's child, Hagar's attitude changed and she became haughty toward Sarai.</i>
God's Word™	He slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When Hagar realized that she was pregnant, she began to be disrespectful to Sarai, her owner.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Abram, then, had knowledge of her, and she, finding herself with child, began to look on her mistress with scorn.
New American Bible (2002)	He had intercourse with her, and she became pregnant. When she became aware of her pregnancy, she looked on her mistress with disdain.
New American Bible (2011)	He had intercourse with her, and she became pregnant. As soon as Hagar knew she was pregnant, her mistress lost stature in her eyes.

V. 4 reads: *Abram went into Hagar and she conceived. When she realized that she had conceived, she considered her mistress, Sarai, as insignificant.* Hagar has done what Sarai could not do; she has become pregnant by Abram, and this changes the balance of power in her own eyes.

There are a number of *she's* in this verse, so we need to sort them out. We have two clues: the name *Hagar* is the only feminine person named in this verse until we come to *mistress*. This word *mistress* does not refer to Hagar, as the mistress of Abram, but it refers to Sarai, as the mistress over Hagar (Genesis 16:8–9). Therefore, all of the *she's* in this verse logically refer to *Hagar*. Therefore, to help sort this out, we might read Genesis 16:4 in this way: *And Abram went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when Hagar saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress, Sarai.*

The tenses are interesting in this verse. The verb *went in to* is a Qal imperfect, which indicates that Abram probably had sex with Hagar on several occasions. The first time we find the verb *conceived*, it is also in the Qal imperfect, so the idea is, Hagar entered into a state of having conceived, and remained in that state for a long time (my guess would be about 9 months). The next verb *saw* is a Qal imperfect followed by the Qal perfect of *conceive*. So, Hagar kept looking at (thinking about) her situation of having conceived (perfect tense; past action); which meant that, each and every day, the fact of her carrying Abram's child was given consideration in her own mind. She thought about this and tried to figure out what to do in order to usurp Sarai's position in the family. Let's take this information and try to translate this verse to reflect these various tenses.

**Gen 16:4** *And Abram went in to Hagar [on several occasions], and she conceived [became pregnant and continued to show signs of pregnancy]. And when Hagar kept observing that she herself had become pregnant, she kept looking with contempt upon her mistress, Sarai.*

The final verb is the Qal imperfect of *qâlal* (קָלַל) [pronounced *kaw-LAL*] and it means ❶ *to be diminished* (note the passive meaning); ❷ *to be despised, to be contemned* (again, a passive meaning); ❸ *to be swift, to be fleet* (this verb is rarely so used). Strong's #7043 BDB #886. All of a sudden, this slave girl looked down upon her mistress; this slave girl saw herself as superior to Sarai. Sarai had become quite diminished in her eyes. Remember in v. 3, how their relationships are carefully defined; and then, at the end, Sarai seizes Hagar and gives her to Abram? That messes up their well-defined relationships. So now, in this verse, Hagar, the slave-girl, who ought to be

obedient to her mistress, Sarai, now looks down upon her mistress. She no longer has the proper deference for her mistress.

Genesis 16:4 **He went into Hagar and she conceived. When she saw that she had conceived, her mistress is insignificant in her eyes.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:4 **Abram went into Hagar and she conceived. When she realized that she had conceived, she considered her mistress, Sarai, as insignificant.** (Kukis paraphrase)

The intent was for Hagar to have a child, but for Sarai to raise it as her own. However, Hagar is her maidservant; so, who logically would raise the child? Hagar will be doing all of the actual day-to-day stuff, increasing her bond with her own son. When Abram comes to visit, it would be with his son and with Hagar, as she is there. This is just not working out at all as Sarai saw it. Hagar, because this is her son, is willing to put up with a great deal—sleepless nights, feeding, changing diapers (or whatever they did in the ancient world). Sarai, because this is not her son, is not really interested in doing any of those things.

Because Hagar receives some attention by Abram, Hagar begins to see herself in a different light. She is bearing the son of her master, which lessens her commitment as a slave, and causes her to think more about the big picture. She has the master's son in her womb; his wife does not. Therefore, Hagar begins to treat Sarai with disrespect.

Women are very keyed into these things. It is possible that Abram, being a man, noticed very little; but I can guarantee that, this new opinion that Hagar had of Sarai was very well-known to Sarai. Hagar was younger than Sarai and now she was carrying Abram's child. She first stated a few simple facts to Sarai, such as, "I do believe that I have morning sickness." But, at some point in time, 7 or 8 months into pregnancy, I can just see Hagar saying to Sarai, "Could you be a dear, and fetch that for me?" Hagar is no longer the slave girl in her own eyes. She is not under Sarai's authority anymore. She is Abram's woman carrying his child, something that Sarai is unable to do. Sarai is struggling with this new relationship as well.

Related to this is Hammurabi's Code, ¶ 146, which tells us that a slave woman who has borne children, may not assert herself over against the unproductive wife. She may not usurp the wife's position or achieve equality with the wife in this situation. Again, we can see how closely this situation parallels with the traditions of that era. Hammurabi's code clearly recognizes the problem which could erupt and makes an attempt to fix everything with a law.

In Hagar's entire periphery, the most important man and the richest and the most powerful man is Abram. And right now, she is carrying his child. In some ways, she may feel as if she has won the lottery here. She is now tied to this greatest of men. She has his seed, his child.

You will note that, in laying out this entire scheme, Sarai seems like a very modern and progressive woman. This is what a modern woman ought to do under these circumstances, in that culture. However, after Abram has sex with Hagar, after Hagar bears Abram the child that Sarai could not, and after Hagar begins to see herself in a different light, Sarai's feelings about this situation changed.

Bear in mind, all of this is Sarai's idea, but now that Hagar has a son sired by her husband, Abram, she is less than happy with the results. Therefore, Sarai is going to complain about the situation. And this you might find shocking: Abram cannot simply say, "But, honey, this was all your idea." That approach just isn't going to fly.

**Gen 16:3–4** 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. And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress.

All parties involved share in the fault here, even though there were no clear guidelines that we are aware of, apart from the norms of society at that time. Hagar was being told by Abram and Sarai, her two masters, what she had

to do. There does not seem to be any resistance from Hagar in all of this; and it is very likely that she saw this as a possible power play. Abram was a nice guy; she was a slave girl with no prospects, so becoming his wife through pregnancy looked like a step in the right direction to her.

Furthermore, it was not unusual, in that day, for a younger second wife to supplant the first wife, which situation was addressed in Hammurabi's code (mentioned above). So, it is very likely that, in all of this, Hagar looked at this as her way out of being a slave girl. Maybe she would get her own slave girl?

From Sarai's standpoint, this was all wrong. This woman had sex with her husband; this woman now had a child that Sarai was unable to provide, and Hagar was now indicating to Sarai, by her very looks, that she would supplant Sarai as Abram's wife.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### When Hagar Becomes Pregnant, Both She and Sarai Change their Mental Attitudes

And so says Sarai unto Abram, "My wrong [be] upon you. I [even] I have given my maid into your hand. And so she sees that she has conceived and so I am diminished in her [two] eyes. Will judge Y<sup>e</sup>howah between me and between you."

Genesis  
16:5

So Sarai said to Abram, "[Let] my injury [be] upon you. I [even] I have give my maid into your control, but when she saw that she conceived, I have become diminished in her eyes. Y<sup>e</sup>howah will judge between you and me."

So Sarai said to Abram, "Let this injury against me be upon you. I certain gave my maid to you, but as soon as she saw that she had conceived, I then became diminished in her estimation. Let Jehovah judge between us."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)

And Sara said to Abram, All my affliction is from thee. Being secure that thou wouldst do me justice, I left the land and house of my father, and came up with thee to a foreign land; and forasmuch as I was not able to become a mother, I set free my handmaid, and gave her to lie in thy bosom; and she seeth that she had conceived, and mine honour is despised before her. But now is my affliction manifest before the Lord, who will spread peace between me and thee, and the land shall be replenished from us, nor shall we need the help of the progeny of Hagar the daughter of Pharoh bar Nimrod, who threw thee into the furnace of fire.

Jerusalem targum

And Sara said, My judgment and my affliction are delivered into thine hand. I left the house of my birth, and the house of my father, and came with thee in the faith of the Heavens. I have gone in with thee before kings; before Pharoh King of Mizraim, and before Avimelek king of the Philistaeae; and I have said of thee, he is my brother, so that they might not kill thee. And when I saw that I was not made fruitful, I took Hagar the Mizreitha, my handmaid, and gave her to thee to wife, and said, She shall bring forth, and I will bring up whom she may bear, that I may be builded, be it only from her. But now seeing that she hath conceived, my honour is contemned and despised in her sight. Now may the Lord appear, and judge between me and thee, and fulfil mercies upon me and thee, and spread His peace between me and thee, and replenish the world from me and from thee, that we may not heed the son of

	Hagar the Mizreitha handmaid, who is of the children of the people who cast thee into the burning furnace of the Kasdin.
Latin Vulgate	And Sarai said to Abram: Thou dost unjustly with me: I gave my handmaid into thy bosom, and she perceiving herself to be with child, despiseth me. The Lord judge between me and thee.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Sarai unto Abram, "My wrong [be] upon you. I [even] I have given my maid into your hand. And so she sees that she has conceived and so I am diminished in her [two] eyes. Will judge Y <sup>e</sup> howah between me and between you."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Sarai said to Abram, My wrong be upon you; I gave my maid into your bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes; may the LORD judge between me and you.
Septuagint (Greek)	Then Sarai said to Abram, I am injured by you; I gave my handmaid into your bosom, and when I saw that she was with child, I was dishonored before her. The Lord judge between me and you.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	Sarai said to Abram, "This harassment is your fault. I allowed you to embrace my servant, but when she realized she was pregnant, I lost her respect. Let the Lord decide who is right, you or me."
Contemporary English V.	Then Sarai said to Abram, "It's all your fault! I gave you my slave woman, but she has been hateful to me ever since she found out she was pregnant. You have done me wrong, and you will have to answer to the LORD for this."
Easy English	Then Sarai said to Abram, "It is your fault that I am unhappy. I gave my maid to you so that you could have sex with her. Now, when she is *pregnant, she is unkind to me. She is being unkind because she considers me worse than herself. Let the *Lord *judge between you and me!"
Easy-to-Read Version	But Sarai said to Abram, "My servant now hates me. And I blame you for this. I gave her to you. She became pregnant. And then she began to feel that she is better than I am. I want the Lord to judge which of us is right."
Good News Bible (TEV)	Then Sarai said to Abram, "It's your fault that Hagar despises me. I myself gave her to you, and ever since she found out that she was pregnant, she has despised me. May the LORD judge which of us is right, you or me!"
<i>The Message</i>	Sarai told Abram, "It's all your fault that I'm suffering this abuse. I put my maid in bed with you and the minute she knows she's pregnant, she treats me like I'm nothing. May GOD decide which of us is right."
New Berkeley Version	Then Sarai said to Abram, "May the injury I suffer come home to you. I entrusted my maid to your bosom and as soon as she found herself with child she looked down on me. Let the LORD do justice between me and you."
New Century Version	Then Sarai said to Abram, "This is your fault. I gave my slave girl to you, and when she became pregnant, she began to treat me badly. Let the Lord decide who is right-you or me."
New Life Version	Then Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be upon you. I gave the woman who served me into your arms. But when she saw that she was going to have a child, she began to hate me. May the Lord judge who is guilty or not between you and me."
New Living Translation	Then Sarai said to Abram, "This is all your fault! I put my servant into your arms, but now that she's pregnant she treats me with contempt. The Lord will show who's wrong-you or me!"
The Voice	<i>Sarai would not tolerate her servant looking down on her, so she approached Abram again.</i>

**Sarai (to Abram):** This is all your fault. I allowed my servant girl to be intimate with you, and as soon as she saw she was pregnant *with your child*, she started behaving arrogantly and disrespectfully toward me! *I have done nothing to deserve this*. Let the Eternal One judge who is in the wrong here-you or me!.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So Sara said to Abram: 'I've really been hurt by you, for I gave you my handmaid [to sleep with], and when I saw that she was pregnant, she treated me disrespectfully. May Jehovah judge between me and you!'
Beck's American Translation	"I've been wrongs," Sarai told Abram, "and it's your fault. I put my maid in your arms. Now that she sees she's going to have a child, she despised me. May the LORD decide whether I am wrong or you."
Christian Community Bible	Sarai said to Abram, "May this injury done to me be yours. I put my servant in your arms and now that she knows she is pregnant, I count for nothing in her eyes. Let Yahweh judge between me and you."
God's Word™	So Sarai complained to Abram, "I'm being treated unfairly! And it's your fault! I know that I gave my slave to you, but now that she's pregnant, she's being disrespectful to me. May the LORD decide who is right-you or me."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And Sarai complained to Abram, I am being wronged, through thy fault; here is this maid-servant of mine, whom I bade thee take in thy arms, treating me scornfully, now that she has conceived. May the Lord do justice between us.
New American Bible (2011)	So Sarai said to Abram: "This outrage against me is your fault. I myself gave my maid to your embrace; but ever since she knew she was pregnant, I have lost stature in her eyes. May the LORD decide between you and me!" Gn 21:10-19.
NIRV	Then Sarai said to Abram, "It's your fault that I'm suffering like this. I put my servant in your arms. Now that she knows she's pregnant, she looks down on me. May the Lord judge between you and me. May he decide which of us is right."
New Jerusalem Bible	Then Sarai said to Abram, 'This outrage done to me is your fault! It was I who put my slave-girl into your arms but, now she knows that she has conceived, I count for nothing in her eyes. Yahweh judge between me and you!'
New Simplified Bible	Then Sarai said to Abram: »You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in your arms; she knows she is pregnant and she despises me. May Jehovah judge between you and me.«
Revised English Bible	Sarai complained to Abram, 'I am being wronged; you must do something about it. It was I who gave my slave-girl into your arms, but since she has known that she is pregnant, she has despised me. May the LORD see justice done between you and me.'
Today's NIV	Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Sarai said to Abram, "My violence is toward you! I gave my handmaid to your bosom. When she saw she conceived, <i>she</i> cursed me in her eyes: Yahweh judges between me and you."
Bible in Basic English	And Sarai said to Abram, May my wrong be on you: I gave you my servant for your wife and when she saw that she was with child, she no longer had any respect for me: may the Lord be judge between you and me.
Conservapedia	So Sarai told Abram, "This is your fault! I gave my maid to share your bed. Now that she knows that she's pregnant, she holds me in contempt. May the LORD judge between me and you!" Sarai blames Abram, conveniently making light of a simple matter such as that it was her idea.



The Expanded Bible	Then Sarai said to Abram, "·This is your fault [ <sup>L</sup> May the wrong/violence done to me be on you]. I gave my slave girl ·to you [into your embrace; <sup>L</sup> into your lap], and when she ·became pregnant [ <sup>L</sup> conceived], she began to ·treat [look on] me ·badly [with contempt]. Let the Lord ·decide who is right-[judge between] you or me."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Then Sarai said to Abram, " My wrong came from you. I gave my maid to you as wife, and she sees that she has conceived, and I am despicable in her eyes. Let the EVER-LIVING decide between me and you."
NET Bible®	Then Sarai said to Abram, "You have brought this wrong on me [Heb "my wrong is because of you."]! I allowed my servant to have sexual relations with you [Heb "I placed my female servant in your bosom."], but when she realized [Heb "saw."] that she was pregnant, she despised me [Heb "I was despised in her eyes." The passive verb has been translated as active for stylistic reasons. Sarai was made to feel supplanted and worthless by Hagar the servant girl.]. <b>May the Lord judge between you and me</b> [Heb "me and you."] [May the Lord judge between you and me. Sarai blamed Abram for Hagar's attitude, not the pregnancy. Here she expects to be vindicated by the Lord who will prove Abram responsible. A colloquial rendering might be, "God will get you for this." It may mean that she thought Abram had encouraged the servant girl in her elevated status.]"
NIV, ©2011	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." S Ge 3:9

### **Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	Sarai said to Avram, "This outrage being done to me is your fault! True, I gave my slave-girl to you to sleep with; but when she saw that she was pregnant, she began holding me in contempt. May ADONAI decide who is right - I or you!"
exeGesés companion Bible	And Saray says to Abram, My violence is on you: I - I give my maid into your bosom; and she sees that she conceives, and is abased in her eyes: Yah Veh judge between me and you.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And Sarai said to Abram, "May my injustice be upon you! I gave my handmaid into your bosom, and she saw that she had become pregnant, and I became unimportant in her eyes. May the Lord judge between me and you!"
Kaplan Translation	Sarai said to Abram, 'It's all your fault! I myself placed my slave in your arms [Literally, 'in your bosom,' or 'in your lap.']! Now that she sees herself pregnant, she looks at me with disrespect. Let God judge between me and you!"
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Sarai said unto Avram, My wrong be upon thee; I have given my shifchah unto thy kheyk; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes; Hashem judge between me and thee.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Sarai said to Ab?ram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my female servant into your bosom. And when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes. Let הוה judge between you and me."

### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Then Sarai said to Abram, May [the responsibility for] my wrong and deprivation of rights be upon you! I gave my maid into your bosom, and when she saw that she was with child, I was contemptible and despised in her eyes. May the Lord be the judge between you and me.
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Concordant Literal Version	And saying is Sarai to Abram, "My wrong comes on you. I, I gave my maid into your bosom. And seeing is she that she is pregnant, and lightly esteemed am I in her eyes. Judging is Yahweh Elohim between me and her.
Context Group Version	And Sarai said to Abram, My wrong be on you: I gave my slave into your bosom; and when she saw that she had become pregnant, I was ignored in her eyes: YHWH judge between me and you.
Darby Translation	And Sarai said to Abram, My wrong be on thee! I have given my maidservant into thy bosom; and now she sees that she has conceived, I am lightly esteemed in her eyes. Jehovah judge between me and thee!
English Standard Version	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 [ch. 31:53; 1 Sam. 24:12] between you and me!"
Green's Literal Translation	And Sarai said to Abram, My injury <i>be</i> upon you; I gave my slave-girl into your bosom, and she saw that she had conceived, and I was despised in her eyes. Let Jehovah judge between me and you.
New RSV	Then Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my slave-girl to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt.
Syndein/Thieme	And Sarai said unto Abram, "It is all your fault! {chamac idiom: literally 'wronged' or injustice'} I have given my maid into your embrace {cheyq idiom: literally 'bosom'}. And when she kept on seeing { ra'ah } that she was pregnant, {I am} despised in her eyes. Jehovah/God judge!" {Note: The picture is pretty clear that the two women are not happy with each other. Sarai has blamed God earlier and now she is blaming Abram for following up on her suggestion. Mental attitude sins abound.}.
World English Bible	Sarai said to Abram, "This wrong is your fault. I gave my handmaid into your bosom, and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes. Yahweh judge between me and you."
Young's Updated LT	And Sarai says unto Abram, "My violence is for you; I—I have given mine handmaid into your bosom, and she sees that she has conceived, and I am lightly esteemed in her eyes; Jehovah does judge between me and you."

**The gist of this verse:** Sarai complains to Abram, about how her servant now treats her; and she blames Abram for that.

Genesis 16:5a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'amar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Sâray (שרַי) [pronounced <i>saw-RAY</i> or <i>saw-RAH-ee</i> ]	<i>my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #8297 BDB #979
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39

## Genesis 16:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾAb <sup>e</sup> râm (אַבְרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4

**Translation:** So Sarai said to Abram,...

This is exactly the verbiage of v. 2, when Sarai decided to float her solution past Abram. She thought that she could help God's plan and get Abram with her maid Hagar and provide an heir for Abram. Well, now she is speaking to Abram again, and this is to complain about the whole arrangement.

## Genesis 16:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
châmâç (חַמָּץ) [pronounced khaw-MAWS]	<i>violence, wrong, cruelty, oppression; that which is gained by violence and wrongdoing</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #2555 BDB #329
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ǵahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:**... "[Let] my injury [be] upon you.

This is actually only 2 words with two suffixes. *My wrong upon you* is how this actually reads. The *wrong, oppression, or cruelty* is that which has been done against Sarai—I should say, *the perceived wrong* that has been done against her.

## Genesis 16:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾânôkîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced awn-oh-KEE]	<i>I, me; (sometimes a verb is implied)</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular personal pronoun	Strong's #595 BDB #59
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
shiph <sup>e</sup> châh (שִׁפְחָה) [pronounced shif-KHAW]	<i>maid, maid-servant, household servant, handmaid, female slave</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

## Genesis 16:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
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This combination of the bêyth preposition and *hand* means *in your hand; in your power, under your control; with you; through you, by you, by means of you; at your hand [i.e., before your, in your sight]*.

**Translation:** I [even] I have give my maid into your control,...

Sarai explains exactly what happened, and will try to put this into a light that would blame Abram for all that has happened. Sarai does agree that she initiated the whole thing. She uses the 1<sup>st</sup> person personal pronoun for emphasis, so she completely agrees that she initiated this whole thing.

Placing the maid into Abram's hand means that she is *in his power, under his authority, in his control*.

## Genesis 16:5d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
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wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
kîy (כי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
hârâh (הָרָה) [pronounced haw-RAW]	<i>to conceive, to become pregnant, to be with child; to conceive in the mind; to plan [something out], to devise, to plot</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2029 BDB #247

**Translation:** ...but when she saw that she conceived,...

Here are the results. Here is where Sarai goes awry in her thinking. These are normal results; these are results which could have been foreseen. She is blaming these results upon Abram. We may find this hard to believe, however, this happens all of the time.

**Application:** I am writing this in the year 2013, and Obamacare is having a rough roll out. This was a program passed by Democrats and Democrats alone; and all of the handling of this law has been by Democrats and Democrat appointees. However, now that it is running into massive problems, I have heard several prominent Democrats blame Republicans for all of the negatives of the roll out of this program. So, certainly, Sarai may seem a little irrational, but we have this sort of thing occur all of the time.

Now, Sarai is correct in some ways. Abram is the authority in his family. He could have said *no*. He could have refused to go forward on Sarai's silly plan, but he did not.

## Genesis 16:5e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâlal (קָלַל) [pronounced kaw-LAL]	❶ <i>to be diminished</i> (note the passive meaning); ❷ <i>to be despised, to be contemned</i> (again, a passive meaning); ❸ <i>to be light, to be trifling, to be of little account</i> ; ❹ <i>to be swift, to be fleet</i> ; ❺ <i>to be lightly esteemed</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7043 BDB #886
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced gay-nah-YIM]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

This phrase is literally *in her eyes*, but it can be translated *in her opinion, in her estimation, in her sight, to her way of thinking, as she sees [it]*.

**Translation:** ...I have become diminished in her eyes.

Here is Sarai's complaint, and it is valid. Hagar is under Sarai's authority and she is bucking this authority now. She is considering herself to be greater than Sarai. This is a reasonable complaint; but, at the same time, this is also an unintended consequence which could have been foreseen.

*Was belittled* is the same Hebrew word as *depreciated* in the previous verse. Now, Sarai is upset. She is jealous of the adultery which took place; she is jealous that Hagar is fertile and will bear Abram a child, something that she has been unable to do. She recognizes Hagar's haughtiness and air of superiority due to this. Hagar has always been the inferior, being a slave, and Sarai, as the mistress, the wife of a very wealthy and successful businessman and now her peon slave can do what she has been unable to do for the past several decades: give Abram a child. Abram is the only one who perhaps is not filled with mental attitude sins, however, what he did has filled his household with misery. One woman expressing her emotion with mental attitude sins is difficult enough; Abram now has two women who have become spiteful towards one another and it will be hell on earth for all three of them under the same roof. Abram does not want to deal with the headache. He is going to throw it back into his wife's lap. He should be a man and take charge at this point. He should have thought through Sarai's original plan first, but it is too late for that. Now that he has screwed up his household by obeying his wife, it is time for him to go into action as the head of the household and to solve the problem fairly between the two women. He passes the buck back to the person whose idea this all was in the first place.

Sarai blames Abram for this. It was her idea, and yet she blames Abram. Obviously, some things in male-female relationships never change over time. And notice Sarai's complaint: *she gave me a mean look!* It is the same verb as in v. 4—it is clear that Hagar now has a diminished view of Sarai—and Sarai knows it. What has been going on may have been news to Abram, because Sarai has to point this out to him.

## Genesis 16:5f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
shâphaṭ (שָׁפַט) [pronounced shaw-FAHT]	<i>to judge, to condemn, to punish; to defend [especially the poor and oppressed], to defend [one's cause] and deliver him from his enemies; to rule, to govern</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
bêyn (בֵּינַי) [pronounced bane]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107
When this preposition is found more than once, it is most accurately rendered <i>between</i> (and translated only once).			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּינַי) [pronounced bane]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #996 BDB #107

**Translation:** Y<sup>e</sup>howah will judge between you and me.”

Sarai asks for God to judge between her and Abram; she blames Abram for the results of her bad decision.

However, we ought not to be too hard on Sarai here. Abram did listen to her and he did go along with this plan, without checking with God; without considering the ramifications of what they were doing. Abram's behavior after the fact probably contributes, to some degree, to the way that Hagar is treating Sarai. So calling for God to judge between the two of them is not Sarai being completely irrational.

Genesis 16:5 So Sarai said to Abram, “[Let] my injury [be] upon you. I [even] I have give my maid into your control, but when she saw that she conceived, I have become diminished in her eyes. Y<sup>e</sup>howah will judge between you and me.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:5 So Sarai said to Abram, “Let this injury against me be upon you. I certain gave my maid to you, but as soon as she saw that she had conceived, I then became diminished in her estimation. Let Jehovah judge between us.” (Kukis paraphrase)

#### A discussion of Genesis 16:1–5:

Gen 16:1–3 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said to Abram, "Look, [up until] 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 [and obeyed] the voice of Sarai. 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.



Sarai clearly wants a child very badly; my guess is, Abram, when asked to have sex with another woman, responded as any male would. "Of course, honey; I'll take one for the team." Today, he might ask, "Do you really want me to impregnate Hagar or is this some kind of a test?" It is possible that some thought is being given to God's promises as well, but God is only mentioned twice in this passage: (1) Sarai blames God for her being infertile and (2) after the child is born to Hagar, Sarai asks for God to judge between her and Abram. That tells us that God's promises to Abram were not first and foremost on their minds. It is certainly possible that Sarai used God's promises to rationalize what she was doing.

With regards to Sarai, patience and waiting on God ought to be the order of the day. She obviously wants a child and blames God that she does not have one. However, she certainly knows that promises that God has made to Abram.

At this juncture, instead of moving ahead with their human viewpoint plan, Abram should have stopped this process and said, "I need guidance from God, just to make sure." However, there are other things at play here. Sarai wants a child and she believes that God is preventing her from having one, so she is willing to go the surrogate-mother route. Hagar wants to elevate her position in the household, and this is the ideal way to make that happen. And Abram is, as a male, tempted. Since Sarai proposed this plan, it is likely that Abram has begun to see Hagar in a different light. So, even though God is mentioned twice in this passage (vv. 1–5), it is unrelated to His plan or His promises.

**Gen 16:4–5** And Abram went in to Hagar [on several occasions], and she conceived [became pregnant and continued to show signs of pregnancy]. And when Hagar kept observing that she herself had become pregnant, she kept looking with contempt upon her mistress, Sarai. And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you [that is, *this is all your fault, Abram*]! 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!"

Sarai is apparently aware of the promises that God made to Abram. There is no indication that these promises were to be kept a secret from Sarai. However, her actual desire is to have a child. Her solution was to have her husband have sex with her personal female servant, and use her as a surrogate; something which was not unknown in that time period.

When Hagar, Sarai's servant, becomes pregnant, the servant girl begins to look down on her mistress, because she is able to get pregnant and her mistress is unable to. This has dramatically changed the dynamic of Abram's marriage, as the introduction of a 3<sup>rd</sup> party into a marriage would naturally do.

How should Abram have responded? With Bible doctrine. He has doctrine in his soul. He knows what God has promised. God told Abram that his heir would be from his own loins (that is, Abram would sire such a child—Genesis 15:4). That Abram's seed would eventually be like the stars of the heavens or the dust of the earth (Genesis 13:16–15:5). Abram has already suggested that his heir would end up being one of those in his household, and God told him, *no* (Genesis 15:2–4). Combine this with what Abram and Sarai both know about Adam and Eve, and there is clearly no reason for Abram to go outside of the marriage in order to sire a child. At the very least, Abram should say, "I'll ask God about this." But this was not his response. Instead, he listened and obeyed his wife.

**Gen 16:5** And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you [that is, *this is all your fault, Abram*]! 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!"

Abram is at a loss here. The problem is, he has allowed Sarai to undermine his authority, and she is technically right—this is Abram's fault. She may have had the idea to do this and she may have made the suggestion, but Abram followed through with the action. Abram is the head of their household, and what he chose to do was

wrong. It does not matter that this was Sarai's idea. He ought to take responsibility for what has transpired; however, instead, he takes the path of least resistance.

And so says Abram unto Sarai, "Behold, your maid [is] in your hand; do to her the good in your [two] eyes." And so afflicted her Sarai and so she flees from her faces.

Genesis  
16:6

Abram said to Sarai, "Look, your maid [is] in your power; do to her [whatever is] right in your [own] estimation." Consequently, Sarai afflicted Hagar [lit., *her*] and she fled from her presence.

Abram said to Sarai, "Listen, your maid is in your power; you may do to her whatever you think is right." Therefore, Sarai afflicted Hagar, causing her to run away.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)	And Abram said to Sara, Behold, thy handmaid is under thy authority: do to her what is right in thine eyes. And Sara afflicted her, and she escaped from before her.
Latin Vulgate	And Abram made answer, and said to her: Behold your handmaid is in your own hand, use her as it pleases you. And when Sarai afflicted her, she ran away.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Abram unto Sarai, "Behold, your maid [is] in your hand; do to her the good in your [two] eyes." And so afflicted her Sarai and so she flees from her faces.
Peshitta (Syriac)	But Abram said to Sarai his wife, Behold your maid is at your disposal; do to her as it pleases you. And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Abram said to Sarai, Behold your handmaid is in your hands, use her as it may seem good to you. And Sarai afflicted her, and she fled from her face.

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Abram said, "All right! She's your slave, and you can do whatever you want with her." But Sarai began treating Hagar so harshly that she finally ran away.
Easy English	Abram said to Sarai, 'Your maid is in your power. Do to her whatever you want.' Then Sarai was cruel to Hagar. And Hagar ran away.
Easy-to-Read Version	But Abram said to Sarai, "Hagar is your slave. You can do anything you want to her." So Sarai was mean to her servant Hagar, and Hagar ran away.
<i>The Message</i>	"You decide," said Abram. "Your maid is your business." Sarai was abusive to Hagar and she ran away.
New Century Version	But Abram said to Sarai, "You are Hagar's mistress. Do anything you want to her." Then Sarai was hard on Hagar, and Hagar ran away.
New Life Version	But Abram said to Sarai, "See, the woman who serves you is in your power. Do what you want with her." So Sarai made it hard for Hagar. And Hagar ran away from her.
The Voice	<b>Abram</b> (to Sarai): Sarai-look, she's still your servant girl. Do whatever you want with her. She's under your control. So Sarai clamped down on Hagar severely, and Hagar ran away.

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then Abram told Sara: 'Look, your handmaid is yours! Treat her any way that seems right to you!'
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	So, Sara started treating [Hagar] badly, and she ran away.
Beck's American Translation	Abram said to Sarai, "Look, your maid is in your power; handle her as you please." Then Sarai treated her harshly until she ran away from her.
Christian Community Bible	Abram said to Sarai, "Your servant is in your power; do with her as you please." Then Sarai treated her so badly that she ran away.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	To this, Abram made answer, Is she not in thy power, thy own maid-servant? Do what thou wilt with her. Thus it was that Sarai used her cruelly, and she took refuge in flight.
New American Bible (2002)	Abram told Sarai: "Your maid is in your power. Do to her whatever you please." Sarai then abused her so much that Hagar ran away from her.
New American Bible (2011)	Abram told Sarai: "Your maid is in your power. Do to her what you regard as right." Sarai then mistreated her so much that Hagar ran away from her.
NIRV	"Your servant belongs to you," Abram said. "Do with her what you think is best." Then Sarai treated Hagar badly. So Hagar ran away from her.
New Jerusalem Bible	'Very well,' Abram said to Sarai, 'your slave-girl is at your disposal. Treat her as you think fit.' Sarai accordingly treated her so badly that she ran away from her.
Revised English Bible	Abram replied, 'Your slave-girl is in your hands; deal with her as you please.' So Sarai ill-treated her and she ran away from her mistress.
Today's NIV	"Your servant is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Abram said to Sarai, "Here, your handmaid is in your hand: do to her as good in your eyes." Sarai humbled her and she disappeared from her face.
Bible in Basic English	And Abram said, The woman is in your power; do with her whatever seems good to you. And Sarai was cruel to her, so that she went running away from her.
Conservapedia	But Abram said back to Sarai, "Look: she's your slave-girl; you handle her." Then, when Sarai treated her harshly, she ran away. Abram proves no better able to handle the situation than is Sarai.
The Expanded Bible	But Abram said to Sarai, "·You are Hagar's mistress [ <sup>L</sup> Your slave girl is in your hand/power]. Do ·anything you want [ <sup>L</sup> what is good in your eyes] to her." Then Sarai ·was hard on [afflicted; abused] Hagar, and Hagar ·ran away [ <sup>L</sup> fled from her presence].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Abram answered Sarai, " Well, your maid is under your hand ; do to her whatever you consider right." So Sarai persecuted her, and she fled from her presence.
HCSB	Abram replied to Sarai, "Here, your slave is in your hands; do whatever you want with her." Then Sarai mistreated her so much that she ran away from her.
NET Bible®	Abram said to Sarai, "Since [The clause is introduced with the particle הִנֵּה (hinneh), introducing a foundational clause for the coming imperative: "since...do."] your servant is under your authority [Heb "in your hand."], do to her whatever you think best [Heb "what is good in your eyes."]. Then Sarai treated Hagar [Heb "her"; the referent (Hagar) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] harshly [In the Piel stem the verb הִנַּע ('anah) means "to afflict, to oppress, to treat harshly, to mistreat."], so she ran away from Sarai [Heb "and she fled from her presence." The referent of "her" (Sarai) has been specified in the translation for clarity.].
NIV, ©2011	"Your slave is in your hands [Jos 9:25]," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated [Ge 31:50] Hagar; so she fled from her.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	However, Avram answered Sarai, "Look, she's your slave-girl. Deal with her as you think fit."Then Sarai treated her so harshly that she ran away from her.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Abram says to Saray,

	Behold, your maid is in your hand; work to her as is good in your eyes. - and Sarai humbles her and she flees from her face.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And Abram said to Sarai, "Here is your handmaid in your hand; do to her that which is proper in your eyes." And Sarai afflicted her, and she fled from before her.
Kaplan Translation	Abram replied to Sarai, 'Your slave is in your hands. Do with her as you see fit.' Sarai abused her, and [Hagar] ran away from her.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	But Avram said unto Sarai, Hinei, thy shifchah is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her face.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	But Abram said to Sarai, See here, your maid is in your hands <i>and</i> power; do as you please with her. And when Sarai dealt severely with her, humbling <i>and</i> afflicting her, she [Hagar] fled from her.
Concordant Literal Version	And saying is Abram to Sarai, "Behold, your maid is in your hands. Do to her what is good in your eyes. And Sarai is humiliating her, and away is she running from her face.
Context Group Version	But Abram said to Sarai, Look, your slave is in your hand; do to her that which is good in your eyes. And Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her face.
Darby Translation	And Abram said to Sarai, Behold, thy maidservant is in thy hand: do to her what is good in thine eyes. And Sarai oppressed her; and she fled from her face.
English Standard Version	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.
Green's Literal Translation	But Abram said to Sarai, See, your slave girl <i>is</i> in your hand. Do to her what is good in your eyes. And Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from before her.
Syndein/Thieme	Abram said unto Sarai, "Behold, your maid is 'under your authority' {yad idiom: literally 'in your hand'}. Manufacture {'asah - out of your mental attitude sins}/ do to her as it pleases you. And when Sarai abused/afflicted/bullied her {Hagar}, she {Hagar} fled from her {Sarai} presence/face.
World English Bible	But Abram said to Sarai, "Behold, your maid is in your hand. Do to her whatever is good in your eyes." Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her face.
Young's Updated LT	And Abram says unto Sarai, "Lo, your handmaid is in your hand, do to her that which is good in your eyes;" and Sarai afflicted her, and she flees from her presence.

**The gist of this verse:** Abram tells Sarai to deal with Hagar as she wishes; so she treats Hagar with such cruelty that she runs away.

Genesis 16:6a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Ab <sup>e</sup> râm (אָבְרָם) [pronounced <i>ab<sup>v</sup>-RAWM</i> ]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4

## Genesis 16:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'el (אֵל) [pronounced eh]l]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Sâray (שָׂרַי) [pronounced saw-RAY or saw-RAH-ee]	<i>my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #8297 BDB #979
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced hin-NAY]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
The clause is introduced with the particle הִנֵּה (hinneh), introducing a foundational clause for the coming imperative: "since...do." <sup>5</sup>			
shiph <sup>e</sup> châh (שִׁפְחָה) [pronounced shif-KHAW]	<i>maid, maid-servant, household servant, handmaid, female slave</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

This combination of the bêyth preposition and *hand* means *in your hand; in your power, under your control; with you; through you, by you, by means of you; at your hand* [i.e., *before your, in your sight*].

**Translation:** Abram said to Sarai, "Look, your maid [is] in your power;...

This is somewhat of a headache for Abram. He went along with Sarai in order to raise up a child from his own seed; and now, his home life is a mess. He no doubt like this idea of having a child, but dealing with two women who are angry at one another—no man wants to be in the middle of that.

Sarai, who set all of this up, has complained, and Abram has decided to leave it up to Sarai to solve this situation. This was not the best approach, as it is Sarai's idea that got them into this mess in the first place.

Abram points out that, Hagar, Sarai's maid, was under her authority. She got to choose what got done with this maid.

## Genesis 16:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

<sup>5</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?gen16.htm> accessed November 30, 2013.



## Genesis 16:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʔôwb (בוט) [pronounced toh <sup>bv</sup> ]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better; approved</i>	masculine singular adjective which can act like a substantive; with the definite article	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced ʿay-nah-YIM]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine dual noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744

This phrase is literally *in your eyes*, but it can be translated *in your opinion, in your estimation, in your sight, to your way of thinking, as you see [it]*.

**Translation:** ...do to her [whatever is] right in your [own] estimation.”

Abram gives Sarai carte blanc to do whatever she believed to be right. Sarai will take this to understand that she can essentially do whatever she wants to do with Hagar, her maid.

Abram has basically given Sarai carte blanc to express her mental attitude sins in any way that she feels. Abram is wrongly taking a step back, telling Sarai that this is a problem between her and her maid; he is not going to become involved and, since Sarai is the mistress, she can do whatever she would like to her slave, Hagar. Given the limits of her mental attitude, this is great news to Sarai and she proceeds to make Hagar's life a living hell. When you have two women under the same roof who are sleeping with the same man and these women have no restraints put upon their old sin natures, then it is apropos to describe the lives of everyone under that roof as hell on earth. Sarai was so vicious, so temperamental, so thoughtless in her treatment of Hagar, Hagar fled. Hagar is totally without resources, she is helpless, she is pregnant but Sarai made her life so miserable that she had no choice but to book it on out of there. No matter what, their lives would have been miserable as soon as Abram consented to Sarai's plan; however, Hagar's mental attitude toward Sarai just fueled the fire. If she did not develop this attitude of superiority over a fertile womb, something over which she has no control; something which is totally the grace of God, then the household difficulties could have been minimized somewhat (although Sarai would have still been filled with mental attitude sins). One positive note: since Hagar lived under the roof of Abram and Sarai, she became a believer in Jesus Christ. She had a personal relationship with the God of the universe, the God of Adam, of Noah, of Melchizedek. Because of that, Jesus Christ came to her.

## Genesis 16:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

Genesis 16:6c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʿānâh (עָנָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-NAWH</i> ]	<i>to oppress, to depress, to afflict; to persecute; to intimidate; to humble; to deal harshly [with someone]; to harangue [harass, provoke, hassle]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Piel imperfect with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #6031 BDB #776
Sāray (סָרַי) [pronounced <i>saw-RAY</i> or <i>saw-RAH-ee</i> ]	<i>my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #8297 BDB #979

**Translation:** Consequently, Sarai afflicted Hagar [lit., her]...

Sarai immediately began to oppress and afflict Hagar. We do not know exactly what happened or what she did; perhaps she poured on the work or demanded her to do more than she was able to do (we do not know how long after the pregnancy that this occurred).

Genesis 16:6d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bārach (בָּרַח) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHKH</i> ]	<i>to go [pass] through, to flee [away]; to hasten, to come quickly; to reach across</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1272 BDB #137
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
pānîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, min pānîym and a suffix mean *from before her face, out from before her face, from her, from one's presence*. However, together, they can also be a reference to the cause, whether near or remote, and can therefore be rendered *because of her, by her*.

**Translation:** ...and she fled from her presence.

The pressure was so great, that Hagar ran away from her mistress.

**Gen 16:6** But Abram said to Sarai, "Listen, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she [Hagar] fled from her [Sarai].

Genesis 16:6 Abram said to Sarai, "Look, your maid [is] in your power; do to her [whatever is] right in your [own] estimation." Consequently, Sarai afflicted Hagar [lit., *her*] and she fled from her presence. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:6 Abram said to Sarai, "Listen, your maid is in your power; you may do to her whatever you think is right." Therefore, Sarai afflicted Hagar, causing her to run away. (Kukis paraphrase)

So, Abram does exactly what you would expect: he abdicates his responsibility in the matter and suggests that his wife deal with the problem.

We know that this argument took place on several occasions; or that this was a long discussion. *Said* in both verses is a Qal imperfect, indicating that Sarai kept talking and Abram kept talking. Did Abram try the line, "But, honey, this was all your idea"? We don't know. But we are only given the gist of the conversation here, but with the implication that this topic of conversation came up again and again between Sarai and Abram.

The bullet points are:

Sarai: "This is all your fault—even God knows this."

Abram: "She's your servant; you deal with her."

If you have been married for over one month, I am sure that you have had a lengthy conversation with your spouse, where this pretty much sums up your discussion.

**Gen 16:6** But Abram said to Sarai, "Look, your servant is in your power [lit., *hand*]; do to her as you please [lit., *do what is good in your eyes*]." Therefore, Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she [Hagar] fled from her [Sarai].

Abram is in complete failure mode here. He tells Sarai to do whatever she wants to do with her servant girl, because she is her servant. *To deal harshly* is the Piel imperfect of 'ânâh (אָנָה) [pronounced *gaw-NAWH*], which means (in the Piel) *to oppress, to depress, to afflict; to persecute; to intimidate; to humble; to deal harshly [with someone]; to harangue [harass, provoke, hassle]*. Strong's #6031 BDB #776. The imperfect tense indicates that Sarai kept intimidating and harassing her servant-girl. Sarai treats her so harshly that Hagar runs away.

**Map of the Way to Egypt;** from **According to the Scriptures**, accessed December 1, 2013.

At this time, Abram and Sarai are living somewhere in southern Canaan (what would later become Judah); and a very pregnant Hagar is walking back to Egypt. This is about a 200 mile trek, much of it through uninhabited wilderness. A pregnant Hagar would not survive such a walk.



## The Angel of the Lord Speaks to Hagar as She Flees Abram's Compound

And so finds her a Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah upon a spring of the waters in the desert-wilderness upon a spring in a way of Shur. And so He says, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, where from here have you come and where are you going?" And so she says, "From faces of Sarai my mistress I am fleeing."

Genesis  
16:7-8

The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah found her beside a spring of waters in the desert-wilderness near the spring on the road to Shur. And He said, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, from where have you come and where are you going [to]?" She answered, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."

The Angel of Jehovah found her beside a spring of waters in the desert-wilderness near the spring which is on the road to Shur. And He asked her, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, where did you come from and where to you think that you are going?" She answered him, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)	And the Angel of the Lord found her at the fountain of waters in the desert; at the fountain of waters which is in the way to Chagra. [JERUSALEM. Chalitza.] And He said, Hagar, handmaid of Sara, from where do you come and where do you go? And she said, From before Sara my mistress I have escaped.
Latin Vulgate	And the angel of the Lord having found her, by a fountain of water in the wilderness, which is in the way to Sur in the desert, He said to her: Agar, handmaid of Sarai, from where did you come? And where do you go? And she answered: I flee from the face of Sarai, my mistress.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so finds her a Messenger of Y <sup>e</sup> howah upon a spring of the waters in the desert-wilderness upon a spring in a way of Shur. And so He says, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, where from here have you come and where are you going?" And so she says, "From faces of Sarai my mistress I am fleeing."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain on the road to Gadar. And he said to her, Hagar, maid of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going? And she said, I flee from the presence of my mistress Sarai.

Significant differences:

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The Lord's messenger found Hagar at a spring in the desert, the spring on the road to Shur, and said, "Hagar! Sarai's servant! Where did you come from and where are you going?" She said, "From Sarai my mistress. I'm running away."
Contemporary English V.	Hagar stopped to rest at a spring in the desert on the road to Shur. While she was there, the angel of the LORD came to her and asked, "Hagar, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She answered, "I'm running away from Sarai, my owner."
Easy English	<b>God's *angel finds Hagar, 16:7-16</b> But the *angel of the *Lord found Hagar in the desert. Hagar was near a well that gave water. That well was on the way to Shur. The *angel said, 'Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from? And where are you going to?' Hagar replied, 'I am running away from my boss Sarai.'

Easy-to-Read Version	The Angel of the Lord found Hagar near a pool of water in the desert. The pool was by the road to Shur. The Angel said, "Hagar, you are Sarai's servant. Why are you here? Where are you going?"
New Life Version	The angel of the Lord found Hagar by a well of water in the desert on the way to Shur. He said, "Hagar, you who serve Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" And she said, "I am running away from Sarai, the one I serve."
The Voice	The Special Messenger of the Eternal One found Hagar alone by a spring of water out in the desert. It was the spring of water along the road that went to Shur. <hr/> When the Lord sends His Special Messenger, it is generally an important and sensitive mission (see, too, Exodus 3; Numbers 22; and Judges 6). This special agent bears God's unique, covenant name and speaks with divine authority in ways other messengers do not. In fact, by what Hagar says and does next, it is clear she thinks she has encountered the Lord Himself. <hr/> <b>Special Messenger:</b> Hagar, Sarai's servant girl? Where have you come from, and where are you planning to go? <b>Hagar:</b> I am running away from my mistress, Sarai!.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then a messenger from Jehovah found [Hagar] by a spring of water in the desert (the spring on the way to Sur). 8 And Jehovah's messenger said to her: 'Hagar, Sara's maid; Where are you coming from and where are you going?' And she replied: 'I'm running away from my mistress, Sara.'
Christian Community Bible	The angel of Yahweh found her near a spring in the wilderness and said to her, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I'm running away from Sarai, my mistress."
<i>God's Word™</i>	The Messenger of the LORD found her by a spring in the desert, the spring on the way to Shur. He said, "Hagar, Sarai's slave, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She answered, "I'm running away from my owner Sarai."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	She was sitting by a well out in the wilderness, on the desert road to Sur, when an angel of the Lord found her. Whence comes Agar, he asked, and where does she go, that was Sarai's maid-servant? And she answered, It is from the threats of my mistress, Sarai, that I have fled.
New American Bible (2002)	The LORD'S messenger [The LORD'S messenger: a manifestation of God in human form; therefore in Genesis 16:13 the messenger is identified with the Lord himself.] found her by a spring in the wilderness, the spring on the road to Shur, and he asked, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She answered, "I am running away from my mistress, Sarai."
New American Bible (2011)	The LORD's angel [The LORD's angel: a manifestation of God in human form; in v. 13 the messenger is identified with God. See note on Ex 3:2.] found her by a spring in the wilderness, the spring on the road to Shur [Ex 15:22.], and he asked, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She answered, "I am running away from my mistress, Sarai."
NIRV	The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring of water in the desert. The spring was beside the road to Shur. 8 He said, "Hagar, you are the servant of Sarai. Where have you come from? Where are you going?" "I'm running away from my owner Sarai," she answered.
Today's NIV	The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. And he said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):



Ancient Roots Translinear	A messenger of Yahweh found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain on the way of the trade-route. He said, "Hagar, Sarai's handmaid, from where do you come and where do you go?" She said, "I disappeared from the face of my mistress Sarai."
Bible in Basic English	And an angel of the Lord came to her by a fountain of water in the waste land, by the fountain on the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's servant, where have you come from and where are you going? And she said, I am running away from Sarai, my master's wife.
Conservapedia	The Angel of the Lord [This angel is actually Jesus Christ in His pre-incarnate manifestation.] found her near an oasis [The Hebrew word used here for "oasis" is actually the same as the word for "eye." The Hebrews named an oasis by what it looked like.], the oasis along the road to Shur. He said, "Hagar, slave-girl of Sarai, where did you come from, and where do you think you're going?" And she said, "I am running away from my mistress, Sarai."
The Expanded Bible	The angel [messenger] of the Lord [the angel of the Lord was either a representative of the Lord or the Lord himself; v. 13; Judg. 6:11, 14] found Hagar beside a spring of water in the desert [wilderness], by the road to Shur [likely a location in southern Canaan; 20:1; 25:18; Ex. 15:22; 1 Sam. 15:7]. The angel [He] said, "Hagar, Sarai's slave girl, where have you come from? Where are you going?" Hagar answered, "I am running away [fleeing] from my mistress Sarai."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	A messenger of the EVER-LIVING met her, however, at the Well of Waters in the Desert, at the Well by the road to the Wall [The wall across the Isthmus of Suez built to protect Egypt from border raiders.], and asked, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where are you going, and what are you weeping for ? " And she answered, " I am flying from the hand of Sarai, my mistress."
NET Bible®	The Lord's angel [Heb "the messenger of the Lord." Some identify the angel of the Lord as the preincarnate Christ because in some texts the angel is identified with the Lord himself. However, it is more likely that the angel merely represents the Lord; he can speak for the Lord because he is sent with the Lord's full authority. In some cases the angel is clearly distinct from the Lord (see Judg 6:11-23). It is not certain if the same angel is always in view. Though the proper name following the noun "angel" makes the construction definite, this may simply indicate that a definite angel sent from the Lord is referred to in any given context. It need not be the same angel on every occasion. Note the analogous expression "the servant of the Lord," which refers to various individuals in the OT (see BDB 714 s.v. עֲבָדָה).] found Hagar near a spring of water in the desert - the spring that is along the road to Shur [Heb "And the angel of the Lord found her near the spring of water in the desert, near the spring on the way to Shur."]. He said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She replied, "I'm running away from [Heb "from the presence of."] my mistress, Sarai."
New Heart English Bible	The angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. He said, "Hagar, Sarai's handmaid, where did you come from? Where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the face of my mistress Sarai."
NIV, ©2011	The angel of the Lord [ver 11; Ge 21:17; 22:11, 15; 24:7, 40; 31:11; 48:16; Ex 3:2; 14:19; 23:20, 23; 32:34; 33:2; Nu 22:22; Jdg 2:1; 6:11; 13:3; 2Sa 24:16; 1Ki 19:5; 2Ki 1:3; 19:35; Ps 34:7; Zec 1:11; S Ac 5:19] found Hagar near a spring [ver 14; Ge 21:19] in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur [Ge 20:1; 25:18; Ex 15:22; 1Sa 15:7; 27:8]. And he said, "Hagar [S ver 1], slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going [S Ge 3:9]?" "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	The angel of ADONAI found her by a spring in the desert, the spring on the road to Shur, and said, "Hagar! Sarai's slave-girl! Where have you come from, and where are you going?" She answered, "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai."
exeGeseges companion Bible	And the angel of Yah Veh finds her by a fountain of water in the wilderness - by the fountain in the way to Shur: and he says, Hagar, maid of Saray, whence come you? And where go you? And she says, I flee from the face of my lady Saray.
Kaplan Translation	An angel of God encountered her by a spring in the desert, in the oasis [Eyn in Hebrew, as distinguished from eyn ha-mayim which we translate as well or spring.] on the road to Shur. This was a well known road to Egypt, some 50 miles south of the Mediterranean coast. It is obvious that Hagar was returning to Egypt, her homeland (cf. Genesis 16:1). The Targum translates Shur as Chagra, a city on the border of the Holy Land, possibly on the 'River of Egypt' (Wadi el Arish, see Genesis 15:18). This would place it near the present Al Qusayma, approximately 100 miles southwest of Hebron. The name Shur is still found in the area in such places as Jebel es-Sur in the et-Tih desert. Josephus identifies Shur with Pelusium on the Mediterranean coast near Egypt (Antiquities 6:7:3). Saadia Gaon states that it is Jifar. Also see note on Genesis 16:14. The angel therefore encountered Hagar just as she was leaving the Holy Land. [The angel] said, 'Hagar, maid of Sarai! From where are you coming, and where are you going?' 'I am running away from my mistress, Sarai,' she replied.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the Malach Hashem found her by a spring of mayim in the midbar, near the spring on the road to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's shifchah, from where camest thou? And where wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my gevirah Sarai.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	But the Angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness on the road to Shur. And He said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, where did you come from, and where are you intending to go? And she said, I am running away from my mistress Sarai. "The Angel of the Lord" or "of God" or "of His presence" is readily identified with the Lord God (Gen. 16:11, 13; 22:11, 12; 31:11, 13; Exod. 3:1-6 and other passages). But it is obvious that the "Angel of the Lord" is a distinct person in Himself from God the Father (Gen. 24:7; Exod. 23:20; Zech. 1:12, 13 and other passages). Nor does the "Angel of the Lord" appear again after Christ came in human form. He must of necessity be One of the "three-in-one" Godhead. The "Angel of the Lord" is the visible Lord God of the Old Testament, as Jesus Christ is of the New Testament. Thus His deity is clearly portrayed in the Old Testament. The Cambridge Bible observes, "There is a fascinating forecast of the coming Messiah, breaking through the dimness with amazing consistency, at intervals from Genesis to Malachi. Abraham, Moses, the slave girl Hagar, the impoverished farmer Gideon, even the humble parents of Samson, had seen and talked with Him centuries before the herald angels proclaimed His birth in Bethlehem."
Concordant Literal Version	And finding her is a messenger of Yahweh at a spring of water in the wilderness, at a spring on the way of the barricade. And saying to her is the messenger of Yahweh, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, whence come you and whither are you going? And saying is she, "From the face of Sarai, my mistress, am I running away.

Context Group Version	And the messenger of YHWH found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's slave, where did you come from and where are you going? And she said, I am fleeing from the face of my mistress Sarai.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	And the messenger of Yahweh b found her by the fountain of water in the desert,—by the fountain in the way to Shur. So he said Hagar! handmaid of Sarai! Whence hast thou come, and whither wouldst thou go? And she said, From the face of Sarai, my lady, am, I, fleeing.
Green's Literal Translation	And the Angel of Jehovah found her by a well of water in the wilderness; by the well in the way of Shur. And He said, Hagar, Sarai's slave-girl, where did you come from? And where do you go? And she said, I am fleeing from the face of my mistress, Sarai.
NASB	Now the angel of the Lord [Gen 21:17, 18; 22:11, 15; 31:11] found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur [Gen 20:1; 25:18]. He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from [Gen 3:9; 1 Kin 19:9, 13] and where are you going?" And she said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."
Syndein/Thieme	{Theophanic Angel - Appearance of Jesus Christ as the 'Angel of Jehovah'} And the angel/messenger {mal'ak} of Jehovah/God found her {Hagar} {in grace God finds us! We do not find Him! That is GRACE} by a fountain/spring {`ayin} of water in the desert . . . by the fountain/spring {`ayin} on the way to Shur {on the way to Egypt}. {Note: In verse 13 we see that this 'messenger' is the Lord Himself on His own mission. The manifest member of the Godhead always is the second member - Jesus Christ. This is the doctrine of Christophanies (Greek for Christ + appearances).} {Note: RBT says the angel of Jehovah is not always said to be God. So, sometimes, 'Jehovah' in that case is God the Father and the angel is still Jesus Christ, but in those cases, He is on a mission for God the Father.} And He said {'amar}, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, from where have you come? {she did not know Him, but He knew her! And, He knew where she was! So, just as with when Adam was hiding in the garden and God went to find Him . . . this means - 'why are you, where you are?'} And where will you keep on going? And she said {'amar}, "I flee from the presence/face of my mistress Sarai." {Note: Principal is that changing circumstances does not solve any problem - don't run away from your problems. Face your problems.}
Webster's updated Bible	And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, from where did you come? And where will you go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.
Young's Updated LT	And a messenger of Jehovah finds her by the fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur, and he says, "Hagar, Sarai's handmaid, whence have you come, and where will you go?" and she says, "From the presence of Sarai, my mistress, I am fleeing."
<b>The gist of this verse:</b>	The Angel of the Lord finds Hagar by a fountain of water in the desert-wilderness and asks her where did she come from and where is she going. She says that she is running from her mistress Sarai.

## Genesis 16:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâtsâ' (מצא) [pronounced <i>maw-TSAW</i> ]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover; to meet (encounter)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
mal'âkê (מלאך) [pronounced <i>mah'-AWK</i> ]	<i>messenger or angel; this word has been used for a prophet (Isaiah 42:19) and priest (Mal. 2:7)</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4397 BDB #521
This is the first time that this word occurs in the Bible.			
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'al (לע) [pronounced <i>gah</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
'ayin (עין) [pronounced <i>GAH-yin</i> ]	<i>spring, fountain; eye, spiritual eyes</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
mayim (מים) [pronounced <i>MAH-yim</i> ]	<i>water, waters</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4325 BDB #565
bê (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mid'bâr (מדבר) [pronounced <i>mid'-BAWR</i> ]	<i>wilderness, unpopulated wilderness, desert wilderness; mouth</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article; pausal form	Strong's #4057 BDB #184

**Translation:** The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah found her beside a spring of waters in the desert-wilderness...

The Messenger of Angel of Y<sup>e</sup>howah is Jesus Christ in His Preincarnate form. This is Jesus as the Revealed Lord.

Hagar is carrying Abram's child, and that counts for something to God, even though this child does not represent the seed of promise.

This is the first mention in the OT of the angel, or the messenger, of Yahweh. The Angel of the Lord is Jesus Christ. He is the revealed member of the Godhead. Prior to the incarnation, Jesus Christ reveals Himself to man in several ways: as God in the garden, as an angel, as a man, as a burning bush, in dreams, etc. See the **Doctrine of the Angel of Jehovah** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)). The Angel of the Lord comes to her at this time. Who exactly is the Angel of Jehovah?

This is taken from the **Doctrine of the Angel of Jehovah** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

## The Abbreviated Doctrine of the Angel of Jehovah

1. The Angel of the Lord is one of the preincarnate forms of Jesus Christ, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Member of the Trinity.
2. There are actually several names for the Angel of Jehovah, all of which are related to divine designations:
  - 1) The Angel (Messenger, representative, one sent) of Jehovah. Gen. 16:7
  - 2) The Angel of God. Gen. 21:17 31:11 21:17 Ex.14:19 Judges 6:20
  - 3) The Angel (Messenger) Who has redeemed me. Gen. 48:16
  - 4) The Angel (Messenger) of His Presence (Face). Isa. 63:9
  - 5) The Angel of the Covenant (Contract). Mal. 3:1
  - 6) The Destroying Angel. 1Chron. 21:15 2Sam. 24:16
3. The Angel of Jehovah is identified as Jehovah. Gen. 16:7-13 21:17-18 22:11-18 31:11-13 48:15,16 Exodus 3:2 cf. Acts 7:30-35 Ex. 13:21 14:19 Judges.2:1-4 5:23 6:11-23 13:3-22 2Sam. 24:16 Zechariah 1:12-13.
  - 1) Genesis 22:11-12 **But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." And He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."**
  - 2) Genesis 31:11, 13 **"Then the Angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am.' 'I am the God {of} Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to Me; now arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth.' "**
  - 3) Exodus 3:2-4 **And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. So Moses said, "I must turn aside now, and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up." When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush, and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."**
4. The Angel of Jehovah is distinguished from Jehovah. Gen. 24:7 40 Ex. 23:20 32:34 Num. 20:16 1 Chron. 21:15-18 Isa. 63:9 Zech. 1:12-13.
  - 1) Exodus 32:34 **"But go now, lead the people where I told you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you; nevertheless in the day when I punish, I will punish them for their sin."**
  - 2) Isaiah 63:9 **In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and in His mercy He redeemed them; and He lifted them and carried them all the days of old.**
  - 3) Zechariah 1:12-13 **Then the Angel of the LORD answered and said, "O LORD of hosts, how long wilt You have no compassion for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which You hast been indignant these seventy years?" And the LORD answered the Angel Who was speaking with me with gracious words, comforting words.**
5. The Angel of Jehovah does the works of God.
  - 1) He provides a substitutionary sacrifice for Abram and blesses Abraham, confirming promises given to him by God. Genesis 22:11-18
  - 2) The Angel of Jehovah imposes God's will upon Balaam in Num. 22:22-35
  - 3) The Angel of the Lord becomes the Savior of Israel as well as their Redeemer. Isaiah 63:8-9 **He [God] said, "They are indeed My people, children who will not be disloyal," and He became their Savior. In all their suffering, He suffered, and the Angel of His Presence saved them. He redeemed them because of His love and compassion; He lifted them up and carried them all the days of the past. Jesus Christ is our Redeemer, Who has given Himself as our ransom. Matthew 20:28 Colossians 1:14**
6. Therefore, the Angel of Jehovah is the Second Person of the Trinity. John 1:18 6:46 2Corinthians 4:4 Colossians 1:15 1Tim. 6:16 Hebrews 1:1-2 1John 4:12.
  - 1) The Second Person of the Trinity is the visible God of the New Testament.
    - (1) John 1:18 **No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God [Jesus Christ the Son], who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained {Him.}**
    - (2) John 6:46 **"Not that any man has seen the Father, except the One [Jesus Christ] Who is from God; He has seen the Father.**
    - (3) 1 John 4:12a **No one has beheld God at any time;**
  - 2) The Angel of Jehovah never appears after the Incarnation. Note that Acts 12:7, 11 is not a



## The Abbreviated Doctrine of the Angel of Jehovah

- reference to the *Angel of Jehovah* but to an angel *from* the Lord (Jesus Christ). (compare Col. 3:1)
- 3) Both the Angel of Jehovah and Jesus Christ are sent by the Father. Gen. 24:7 Ex. 23:20 Num. 20:16 Dan. 3:25, 28 6:22 John 3:17 6:44 John 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25 1John 4:14
  - 4) Since neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit can be seen by man (John 1:18 John 4:24 3:8), and since Jesus Christ has been seen (John 1:14 John 18b; 14:9), it is concluded that Jesus Christ is the Angel of Jehovah or the visible member of the Godhead in the Old Testament.
7. Other pre-incarnate appearances of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Old Testament which are not specifically spoken of as the Angel of Jehovah:
- 1) ...the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) walking in the garden... Gen. 3:8
  - 2) ...a Man wrestled with him (Jacob)... Gen. 32:24-32;
  - 3) ...the Lord appeared to Abram... Gen. 17:1-22; 18:1, 2, 10, 13, 14, 17-33
  - 4) ...a Man (captain of the army, or host, of Jehovah)...with his sword drawn... Joshua 5:13-15 6:1-2
  - 5) The destroying angel, most likely the Angel of the Lord in 1Chron. 21:15
  - 6) ...a Man riding on a red horse... from Zech. 1:8-12
  - 7) ...a certain Man dressed in linen... Dan. 10:5-9; 12:6-13; cf. Ezek. 1:26-28; and Rev. 1:12-20

The Introduction of the Angel of Jehovah is another instance in the Old Testament where the doctrine of the Trinity was taught but never formally codified in Rabbinical literature and probably not understood or discussed in Old Testament times.

### Bibliography:

Basic doctrine is taken from [http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page\\_id=28](http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=28) which are probably notes taken from R. B. Thieme, Jr.. and from

<http://www.swordofthespiritbibleministries.com/images/simplelists//NOTESAF/Angel%20of%20Jehovah.pdf>  
<http://www.portlandbiblechurch.com/DoctrineFolder/DOCTRINE%20OF%20THE%20ANGEL%20OF%20JEHOVAH.pdf>

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We know that Hagar is a believer in Jesus Christ because He comes to her while she is running away. She is in a hopeless state. The trek to Egypt is long and arduous. Prior to this, she made it as not pregnant and as a part of a caravan where her needs were all seen to. Now she is pregnant, possibly sick; very moody, upset, weak and on her own for a long walk along the desert. She perhaps knows where some of the springs are along the way, and knows this way since she came with Abram's caravan a decade earlier. We do not know if she was praying to our Lord or what was going through her mind.

### Genesis 16:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
ʿayin (עַיִן) [pronounced <i>GAH-yin</i> ]	<i>spring, fountain; eye, spiritual eyes</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

## Genesis 16:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
derek <sup>e</sup> (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced DEH-rek <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction, towards; manner, habit, way [of life]; of moral character</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1870 BDB #202
With the bêyth preposition, this means <i>in the way, along the way [road], near the road, by the way, on [your] journey.</i>			
Shûwr (שׁוּר) [pronounced sher]	<i>wall, fortification, fortress and is transliterated Shur</i>	proper noun, location	Strong's #7793 BDB #1004
A place southwest of Palestine on the eastern border or within the border of Egypt; the Israelites passed through the wilderness of Shur after crossing the Red Sea			

**Translation:** ...near the spring on the road to Shur.

There are probably two springs; and this one is along side the road which goes to Shur. *Shur* means “wall” and BDB describe it in this way: *a place southwest of Palestine on the eastern border or within the border of Egypt; the Israelites passed through the wilderness of Shur after crossing the Red Sea.* This indicates that Hagar is returning to Egypt.

Shur was an area south of Judah, between Israel and Egypt. The *Way to Shur* would have been a road, albeit more crude than the ones we are used to.

Since Hagar is Egyptian, the direction that she would flee would naturally be toward her country of Egypt. *The way to Shur* is likely an established highway or roadway which is perhaps a continuation of the King's Highway and/or a caravan route from the King's Highway to Egypt, traveling through Edom and the desert of Shur. Hagar is a relatively bright woman. She is not an ignorant slave woman; otherwise, Sarai would not have kept her as her own personal slave. She knows which direction to go in and knows a route to take. She just does not burst into tears and runs in any direction.

Interestingly enough, God went to Hagar, and this suggests that she is a believer in Jehovah Elohim (or she becomes a believer in Him). She has lived with Abram and Sarai for several years, so it is reasonable that, through them, she believed in Jehovah Elohim.

You will note that some time has passed. God does not go to Hagar 20 minutes after she leaves. God gives her some time to walk and vent; and to also take stock of her situation. She is pregnant, in a desert, without any help, ready to make a 200 mile trip. So God gives her some time to wear out her anger with Sarai and Abram; and to begin to think about the situation that she is in. At some point, she is going to recognize, on her own, that this walk to Egypt while pregnant, is a very bad idea. That is when God comes to her. God's timing is impeccable.

The application is fairly simple here. There are times that we go off, headstrong, in this or that wrong direction; muttering about our situation, and cursing half of the people that we know. For awhile, there is no reasoning with us. However, given a little time and doctrine in our souls, and we just might be open to reason and correction.

Genesis 16:7 [The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah found her beside a spring of waters in the desert-wilderness near the spring on the road to Shur.](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

[Gen 16:1–7](#) Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said to Abram, "Look, [up until] 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 [and obeyed]

the voice of Sarai. 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. And Abram went in to Hagar [on several occasions], and she conceived [became pregnant and continued to show signs of pregnancy]. And when Hagar kept observing that she herself had become pregnant, she kept looking with contempt upon her mistress, Sarai. And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you [that is, *this is all your fault, Abram*]! 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!" But Abram said to Sarai, "Listen, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she [Hagar] fled from her [Sarai]. The Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the desert-wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur.

So far, we have reasonably determined that Sarai knows about God appearing to Abram and of the promises which were made, but it does not appear as though these promises are going to be fulfilled. However, more important than these promises to Sarai is, she simply wants a child. Therefore, Sarai suggests that Abram use her Egyptian slave girl as a surrogate mother, and that Sarai would raise the child as her own (which was socially acceptable in that day and age).

Introducing a new moving part into a marriage was a bad idea, and chaos erupted. After a heated discussion between Abram and Sarai, Abram told Sarai to do whatever she wanted, as Hagar was her slave girl. As a result, Sarai harassed Hagar so unmercifully that a very pregnant Hagar ran away.

When Hagar is on the road to Shur, the Angel of Jehovah, Who is Jehovah, *found her*. The verb here is the Qal imperfect of *mâtsâ'* (מָצָא) [pronounced *maw-TSAW*], which means *to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover; to meet (encounter)*. Strong's #4672 BDB #592. This is a very common verb and ought to be translated *to meet, to encounter* in this instance. This gives us [The Angel of the LORD encountered her by a spring of water in the desert-wilderness, the spring on the road to Shur](#). The way to Shur is actually a road—not as we would understand a road to be—but it is a clearly defined route which would take her eventually to Egypt. She was at a rest stop, which would have been a well to drink from. In that era, a well would be a deep hole dug in the ground.

As we have studied, the Angel of the Lord is Jehovah Elohim, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity, the revealed Person of the Trinity and the object of our salvation faith.

Hagar is clearly angry and disappointed with her life at this point. We do not know the circumstances which caused her to become a slave, but they could not have been very good. Becoming a slave to Abram and Sarai was a great blessing to her, whether she recognized this or not. During her service to Abram and Sarai, she believed in Jehovah Elohim, the God of Abram. We know this because God has come to her in these desperate times.

There is one more lesson here: God comes to us when we are ready and in whatever state we are in. God did not come to Hagar 3 minutes after she stepped out of the door and began walking to Egypt. She was not ready at that time. She would not have listened even to God. God waited until she got to this point—she was tired, probably hungry and thirsty, at a well—and Egypt was still a very far ways off. By this point in time, she may have begun to realize what she had chosen to do might not have been a good idea.

### Genesis 16:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (i) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## Genesis 16:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Hâgâr (הָגָר) [pronounced haw-GAWR]	<i>flight, fugitive; transliterated Hagar</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #1904 BDB #212
shiph <sup>e</sup> châh (שִׁפְחָה) [pronounced shif-KHAW]	<i>maid, maid-servant, household servant, handmaid, female slave</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046
Sâray (שָׂרַי) [pronounced saw-RAY or saw-RAH-ee]	<i>my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #8297 BDB #979

**Translation:** And He said, "Hagar, maid of Sarai,...

The Angel of the Lord calls out to Hagar, calling her *maid of Sarai*.

I do not recall if there is an OT conversation which was begun by man speaking to God...it seems as though it is always God who speaks to man first. At least up to this point in time. God, in His grace, has established fellowship with her, as He did when Adam and Eve had sinned in the garden, and it seems that when an OT saint was out of fellowship and God chose to speak, it would always be in the form of a question. To Abram and Noah, two men who were generally in fellowship and growing, God began speaking to them in imperatives; revealing more of His plan and direction to them. However, when a believer is out of fellowship, God begins by asking them questions. Her human relationship is brought into question and her direction in life. Hagar only answers the first question.

## Genesis 16:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'êy (אֵי) [pronounced ây]	<i>where</i>	adverb; with a suffix, the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #335 BDB #32
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
These 3 particles together mean <i>from where, whence</i> .			
bôw' (בֹּוֹא) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97

**Translation:** ...from where have you come...

There are two questions which the Angel of the Lord asks Hagar. First she is asked, "Where are you coming from?"

This is the **rebound** question. When Hagar answers this question, she will be confessing her sin, which puts her back into fellowship with God. You will notice that God's questions to people who are out of fellowship start with a question, the answer to which specifies their sin.

Genesis 16:8c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'ânâh (אָנָה) [pronounced <i>awn-AW</i> ]	<i>where; whether; where</i>	adverb with the hê local	Strong's #575 BDB #33
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

**Translation:** ...and where are you going [to]?"

The second question is, "**Just where are you going?**" The first question opens up the conversation, but the second question is the key question. Where can Hagar really go to? For whatever reason, she was placed into slavery in Egypt—perhaps she was an orphan girl or she came from very poor parents. In that case, there is nothing for her to go back to. Furthermore, she has spent much of her adult life in Canaan on Abram's compound. Even though this was likely less than 10 years, that is still a large chunk of her adult life (we do not know her age, but a reasonable guess would probably have her beginning her life with Abram and company while in her teens or early 20's.<sup>6</sup>

You may ask, *Why not just let her go? Slavery is bad; she is a slave. Just let her escape and provide for her. Why can't God just do that?* There are several reasons. First of all, like it or not, she is the property of Abram. She was received as a gift or she was purchased; but, in any case, she belongs to Abram. I realize that does not set well with many people because you have been so turned against slavery that you cannot imagine there being any good or any purpose for it; and you certainly cannot imagine that God sanctions it. After all, you know how bad it is; so God must know as well. However, slavery is an institution which has been with us almost since the dawn of time; although this is the first time we will cover this doctrine in detail from a Biblical standpoint.

The second question to Hagar was to get her to focus on her future plans; and to look realistically at what she plans to do.

We do not know Hagar's previous life. She may have been sold by her own parents; she may have originally been an orphan; and she may have even sold herself into slavery. She works for Sarai primarily and she probably does a lot of menial tasks; however, in return, Abram must provide her with food, clothing and shelter. Now, you may say, "Well, big deal." However, when you consider what some unskilled workers make; it is not out of the question in today's America for a person to work two full -time minimum wage jobs and barely scrape by, being able to pay only for food, clothing and shelter. And life was much tougher in Abram's era.

### Hagar needs to face some simple facts

Let's face some facts:

1. A pregnant Hagar is not going to be able to walk all the way to Egypt through the desert-wilderness.
2. There is no one waiting for Hagar in Egypt. She has no place to go. At best, she could sell herself into slavery again.
3. Hagar would more than likely die in the desert; and if she made it to Egypt, she might die in Egypt as well.

<sup>6</sup> I am assuming that Abram wrote all of this or at least spoke of this to Isaac, who wrote it down (or memorized it). But Abram is in his 80's at this point, so anyone age 30 or younger is going to seem like a kid.



### Hagar needs to face some simple facts

4. Abram will take care of her. Abram will raise her son with the benefit of that boy having a good father for the first 15 or so years of his life.
5. Her son Ishmael will have the best father-son experience with Abram that a boy could have.
6. Hagar will be given her full and complete freedom and she will leave with her son, also a free man. This is God taking care of her.

It is always a good idea to take stock of yourself, your situation and your own skills and resources; and evaluate them using a little reason.

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**Application:** As an aside, I knew a young woman who had her first child—a daughter—and could not imagine loving anything more than she loved this little girl. But, she did not love that little girl enough to marry the little girl’s father. That would have been a great demonstration of love. There would have been no man more important to that little girl than her father in her entire life, and marriage would have given them all the opportunity to forge ahead with the correct focus in life. Love is much more than emotion; love is also action. Love is doing something for another person which may involve personal sacrifice.

The very best thing for Hagar, Ishmael (her son-to-be) and Abram is for them all to be together—even if Sarai was a part of the overall picture.

### Genesis 16:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
’amar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
min (מן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of; from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong’s #4480 BDB #577
pânîym (פנין) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong’s #6440 BDB #815

Together, min pânîym mean *from before the face of; out from before the face, from the presence of*. However, together, they can also be a reference to the cause, whether near or remote, and can therefore be rendered *because of, because that; by*.

g <sup>e</sup> bereth (תַּרְבֵּגָה) [pronounced gheb-EH-rehth]	<i>mistress [of servants]; lady; queen; she is the opposite of a maid</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong’s #1404 BDB #150
’ânôkiy (אֲנִי) [pronounced awn-oh-KEE]	<i>I, me; (sometimes a verb is implied)</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular personal pronoun	Strong’s #595 BDB #59

### Genesis 16:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bârach (בָּרַח) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHKH</i> ]	<i>going [pass] through, fleeing [away]; hastening, coming quickly; reaching across</i>	feminine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #1272 BDB #137

**Translation:** She answered, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."

This is a sin; and she confesses this sin to the Angel of God; she is fleeing from her mistress.

V. 8 reads: **And He said, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, from where have you come and where are you going [to]?" She answered, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."** You will notice that, when dealing with someone who is out of fellowship, God seems to invariably open the conversation with a question. So God asks her where she is going. Hagar explains that she is running away from her mistress, Sarai. The very fact that God is speaking to Hagar suggests that she believes in Him.

What is also very interesting about this question—when she tells what God she has done, she has just named her sin to Him. Her sin is, she was running away from her mistress.

You may recall that, when the idea of Hagar being a surrogate mother came up, the relationships of Abram, Sarai and Hagar were all clearly defined. God again reminds Hagar of her true relationship. **"Hagar, slave-girl of Sarai"** is how God addresses her. Hagar even acknowledges this, admitting that she is fleeing from her mistress. Hagar recognizes their relationship—that she is the slave-girl and Sarai is her mistress.

You will notice there is a second question asked by the Angel of Jehovah: **"Where are you going?"** Hagar does not answer the second question. Or, if she did, the Bible does not record her answer. This is for the simple reason that, she is not going to get there. This is not a true option in her life: Sarai or Egypt. First of all, she will be unable to walk to Egypt and, secondly, what is she going to do there? She already was in Egypt, in slavery, and she was likely given to Abram as a slave (Genesis 12:6). This suggests that she either lacks a family or does not have a family that she can return to for support. Hagar has 2 real options before her: return to Sarai or die in the desert.

Genesis 16:8 **And He said, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, from where have you come and where are you going [to]?" She answered, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

We do not separate the lines of Sarai and Hagar into descendants who are all believers as over against descendants who are unbelievers. Here, Hagar is interacting with God. Many Arab nations are going to come out from Hagar; and these are sons of Abram. And, so there is no misunderstanding here, not only does Hagar believe in the Revealed God but so will her son; and so will some of his descendants.

When determined which is the line of promise and which is not, God does not simply look at Isaac versus Ishmael; but God sees the entire line. Isaac (who is not conceived yet) will have a son Jacob, and he will have a son Judah, and a descendant of Judah will be David, and Jesus will be descended from David. This is what God sees. That is the line of promise, no matter how you slice it.

Genesis 16:7–8 **The Messenger of Y<sup>h</sup>owah found her beside a spring of waters in the desert-wilderness near the spring on the road to Shur. And He said, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, from where have you come and where are you going [to]?" She answered, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:7–8 **The Angel of Jehovah found her beside a spring of waters in the desert-wilderness near the spring which is on the road to Shur. And He asked her, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, where did you come from and**

where to you think that you are going?" She answered him, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai." (Kukis paraphrase)

**And so says to her a Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, "Return unto your mistress and submit [yourself] under her [two] hands."**

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**The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit [yourself] to her control."**

**The Angel of Jehovah then said to her, "Return to your mistress, Sarai and submit yourself to her."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)	And the Angel of the Lord said to her, Return to thy mistress, and be subject under her hand.
Latin Vulgate	And the angel of the Lord said to her: Return to thy mistress, and humble thyself under her hand.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says to her a Messenger of Y <sup>e</sup> howah, "Return unto your mistress and submit [yourself] under her [two] hands."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the angel of the LORD said to her, Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hands.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the Angel of the Lord said to her, Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hands.

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The Lord's messenger said to her, "Go back to your mistress. Put up with her harsh treatment of you."
Contemporary English V.	The angel said, "Go back to Sarai and be her slave.
Easy English	The *angel of the *Lord said this to her. `Return to your boss and obey her.'
Easy-to-Read Version	The Angel of the Lord said to Hagar, "Sarai is your master. Go home to her and obey her."
<i>The Message</i>	The angel of GOD said, "Go back to your mistress. Put up with her abuse."
New Century Version	The angel of the Lord said to her, "Go home to your mistress and obey her."
New Life Version	Then the angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your boss. Put yourself under her power."
The Voice	<b>Special Messenger:</b> Hagar, go back to your mistress, <i>and change your attitude.</i> Be respectful, and listen to her instructions. <i>You're pregnant, and you need to go home.</i>

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	The Messenger of the LORD said to her, "Go back to your owner, and place yourself under her authority."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Then the angel of the Lord said to her, Go back to thy mistress, and submit to her will.
New American Bible (2002)	But the LORD'S messenger told her: "Go back to your mistress and submit to her abusive treatment.
NIRV	Then the angel of the Lord told her, "Go back to the woman who owns you. Obey her."

Revised English Bible The angel of the LORD said to her, 'God back to your mistress and submit to ill-treatment at her hands.'

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear The messenger of Yahweh said to her, "Return to your mistress, and humble under her hands."  
 Conservapedia The Angel of the Lord said to her, "Go back to your mistress, and place yourself under her authority."  
 The Expanded Bible The ·angel [messenger] of the Lord [16:7] said to her, "Go home to your mistress and ·obey [submit to] her."  
 HCSB Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "You must go back to your mistress and submit to her mistreatment."  
 NET Bible® Then the Lord's angel said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit [The imperative וְיָחִיתִי (v'yhit'anni) is the Hitpael of וָחָה ('anah, here translated "submit"), the same word used for Sarai's harsh treatment of her. Hagar is instructed not only to submit to Sarai's authority, but to whatever mistreatment that involves. God calls for Hagar to humble herself.] to her authority.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible The angel of ADONAI said to her, "Go back to your mistress, and submit to her authority."  
 exeGeses companion Bible And the angel of Yah Veh says to her,  
 Return to your lady  
 and humble yourself under her hands.  
 Judaica Press Complete T. And the angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and allow yourself to be afflicted under her hands."  
 Kaplan Translation The angel of God said to her, 'Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her.'  
 Orthodox Jewish Bible And the Malach Hashem said unto her, Return to thy gevirah, and submit thyself under her hands.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

*The Amplified Bible* The Angel of the Lord said to her, Go back to your mistress and [humbly] submit to her control.  
 Concordant Literal Version And saying to her is the messenger of Yahweh, "Return to your mistress and humble yourself under her hands.  
 Context Group Version And the messenger of YHWH said to her, Return to your mistress, and humble yourself under her hands.  
 The Geneva Bible And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. God rejects no estate of people in their misery, but sends them comfort.  
 Green's Literal Translation And the Angel of Jehovah said to her, Return to your mistress and submit yourself under her hand.  
 NASB Then the angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority [Lit under her hands]."  
 Syndein/Thieme And the angel/messenger {mal'ak} of Jehovah/God said {'amar} {unto her}, " 'Turn back'/'Return' {shuwb - same word used for 'repent' and that is the analogy here} to your mistress, and submit yourself {'anah imperative - an order} 'under her authority' {yad idiom: literally 'in her hand'}."  
 World English Bible The angel of Yahweh said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hands."

Young's Updated LT

And the messenger of Jehovah says to her, "Turn back unto your mistress, and humble yourself under her hands;"

**The gist of this verse:**

The Angel of the Lord tells Hagar to return to her mistress and to submit to her.

Genesis 16:9a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>lê</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
mal'âkê (מלאך) [pronounced <i>mahl<sup>e</sup>-AWK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>messenger or angel; this word has been used for a prophet (Isaiah 42:19) and priest (Mal. 2:7)</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4397 BDB #521
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
shûwb (שוב) [pronounced <i>shoo<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>return, turn, turn back, reminisce, restore something, bring back something, revive, recover something, make restitution</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>eh</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
g <sup>e</sup> bereth (תַּרְבֵּגָה) [pronounced <i>gheb-EH-rehth</i> ]	<i>mistress [of servants]; lady; queen; she is the opposite of a maid</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #1404 BDB #150

**Translation:** The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, "Return to your mistress..."

The Angel of Jehovah instructed Hagar to return to her mistress, Sarai.

Nowhere in the Bible does God indicate that slavery is an inhuman evil which we as mankind should work to erase. There is only one time when it is implied that slavery is not the best way of doing things. In the book of Philemon, Onesimus is a runaway slave who is also a believer. When he comes into contact with Paul in the Mamertine Dungeon, Paul convinced Onesimus to return to his master and to submit to his authority. He also urges his master to set Onesimus free. But note carefully: whereas Paul issued many mandates to individual believers and to churches, Paul did not issue a mandate to Philemon to give Onesimus his freedom; that was a request. The



Mosaic law will set up certain laws regarding slavery. This is a hard pill to swallow in a country where most people believe that we fought a vicious, awful civil war over slavery, where believers on both sides of the issue were killed. It is a tough pill to swallow for those who still feel guilty because of what their ancestors did and others who feel entitled because their ancestors had been enslaved. Notice carefully: Y<sup>e</sup>howah does not say, "Keep running, Hagar. You shouldn't be enslaved to begin with and she is treating you terribly; keep running and I will protect you."

**Application:** There was a point in my life where I had been under terrible circumstances where I worked and it seemed as though the only reasonable solution would be to flee this job and get a job elsewhere. How often is it that people change jobs to find themselves a better environment; people with whom they will get along better; superiors which they agree with more often. During this period of time, when I was contemplating leaving and calling around concerning other positions, my pastor was teaching that it is not enough of a reason to leave a job just because the working conditions were poor or your superior was unjust, unlikeable and/or disliked you. For that reason, I continued my search with a lot less vigor, being open to move if that was God's will, but being willing to stay if that was God's will. I stayed and was blessed and prospered at that job by God. The difficult circumstances and the personality conflict which I had disappeared eventually, and these conditions were replaced by a new set of pressures and problems. In retrospect, it was God's will that I remained and it was to my benefit that I did not pack up and move to another position elsewhere. Hagar is in an unfair, unjust situation that she has run from. What is the solution offered her by the God of the universe: go back to it!

**Application:** Don't ever leave a situation just because it is difficult. Along the same lines, I recall that my parents had problems early in their marriage, before I was born. They had separated either several months of a year or so into their marriage over difficult circumstances. This, I found out about much later in life, I believe after my father had passed away. My memories of my parents was of a couple who were happy together and who loved each other very much; for whom there was perhaps no one else on earth that they would love as much as each other. When I was old enough to recognize this, I was in my late teens or early twenties, and I could see it in everything that my father did and through the many things which my mother said. What a tragedy for them both had they called it quits because they were under some difficult circumstances. God unequivocally told Hagar to return to her mistress. As God spoke to me when I was contemplating leaving my job due to difficult circumstances, somehow, I know that God is speaking to someone else also in a difficult, unjust situation.

### Genesis 16:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿânâh (עָנָה) [pronounced ʿaw-NAWH]	<i>oppress, depress, afflict</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #6031 BDB #776
Although I do not find this in BDB or in Gesenius, this appears also to mean <i>submit yourself, humble yourself, put yourself under the authority of</i> .			
tachath (תַּחַת) [pronounced TAH-khahth]	<i>underneath, below, under, beneath; instead of, in lieu of; in the place [in which one stands]; in exchange for; on the basis of</i>	preposition of location or foundation	Strong's #8478 BDB #1065

Examples of the latter usage: Exodus 16:29 Judges 7:21 1Samuel 14:9 2Samuel 2:23 7:10 1Chronicles 17:9 Job 36:16 (given that this preposition has such a specific meaning and that I give it an entirely different spin here, I believe that it would be better to include passages which are in agreement with this other rendering).

## Genesis 16:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yâdayim (יָדַיִם) [pronounced yaw-dah- YIHM]	[two] hands; both hands figuratively for strength, power, control of a particular person	feminine dual noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

**Translation:** ...and submit [yourself] to her control.”

This is something that many people have trouble with, but Hagar is the mistress of Sarai; therefore, she belongs under the authority of Sarai. God would see to her preservation as well.

Here, as in many other places, God’s approach to what has gone on is much different from our approach. Slavery is the law of the land and Hagar belongs to Sarai. We do not know any details of this conveyance of ownership. The most likely scenario is, when Abram and Sarai were in Egypt, pharaoh gave Abram a number of gifts for Sarai, which included male and female slaves (Genesis 12:16). There is no indication that any of these items were returned to pharaoh when the truth became known about Sarai. There is the possibility that, when Abram and Sarai were in Egypt, that they purchased Hagar. Hagar may have offered her own services to them. However, this is less likely because they just received a large present of cattle and slaves; so it is not as if they are out there looking to buy one additional slave-girl.

We know that Abram did not take her as a result of combat in Genesis 14, because he personally took none of the spoils of that war (Genesis 14:23–24). So, most likely, the Egyptian girl, was among the slaves given to Abram when he and Sarai were in Egypt.

You will notice that God does not appear to Abram and Sarai and tell them, “Slavery is a social evil and you need to eschew it and set Hagar free. And then you need to travel about to your neighbors and tell them to set their slaves free.” Abram probably had dozens of slaves (Genesis 12:16 20:14 24:35). Instead, God speaks to Hagar and tells her to return and to submit to her mistress, Sarai. Slavery was her station in life; she belonged to Sarai; and God never suggests or implies that this is a bad thing that the elimination of slavery is what Sarai and Abram need to devote their lives to.

Many slave contracts were agreements between the master and slave. At times, there appears to be an exit clause or a time limit clause. We may or may not like it, but God did not repudiate slavery as a human institution in the Old Testament. Even in the New Testament, when Paul dealt with the slave of Philemon, he sent this slave back to his master Philemon. Paul did suggest that Philemon free Onesimus, the slave who came to Paul; but, clearly, the final decision was Philemon’s.

In our culture, we have heard over and over again about the evils of slavery, and it was, no doubt, at times, very cruel and evil. We have heard almost endlessly in our own history, what a great evil slavery is. However, despite the cruelty and abuse that existed, millions of Africans who were brought to America have believed in Jesus Christ as a result. The same is true of their descendants. The descendants of slaves today have a far better life than the descendants of those whose ancestors were not taken into slavery. In fact, for many years, Biblical Christianity was the greatest driving force in the American Black community. Throughout American history, there have been many Black churches and many Black believers in Jesus Christ who adhered to the teachings of the Bible.

The first great distortion of the Black church was the civil rights movement, which became closely associated with many Black churches. Rather than teaching the Word of God within some local churches, the people were taught about social issues and encouraged to become involved in social issues, which is not the place of the church.

One of the reasons we know that the civil rights movement distorted Black churches is, additional false doctrine and distortion of the gospel has since crept into many Black churches, as Paul warned about (2Corinthians

11:13–15 Galatians 1:7 2:4). The social consciousness and the social action of the civil rights movement made the Black church ripe for additional perversions, the most common of which is **Black Liberation Theology (PDF format)** (from what I have read, that has found its way into a tenth of the Black churches today). In fact, the church that President Obama attended for 2 decades teaches Black Liberation Theology.

Black Liberation Theology has its roots in Liberation Theology, which was a communist approach to distorting the beliefs of the deeply religious in South America and elsewhere. Communists found out that they could not easily oppose the faith of the people of the countries that they wanted to take over (they were mostly Catholic), so they subverted the faith instead. They made the Bible say things that it did not say and perverted the churches from the inside. The less the people knew about the Bible, the more easily they could be convinced of enough false doctrine to make them compliant to communism.

Furthermore, because many African-Americans have been removed from their faith, Islam has ironically made great inroads into the Black community since the 60's and 70's, particularly with Blacks who are disenchanted with American society in any way. If they can be convinced that Christianity is a white man's religion (which is absolutely foolish, since it comes out of the Middle East), then they can be convinced that Islam is a religion for the Black man. This is quite ironic because Islam was the religion of many of those who originally captured and sold Africans into slavery.

Over a period of time of 50 or so years, the Black Church in America was dramatically changed; and with this change came the corruption of the Black family and the dramatic rise of drug use, crime and fatherless families in the Black community. It all goes back to the perversion of Christianity. You may not know this, but, at one time, prior to the Great Depression, Black unemployment was lower than white unemployment. Black families were every bit as strong as white ones. Education was a strong family value in the Black community. This is because they focused first and foremost on the gospel of Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Word of God. The key to Black families is the key to all families—Bible doctrine in the souls of the family members. The key is churches which teach the Word of God as opposed to churches which are involved in temporal social issues.

During the 50 years or so after the Civil War, Blacks in America developed strong churches, which in turn blessed the Black community (as well as the United States as a whole). There were problems and social ills, as there is with every generation (e.g., President Woodrow Wilson re-segregating our armed forces); but the Black community was progressing spiritually and socially.

Let's talk a little more about slavery. There is something distinctly honorable about slavery in some respects. Some people, who were deeply in debt, paid off these debts by voluntarily placing themselves into slavery. Personally, I find that to be much more honorable than going into bankruptcy or filing a chapter 13 bankruptcy, and leaving your creditors out there to dry. Placing oneself into slavery because of debt is taking real responsibility for one's debts.

For some young people in the ancient world, this was their start in life—orphans or those coming from very poor families. Becoming a slave to a wealthy family was their start in life; and it is what sustained them for the rest of their lives.

Many young people—particularly those from poorer countries—become au pairs for some families. The timing often works out well; the job may last a few years or longer, allowing enough time for the au pair to put away some money and to gain some direction in life. The life to the au pair is not dramatically different from the life of Hagar.

Even though some Americans look at slavery as America's greatest sin, God still tells Hagar to return to Sarai and to submit herself to her. One of the clear teachings of Scripture is authority orientation; that we have certain authorities over us in this life, and that we are to obey those authorities. Sarai was Hagar's authority in slavery. Despite the unfair treatment by Sarai herself, Hagar was still subject to her authority, Sarai would be providing food, clothing and shelter to both Hagar and her son throughout her pregnancy and during the time her son is an infant. And this is God's plan for Sarai, Hagar and Hagar's child.

Gen 16:9 The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her."

Genesis 16:9 The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit [yourself] to her control." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:9 The Angel of Jehovah then said to her, "Return to your mistress, Sarai and submit yourself to her." (Kukis paraphrase)

Returning to Abram and Sarai will preserve the lives of Hagar and her son.

So far, we have studied this:

Gen 16:1–9 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said to Abram, "Look, [up until] 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 [and obeyed] the voice of Sarai. 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. And Abram went in to Hagar [on several occasions], and she conceived [became pregnant and continued to show signs of pregnancy]. And when Hagar kept observing that she herself had become pregnant, she kept looking with contempt upon her mistress, Sarai. And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you [that is, *this is all your fault, Abram*]! 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!" But Abram said to Sarai, "Listen, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she [Hagar] fled from her [Sarai]. The Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the desert-wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. 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." The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her."

Hagar is a slave to Abram and Sarai; she is Sarai's personal slave (often called a *handmaid* in the KJV). So, this brings up the question of slavery and the Bible.

Let's look at slavery objectively, from the standpoint of the Bible.

### The Biblical Doctrine of Slavery

1. Slavery, as a human institution, is not specifically condemned in the Bible. No one in the Bible is ever told to leave their master; no one is told to lead some great revolt against slavery.
  - a. In the context of our passage, Hagar is told by God to return to and submit to her mistress, who maltreated her. Genesis 16:9
  - b. The book of Philemon deals with a slave that escaped from Philemon—Onesimus—who comes to Paul in prison, and who Paul sends back to Philemon, his master. Although Paul requests that Philemon set this slave free, he does not command it. The final decision is the master. This is found in the Epistle (letter) to Philemon.
  - c. Jesus did not condemn slavery, even though He had the chance to on many occasions. Matthew 8:5–10 10:24
2. Several great men in the Bible owned slaves. For example:
  - a. Abraham in Genesis 24:35.
  - b. Isaac in Gen. 26:13–14.
  - c. Job in Job 19:15.
3. However, it is clear that slavery is not the ideal in God's eyes:
  - a. The Hebrews were enslaved to Egypt and God told the pharaoh to let them leave.
  - b. Paul suggested to Philemon that he free Onesimus. Philemon 1:8–16
  - c. When northern Israel defeated southern Israel (Judah) in a battle, they took 200,000 men, women and children, many of whom would become slaves. God sent a prophet to them and told them not to do this. 2Chronicles 28:8–11

## The Biblical Doctrine of Slavery

- d. There would come a day when Israel would no longer be enslaved to her enemies. Jer. 30:8 Ezekiel 34:27
- e. When listing those who are opposed to God and opposed to sound doctrine, Paul includes those who are *slave-traders* (also called *man-stealers*). This would indicate that there are clearly some illegitimate aspects of slavery which some slave traders practiced. 1Timothy 1:10
4. There were a number of ways a person could become a slave in the ancient world:
  - a. Foreign slaves could be captured in war. 1Sam.4:9 17:9 2Chronicles 36:20 Ezra 9:7–9
    - i. As an aside, a woman taken as a captive in war could also become the wife of a Hebrew. Deut.21:10-14
  - b. Slaves could be purchased. Ex.12:44 21:2 Leviticus 25:44–46 Eccles. 2:7
  - c. Slaves could be a gift. Genesis 21:10
  - d. Joseph's own brothers threw him into a pit, and traveling Midianites found him and sold him to Ishmaelites who then sold him to the Egyptians. Genesis 37:23–24, 28
  - e. One could enter into slavery or sell one's children into slavery because of debt. 2Kings 4:1
  - f. Some men are born into slavery because their parents are slaves. Gen.15:3; Jer.2:14.
  - g. As restitution for crime, a person could commit himself to slavery. Ex.22:3
  - h. A person could become a slave because of defaulting on debts. Leviticus 25:14–28 2Kings 4:1
  - i. One could become a slave by means of abduction, which the Bible teaches to be wrong. In fact, this illegal act could be punished by execution. Ex.21:16 Deut.24:7 1Timothy 1:10
5. The point is, most of these ways that a person could become a slave are legitimate. The application of this institution could be sinful; but slavery, in itself, was not necessarily evil. In fact, a person with absolutely nothing could become a slave and eventually earn his freedom and walk away financially solvent. Some slaves were elevated from slavery to very high positions of authority and responsibility.
6. There was a form of slavery where a nation would be conquered and they would be taxed instead of being taken hostage and made slaves. 2Samuel 8:2, 6, 10–12 1Kings 4:21 2Chronicles 17:11
  - a. In some cases, this was codified where a stronger power protected a weaker country; and the weaker country would pay tribute to the stronger country. The agreement was called a Suzerain-vassal treaty.
  - b. The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:2–17) are said to be in the form of a Suzerain-vassal treaty, containing a preamble (identification of the covenant giver), an historical prologue, stipulations, provision for deposit and public reading, a listing of treaty witnesses, blessings and curses, a ratification ceremony and an imposition of the curses.
    - i. See <http://www.haverhillcc.org/files/IntrotoBibleClass15.pdf> This writer suggests that the entire book of Deuteronomy is in a Suzerain-vassal treaty format.
7. Just as owning a business today with hundreds or thousands of employees is seen as a good thing today, owning many slaves in the ancient world was considered a blessing from God. Genesis 24:35 26:13–14 Isaiah 14:1–3
8. God required that the Egyptians pay restitution to the Hebrew slaves for their years of labor. It should be noted that payment was made by slave-holders to the slaves themselves, and not many generations later (like the reparations being called for by some liberal Black groups in the United States today). Exodus 3:22 11:2 12:35–36
9. The slaves of Hebrews often became believers in Jehovah Elohim. Genesis 24:52 Exodus 12:43–44
10. Slaves were to participate in some of the religious celebrations of Israel. Deut. 12:18 16:10–11
11. A relative could redeem a slave from slavery. Leviticus 25:48–49
12. Slaves were supposed to be released in the Year of Jubilee (every 49<sup>th</sup> year). Leviticus 25:50–55
13. In the end times, even slaves would have God's Spirit poured out upon them. Joel 2:29
14. Slaves were entrusted with important tasks, material things and great responsibilities. In this way, slaves were not much different than a live-in employee. In the case of Joseph, he rose from being a slave to a great ruler in Egypt. Genesis 24 (see, for instance, v. 53) 39:1–6 Psalm 105:17–23
15. Therefore, if you envision a slave as someone who was followed around by someone with a whip who constantly beat the slave; and that this slave did only menial tasks, then you do not have a clear picture of slavery in the ancient world. Matthew 18:28–29 21:34–35 25:21–23



## The Biblical Doctrine of Slavery

16. Quite obviously, many slaves did perform menial tasks as well. In many cases, this was their only function. Genesis 26:15, 19, 25, 32 Joshua 9:18–23 1Kings 9:21
17. However, a smart slave-owner would recognize potential and responsibility in his slaves, which is why Joseph could rise from being a slave to prime minister over Egypt. Genesis 39:1–6
18. Female slaves sometimes became the wives or mistresses of their masters or their master's sons. Genesis 16:1–4 30:1–18
19. The Bible provided protections for the slave in the Mosaic Law.
  - a. Hebrew slaves were enslaved only for 6 years and then they were to be freed. Exodus 21:2 Deut. 15:12–15
  - b. If another Hebrew becomes your slave as a result of their debt, you are not to treat them cruelly as a slave; but to work out a future time when they can be financially solvent and free. Leviticus 25:35–43
  - c. Such manumission occurred on other times as well. Jer. 34:8–10
  - d. A Hebrew slave could choose to remain a slave. Deut. 15:16–18
  - e. If the master of a slave purchases a woman who becomes the slave's wife, he may remain with his wife in slavery. Exodus 21:3–6
  - f. Slaves were not to work on the Sabbath. Exodus 20:10 23:12
  - g. A slave-owner could not simply kill one of his slaves without retribution. Exodus 21:20
  - h. Under some circumstances of causing injury to a slave, the owner had to set the slave free. This is more an indictment of the slave-owner, rather than a reward to the slave. It is obvious that such a man should not own slaves. Exodus 21:26–27
  - i. If a woman taken in slavery was made a wife, and then rejected, she could not simply return to being a slave. She had to be set free. Deut. 21:10–14
20. These protections for slaves in Israel provide a great contrast between slaves in Israel and slaves in Egypt. Egyptians treated the Jews with great harshness in slavery. Exodus 1:10–14 3:7–9
21. In Jesus' time, slaves clearly had independent financial transactions from their masters as well as some freedom of movement. Matthew 18:28
22. Slavery is used as an illustration for our spiritual depravity before God. Because we are born with Adam's sin imputed to us, because we have a sin nature and because we sin personally against God, we are in the **slave market of sin**, unable to purchase our own freedom. Only Jesus Christ, from outside of the slave market (He is born without a sin nature, without Adam's imputed sin, and without personal sin), can purchase (redeem) us. The Israelites freed from Egypt illustrate this. Exodus 13:3, 14 Deut. 6:12 7:8 15:15
23. Slaves were a part of several of our Lord's parables:
  - a. The parable of the sower. Matthew 13:18–30
  - b. The slaves waiting for their master. Luke 2:37–48
  - c. The man having the great supper sends out his slave with the invitations. Luke 14:16–24
  - d. In the prodigal son parable, the slaves prepare for the return of the son. Luke 15:22
  - e. The slaves being left with money with the intent that they invest this money. Luke 19:11–26
  - f. The farmers who beat the slaves who come on behalf of their master for the fruit of the field. Luke 20:9–16
  - g. This was not a complete listing of parables which featured slaves.
24. The human race is born into slavery, 1Cor.7:21-23. The unbeliever is a 3-fold slave.
  - a. The unbeliever is spiritually dead, a resident of the slave market of sin.
  - b. The unbeliever is a slave to the old sin nature.
  - c. The unbeliever is a slave to human viewpoint.
25. The believer can become enslaved. Enslavement to the sin nature is basic soul slavery, Rom.6:20. Advanced soul slavery is reversionism, where the believer becomes indistinguishable from the unbeliever.
26. As believers, we ought to see ourselves as slaves to God. Paul and other communicators of God's Word saw themselves as slaves as well. Luke 1:38, 46–48 Luke 2:29 Acts 4:29 Romans 1:1 Galatians 1:10 Philip. 1:1
27. Jesus differentiates between believers who are slaves of God and believers who are friends of God.

## The Biblical Doctrine of Slavery

John 15:15

28. Paul uses slavery to illustrate positional and temporal sanctification in Romans 6:15–23
29. When a person becomes a believer, he should not look to suddenly change his status—even if he is a slave. 1Corinthians 7:17–23
30. There are no human distinctions which are carried over into the spiritual life, including being slave or being free. The idea is, a believer who is a slave is equal in the eyes of God to a believer who is free. 1Corinthians 12:13 Galatians 3:28 Colossians 3:11
31. Paul saw even himself as a slave to the Corinthians for their spiritual growth. 2Corinthians 4:5
32. Paul uses this real life illustration of Abraham's children by a slave woman (Hagar) and by a free woman (Sarah) to being under the Law of Moses or heirs to God's promises. Galatians 4:21–31
33. Paul mandates the believers who are slaves obey their masters. Ephesians 6:5–8 Colossians 3:22–24 1Timothy 6:1–2 Titus 2:9–10
34. Similarly, masters were to treat their slaves justly. Colossians 4:1
35. By application, we can take much of what is said in the Bible about slaves and masters and apply this to employees and employers.
36. When Jesus became a man, He was taking upon himself the form of a slave. Philip. 2:7
37. So, like it or not, apart from abduction slavery, the Law of Moses sought to regulate slavery and to protect those who were slaves. The Bible did not seek to end slavery.

Some points were taken from <http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/slavery.html>

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

There are several applications from the Doctrine of Slavery.

## Lessons from the Doctrine of Slavery

1. There are social evils in this world that we cannot solve; nor is God calling for His people to lead this or that social movement to fix this or that social problem. This includes slavery. At no time does God call upon His people to end slavery.
2. The believer in Jesus Christ is not called upon by God to fix social evils in this world.
3. We have already studied how the Black church became corrupted by social action. Their lives, in many ways, became worse, because of social action. What good is freedom if that freedom is squandered? If you use your freedom to take drugs, to commit crimes and to have children without caring for them, is that a good thing?
  - a. As an aside, Oprah Winfrey first went to some American Black children to see about setting up her school in the United States. They wanted sneakers and other material things; so she set up an educational institution for girls in South Africa. There, they appreciated what an education would do for them.
4. It is clear that slavery can be a social evil in the way that it was practiced. However, nowhere in the Bible are believers called upon to correct this social evil. If they were slave owners, then they were called upon by God to treat their slaves justly and honorably.
5. Laws from God to Israel were cognizant of slavery yet did not call for the out-and-out removal of slavery as an institution.
6. This suggests that there aspects of slavery which were not necessarily evil. With the correct relationship between a master and a slave, the slave was to be taken care of and treated justly; and the master received the service of the slave. Colossians 3:22 **Slaves, obey the lords according to flesh in all respects, not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God.** Colossians 4:1 **Lords, give what is just and equal to the slaves, knowing that you have a Lord in Heaven also.**
7. If a person was born again while a slave, they were not to expend effort trying to secure their own freedom. 1Corinthians 7:21–23 **Were you called as a slave? It does not matter to you. But if you are able to be free, rather use it. For the one called while a slave in the Lord is a freed man of the Lord. And**

## Lessons from the Doctrine of Slavery

likewise, the one called while a free man is a slave of Christ. You were redeemed with a price; do not become slaves of men. This final statement has to do with becoming a slave to human viewpoint, not with some sort of resistance to becoming a slave in some way. There would be some instances where one believer might petition another to request the freeing of an individual slave, as Paul requested of Philemon. The spiritual duty of Onesimus was more important to the plan of God than was his labor to Philemon.

8. Meaningful decisions are made by individuals or corporations based upon Bible doctrine. A corporation can be a married couple, a family, or some other organization of people.
9. So, in the Bible, it is legitimate for Philemon, Paul's slave-owning friend, to manumit Onesimus from his own free will; however, it would not be right for Paul to demand that he do this. It was legitimate for Paul to ask Philemon to manumit Onesimus.
10. David, as leader of his country, originally developed a friendship with Ammon (2Samuel 10:1–2) and put Moab into slavery (2Samuel 8:2). He did not decide that Israel needed some more slaves, so he enslaved Moab. David originally had a friendship with the King of Moab (1Samuel 22:3). Moab had simply become hostile to Israel, so David soundly defeated them, killed 2/3<sup>rds</sup> of their males, and enslaved the nation (after that, they paid Israel tribute). We, in the United States, do not grasp that some countries and some leaders are implacable and hate us and only understand military might. In fact, the only reason 50 or so countries have not attacked us is, our military would destroy them. Moab was right next door to David and he had to act. Therefore, after Moab was defeated militarily, it was legitimate to make Moab pay tribute (David was essentially taxing them for being overtly hostile towards Israel).
11. In our own history, it ought to be clear that, forcing the manumission of slaves is quite costly—if memory serves, 600,000 men died in the Civil War and the South was devastated for another 100 years following the Civil War (not because of the manumission of slaves, but the north devastated the south in the war, and then continued to do so via legislation from Congress). This was not an issue that needed to be forced, particularly in a democracy. England freed their slaves legislatively, as a matter of course, discourse and debate. Even the abolishment of slavery took place over a period of time in Great Britain, after the Abolishment of Slavery Act in 1833.
12. Israel had been enslaved to Egypt for 400 years; and this slavery was illegitimate. Jacob and his sons had moved to Egypt for legitimate reasons, his son Joseph was the Prime Minister of Egypt, and the Jews were not hostile to the Egyptians. In fact, the Jews always had it in their souls to return to the land of Canaan, the Land of Promise. They did not want to take over Egypt. Therefore, enslaving the Jews was a matter of paranoia on the part of the Egyptian king; and not on the basis of any legitimate principle (the Jews were not, for instance, organizing uprisings in the land of Egypt).
13. God did call upon Egypt to set His people free and to reimburse them for their time of slavery. Because the Egyptians resisted this, God punished them (the 10 signs or judgments). However, even this was done according to God's timetable and could have been accomplished without loss of life, had the Egyptians been willing to recognize that Moses was operating with God's authority.
14. In conclusion, social evils are not what a believer ought to focus on. The believer focuses on Bible doctrine and allows himself to be guided by Bible doctrine.

10 or 20 lessons from now, we will examine the history of **slavery in the United States**.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

A brief review of Genesis 16:1–9:

**Gen 16:1–7** Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said to Abram, "Look, [up until] 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 [and obeyed] the voice of Sarai. 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. And Abram went in to Hagar [on several occasions], and she conceived [became pregnant and continued to show signs of pregnancy]. And when Hagar

kept observing that she herself had become pregnant, she kept looking with contempt upon her mistress, Sarai. And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you [that is, *this is all your fault, Abram*]! 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!" But Abram said to Sarai, "Listen, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she [Hagar] fled from her [Sarai]. The Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the desert-wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur.

Sarai suggested to Abram that he have a child with Hagar, her slave-girl, so that Sarai might raise this child as her own. Although many teachers speak of this fulfilling the covenant of God to Abram, it sounds much more like Sarai just wants a child.

**Gen 16:8–9** And He [the Angel of the Lord = Jehovah Elohim] said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai." The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her."

That the Angel of Jehovah appeared to Hagar is quite remarkable. As we have studied, the angel of Jehovah is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Member of the Trinity, the Revealed Member of the Trinity, Jesus Christ in His preincarnate form. Hagar is a slave-girl and God appears to her. There is no one in her line, apart from Ishmael, who will be well-known; but the very fact that this boy is Abram's son is meaningful to God. This is known as  **blessing by association** , which has been mentioned and studied before. Hagar is blessed in many ways because she is associated with Abram. Part of that blessing is, she became a believer in Jehovah Elohim. Because she is a believer and because she is carrying Abram's child, God appears to her. God will take care of her and He will take care of her child; but Hagar must return to mistress. This is God's geographical will for her.<sup>7</sup> There is a place where God desires for us to be. For Hagar, it is in the household of Abraham.

I have mentioned the geographical will of God on many occasions. Therefore, it might be useful to have it laid out in doctrinal form.

### The Geographical Will of God

1. Anything related to the will of God has several common elements:
  - a. First of all, you must be a believer in Jesus Christ. There is no will of God whatsoever for the unbeliever, apart from, "**Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.**" (John 3:16, 18, 36).
  - b. In order to discern the will of God, including His geographical will, you must be in fellowship, which requires you to name your sins to God (1John 1:9).
  - c. You must know Bible doctrine (2Peter 3:18). God does not give you a tingly feeling when you are doing the right thing and a stomach ache when you are not.
2. There are things which are true for all human beings, which are the  **laws of divine establishment** . Believers and unbelievers ought to function within the confines of these laws.
3. You do not use your free will to sin or to commit crimes. When you do that, you are out of the will of God and probably out of the geographical will of God.
4. It is a part of man's nature and a part of man's responsibility to work. So, during working hours, you ought to be at work.
  - a. Adam worked both in perfect environment and in a fallen world. Genesis 2:8, 15 3:17
  - b. On many occasions, God teaches the importance of hard work. One example is Proverbs 6:6–11.
  - c. When believers lost track of this in Thessalonika, Paul told them,  **If one does not work, then neither should he eat**  (2Thessalonians 3:10).
  - d. As an aside, a believer should not be sitting at home collecting a check from the government. I have personally known dozens of people who collect checks from the government, and, apart from a social security check collected after age 65, I have never known a single person who would have starved without this government check. In most cases, the same is true of most of the retired social

<sup>7</sup> We have spoken of God's geographical will on many occasions and it is integral to the  **Doctrine of the Will of God** .

## The Geographical Will of God

security recipients that I have known.

5. Believers and unbelievers both have a responsibility toward their spouses and toward their children. To properly function in a marriage to properly raise a child, there must be time spent on these things. That time spent with the family is being within the geographical will of God.
6. Believers grow by means of the Spirit and knowledge of the Word of God (2Peter 3:18). That means, you ought to be under the teaching of the Word of God every day that your church is open. Unfortunately, in most cases, it is only open 2–3 times per week. This ought to be supplemented with additional teaching on the off days.
7. Once you have taken into consideration your job, your spouse, your family, the intake of Bible doctrine, along with meals and sleeping; it is generally quite easy to be in God's geographical will 24 hours a day.
8. What about the big things, like moving from point A to point B?
  - a. If you are in a city where there is no Bible doctrine being taught (and there are many cities like that), and no group which studies under a pastor from another city, you need to consider other cities. I have known a lot of people over the years and very few who did not have the academic discipline of the church classroom (which could be a group in which a person meets) were able to make a go of the spiritual lives. This is a **list** of doctrinal churches that I am aware of.
  - b. When it comes to making a big move, there will certainly be other factors, e.g., advancement in your profession, a job promotion, specialized training for your profession, etc. You may not be able to find a job in your field in your city. However, if you are looking to make a move because of your vocation, then the spiritual availabilities where you are moving to must be a part of your decision making process.
  - c. All of your decisions ought to have a spiritual aspect to them. That is a part of being occupied with the Person of Jesus Christ.
  - d. God will not talk to you, He will not email you, He will not give you tingly feelings to move your from point A to point B.
9. The same thing is true when it comes to any major decision in your life, e.g., changing jobs. Personal problems or a personality conflict are not sufficient reasons to change jobs. One of the best decisions I made was to stay at a job where there were problems, and that encouragement to stay came from Bible teaching which I received just at that time. Similarly, one of the best decisions I made was to change jobs (that very same job) about 15 years later.
10. For the new believer or the immature believer, your best decision is to stay right where you are about 99.9% of the time. Paul advises that the believer remain in the state wherein he was calls. If he is a slave, do not expend effort trying to be free. If you are married to an unbeliever, do not seek to break the bonds of your marriage. 1Corinthians 7:20–21 **Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.)** Read all of 1Corinthians 7:18–24 to get the full impact of this passage.
11. We have had several instances of God's geographical will being made clear (that is, God came to these individuals and told them what to do and where to go):
  - a. Noah building the ark and then entering into the ark with his family.
  - b. Abram and his wife moving to the Land of Promise.
  - c. Hagar being sent back to her mistress.
  - d. You will never receiver these sorts of verbal instructions because you have the entire Word of God available to you.
12. We also have instances of a believer being in God's geographical will without God having to tell him exactly where to go and what to do.
  - a. Abram chose to separate from Lot because they were involved in constant disputes over the ownership of the assets of their two companies. God came to Abram almost immediately after and continued teaching the Abrahamic Covenant to him. Genesis 13
  - b. Abram in Genesis 14 gathered his men and fought to free his nephew Lot from what would be a lifetime of slavery. God did not have to come to Abram and tell him to do this. As a result, Abram enjoys the fellowship of Melchizedek, one of the pivotal people of the Old Testament.
13. For the growing and mature believer, the key to the geographical will of God is being in fellowship with



## The Geographical Will of God

God and knowing the Word of God.

Additional resources:

The Doctrine of the Will of God ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#))

R. B. Thieme, Jr.'s [Divine Guidance](#).

Buddy Dano's [God's Will for Your Life](#).

The example of [Paul and the geographical will of God](#).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

**Gen 16:8–9** And He [the Angel of the Lord = Jehovah Elohim] said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai." The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her."

Abram's line through Hagar to Ishmael will be a fallen line; and Abram's line by Sarai through Isaac, will be the line of promise. Even today, if you had to choose between living in Israel, where there is relative freedom, and living in any other middle eastern country, where churches are burned and Christians are persecuted and killed, it will be obvious which people are the Lord's and which people are the fallen line. After all, what kind of people would celebrate a "Day of Rage"?

**And so says to her a Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, "Multiplying I will multiply your seed and cannot be numbered from multitude."**

Genesis  
16:10

**The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, "I will certainly multiply your descendants so that they cannot be numbered because of [their great] multitude."**

**The Angel of Jehovah said to her, "I will certainly multiply your descendants so that they cannot be counted because of their great multitude."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)	And the Angel of the Lord said to her, Multiplying I will multiply thy sons, and they shall not be numbered for multitude.
Latin Vulgate	And again he said: I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, and it shall not be numbered for multitude.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says to her a Messenger of Y <sup>e</sup> howah, "Multiplying I will multiply your seed and cannot be numbered from multitude."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And again the angel of the LORD said to her, I will greatly multiply your descendants, that they can not be numbered because of their multitude.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the Angel of the Lord said to her, I will surely multiply your seed, so that they shall not be numbered for multitude.

Significant differences:

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The LORD's messenger also said to her, "I will give you many children, so many they can't be counted!"
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Contemporary English V.	I will give you a son, who will be called Ishmael, because I have heard your cry for help. And later I will give you so many descendants that no one will be able to count them all. The CEV has obviously combined this with another subsequent verse.
Easy English	The *angel of the *Lord also said, `I will give many *descendants to you. Nobody will be able to count them.'
Easy-to-Read Version	The Angel of the Lord also said to Hagar, "From you will come many people. There will be so many people that they cannot be counted."
<i>The Message</i>	He continued, "I'm going to give you a big family, children past counting.
New Berkeley Version	The Angel of the LORD added: I will greatly increase your descendants beyond all counting, they will be so numerous.
New Century Version	The angel also said, "I will give you so many descendants they cannot be counted."
New Life Version	The angel of the Lord said to her, "I will give you so many people in your family through the years that they will be too many to number."
New Living Translation	Then he added, "I will give you more descendants than you can count."
The Voice	<i>Trust me:</i> I am going to give you <i>many children and many</i> descendants, so many you won't be able to count them!

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the messenger of Jehovah told her: 'I will make your seed grow, and there will be so many that they can't be counted.'
Christian Community Bible	The angel of Yahweh said to her, "I will so increase your descendants, that they will be too numerous to be counted."
<i>God's Word™</i>	The Messenger of the LORD also said to her, "I will give you many descendants. No one will be able to count them because there will be so many."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Still will I grant increase, he said, to the race that shall spring from thee, till its numbers cannot be counted.
New American Bible (2011)	I will make your descendants so numerous," added the LORD's angel, "that they will be too many to count." Gn 17:20; 21:13, 18; 25:12-18.
NIRV	The angel continued, "I will greatly increase the number of your children after you. You will have more of them than anyone can count."
New Simplified Bible	»I will so increase your descendants that they will be too numerous to count.«
Today's NIV	The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The messenger of Yahweh said to her, "I will   multiply   your seed with an abundance not accounted!"
Bible in Basic English	And the angel of the Lord said, Your seed will be greatly increased so that it may not be numbered.
Conservapedia	Further, the Angel of the Lord told her, "I will multiply your descendants to such a degree that they will be innumerable."
The Expanded Bible	The angel of the Lord also said, "I will ·give you so many descendants [·greatly multiply your seed so that] they cannot be counted."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	The EVER-LIVING's messenger further said to her," I will greatly increase your race, so that they cannot be numbered for multitude."
HCSB	The Angel of the LORD also said to her, "I will greatly multiply your offspring, and they will be too many to count."
NET Bible®	I will greatly multiply your descendants," the Lord's angel added [Heb "The Lord's angel said, `I will greatly multiply your descendants.." The order of the clauses has been rearranged in the translation for stylistic reasons.], "so that they will be too numerous to count [Heb "cannot be numbered because of abundance."]."

NIV, ©2011

The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count." S Ge 13:16

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	The angel of ADONAI said to her, "I will greatly increase your descendants; there will be so many that it will be impossible to count them."
exeGesés companion Bible	And the angel of Yah Veh says to her, In abounding, I abound your seed, that it not be scribed for abundance.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And the angel of the Lord said to her, "I will greatly multiply your seed, and it will not be counted for abundance."
Kaplan Translation	[Another] [Cf. Rashi on Genesis 16:9] angel said in God's name [Literally, 'An angel of God said to her,' but obviously it was God making the promise, and not the angel (cf. Radak; Rashi on Genesis 18:10).], 'I will grant you many descendants. They will be so many that they will be uncountable.'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the Malach Hashem said unto her, I will multiply thy zera exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And the Messenger of הויה said to her, "I am going to increase your seed greatly, too numerous to be counted."

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And saying to her is the messenger of Yahweh, "Verily, I am increasing your seed, and not shall it be numbered for multitude.
Context Group Version	And the messenger of YHWH said to her, I will greatly multiply your seed, it shall be too many to count.
English Standard Version	The angel of the LORD also said to her, "I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude."
Green's Literal Translation	And the Angel of Jehovah said to her, I will exceedingly multiply your seed, so that it shall not be numbered for multitude.
NASB	Moreover, the angel of the Lord [Gen 22:15-18] said to her, "I will greatly multiply [Gen 17:20] your descendants [Lit seed] so that they will be too many to count [Or it shall not be counted for multitude]."
Syndein/Thieme	And the angel/messenger {mal'ak} of Jehovah/God said {'amar} {unto her}, "I will multiply your seed/progeny tremendously {a great section of the Arabs today come from Hagar}, that it shall not be numbered {caphar} for multitude {tremendously large nations}."
Third Millennium Bible	And the angel of the LORD said unto her, "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude."
World English Bible	The angel of Yahweh said to her, "I will greatly multiply your seed, that they will not be numbered for multitude."
Young's Updated LT	And the messenger of Jehovah says to her, "Multiplying I multiply your seed, and it is not numbered from multitude;"

**The gist of this verse:** God promises Hagar to give her so many descendants that they cannot be counted.

**Genesis 16:10a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## Genesis 16:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
mal <sup>e</sup> âk <sup>e</sup> (מַלְאָךְ) [pronounced mah <sup>e</sup> -AWK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>messenger or angel; this word has been used for a prophet (Isaiah 42:19) and priest (Mal. 2:7)</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4397 BDB #521
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
râbâh (רָבַח) [pronounced raw <sup>b</sup> -VAWH]	<i>to make [do] much; to multiply, to increase; to give much; to lay much; to have much; to make great; many [as a Hiphil infinitive construct]</i>	Hiphil infinitive absolute	Strong's #7235 BDB #915
The <b>infinitive absolute</b> has four uses: ❶ when found alone, it sometimes acts as an English gerund, so that we may add <i>ing</i> to the end of the verb; ❷ When found directly before its verbal cognate, it serves to intensify or strengthen the action or the meaning of the verb which follows; ❸ When it follows its cognate verb, it emphasizes the duration or the continuation of the verbal idea; and, ❹ it is sometimes used as a substitute for a finite verb form. <sup>8</sup>			
râbâh (רָבַח) [pronounced raw <sup>b</sup> -VAWH]	<i>to make [do] much; to multiply, to increase; to give much; to lay much; to have much; to make great; many [as a Hiphil infinitive construct]</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #7235 BDB #915
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
zera' (עֵרָוָה) [pronounced ZEH-rah <sup>g</sup> ]	<i>a seed, a sowing; an offspring, progeny, descendant; posterity</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #2233 BDB #282

**Translation:** The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, "I will certainly multiply your descendants..."

The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah (the Angel of Jehovah) is the Preincarnate Jesus, and He is making a promise to Hagar here. He promises her that He will definitely multiply her descendants. A mere angel cannot make a promise like that. A mere angel cannot say, "I will definitely multiply your descendants." Only God can do that.

<sup>8</sup> *Biblical Hebrew*; Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 184–185.

Genesis 16:10b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לוּ or לוֹ) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
çâphar (סָפַר) [pronounced <i>saw-FAHR</i> ]	<i>to be counted, to be numbered; to be considered</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #5608 BDB #707
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i> ]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
rôb (רַב) [pronounced <i>roh<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>multitude, abundance, greatness</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7230 BDB #913

**Translation:** ...so that they cannot be numbered because of [their great] multitude.”

The Revealed God is not speaking to Abram; He is speaking to Hagar, and He is making great promises to her. And the population of Arabs all over the world is evidence that these promises of 4000 years ago have come to pass.

What has happened due to Abram and Sarai's unbelief cannot be reversed without God altering the free will choices of man. Hagar's child, Ishmael, will be born in Abram's household and this verse will be fulfilled.

*As Scofield points out: Ishmael... was the progenitor of the Arabs, the traditional enemies of the Jewish people. Moreover Mohammed, the founder of Islam, whose adherents form Christianity's most difficult missionary problem, came from the line of Ishmael. Islam is the world religion which is, perhaps, closest to Christianity; thus it is the hardest to penetrate with the Gospel of Christ.<sup>9</sup>*

V. 10 reads: **The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, “I will certainly multiply your descendants so that they cannot be numbered because of [their great] multitude.”** Surprisingly, God makes a promise to Hagar. Hagar is carrying Abram's child, and God honors this, despite the fact that sin brought them to this point. God promises that Hagar will be the mother of a very large group of people. In fact, the words used here—that Hagar's descendants cannot be numbered—suggests that Hagar's son will father even more people than will Abram. However, as a distinct people, they will fade from history.

Genesis 16:10 **The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, “I will certainly multiply your descendants so that they cannot be numbered because of [their great] multitude.”** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:10 **The Angel of Jehovah said to her, “I will certainly multiply your descendants so that they cannot be counted because of their great multitude.”** (Kukis paraphrase)

<sup>9</sup> Scofield Bible, p. 25



And so says to her a Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, “Behold you [are] pregnant and giving birth to a son. And you have called his name Ishmael because has heard Y<sup>e</sup>howah unto your affliction. And he [even he] will be a wild ass of a man. His hand in the all and a hand of all in him; and upon faces of all his brothers he will dwell.”

Genesis  
16:11–12

The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, “Listen, you [are] pregnant and giving birth to a son. You will call his name Ishmael because Y<sup>e</sup>howah has heard your affliction. Furthermore, he will be a wild ass of a man. His hand [will be] against all [others] and the hand of all [others will be] against him; and he will dwell facing his brothers.”

The Angel of Jehovah said to her, “Listen, you are pregnant and about to give birth to a son. You will call his name Ishmael because Jehovah has heard your afflicted cry. Furthermore, he will be a wild ass of a man—his hand will be against all those around him and the hand of all others will be against him; and he will live in opposition to his brothers.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)	And the Angel of the Lord said to her, Behold, thou art with child, and thou wilt bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Ishmael, because thy affliction is revealed before the Lord. And he shall be like the wild ass among men: his hands shall take vengeance of his adversaries, and the hands of his adversaries be put forth to do him evil; and in the presence of all his brethren shall he be commingled, (yitharbeb, Arabized,) and shall dwell.
Latin Vulgate	And again: Behold, said he, thou art with child, and thou shalt bring forth a son: and thou shalt call his name Ismael, because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. He shall be a wild man: his hand will be against all men, and all men's hands against him: and he shall pitch his tents over against all his brethren.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says to her a Messenger of Y <sup>e</sup> howah, “Behold you [are] pregnant and giving birth to a son. And you have called his name Ishmael because has heard Y <sup>e</sup> howah unto your affliction. And he [even he] will be a wild ass of a man. His hand in the all and a hand of all in him; and upon faces of all his brothers he will dwell.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the angel of the LORD said to her, Behold, you are with child, and shall bear a son, and you shall call his name Ishmael; because the LORD has heard of your afflictions. And he will be like a wild ass among men; with his hand against every man, and every mans hand against him, and he shall dwell on the borders of all his brethren.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the Angel of the Lord said to her, Behold you are with child, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael, for the Lord has hearkened to your humiliation. He shall be a wild man, his hands against all, and the hands of all against him, and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

Significant differences:

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The Lord's messenger said to her, "You are now pregnant and will give birth to a son. You will name him Ishmael [Or God hears] because the Lord has heard about your harsh treatment. He will be a wild mule of a man; he will fight everyone, and they will fight him. He will live at odds with all his relatives [Or He will reside near all his relatives]."
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Contemporary English V.	I will give you a son, who will be called Ishmael, because I have heard your cry for help. And later I will give you so many descendants that no one will be able to count them all. But your son will live far from his relatives; he will be like a wild donkey, fighting everyone, and everyone fighting him." V. 10 is included for context.
Easy English	The *angel of the *Lord then said this to Sarai. `You are now *pregnant and you will have a baby son. The *Lord has heard that you are suffering. So you will name your son Ishmael. Ishmael will be a man that is like a wild *donkey. He will oppose everyone, and everyone will oppose him. He will always fight against his relatives.'
Easy-to-Read Version	The Angel of the Lord also said, "Ishmael will be wild and free, like a wild donkey. He will move from place to place and camp near his brothers. He will be against everyone and everyone will be against him."
Good News Bible (TEV)	You are going to have a son, and you will name him Ishmael, because the LORD has heard your cry of distress. But your son will live like a wild donkey; he will be against everyone, and everyone will be against him. He will live apart from all his relatives."
<i>The Message</i>	From this pregnancy, you'll get a son: Name him Ishmael; for GOD heard you, GOD answered you. He'll be a bucking bronco of a man, a real fighter, fighting and being fought, Always stirring up trouble, always at odds with his family."
New Century Version	The angel added, "You are now pregnant, and you will have a son. You will name him Ishmael,[a] because the Lord has heard your cries. Ishmael will be like a wild donkey. He will be against everyone, and everyone will be against him. He will attack all his brothers."
New Life Version	The angel of the Lord also said to her, "See, you are going to have a child. And you will give birth to a son. You will give him the name Ishmael, because the Lord has heard how you have suffered. He will be a wild donkey of a man. His hand will be against all people. And the hand of all people will be against him. He will live to the east of all his brothers."
New Living Translation	And the angel also said, "You are now pregnant and will give birth to a son. You are to name him Ishmael (which means `God hears'), for the Lord has heard your cry of distress. This son of yours will be a wild man, as untamed as a wild donkey! He will raise his fist against everyone, and everyone will be against him. Yes, he will live in open hostility against all his relatives."
The Voice	Look, you are pregnant, and you're going to have a son. <i>I want</i> you to call him Ishmael because the Eternal One has heard your anguished cries. <i>Just to warn you, though:</i> <i>Ishmael</i> , your son, is going to be a wild and rowdy man; he'll put his fist in every face, And everyone will turn against him, and he will live at odds with all of his relatives.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	And the messenger of Jehovah said to her: 'Look; You are pregnant with a child. You will give birth to a son, and you should name him Ishmael ('God has Noticed'); because, Jehovah has noticed how you've been humiliated. 12 He will be a wild man, for his fists [will be lifted] against everyone, and everyone [will lift] their fists against him. However, he will live in the midst of all his brothers.
Christian Community Bible	Then the angel of Yahweh said to her, "Now you are with child and you will have a son, and you shall name him Ishmael, for Yahweh has heard your distress. He shall be a wild ass of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, defiant towards all his brothers."
<i>God's Word™</i>	Then the Messenger of the LORD said to her, "You are pregnant, and you will give birth to a son. You will name him Ishmael [God Hears], because the LORD has heard your cry of distress. He will be as free and wild as an untamed donkey. He will fight with everyone, and everyone will fight with him. He will have conflicts with all his relatives."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And he added, Now thou art with child; it is a son that will be born to thee, and thou shalt call him Ismael (that is, God hears), in token that God has listened to thee in thy affliction. His shall be a nature none can tame; hating all and hated by all, he shall pitch his camp eastwards [ 'Eastwards'; the Hebrew text is usually so rendered. The Latin gives a literal translation, 'over against'.] of his brethren.
New American Bible (2002)	Besides," the LORD'S messenger said to her: "You are now pregnant and shall bear a son; you shall name him Ishmael [Ishmael: in Hebrew the name means "God has heard."], For the LORD has heard you, God has answered you. He shall be a wild ass of a man, his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; In opposition to all his kin shall he encamp."
New American Bible (2011)	Then the LORD's angel said to her: "You are now pregnant and shall bear a son; you shall name him Ishmael [Ishmael: in Hebrew the name means "God has heard." It is the same Hebrew verb that is translated "heeded" in the next clause. In other ancient Near Eastern texts, the name commemorated the divine answer to the parents' prayer to have a child, but here it is broadened to mean that God has "heard" Hagar's plight. In vv. 13-14, the verb "to see" is similarly broadened to describe God's special care for those in need.], For the LORD has heeded your affliction. He shall be a wild ass of a man, his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; Alongside [Alongside: lit., "against the face of"; the same phrase is used of the lands of Ishmael's descendants in 25:18. It can be translated "in opposition to" (Dt 21:16; Jb 1:11; 6:28; 21:31), but here more likely means that Ishmael's settlement was near but not in the promised land.] all his kindred shall he encamp." Gn 21:20; 25:18.
NIRV	The angel of the Lord also said to her, "You are now pregnant. You will have a son. You will name him Ishmael. That is because the Lord has heard about your suffering. He will be like a wild donkey. He will use his power against everyone. And everyone will be against him. He will not be friendly toward any of his relatives."
New Jerusalem Bible	Then the angel of Yahweh said to her: Now, you have conceived and will bear a son, and you shall name him Ishmael, for Yahweh has heard your cries of distress.

A wild donkey of a man he will be, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him, living his life in defiance of all his kinsmen.

New Simplified Bible

Jehovah's angel also said: »You are now with child and you will have a son. You shall name him Ishmael (means: God hears). Jehovah has heard of your misery. »He (Ishmael) will be a wild donkey of a man. His hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him. He will live in hostility toward all his brothers.«

Today's NIV

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. 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."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear

The messenger of Yahweh said to her, "Behold, your pregnancy will beget a son. Call his name Ishmael (God heard), for Yahweh heard into your humiliation. He will be a wild-ass human with his hand to all and all hands to him. He will reside in front over all his brothers."

Bible in Basic English

And the angel of the Lord said, See, you are with child and will give birth to a son, to whom you will give the name Ishmael, because the ears of the Lord were open to your sorrow. And he will be like a mountain ass among men; his hand will be against every man and every man's hand against him, and he will keep his place against all his brothers.

Conservapedia

Again the Angel of the Lord told her, "Look: you're pregnant, and you will have a son. You will name him Ishmael [The name Ishmael literally means "God hears." ], because the LORD has heard your affliction. He will be a wild donkey of a man. His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand will be against him. He will settle in the face of all his kin." In short, he will be a "wiseguy."

The Expanded Bible

The ·angel [messenger] added,  
 "You ·are now pregnant [have conceived],  
 and you will ·have [l<sup>t</sup>give birth to] a son.  
 You will name him Ishmael [c<sup>s</sup>sounds like the verb "to hear"],  
 because the Lord has heard ·your cries [l<sup>t</sup>of your affliction].  
 Ishmael will be ·like a wild donkey [l<sup>t</sup>a wild donkey/ass of a man].  
 ·He [l<sup>t</sup>His hand] will be against everyone,  
 and ·everyone [l<sup>t</sup>everyone's hand] will be against him.  
 He will ·attack [l<sup>t</sup>dwell against] all his brothers."

Ferar-Fenton Bible

The EVER-LIVING's messenger also continued, " You are now with child, and you will give birth to a son, and you must call his name Ishmael.-'for God heard your sorrow. And he shall be a freeman; his hand shall be with every man, and the hand of every man with him, and he shall stand up in the presence of all his brothers."

HCSB

Then the Angel of the LORD said to her: You have conceived and will have a son. You will name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard your *cry of affliction*. This man will be like a wild ass. His hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand will be against him; he will live at odds with all his brothers.

NET Bible®

Then the Lord's angel said to her,  
 "You are now [The particle הִנֵּה (hinneh) focuses on her immediate situation: "Here you are pregnant."] pregnant  
 and are about to give birth [The active participle refers here to something that is about to happen.] to a son.  
 You are to name him Ishmael [The name Ishmael consists of the imperfect or jussive form of the Hebrew verb with the theophoric element added as the subject. It means "God hears" or "may God hear."],  
 for the Lord has heard your painful groans [Heb "affliction," which must refer here to Hagar's painful groans of anguish.] [This clause gives the explanation

of the name Ishmael, using a wordplay. Ishmael's name will be a reminder that "God hears" Hagar's painful cries.].

**He will be a wild donkey** [A wild donkey of a man. The prophecy is not an insult. The wild donkey lived a solitary existence in the desert away from society. Ishmael would be free-roaming, strong, and like a bedouin; he would enjoy the freedom his mother sought.] **of a man.**

**He will be hostile to everyone** [Heb "His hand will be against everyone." The "hand" by metonymy represents strength. His free-roaming life style would put him in conflict with those who follow social conventions. There would not be open warfare, only friction because of his antagonism to their way of life.], **and everyone will be hostile to him** [Heb "And the hand of everyone will be against him."].

**He will live away from** [Heb "opposite, across from." Ishmael would live on the edge of society (cf. NASB "to the east of"). Some take this as an idiom meaning "be at odds with" (cf. NRSV, NLT) or "live in hostility toward" (cf. NIV.)] **his brothers."**

NIV, ©2011

The angel of the Lord [S ver 7; S Ac 5:19] also said to her:

"You are now pregnant

and you will give birth to a son [S Ge 3:15].

You shall name him [Ge 12:2-3; 18:19; Ne 9:7; Isa 44:1; Am 3:2; Mt 1:21; Lk 1:13, 31] **Ishmael** [Ishmael means God hears.] [Ge 17:19; 21:3; 37:25, 28; 39:1; Jdg 8:24],

**for the Lord has heard of your misery** [Ge 29:32; 31:42; Ex 2:24; 3:7, 9; 4:31; Nu 20:16; Dt 26:7; 1Sa 9:16].

**He will be a wild donkey** [Job 6:5; 11:12; 24:5; 39:5; Ps 104:11; Jer 2:24; Hos 8:9] **of a man;**

**his hand will be against everyone**

**and everyone's hand against him,**

**and he will live in hostility**

**toward** [Or live to the east / of] **all his brothers** [Ge 25:18]."

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

The angel of ADONAI said to her, "Look, you are pregnant, and you will give birth to a son. You are to call him Yishma'el [God pays attention] because ADONAI has paid attention to your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man, with his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, living his life at odds with all his kinsmen."

exeGesés companion Bible

And the angel of Yah Veh says to her,  
Behold, you conceive and birth a son;  
and call his name Yishma El;  
because Yah Veh hears your humiliation:  
and he is a human runner  
with the hand of every man against him;  
and he tabernacles at the face of all his brethren.

Judaica Press Complete T.

And the angel of the Lord said to her, "Behold, you will conceive and bear a son, and you shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard your affliction. And he will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be upon all, and everyone's hand upon him, and before all his brothers he will dwell."

Kaplan Translation

[Still another] angel of God said to her, 'You are pregnant, and will give birth to a son. You must name him Ishmael [Yishmael in Hebrew, literally, 'God will hear.'], for God has heard your prayer [(Targum). Literally, 'suffering']. He will be a rebel [(Targum; cf. Ibn Ezra). Pereh Adam in Hebrew. Pereh is a wild donkey (cf. Isaiah 32:14, Hosea 8:9, Job 6:5, 11:12, 24:5) and hence, it can be translated, 'a wild



donkey of a man' (Targum Yonathan; Ramban). Rashi interprets it to mean an 'outdoor man' or 'a man who will live in Paran.']. His hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand will be against him. Still, he will dwell undisturbed [See note on Genesis 14:13. Cf. Targum Yonathan] near all his brothers [Or, 'He will dwell over all his brothers,' (cf. Rashi).].'

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And the Malach Hashem said unto her, See, thou art with child and shalt bear ben, and shalt call shmo Yishmael; because Hashem shema thy oni (misery). And he will be a pere adam; his yad will be against kol, and kol yad against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

*The Amplified Bible*

And the Angel of the Lord continued, See now, you are with child and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael [God hears], because the Lord has heard and paid attention to your affliction. And he [Ishmael] will be as a wild ass among men ["Nothing can be more descriptive of the wandering, lawless, freebooting life of the Arabs than this. From the beginning to the present they have kept their independence, and God preserves them as a lasting monument of His providential care and an incontestable argument of the truth of divine revelation. Had the books of Moses no other proof of their divine origin, the account of Ishmael and the prophecy concerning his descendants during a period of nearly 4,000 years would be sufficient. To attempt to refute it would be a most ridiculous presumption and folly" (Adam Clarke, The Holy Bible with A Commentary).]; his hand will be against every man and every man's hand against him, and he will live to the east and on the borders of all his kinsmen.

Concordant Literal Version

And saying to her is the messenger of Yahweh, "Behold! Pregnant are you, bearing a son, and you are to call his name Ishmael, for Yahweh hears of your humiliation. And becoming is he a wild ass of a human, his hand against all, and the hand of all against him. And adjoining all his brethren will he tabernacle.

A Conservative Version

And the agent of LORD said to her, Behold, thou are with child, and shall bear a son, and thou shall call his name Ishmael, because LORD has heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild donkey among men, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him, and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brothers.

Context Group Version

And the messenger of YHWH said to her, Look, you are pregnant, and shall give birth to a son; and you shall name him Ishmael, because YHWH has heard your affliction. And he shall be [ as ] a wild donkey among man; his hand [ shall be ] against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; and he shall dwell across from all his brothers.

*Emphasized Bible*

And the messenger of Yahweh said to her, Behold thee! with child, and about bearing a son—and thou shalt call his name Ishmael for Yahweh hath hearkened unto thy humiliation. (Ishmael: God hearkeneth) But, he, will be a wild ass of a man, his hand, against every one, and every ones hand against him—yet, in presence of all his brethren, shall he have his habitation.

English Standard V. – UK

And the angel of the Lord said to her,  
 "Behold, you are pregnant  
 and shall bear a son.  
 You shall call his name Ishmael [Ishmael means God hears],  
 because the Lord has listened [ch. 29:32] to your affliction.  
 He shall be a wild donkey [Job 39:5-8; [ch. 21:20]] of a man,  
 his hand against everyone  
 and everyone's hand against him,  
 and he shall dwell over against [ch. 25:18] all his kinsmen."

The Geneva Bible

And he will be a wild man; his hand [will be] against every man, and every mans hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. V. 12 only.

	That is, the Ishmaelites will be a separate people by themselves and not part of another people.
Green's Literal Translation	And the Angel of Jehovah said to her, Behold! You are with child and shall bear a son; and you shall call his name Ishmael, because Jehovah has listened to your affliction. And he shall be a wild ass of a man, his hand against all, and the hand of everyone against him; and he shall live before all his brothers.
NASB	The angel of the Lord said to her further, "Behold, you are with child, And you will bear a son; And you shall call his name Ishmael [I.e. God hears], Because the Lord has given heed [Lit has heard] [Ex 2:23, 24; 3:7, 9] to your affliction. "He will be a wild donkey [Job 24:5; 39:5-8] of a man, His hand will be against everyone, And everyone's hand will be against him; And he will live [Lit dwell] to the east of [Lit before the face of; or in defiance of] [Gen 25:18] all his brothers."
New RSV	And the angel of the Lord said to her, 'Now you have conceived and shall bear a son; you shall call him Ishmael [That is God hears], for the Lord has given heed to your affliction. He shall be a wild ass of a man, with his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; and he shall live at odds with all his kin.'
Syndein/Thieme	And the angel/messenger {mal'ak} of Jehovah/God said {'amar} unto her, "Behold, you are with child, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael {means 'the Lord has heard'}. Because Jehovah/God has heard your affliction." "He {Ishmael} will be a 'wild ass {pere}' of a man' {Ishmael and his descendents are a wild desert peoples}. 'His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him' {yad yad - literally: 'hand hand'. The doubling of a word in the Hebrew is very strong - this indicates each 'hand' will be against the 'hand' of those around him - always battling}. And he shall keep on dwelling {shakan} in the presence/face {paniyim} of all his brethren/kindred {'ach}." {Note: One of the great signs of the coming of the Tribulation is the gathering together of the Arabs to attack the Jews in Jerusalem. Until then the Arabs will be at each other's throats.}
Third Millennium Bible	And the angel of the LORD said unto her, "Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son and shalt call his name Ishmael [that is, God shall hear], because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man. His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And the angel of Yahweh said to her, Look, you are pregnant, and will give birth to a son; and you will name him Ishmael, because Yahweh has heard your affliction. And he will be [as] a wild donkey among man; his hand [will be] against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; and he will stay across from all his brothers.
Webster's Bible Translation	And the angel of the LORD said to her, Behold, thou [art] with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand [will be] against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.
Young's Updated LT	And the messenger of Jehovah says to her, "Behold you are conceiving, and bearing a son, and have called his name Ishmael, for Jehovah has hearkened unto your affliction; and he is a wild-ass man, his hand against every one, and every one's hand against him—and before the face of all his brothers he dwells."

**The gist of this verse:** God talks some reality to Hagar, tells her what to name her child, then prophecies about the child.

Genesis 16:11a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
mal'âkê (מלאך) [pronounced <i>mahl'-AWK'</i> ]	<i>messenger or angel; this word has been used for a prophet (Isaiah 42:19) and priest (Mal. 2:7)</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4397 BDB #521
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
hinnêh (הנה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle; with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
Sometimes, hinnêh (הנה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ] is used to focus the listener on the <i>here and now</i> ; the intent is to get the hearer to recognize reality, their decisions and the consequence of their decisions.			
With the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular suffix, it is as if God is saying, "Reality check, babe."			
hârâh (הרה) [pronounced <i>haw-RAW</i> ]	<i>pregnant, with child, having conceived</i>	feminine singular adjective	Strong's #2030 BDB #248
The adjective and the verb are spelled alike, although both Owen and Zodhiates identify this as the adjective.			

**Translation:** The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, "Listen, you [are] pregnant..."

God is speaking to a pregnant Hagar who is out in the middle of the desert. He states the obvious, a fact which is affecting the hormones of Hagar, which could account, in part, for her erratic behavior (which is not to say that Sarai was not tough on her).

## Genesis 16:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>giving birth, bearing, being born, bearing, bringing forth, begetting</i>	feminine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

**Translation:** ...and giving birth to a son.

She does not know if she will bear a son or a daughter; but God certainly does, and He knows that she will have a son.

Interestingly enough, she will travel to about this same place with her teen of a son 13 or so years in the future.

## Genesis 16:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lamed]</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
Yish <sup>e</sup> mâ'ê'l (יִשְׁמָעֵל) [pronounced <i>yish-maw-GALE</i> ]	<i>whom God hears; God is hearing and is transliterated Ishmael</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3458 BDB #1035

**Translation:** You will call his name Ishmael...

God chose a name for the boy, which means *God hears; God is hearing*. God has heard the cries of this pregnant woman out in the desert; and He has made provision for the pregnancy and birth.

*Ishmael* is the Hebrew word Yish<sup>e</sup>mâ'ê'l (יִשְׁמָעֵל) [pronounced *yish-maw-GALE*], which is a composite of the words shâma' and el (God) and it therefore means *whom God hears; God is hearing*. The slight difference in spelling is that shama is the vocabulary form and in the Qal perfect. The yodh changes this verb to a Qal imperfect and is almost letter for letter the same as Ishmael.

Genesis 16:11d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kîy (כי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
shâma' (שמע) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to, against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'ôñîy (עני) [pronounced gon-EE]	<i>affliction, poverty, humility, humiliation</i>	masculine singular substantive with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6040 BDB #777

**Translation:** ...because Y<sup>e</sup>howah has heard your affliction.

Ishmael's name means *God is hearing; God is listening*. This is why Ishmael is given this name. Throughout the Bible, we find a playful use of language.

Shâma' (שמע) [pronounced shaw-MAHG] means *to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of*. The verb is in the Qal perfect, meaning that God heard this and made provision for this situation in eternity past as a part of His eternal decrees.

The name Ishmael means *God hears*, and this is because Hagar is a young pregnant woman, running away from her home, and God tells her that He hears her and is concerned for her situation.

God tells Hagar to return, but He tells her that he has heard and He knows about her affliction, and that He has made provision for that affliction.

Bear in mind, God is the authority over Abram, and he is Sarai's authority. Therefore, God can see to it that Hagar is treated reasonably. Although this topic is not covered specifically in the narrative, Abram's relationship with his future son Ishmael, will be such that, it is apparent that Sarai backed off.

As an aside, there are unjust people, unjust institutions and unjust situations in this world. It is not up to the believer to go out there and try to fix them all. This is the devil's world and these things will never be resolved in our lifetime. Some people believe that slavery is an unjust situation and the Bible itself states clearly that Sarai treated Hagar unfairly. God does not send Hagar back with a list of demands. God does not outlaw slavery nor does He take Abram aside and outlaw slavery within his household. God's perfect justice will reign in all of the earth when Jesus reigns over all the earth, and not until then. In other words, Hagar is to live in her circumstances as she finds them. This does not mean that God has abandoned her or that God will not deal with the specific treatment that caused Hagar to leave her mistress, Sarai.



God will not take Sarai aside personally and say, “Listen, you need to lighten up.” In fact, up to this point, God has not spoken to Sarai directly. However, what appears to be the case is, Abram gave this situation some thought—Sarai’s unjust treatment of Hagar and Hagar running away because of it (which endangered Abram’s only son)—and he apparently took care of the matter. Abram cannot have the mother of his son die while pregnant out in the desert somewhere. So, even though there is no narrative about what is happening behind the scenes, no doubt that Abram took control of the situation.

Genesis 16:11 **The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, “Listen, you [are] pregnant and giving birth to a son. You will call his name Ishmael because Y<sup>e</sup>howah has heard your affliction.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

In v. 12, God describes what Hagar’s son would be like, which prophecy would follow and God will define Arabs and other middle eastern peoples even to this day (Ishmael’s descendants are not clearly defined today, as they appear to have been blended with the Midianites at some point in time).

Genesis 16:12a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
hûw’ (אוּה) [pronounced <i>hoo</i> ]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong’s #1931 BDB #214
hâyâh (הִיָּה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #1961 BDB #224
pere’ (אֶרֶפ) [pronounced <i>PEH-reh</i> ]	<i>wild ass; a wild running animal</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong’s #6501 BDB #825
Also spelled <i>pereh</i> (הֶרֶפ) [pronounced <i>PEH-reh</i> ].			
’âdâm (אָדָם) [pronounced <i>aw-DAWM</i> ]	<i>a man, a human being, mankind; transliterated Adam</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #120 & #121 BDB #9

**Translation:** Furthermore, he will be a wild ass of a man. Ishmael would become a wild ass of a man, suggesting that he is not ridden or tamed. He is not the kind of man that can be reasoned with. This is not necessarily specific to Ishmael; but it will be true of his descendants.

Genesis 16:12b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i> ]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong’s #3027 BDB #388
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong’s # BDB #88

Genesis 16:12b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh/]; also kol (כֹּל) [pronounced kol]	<i>all, all things, the whole, totality, the entirety, everything</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh/]; also kol (כֹּל) [pronounced kol]	<i>all, all things, the whole, totality, the entirety, everything</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88

**Translation:** His hand [will be] against all [others] and the hand of all [others will be] against him;...

This suggests that he will be constantly in conflict. Being at war with those around him is a natural state of being for Ishmael and for his descendants.

As a wild ass of a man, Ishmael would wander the desert and the hills without having a permanent home. This is seen in Genesis 21:20–21 (and cp Job 39:5–8).

Is it any wonder that the higher critics do not want to believe that this record was made prior to the time of the Maccabeans? God is writing history centuries and millenniums before it occurs. Many of the Arabic peoples came from Ishmael and have always dwelt near the promised land and have always been a thorn in the side of the Jews. There is no group of peoples which is so consistently defiant and so consistently negative toward the Jews, and vice versa as the various Arabic races and nations.

*Clark's Commentary*<sup>10</sup> reads: *Nothing can be more descriptive of the wandering, lawless, freebooting life of the Arabs than this. From the beginning to the present they have kept their independence, and God preserves them as a lasting monument of His providential care and an incontestable argument of the truth of divine revelation. Had the books of Moses no other proof of their divine origin, the account of Ishmael and the prophecy concerning his descendants during a period of nearly 4,000 years, would be sufficient. To attempt to refute it would be most ridiculous presumption and folly.*

A reasonable question would be *why?* Why would God allow a race of people to multiply from this one woman; a race which would cause the Jews untold pain and suffering. Why were not these peoples thrown from the land, dispersed by Israel, or, better yet, killed, every man, woman and child. They and their progeny are on the whole extremely negative toward God's Word and God's people. Why has God not only allowed them to live, but the multiply to uncountable numbers? Hagar is a believer in Jesus Christ; the beginning of v. 13 tells us that. God appeared to her; in general, God appears to believers. One of the truths of Scripture is blessing by association, which can extend to friendship, geographical area, govern entities (cities, states, countries), and family. Hagar is a believer and Abram is one of the greatest believers of all time. Because of this, their progeny, despite their own negativity, are kept alive and even, to a certain extent, prospered. Only the Jews, as a race, have seen a greater display of God's grace.

<sup>10</sup> I am quoting *to the Amplified Bible*, p. 18

If you were to look at the map of wars going on at this period of time, you would see that Arabs are involved in most of those wars. This is the state of their souls.

Genesis 16:12c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahʼl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, ʿal and pânîym mean <i>upon the face of, towards the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking; before; east of; on [upon, over] the surface of; above; besides; over-against.</i>			
Here, mostly we are looking at <i>being in opposition to; being against.</i> These meanings come from the context and the meaning of the preposition; they were not taken out of Gesenius.			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohʼl</i> ]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʾâch (אָח) [pronounced <i>awhk</i> ]	<i>brothers, kinsmen, close relatives; tribesmen; fellow-countrymen</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
shâkan (שָׁכַן) [pronounced <i>shaw-KAHN</i> ]	<i>to tabernacle, to pitch a tent; to dwell, to reside, to live in, to domicile at, to settle, to settle down, to encamp</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7931 BDB #1014

**Translation:** ...and he will dwell facing his brothers.”

Generally speaking, the combination of ʿal and pânîym mean *upon the face of, towards the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking; before; east of; on [upon, over] the surface of; above; besides; over-against.* Here, mostly we are looking at *being in opposition to; being against.*

Here is a fascinating principle recorded 3000–4000 years ago. We have the son of a single mother about to be born, and what does God tell her about the son? He is going to be unruly and undisciplined and in conflict with all those around him, including his own relatives (which would include the descendants of Abram).

We have found this to be true in our own culture. One of the false statistics out there is this great racial disparity when it comes to, say, young men in jail. A disproportionate number of them are Black. Many Black activists look at the statistics and fret and march and try to lay guilt on white liberals, who are far too susceptible to this sort of guilt. They will allege that these Black men are in jail just as much because of racism as for the crimes they committed.

However, it is not the race which is the key factor here but the mother—single mothers are the reason that we have so many criminals. If you remove the single mother component from prison statistics (that is, if you compare the number of people from this or that race in jail, but do this in such a way that the sons of single mothers are normalized), then racial disparity all but disappears. A Black father is no less tough on his kids than a father of

any other race. He has expectations and limits, and he teaches by example. Remove this fatherly influence and you have a mother who is often overindulgent and too tired to properly raise her children. Her skin color is not the key; her being single is the key.

There are a huge number of studies which have been done, and the children of single mothers are more likely to become criminals, to use drugs, to drop out of school, to go to prison, to become single mothers themselves (or absentee fathers), etc. Whatever you as a parent don't want for your children, and that is what single motherhood tends to produce in higher percentages. Even though Hagar will be in a household with the biological father of her son, she will be a single mother. The true marriage bond will be between Abram and Sarai, not between Abram and Hagar.

This prophecy—"He shall be a wild ass of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."—is specific to Ishmael and his sons; but it describes the Arabic races in general and it describes the children of single mothers in general.

Genesis 16:12 Furthermore, he will be a wild ass of a man. His hand [will be] against all [others] and the hand of all [others will be] against him; and he will dwell facing his brothers." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:11–12 The Messenger of Y<sup>e</sup>howah said to her, "Listen, you [are] pregnant and giving birth to a son. You will call his name Ishmael because Y<sup>e</sup>howah has heard your affliction. Furthermore, he will be a wild ass of a man. His hand [will be] against all [others] and the hand of all [others will be] against him; and he will dwell facing his brothers." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:11–12 The Angel of Jehovah said to her, "Listen, you are pregnant and about to give birth to a son. You will call his name Ishmael because Jehovah has heard your afflicted cry. Furthermore, he will be a wild ass of a man—his hand will be against all those around him and the hand of all others will be against him; and he will live in opposition to his brothers. (Kukis paraphrase)

So far, we have studied the first 12 verses of Genesis 16:

**Gen 16:1–12** Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said to Abram, "Look, [up until] 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 [and obeyed] the voice of Sarai. 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. And Abram went in to Hagar [on several occasions], and she conceived [became pregnant and continued to show signs of pregnancy]. And when Hagar kept observing that she herself had become pregnant, she kept looking with contempt upon her mistress, Sarai. And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you [that is, *this is all your fault, Abram!*] 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!" But Abram said to Sarai, "Listen, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she [Hagar] fled from her [Sarai]. The Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the desert-wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. And He [the Angel of the Lord = Jehovah Elohim] said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai." The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her." The Angel of the LORD also said to her, "I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude." And the Angel of the LORD said to her, "Listen, you are pregnant and you will bear a son. You will call his name Ishmael, because the LORD has listened to your affliction. He shall be a wild ass of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."

Sarai has decided that she wants to have a child and, since this apparently is not going to occur in the natural way, she suggests the socially acceptable way of using her servant-girl as a surrogate mother. Abram would impregnate her and Sarai and Abram would raise the child as their own. Some have suggested that Sarai was attempting to fulfill God's promise to Abram, but I think that all of this took place because she did not believe God's



promises. Abram surely told her what happened when he met God on those several occasions, and who knows what she thought? “God? My husbands speaks to God? *That’s* rather nice!”

What we do know for certain is, Sarai either did not believe the promise or did not believe that the promise could be fulfilled through her. I lean toward the former explanation. Even though God’s plan for a family is one man, one woman and assorted children; Sarai pushed for a different approach, one which society accepted, but God did not—introducing another moving part into a marriage—a young Egyptian slave girl.

I suggested earlier that Abram now had access to the full Word of God, from Melchizedek, up to his point in time. I believe that he would have known about Adam and Eve at this time; and one may surmise from the creation account that one man, one woman and assorted children is God’s plan. God did not give Adam a little Egyptian girl on the side.

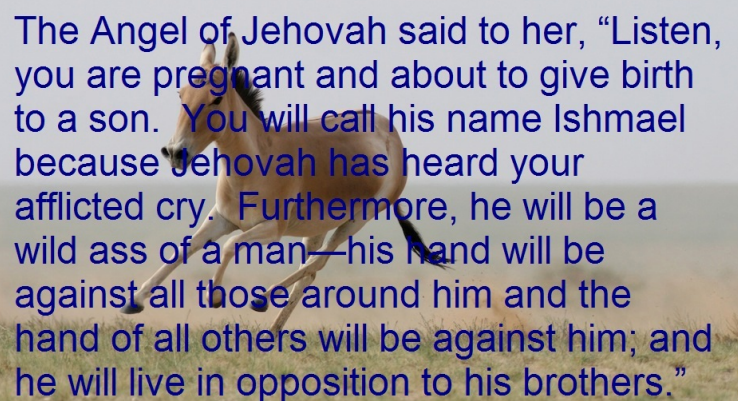
Anyway, despite the fact that Sarai suggested for all of this to take place, it is Sarai and Hagar, her Egyptian slave girl, who butt heads during the pregnancy. Sarai complains to Abram, Abram says, “Look, she’s your slave girl, do with her what you want.” And Sarai just starts walking all over this young girl until she walks out.

So we left Hagar out in the desert, walking toward Egypt, tired, thirsty and hungry (we surmise), and God comes to her and speaks to her. God tells her to return to her mistress and that her son would be a wild ass of a man.

We have studied **divine institutions** awhile back, and one of the 5 divine institutions is family, and family is defined as a mother, a father and children. Both parents offer things to their children which are important to the development of the child. The relationship between a father and his daughter is unique; this cannot be duplicated by the mother alone. The relationship between a father and his son is unique; and it cannot be duplicated by the mother (the same is true of the mother’s relationship to her son or daughter). These relationships are not simply unique because the mother and father are different people with different perspectives; but because the mother and father belong to opposite and sometimes warring gender camps. No one knows a male psyche, responsibilities and weaknesses more than a male; and it is up to the man to convey this to his sons and daughters. No one knows the strength, love and joy of being a woman other than a woman, which information she conveys to her children. Furthermore, these relationships are fundamental to a person’s growth: the respect and deference one ought to give to one’s mother and the obedience one owes to one’s father.

God will send this single woman, Hagar, back to the man who fathered her child, and Abram will raise this boy as his son for many years. A 3-person household + 1 child is not ideal; but it is far better than Hagar trying to make a 200 mile walk back to Egypt (which she would be physically unable to do). And, as has been discussed, even if she got there, what could she do? She would still be a pregnant, unmarried woman.

This appears also to change the timing of God’s promise. Abram and Sarai do not have a child together until Ishmael is sufficiently grown. God did not want Abram to raise the next child in his life in conjunction with Ishmael, both having different mothers. These two children would be very different; and God has a very different purpose for each one of them. Ishmael would be the fallen line; and Isaac would be the child of promise. Whereas, it is certainly possible for a man and a woman to raise 2 or 3 or 10 children together; it is far more difficult for a man and two women to raise children by different mothers. We have already seen problems crop up between Abram, Sarai and Hagar, and there are no children involved yet.



The Angel of Jehovah said to her, “Listen, you are pregnant and about to give birth to a son. You will call his name Ishmael because Jehovah has heard your afflicted cry. Furthermore, he will be a wild ass of a man—his hand will be against all those around him and the hand of all others will be against him; and he will live in opposition to his brothers.”



After God has told Hagar to return to Sarai, He tells her about her son.

**Ishmael Will Be a Wild Ass of a Man** (a graphic); photo from [Live Science](#) accessed December 1, 2013.

**Gen 16:11–12** And the Angel of the LORD said to her, "Listen, you are pregnant and you will bear a son. You will call his name Ishmael, because the LORD has listened to your affliction. He shall be a wild ass of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over-against all his kinsmen."

Ishmael would be hard-headed and he would not play well with others.

Suddenly, it appears as if God—the **Angel of the Lord**—is gone.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

## The Commemoration of the Angel of the Lord Speaking to Hagar

The translations for the next verse vary quite a bit.

The NASB reads: *Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, "Thou art a God who sees"; for she said, "Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?"*

However, NASB gives two alternate translations all incorporated into the following reading of v. 13: *Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, "Thou, God, dost see me." for she said, "Have I even seen here after the one who saw?"*

The NRSV reads: *So she named the Lord who spoke to her. "You are El-roi"; for she said, "Have I really see God and remained alive after seeing him?"*

*The Emphasized Bible* reads: *And she called the name of Yahweh, who had spoke unto her, "Thou God of vision!" For she said, "Do I even here retain my vision after a vision?"*

As you can see, there is quite a difference of readings of this verse.

The end of Genesis 12:8 and the beginning of this verse are identical, except that v. 8 has the masculine singular associated with the verb whereas this verse has the feminine singular. Therefore, Hagar was not naming God anything. She was calling upon Him as believers do when in a jam and as believers do in worship. This is in the Qal imperfect, meaning that she did not call upon God once, but several times, as did Abram in the parallel citation. *Who spoke to her* is a definite article plus the Qal active participle of *to speak* and a preposition with the third person, feminine singular suffix. A participle is a verb used as an adjectival noun. In this case, it is a descriptor of Yahweh. She was aware that Abram called upon God's name and had face to face conversations with the Almighty. Because Abram was so rich and powerful in her eyes, Hagar expected that a man of this stature and of such a high spiritual character would be able to speak to God. However, she is a slave, a runaway slave, and a slave who is pregnant and helpless. It would not occur to her that God is interested in her and she would never presume to ever speak to God. Furthermore, this is the first recorded instance of God speaking to a woman since the expulsion from the garden.

There are several problems with the text in this verse.

And so she calls a name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah the One speaking unto her, "You [are] an 'El of seeing;" for she had said, "Have I seen Elohim and live? Have I seen after Him seeing me?"

Genesis 16:13

Therefore, she called the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the One speaking to her, "You [are] an 'El of seeing [or, (*Who is*) *visible*];" for she [also] said, "Have I seen Elohim and [I] live? Am I [able to] see after He sees me [or, *I have seen after Him seeing me*]?"

She called the name of Jehovah, the One speaking to her, "You are a God of seeing;" and she also said, "Have I seen God and lived? Am I able to still see if He sees me?"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)	And she gave thanks before the Lord whose Word spake to her, and thus said, Thou art He who livest and art eternal; who seest, but art not seen! · for she said, For, behold, here is revealed the glory of the Shekina of the Lord after a vision.
Jerusalem targum	And Hagar gave thanks, and prayed in the Name of the Word of the Lord, who had been manifested to her, saying, Blessed are You, Eloha, the Living One of all Ages, who have looked upon my affliction. For she said, Behold, You are manifested also unto me, even as You were manifested to Sara my mistress.
Latin Vulgate	And she called the name of the Lord that spoke unto her: You the God who has seen me. For she said: Verily, here have I seen the hinder parts of him that sees me.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so she calls a name of Y <sup>e</sup> howah the One speaking unto her, "You [are] an 'El of seeing;" for she had said, "Have I seen Elohim and live? Have I seen after Him seeing me?"
Peshitta (Syriac)	And she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, and said, Thou art God whom I saw; for she said, Behold, I have also seen a vision after he had seen me.
Septuagint (Greek)	And she called the name of the Lord God who spoke to her, You are the God who sees; for she said, For I have openly seen Him that appeared to me.

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Hagar named the Lord who spoke to her, "You are El Roi" [Or God who sees or God whom I've seen] because she said, "Can I still see after he saw me [Heb uncertain; or Have I really seen God and survived]?"
Contemporary English V.	Hagar thought, "Have I really seen God and lived to tell about it?" So from then on she called him, "The God Who Sees Me."
Easy English	Hagar called the *Lord, who spoke to her, this name. `You are God, who sees me.' She said, `Here I have seen God, who cares about me.'
Easy-to-Read Version	The Lord talked to Hagar. Hagar began to use a new name for God. She said to him, "You are 'God Who Sees Me.'" She said this because she thought, "I see that even in this place God sees me and cares for me!"
Good News Bible (TEV)	Hagar asked herself, "Have I really seen God and lived to tell about it?" So she called the LORD, who had spoken to her, "A God Who Sees."
<i>The Message</i>	She answered GOD by name, praying to the God who spoke to her, "You're the God who sees me!" "Yes! He saw me; and then I saw him!"
New Century Version	The slave girl gave a name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are `God who sees me,'" because she said to herself, "Have I really seen God who sees me?"
New Life Version	So Hagar gave this name to the Lord Who spoke to her, "You are a God Who sees." For she said, "Have I even stayed alive here after seeing Him?"

New Living Translation	Thereafter, Hagar used another name to refer to the Lord, who had spoken to her. She said, "You are the God who sees me [Hebrew El-roi]." She also said, "Have I truly seen the One who sees me?"
The Voice	<i>As a result of this encounter, Hagar decided to give the Eternal One who had spoken to her a special name because He had seen her in her misery.</i> <b>Hagar:</b> I'm going to call You the God of Seeing[a] because in this place I have seen the One who watches over me.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then she called upon the Name of the Lord God who was speaking to her, saying, 'You are the God who watches over me,' adding, 'because I openly saw the One who appeared to me.'
Beck's American Translation	She gave the LORD who talked to her the name El-roi ["God-Who-Cares-for-Me"], because she said, "Have I here really seen the back of Him who cares for me?"
Christian Community Bible	Hagar gave to Yahweh who spoke to her the name of El Roi, for she said: "I have seen the One who sees me."
God's Word™	Hagar named the LORD, who had been speaking to her, "You Are the God Who Watches Over Me." She said, "This is the place where I watched the one who watches over me."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Thus the Lord spoke to her, and thus she named him, Thou art God, that hast looked on me; for indeed, she said, there was one who looked on me here, and I saw him as he left me. The exact meaning of verses 13 and 14 is uncertain in the Hebrew.
New American Bible (2002)	To the LORD who spoke to her she gave a name, saying, "You are the God of Vision"; she meant, "Have I really seen God and remained alive after my vision?" The God of Vision: In Hebrew, el-roi; hence the name of the spring. Remained alive: for the ancient notion that a person died on seeing God, cf Genesis 32:31 Exodus 20:19 Deut 4:33 Judges 13:22.
New American Bible (2011)	To the LORD who spoke to her she gave a name, saying, "You are God who sees me"; she meant, "Have I really seen God and remained alive after he saw me?" Gn 24:62. <b>God who sees me:</b> Hebrew el-ro'i is multivalent, meaning either "God of seeing," i.e., extends his protection to me, or "God sees," which can imply seeing human suffering (29:32; Ex 2:25; Is 57:18; 58:3). It is probable that Hagar means to express both of these aspects. <b>Remained alive:</b> for the ancient notion that a person died on seeing God, see Gn 32:31; Ex 20:19; Dt 4:33; Jgs 13:22.
NIRV	She gave a name to the Lord who spoke to her. She called him "You are the God who sees me." That's because she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me."
New Jerusalem Bible	Hagar gave a name to Yahweh who had spoken to her, 'You are El Roi,' by which she meant, 'Did I not go on seeing here, after him who sees me?'
New Simplified Bible	She called the name of Jehovah, who spoke to her: »You are the God who sees me, for she said, 'I have not seen the one who sees me.'«

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	She called Yahweh's name, and she spoke, "You see me, God!" For she also said, "Yes, here I saw after he saw me!"
Bible in Basic English	And to the Lord who was talking with her she gave this name, You are a God who is seen; for she said, Have I not even here in the waste land had a vision of God and am still living?
Conservapedia	She called the name of the LORD Who had spoken to her, "You, God, have seen me!" She also said, "I can't believe I've actually seen Him, right here, and He has seen me!"

The Expanded Bible	The slave girl gave a name to the Lord who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me [or God of seeing; Hebrew El-Roi]" because she said to herself, "Have I really seen God who sees me?"
Ferar-Fenton Bible	She accordingly called the name of the EVER-LIVING Who spoke to her. "You are the God I saw; I can say this, for I have lived after He appeared to me."
HCSB	So she named the LORD who spoke to her: The God Who Sees, for she said, "Have I really seen here the One who sees me?"
NET Bible®	So Hagar named the Lord who spoke to her, "You are the God who sees me [Heb "God of my seeing." The pronominal suffix may be understood either as objective ("who sees me," as in the translation) or subjective ("whom I see").]," for she said, "Here I have seen one who sees me [Heb "after one who sees me.]"! "
NIV, ©2011	She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me [Ps 139:1-12]," for she said, "I have now seen [Or seen the back of] the One who sees me." Ge 32:30; 33:10; Ex 24:10; 33:20, 23; Nu 12:8; Jdg 6:22; 13:22; Isa 6:5

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	So she named ADONAI who had spoken with her El Ro'i [God of seeing], because she said, "Have I really seen the One who sees me [and stayed alive]?"
exeGeses companion Bible	And she calls the name of Yah Veh who words to her, El Roi/El Sees: for she says, Even here see I him who sees me?
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And she called the LORD who spoke to her, "You Are El-roi [Apparently "God of Seeing.]," by which she meant, "Have I not gone on seeing after He saw me!" [Meaning of Hebrew uncertain.]
Judaica Press Complete T.	And she called the name of the Lord, Who had spoken to her, "You are the God of seeing," because she said, "Have I seen <i>him</i> here also after I have seen?"
Kaplan Translation	[Hagar] gave a name to God [Or, 'prayed to God' (Targum).] who had spoken to her, [saying], 'You are a Vision God [ Or, 'God of vision' (Ibn Ezra).]' for she said, 'Didn't I [still] see here after my vision [(cf. Targum; Rashi). Or, 'Wasn't I able to see after my vision?' or 'Did I not have a vision after He saw me?' (Ibn Ezra).]?'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And she called the Shem of Hashem Who spoke unto her, El Roi (G-d Who Sees); for she said, Have I also here seen after Him that seeth me?
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And she called the Name of הויה who spoke to her, "You are the El who sees," for she said, "Even here have I seen after Him who sees me?"

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	So she called the name of the Lord Who spoke to her, You are a God of seeing, for she said, Have I [not] even here [in the wilderness] looked upon Him Who sees me [and lived]? Or have I here also seen [the future purposes or designs of] Him Who sees me?
Concordant Literal Version	And calling is Hagar the name of Yahweh Who spoke to her, "You-El-see me.For she says, "Moreover, hither see I, after my seeing?
Context Group Version	And she named YHWH that spoke to her, "God Sees, ": for she said, Do I still see now [ even ] after my vision?
Darby Translation	And she called the name of Jehovah who spoke to her, Thou art the God who reveals himself, for she said, Also here have I seen after he has revealed himself.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	And she called the name of Yahweh, who had spoken unto her, Thou GOD of vision! For she said. Do I even here, retain my vision after a vision?
English Standard Version	So she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, "You are a God of seeing," [Or You are a God who sees me] for she said, "Truly here I have seen him [Genesis 32:30; Ex. 19:21; 33:20; Judg. 13:22] who looks after me [Hebrew Have I really

	seen him here who sees me? or Would I have looked here for the one who sees me?]."
The updated Geneva Bible	And she called the name of the LORD Who spoke unto her, You God see me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that sees me? She rebukes her own dullness and acknowledges Gods graces, who was present with her everywhere.
Green's Literal Translation	And she called the name of Jehovah, the One speaking to her, You, a God of vision! For she said, Even here have I looked after the One seeing me?
Modern KJV	And she called the name of Jehovah who had spoken to her, You are a God of vision! For she said, Even here have I looked after Him that sees me?
NASB	Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, "You are a God who sees [Or You, God, see me] [Heb Elroi]"; for she said, "Have I even remained alive here [Gen 32:30; Ps 139:1-12] after seeing Him [Lit seen here after the one who saw me]?"
New King James Version	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 me?"
New RSV	So she named the Lord who spoke to her, `You are El-roi' [Perhaps God of seeing or God who sees]; for she said, `Have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him [Meaning of Heb uncertain]?'
Syndein/Thieme	{Hagar's Salvation is Recorded} And she kept on calling {qara'} the name {shem} of Jehovah/God that communicated categorically {dabar} {unto her}, "You El/God see me." For she said {amar} {her testimony follows}, "I have seen the One Who saw me {God saw me in my time of need, and I have 'seen'/accepted Him as Lord}." {Note: Salvation: Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!}.
Third Millennium Bible	And she called the name of the LORD who spoke unto her: "Thou God seest me." For she said, "Have I also here looked upon Him that seeth me?"
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And she named Yahweh who spoke to her, "El-Roi,": for she said, Do I still see now [even] after my vision?
World English Bible	She called the name of Yahweh who spoke to her, "You are a God who sees," for she said, "Have I even stayed alive after seeing him?"
Young's Updated LT	And she calls the name of Jehovah who is speaking unto her, "You are , O God, my beholder;" for she said, "Even here have I looked behind my beholder?"

**The gist of this verse:** Hagar calls God "The One seeing me" and is amazed that she is still alive after such a vision.

### Genesis 16:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027



### Genesis 16:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** Therefore, she called the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah,...

Hagar believes in the Revealed God (which is why He speaks to her); and Ishmael, her son to be, will also believe in the Revealed God.

This phrase, where men call upon the name of the Lord (or similar phrasing), is found 26 or 27 times in the Bible. Many of these occurrences will be examined below.

### Passages Listed for *Calling on the Name of Jehovah*

Text/Scripture	Commentary
<b>Old Testament passages:</b>	
<p>And a son was also born to Seth, and he called his name, Enos. Then it was he began to call on the name of Jehovah (Genesis 4:26).</p>	<p>Even after the fall, it appears as if God would regularly speak to Adam and the woman and to Cain and Abel. However, at the time that Adam's grandson was born, Seth began to call upon the name of Jehovah, suggesting that God had less direct contact with the human race as time went on and that they called upon Him, desiring contact with Him.</p>
<p>And Abram moved from there to a mountain on the east of Bethel, and stretched his tent with Bethel toward the sea, and Ai on the east. And he built an altar there to Jehovah, and called on the name of Jehovah (Genesis 12:8).</p>	<p>God told Abram to move west, into the land of Canaan. Once Abram was in the land, then he began to call upon the name of Jehovah. This suggests that Abram wants to know, "What do I do next?" Quite obviously, this indicates that God was not manifest to Abram all of the time.</p>
<p>And Abram called on the name of Jehovah there (Genesis 13:4b).</p>	<p>Abram wandered off into Egypt, but when he returned to where he first erected an altar, he called upon God. He knew that he had gotten off-track. God will speak to Abram after he separates from Lot.</p>
<p>And Hagar called the name of Jehovah, the One speaking to her, "You [are] a God of vision! For she said, Even here have I seen the One who looks after me?" (Genesis 16:13).</p>	<p>Hagar (the slave girl of Abram's wife) will carry Abram's bastard child, and this occurs after Sarai (Abram's wife) harasses Hagar until she is unable to take it any more. She leaves Abram and Sarai. God has told her to return.</p> <p>What appears to be the case is, God is talking to Hagar, and then, suddenly, He is gone. So she calls out to Him.</p> <p>Furthermore, this incident tells us that Hagar is a believer in Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Abram.</p>

## Passages Listed for *Calling on the Name of Jehovah*

Text/Scripture	Commentary
<p>And he [Abraham] planted a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba, and there he called on the name of Jehovah the everlasting God (Genesis 21:33).</p>	<p>This is Abram (now <i>Abraham</i>) after his son Isaac has been born, Hagar and Ishmael have been cast out, and Abraham has moved to Beersheba in southern Judah, which is considered to be Philistine territory at this time. There is no indication that God came to Abraham at this time.</p>
<p>And Isaac built an altar there and called on the name of Jehovah. And he pitched his tent there. And the slaves of Isaac dug a well there (Genesis 26:25).</p>	<p>God has already spoken to Isaac and reconfirmed His promise to Abraham through Isaac. Isaac is Abram's son of promise, through whom the covenants to Abraham will be fulfilled. God has already promised to fulfill His covenants to Abraham through Isaac and He warns Isaac not to go down to Egypt.</p> <p>It appears as if the altar and calling upon the name of <i>Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i> are functions of worship. Calling upon God's name indicates faith in Him.</p>
<p>A great deal of time will pass—500 years or so—and we go from Isaac to Moses, when this phrase is used again.</p>	
<p>And He [God] said, "I will cause all My goodness to pass before you. And I will call out the name of Jehovah before you. And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." (Exodus 33:19).</p>	<p>This is quite fascinating, because here, Jehovah calls upon the name of Jehovah (as per the context of this verse). The verbiage is exactly the same as above, except there is a perfect tense here and an imperfect tense above (God calls upon the name of Jehovah once; Isaac calls on the name of Jehovah many times). What is being implied here is the Trinity, so Jehovah can communicate with Jehovah. The name <i>Elohim</i> refers to all 3 members of the Trinity; and <i>Y<sup>e</sup>howah (Jehovah)</i> refers to one Member of the Trinity.</p>
<p>This passage where God calls upon the name of <i>Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i> appears to be unique. Although several translations read, "And I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before you..." the construction of the Hebrew here is exactly the same as in the other passages that we are studying. We have the <i>bêyth</i> preposition rather than the particle of the direct object (which would indicate that the verb means <i>to proclaim</i>).</p>	
<p>And Jehovah came down in the cloud. And He stood there with him [Moses], and he called on the name of Jehovah. (Ex. 34:5).</p>	<p>Here, it appears as if it is Moses calling upon the name of <i>Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>, yet God is standing there with him. Moses does not realize that God is there until He passes before him (vv. 6–8).</p>
<p>500 years pass before we have this phrase occurs again in a narrative passage.</p>	

## Passages Listed for *Calling on the Name of Jehovah*

Text/Scripture	Commentary
<p>“And you call upon the name of your god, and I will call upon the name of the LORD, and the God who answers by fire, he is God.” And all the people answered, “This is good.” Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first, for you are many, and call upon the name of your god, but put no fire to it.” (1Kings 18:24–25).</p>	<p>This is the remarkable incident where Elijah compared his God to the gods of the heathen. Elijah gives them a very long time to call on their god, Baal; and he uses sarcasm when Baal does not answer (call louder, for maybe he is asleep or on vacation or out chasing women). Then Elijah set up an altar to God and called upon Him, and fire from the sky consumes this sacrifice. It is clear here and in the passages in Exodus that calling on Jehovah involved a loud, audible cry to Jehovah.</p>
<p>“Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples!” (1Ch 16:8)</p>	<p>This was part of a psalm which was sung aloud when the Ark was being moved into Jerusalem on the direction of David. Those who called upon the name of the Lord were His people. People who believe in the God of Israel call upon His name. At this point in time, there did not appear to be an expectation of direct contact (I cannot think of a single instance where the Angel of Jehovah spoke to David).</p>
<p>Moses and Aaron were among his priests, Samuel also was among those who were calling [or, <i>proclaiming</i>] His name. They were calling to the LORD, and He answered them (Psalm 99:6).</p>	<p>This was one of the few times where we have this phrase where to verb is a Qal active participle and there is no bēyth preposition (which is the “on” in <i>called on the name of the Lord</i>). This simply referred to the spiritual Atlases in various times. This psalm also suggests that, even though we do not find this phrase in a narrative associated with Samuel (or with other believers in historical narratives), that does not mean that Samuel did not call upon God. Moses, Aaron and Samuel all call upon Y<sup>e</sup>howah.</p>
<p>Oh give thanks to the LORD; call on His name; make known His deeds among the peoples! (Psalm 105:1).</p>	<p>Those who called on the name of Jehovah are those who believe in Him. What is implied here is, when we pray to God, we are calling upon His name.</p>
<p>And you will say in that day: “Give thanks to Jehovah, call upon His name, make known His deeds among the peoples, proclaim that His name is exalted.” (Isa 12:4)</p>	<p>This appears to be the end times, when Israel turns back to Jehovah, and calls on His name. After the rapture, when the church has been called by God and the Tribulation begins, many Jews will suddenly recognize that Jesus is their Lord.</p>
<p>“I called on your name, O Y<sup>e</sup>howah, from the depths of the pit.” (Lam 3:55)</p>	<p>Jeremiah is speaking to God—praying to Him—from a difficult situation.</p>
<p>And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as Jehovah has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom Jehovah calls (Joel 2:32)</p>	<p>This passage is quoted twice in the New Testament, and associates calling on the name of Jehovah with deliverance. This same verb is used for those whom Jehovah has called (in the text, this is a Qal active participle, which indicates continuous action).</p>
<p><b>New Testament passages:</b></p>	

## Passages Listed for *Calling on the Name of Jehovah*

Text/Scripture	Commentary
<p>“ ‘And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.” (Acts 2:21–23).</p>	<p>Salvation is presented in a number of different ways, throughout the Old and New Testaments. If you call upon the name of the Lord (Jesus Christ), you will be saved because this indicates that you believe in Him.</p> <p>Peter here is speaking on the Day of Pentecost and quoting Joel 2:23. In the verses which follow, Peter immediately speaks of Jesus Christ, who is the Lord.</p>
<p>As an aside, the bēyth preposition found in the Hebrew is not carried over into the Greek. There is no parallel preposition in the Greek for this phrase; the preposition is considered to be a part of the verb.</p>	
<p>If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Rom 10:9, 12–13</p>	<p>Paul also ties calling upon the name of the Lord to salvation, which is by means of faith in Jesus Christ. Paul is also quoting Joel 2:23.</p>
<p>To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours (1Cor. 1:2).</p>	<p>Again, calling upon the name of the Lord simply indicates salvation faith in Him as well as prayer made to Him.</p>
<p>There are a number of other passages where this phrase is found, which we will not discuss:  Then I called on the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah: "O Y<sup>e</sup>howah, I pray, deliver my soul! (Psalm 116:4).  I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah (Psalm 116:13).  I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah (Psalm 116:4).</p>	
<p>But Naaman was angry and went away, saying, "Behold, I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call upon the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper." (2Kings 5:11).</p>	
<p>And I will put this third into the fire, and refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. They will call upon my name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'They are my people'; and they will say, 'Y<sup>e</sup>howah is my God.'" (Zech. 13:9)  "For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call upon the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah and serve him with one accord." (Zephaniah 3:9).</p>	
<p><b>Chapter Outline</b></p>	<p><b>Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines</b></p>

We have studied the first 12 verses of Genesis 16:

**Gen 16:1–12** Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said to Abram, "Look, [up until] 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 [and obeyed] the voice of Sarai. 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. And Abram went in to Hagar [on several

occasions], and she conceived [became pregnant and continued to show signs of pregnancy]. And when Hagar kept observing that she herself had become pregnant, she kept looking with contempt upon her mistress, Sarai. And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you [that is, *this is all your fault, Abram*]! 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!" But Abram said to Sarai, "Listen, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she [Hagar] fled from her [Sarai]. The Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the desert-wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. 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." The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her." The Angel of the LORD also said to her, "I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude." And the Angel of the LORD said to her, "Listen, you are pregnant and you will bear a son. You will call his name Ishmael, because the LORD has listened to your affliction. He shall be a wild ass of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."

Hagar has gone along with Sarai's scheme to bear a child on behalf of Sarai, which was socially acceptable, but a very bad idea. However, it is difficult to blame her, as she is under the authority of Abram and Sarai.

God also told her about her unborn son, that he would be a wild ass of a man. Now, although this may conjure up some odd things in our own minds, it simply meant that the Ishmaelites would not be confined to a particular geographical area, but they would roam wild, like a wild ass. It also indicated that there would be a lack of external constraints put upon him. We will eventually study the words [Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws](#) (Gen 26:5). For Ishmael and for his sons, there would be fewer external controls.

We stopped at v. 13, where Hagar called on the name of the Lord. This was the 4<sup>th</sup> time this phrase had been used, so we examined the passages where in the Bible this phrase is used. We also confirmed that the Angel of the Lord is God.

Genesis 16:13b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -VAHR]	<i>speaking, declaring, proclaiming, announcing; leading, guiding; ruling, directing</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
'el (אֵל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

**Translation:** ...the One speaking to her,...

Because Hagar believes in the Revealed God, He, therefore, speaks to her.

Genesis 16:13c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61

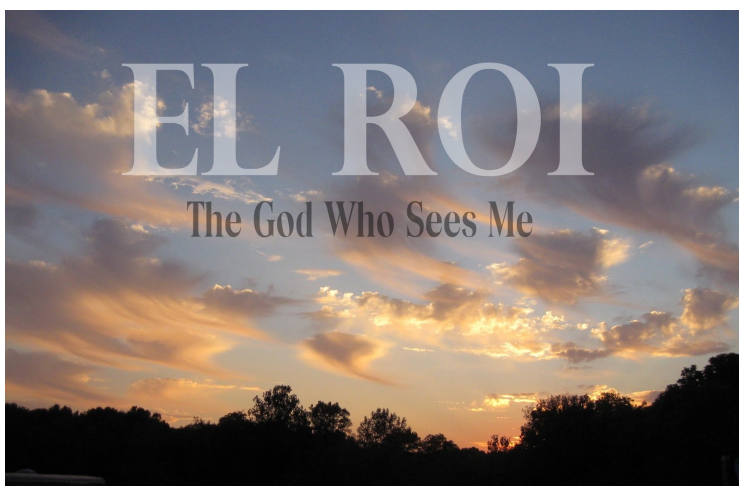


## Genesis 16:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
’Ēl (אֵל) [pronounced ALE]	God, god, mighty one, strong, hero; transliterated El	masculine singular noun	Strong's #410 BDB #42
rô’îy (רֹאִי) [pronounced row-EE]	looking, seeing, sight; vision, appearance; spectacle, example, gazing-stock	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7210 BDB #909

**Translation:** ...“You [are] an ’El of seeing [or, (Who is) visible];”...

Because Hagar believes in the Revealed God, and because He speaks to her, she calls Him *the God of seeing*. He sees the future and the present and can tell her what to expect and guide her as to what to do. We know that Hagar is responsive to God because she will return to Abram and Sarai.



“**You (are) ’El Roi, a God of Seeing**” (a graphic). Taken from [Leading Them to the Rock](#); accessed December 1, 2013.

She begins by saying *You Yahweh*, but then the noun rô’îy (רֹאִי) [pronounced row-EE], a word used rather infrequently in the OT. This word is found twice in this verse, and in 1Samuel 16:12, Job 33:21 and Nah. 3:6. In Job, the passage is dealing with discipline and it reads *Their flesh is so wasted away that it cannot be seen*. In 1Samuel, the passage speaks of David: *He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes and had a pleasant appearance*. In Nah. 3:6, God is pronouncing judgement (upon Ninevah?) and He

says, “*And I will throw upon you filth and I will treat you with contempt and I will make you as a spectacle.*” Note that in every case, we are not speaking of a vision of anything ethereal or of the eyes but of **something which can be seen**. Therefore, this passage should read: “*You, Yahweh, [are] visible.*” She is beside herself, so that, if she were speaking in more complete sentences, she might have said, “*You, Yahweh, are a visible God.*” She might have said, “*You, God are real and visible.*” She has never seen God before and the most that she knows is what Abram has said; and through him, she became a believer; but she is totally beside herself that Yahweh has made Himself visible to her. This is an exclamation. It is: “*You God visible!*”

So far, this reads: *Therefore, she called the name of Y<sup>eh</sup>owah, the One speaking to her, “You [are] an ’El of seeing [or, (Who is) visible];”...*

## Genesis 16:13d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
’âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to answer	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55



## Genesis 16:13e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	seeing; observing; understanding; a seer, perceiver	Qal active participle with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #7200 BDB #906

**Translation:** Am I [able to] see after He sees me? [or, I have seen after Him seeing me]"

Hagar has just met with God. She would not expect to see God and live and is amazed that she has.

We then have the same verb used twice separated by a preposition. That verb means *to see* and it is first found in the Qal perfect, 1<sup>st</sup> person common singular and then in the Qal active participle, masculine singular with a 1<sup>st</sup> person common singular suffix. Between these words is the preposition 'achrêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh-RAY] and it means *after, from behind, afterward, after that*. This can be used in relationship to time. Literally it means, *even here I have seen after him seeing me*. In my translation, I have added the *him* because of the masculine singular on the second verb; I would think that it is implied here.

Now, why does God allow this woman to give birth to Ishmael? Won't his descendants mercilessly harass the descendants of Abram? Yes they will; but Hagar and probably Ishmael will exercise faith in the Revealed God. They are not responsible for many generations who operate under negative volition. Furthermore, this is the devil's world, so we will have troubles and difficulties in this world.

**Gen 16:13** So she called the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the One speaking to her, "You are a God of seeing," for she said, "Here I have seen Him Who looks [lit., *Who is seeing*] after me?"

What appears to be the case is, God came to Hagar, He spoke to her, told her what to do, and then He left. So she calls for Him. Unlike many of the passages quoted in the previous lesson, there is no bêyth preposition; therefore, this could be translated **So she proclaimed the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the One speaking to her:** "You are a God of seeing;" for she had said, "Here, I have seen Him Who looks after me?"

Grammatically, what we have here is the definite article and the Qal active participle of *to speak*. This is commonly used in the Hebrew not to express continuous action but to refer to someone by means of the actions which they do. For instance, if the Hebrew reads *hunting*, then we are describing an act that someone is involve in regularly or continuously. However, if the Hebrew reads *the hunting*, then we are speaking of a *hunter*. Therefore, the Hebrew words *the speaking*, can be reasonably rendered *the One speaking to her* or *Who is speaking to her*. So, what is *not* occurring here is, Y<sup>e</sup>howah is speaking and Hagar interrupts Him, to make this observation. God had been speaking to her; He is called *the One speaking to her*; and she calls out to Him, after He is done speaking, and at a point where He is probably no longer visible to her.

Hagar says that she has seen God, the God Who looks over her, Who looks out for her.

Hagar recognizes that she was speaking to the God of the Universe. The fact that she believes this indicates that she knows some basic Scripture. Therefore, Hagar is not just a believer, but she apparently has grown somewhat spiritually. The fact that she is straying from God's geographical will does not mean that she lacks spiritual growth. It simply means that she strayed.

**Gen 16:13** So she called the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the One speaking to her, "You are a God of seeing," for she said, "Here I have seen Him Who looks [lit., *Who is seeing*] after me?"

Genesis 16:13 Therefore, she called the name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the One speaking to her, "You [are] an 'El of seeing [or, (*Who is*) visible];" for she [also] said, "Have I seen Elohim and [I] live? Am I [able to] see after He sees me [or, I have seen after Him seeing me]?" (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:13 She called the name of Jehovah, the One speaking to her, “You are a God of seeing;” and she also said, “Have I seen God and lived? Am I able to still see if He sees me?” (Kukis paraphrase)

In this verse, Hagar uses a verb and a cognate of this verb 3 times. The first rôîy (רִאִי) [pronounced row-EE], which means *looking, seeing, sight; vision, appearance; spectacle*. Strong’s #7210 BDB #909. “You are a God of vision [seeing].” God has told her what will happen with her son in the future, and she recognizes that God can see into the future. In other words, Hagar recognizes the omniscience of God, which is not limited by time—and she believes what He says (that is, she believes this Bible doctrine). Then Hagar twice uses the verb, *to see*, which is râ’âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH], which means, *to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know*. Strong’s #7200 BDB #906. When God speaks to her, she recognizes it as truth.

There is some confusion as to what she says here. John Joseph Owens here offers another possible reading for this verse, as do some others. Many textual scholars believe that there is something missing here.

If we take the Hebrew, exactly as it stands, Genesis 16:13 reads: *And so she calls a name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the One speaking unto her, “You [are] a God of seeing,” for, she had said, “Have I even here seen after Him Who is seeing me?”*

Some believe the text say that she is alive though she has seen God; other texts suggest only that she has seen God. As it stands, she simply sounds amazed that she has seen God. In some ways, this verse is a little clunky in the Hebrew exactly as it stands. We have 2 adverbs thrown together, *even here, also here, indeed here*; soon followed by a *after Him*, which is not the way that this preposition is usually used. Also, there is designation for God not found anywhere else in the Bible: *a God of seeing*. There is an explanation for this chunkiness which has eluded many commentators: this girl is Egyptian, so there are some things she may have difficulty saying in the Hebrew language—particularly when she is speaking in a mental attitude of great excitement. We get the gist of what she is saying; but it is someone irregular in the Hebrew—but not out of the ordinary for a person whose native language is not Hebrew (this occurs a few times in the Hebrew; the actual Hebrew is quite clunky and is hard to translate; and it is being spoken by a person who is either excited or by a person whose first language is not Hebrew).

This chart may get further into the weeds than you are interested in.

### Various Ancient Takes on Genesis 16:13

Text	English Translation/Text/Commentary
Kukis literal from Hebrew	And so she calls a name of Y <sup>e</sup> howah, the One speaking unto her, “You [are] a God of seeing,” for, she had said, “Have I even here seen after Him Who is seeing me?”
Owens adjusted and updated translation from a change in the text	So she called the name of Yahweh who spoke to her, “You are a God of seeing;” for she said, “ <b>Have I really seen God and remained alive?</b> ” I emphasize the portion that Owen changed. Essentially, Owen is saying that this text is very clunky in the Hebrew, and he attempts to smooth it out, suggesting that some words were dropped out of the text. Owens revised the text, but did not give a reason for doing so.
Updated Douay-Rheims, which is based on the Latin	And she called the name of the Lord that spoke unto her: You the God Who has seen me. For she said: Verily, here have I seen the hinder parts of Him that sees me. This follows the Hebrew text very closely; <i>hinder parts of Him</i> is a substantive translation of the preposition <i>after</i> . In other words, this is in complete agreement with the Hebrew text.



## Various Ancient Takes on Genesis 16:13

Text	English Translation/Text/Commentary
English translation based upon the LXX	And Hagar called the name of the Lord God who is speaking face to face with her, You [are] the God who sees me; for he (she?) said, For in the presence of, I have seen the one appearing to me. The final verb is translated as an aorist passive participle. The rest of the Greek is rather confusing, indicating that the Greek translation is somewhat different from the accepted Hebrew text.
Lamsa Updated Translation of the Peshitta	And she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, and said, You are God Whom I saw; for she said, Behold, I have also seen a vision after He had seen me. This is an English translation taken from the Syriac.
The Complete Jewish Bible	So she named ADONAI who had spoken with her El Ro'i [God of seeing], because she said, "Have I really seen the One who sees me [and stayed alive]?" So, their take is, she gives a name to God, based upon her experience here. Also, the gist of the verse at the end is, she is still alive after seeing God.
Updated Darby's translation	And she called the name of Jehovah who spoke to her, You are the God who reveals Himself, for she said, Also here have I seen after He has revealed Himself.

Apart from Owens, I am not coming up with anyone who suggests alternate text (we do not have Genesis 16:13 in the Dead Sea Scrolls). It is also very common for a translation to sound better than the original; there is nearly always an attempt to "smooth out" the text so that it is more readable.

There is one more consideration, which is generally ignored, but a real factor in what Hagar says. She is an Egyptian, and has been a slave to Abram and Sarai only for a couple of years, so her ability to speak in their language is going to be limited. I have run into this on several occasions—the text seems rough, until you realize that, the person speaking is possibly speaking in a language that is not his or her primary language. Secondly, she is speaking excitedly. Sometimes, in a rush of emotion, not all of your words come out in a way that makes perfect grammatical sense.

It should be noted that, despite the difficulties with this text, our takeaway from this verse is not dramatically different from translation to translation.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Some do not like the text as it stands simply because it is difficult to translate and, therefore, to interpret. The very end of this verse more literally reads, "Have I here seen after Him [or, *His after parts*] Who is seeing me?" Hagar apparently recognizes that she has seen God, Whom she refers to as the *One Who is Seeing me*. The words *after Him* (or, *his after parts*) could simply mean that the Angel of Y<sup>e</sup>howah is walking away from her. The end of this verse indicates that God is watching her at all times. So, Hagar understands the omniscience of God. In other words, taking the text exactly as it stands, Hagar does not say anything which is in conflict with divine truth.

The implication here is, possibly, that she did not, at the first, realize that this is God Who had spoken to her, and she calls on the name of Jehovah after He has spoken to her and left. Maybe He is walking away and she is calling Him, suddenly realizing Who He is.

**Genesis 16:13** And so she calls a name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah [Who spoke to her and is walking away], the One [was] speaking unto her, "You [are] a God of seeing [she calls out to Him, realizing Who He is]," for, she had said, "Have I even here seen after Him Who is seeing me?" "I am out here in the desert, alone, and I have seen the God who always sees me?"

My point here is, I attempt, whenever possible, to take the text exactly as it stands, unless there is a strong reason for assuming that the text is corrupt. On occasion, there are errors—far fewer than you might think—in a



manuscript which dates back 3000 years or so. Most of the time, I am able to take a legitimate meaning from the words. There have only been a few times that I come to a verse and am unable to comprehend what is being said when taking the verse at face value.

On the other hand, all of that having been said, that does not mean that Owens is wrong. Essentially, he has changed a few letters (I believe he switched two letters around and added in a wâw consecutive to come up with his translation): **So she called the name of Yahweh who spoke to her, “You are a God of seeing;” for she said, “Have I really seen God and remained alive?”**

In the Bible, there are occasions where the text is difficult, and a few times when the text is suspect. However, the difference between the resulting translations does not affect the teaching of the Bible in any way. The science of determining what text is actually here is called *textual criticism*. *Textual criticism* (also called *lower criticism*) is the science of determining what the original text is. Such a person will examine various manuscripts of a passage, as well as consider early translation that have been made of the same passage (the Greek, Syriac or Latin translations, for instance, because they would have been working from earlier Hebrew manuscripts than we have today). In some cases, such as this verse, John Joseph Owens will suggest that, because the text is difficult to translate, that perhaps this or that minor change may result in a better estimation of the original text. The people involved in this science have the utmost respect for the Word of God, and are simply trying to ascertain the exact original text. What is never the case is, some fundamental doctrine is in question (e.g., the doctrine of the Trinity, the doctrine of the Hypostatic Union). The only desire is to have the most accurate original text possible. Primary and secondary doctrines from the Word of God remained untouched by such examinations of problem passages. For many people, they may not even appreciate the amount of effort involved in making these determinations because the resulting textual differences are often trivial.

If I examine a passage in the Latin Vulgate (which the Catholics rely on), the Greek Septuagint or the original Hebrew text, such as it is, I will never come up with a passage that, in one language, supports specific Catholic doctrines; and, in another language, supports specific Greek Orthodox doctrines; nor, in another language, support specific Protestant doctrines. The specific differences between Catholicism and Protestantism do not arise from the Latin versus the Hebrew text; these differences are a result of traditions of the Catholic church, the teachings of various popes in their past, and the use of the Apocrypha, which additional text most churches (all Protestant churches) reject as inspired.

We just spent several pages studying Genesis 16:13, and much of this study was actually upon the Hebrew text itself, and we wondered if the text had been incorrectly transmitted to us (as some have suggested).

The text in question reads:

**Genesis 16:13** And so she calls a name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah [Who spoke to her and is walking away], the One speaking unto her, “You [are] a God of seeing [she calls out to Him, realizing Who He is],” for, she had said, “Have I even here seen after Him Who is seeing me?” “I am out here in the desert, alone, and I have seen the God who always sees me?”

We have just spent several pages on one verse, which may or may not have been preserved accurately in the Hebrew. We know that God is perfect. We know that He is capable of doing anything (within the confines of His perfect character). Most of us understand how important the Word of God is. So, why didn't God perfectly preserve His Word so that we do not spend 2 pages considering what may or may not have been in the original Hebrew?

The question is simply this: since God is perfect, omniscient and omnipotent; and since His Word is of the utmost importance to our lives; why did God not, therefore, perfectly preserve His Word?

The doctrine below was taken out of **2Samuel 13** (which is presently a work in progress).

## Why is the Word of God not Perfectly and Supernaturally Preserved?

1. Anyone who has any formal training in the Scriptures (and many who have had informal training) are aware that the Bible has not been perfectly preserved. There are alternate readings, there is text which has been dropped out, and a number of things which indicate to us that, the manuscripts which we have are not perfect.
2. The question is, *why?* After all, God is omnipotent; God could have chosen to perfectly preserve the Word of God exactly as it was originally recorded.
3. First of all, God did not want there to be veneration or worship of the Scriptures themselves. We respect the ancient manuscripts which have been preserved and we work hard to make the information of these Scriptures available, but there is no church of the Holy Scriptures where a supernaturally preserved manuscript is under glass and men all go there to worship it. We are never given objects to worship in Christianity (or, in the worship of Jehovah Elohim).
4. The key to the Word of God is, to get the information from the Word of God into our souls. This cannot be done if the Scriptures themselves are an object of worship.
5. The Bible needed to be translated into the languages of the people. If we had the Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew manuscripts perfectly preserved, then there might be less call for them to be translated into another language. After all, what we have is perfect, so why would you want to change perfect? As a result, only scholars of these 3 languages would be able to study and appreciate the Word of God.
6. How many scholars of these languages would dare to try to teach the Scriptures by providing a modern translation of this or that passage? This may have been seen as adding to or taking from the Scriptures.
7. The focus of teaching would either be removed from the actual content of the Word of God, as there would be those who had no such formal training. So, veneration of the manuscripts themselves in the original languages would result in teaching that is separate from the Scriptures or the teaching would be so focused on each letter and word that little learning would occur. Let me give you an example: Keil and Delitzsch have written an excellent commentary of the Scriptures, but it is so thick with language and language references that it is hard to read and understand even a single paragraph before your mind goes numb.
8. If I know that I have access to the exact perfect words of God, recorded as they were originally in the original languages, I am going to be much less likely to translate these words imperfectly into another language. There may be some countries and churches which would even forbid such a thing from being done. However, I am less overwhelmed by this perfection if I know there are a few textual problems here and there. As a result, we have hundreds of translations into so many different languages. I personally refer to over 50 translations into the English alone. Furthermore, I have come to appreciate many of the looser translations to the point where, once and awhile, I understand a verse only because I see how the NIV or the Living Bible translated it, and the meaning becomes more clear to me than I find in the KJV, the NKJV or the NASB.
9. The textual problems which exist—and there are many in the book of Samuel, for example—have absolutely no affect upon our doctrinal understanding. There are at least 4 places in the text of 2Samuel 13 where there are major problems with the text. No matter how what text and what version we choose to believe is the original text, our understanding of the fundamentals of the faith are unchanged. I cannot choose one set of readings, someone else chooses another set of readings, and the end result are two very different theologies. That will not happen, even with the errors and textual problems that exist.
10. Consequently, God has allowed the imperfections of the world to have an effect upon the text of the Word of God without destroying its power or its meaning. As believers, this is reflected in our lives. We fail again and again; but, as long as we remain alive on this earth, God's plan continues for our lives, despite our imperfections.
11. Because the text is imperfect, there is not an overwhelming need to make every Bible translation into a word-for-word translation. What the New Living Translation may lack in exactness of translation, it makes up for in reaching people who would not have any interest in reading the King James Version. The gospel and most fundamental doctrines are as clear in the Living Bible as they are in the KJV.
12. Similarly, we have other translations in simple English, so that a person on a 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading level and lower can understand what he is reading.
13. We know from history that the Catholic church persecuted and even executed those who attempted to

## Why is the Word of God not Perfectly and Supernaturally Preserved?

- get the Word of God into the hands of the people in a language that they understood. That is key. The idea of having services in Latin is absolutely ridiculous; there is nothing that can be learned, unless the people know Latin.
14. We develop an appreciation for the scribes who preserved the Scriptures over the past 3000 or so years. We have come to learn what they did and the lengths that they went to in order to preserve the Word of God.
  15. Knowing the lengths that the Scribes went to in order to preserve the Word of God tells us that they had tremendous respect for those old manuscripts as the Word of God. This indicates to us that the Bible was recognized as the Word of God very early on.
  16. God has given us enough manuscripts of various kinds so that we can determine, in almost every case, exactly what is in the Word of God. In the places where we have difficulty, most of these difficulties are minor, and involve number or modernized spellings or change of script. I may come up to a verse that I do not have a complete grasp of; however, I almost never come up to a verse where I am unable to understand it or explain it because I might not have the exact correct text to work from or text which is close enough to the original to work from. In other words, almost never do I come across a verse and say, "Well, I do not have a clue as to how this should actually read in the original language; and therefore, I have no clue as to how to explain it." I may be unhappy with my explanation, but it is almost never because of a problem with the text.
  17. As a result of text being imperfect, there have been men of all sorts of spiritual gifts rise up and tackle the problem of textual criticism, and their thoughts and work on these matters are often quite helpful in determining what is to be found substantively in any verse. God has granted men spiritual gifts which allow them to deal with imperfect text.
  18. The inexact text (and some of this is a result of the changing of the spelling of some words or the insertion of glosses) keeps people from getting weird with the text, and looking for hidden messages unearthed by various numerology methods. There are some goofballs out there who claim to find the Kennedy assassination and a variety of other things hidden in the text of the Word of God by taking, say, every tenth letter and stringing the results together, but this falls apart as, by the end of Genesis 1, we do not truly know what the tenth letter was (which may be, by the way, because of a simple change in spelling a word).
  19. I would argue that, the pastor who is moderately obsessed with determining the correct text will also, in this search for the correct text, be able to best present the meaning of the passage in question to his congregation.
  20. One may reasonably argue that God has preserved His Word. There is nothing more hated and more attacked throughout world history than God's Word (except for the Jewish people). Yet, we have 26,000 full and partial manuscripts of the New Testament (no other ancient manuscript has anywhere near that many preserved copies) and the time between the original manuscripts being written and the first copies to emerge is far shorter for the New Testament than for any other ancient document.
  21. When it comes to the Old Testament, its accuracy was preserved in a much different way. For many years, our Old Testament text was based upon principally one manuscript copied perhaps 1300 years after the canon for the Old Testament was closed. Since then, only a handful of manuscripts have been discovered—and then came along the Dead Sea Scrolls, which confirmed the accuracy of the few manuscripts that we have. 2Samuel 13 is perhaps one of the weakest and most poorly transmitted chapters in all of the Bible. And yet, the problems we unearthed in this chapter have nothing to do with the fundamentals of the faith. We are not questioning any of God's attributes, the advent of His Son, His death on the cross for our sins, etc. The textual problems that we come across do not affect the information that we have.
  22. Now, although there are only 7 or so complete or near complete ancient manuscripts of the Old Testament (along with the Dead Sea Scrolls), the Old Testament has been preserve in the Greek, the Latin, the Syriac, the Arabic, etc. So, when we are confused about, say, the meaning of this or that word, this or that phrase, or about the transmission of the text, we have several other languages to go to, translations made 1000–2000 years ago and more (from more ancient manuscripts than we possess today), and we can see how they understood it.

## Why is the Word of God not Perfectly and Supernaturally Preserved?

23. One may argue as to the corruptness and apostasy of the Catholic church; however, St. Jerome's Latin translation (which was adopted by the Catholic church) is outstanding; it is accurate; and it has been preserved by the Catholic church, despite the problems within that institution. And, if one ignores the apocrypha, you can pick up any English translation approved by the Catholic church and use that as your main Bible, and your spiritual life will not be harmed.
24. In John Lee's *The Greatest Book in the World*, we read: *It seems strange that the text of Shakespeare, which has been in existence less than two hundred and eight years, should be far more uncertain and corrupt than that of the New Testament, now over eighteen centuries old, during nearly fifteen of which it existed only in manuscript...With perhaps a dozen or twenty exceptions, the text of every verse in the New Testament may be said to be so far settled by general consent of scholars, that any dispute as to its readings must relate rather to the interpretation of the words than to any doubts respecting the words themselves. But in every one of Shakespeare's thirty-seven plays there are probably a hundred readings still in dispute, a large portion of which materially affects the meaning of the passages in which they occur.*<sup>1</sup> Assuming the truth of this quotation, that would make the Bible supernaturally but not perfectly preserved.

One of the very best books available on the topic of the Bible, its transmission, the ancient manuscripts, etc. is Geisler and Nix's *General Introduction to the Bible*. Somewhere in this book, there are additional points on this very topic.

I audited a couple of classes at a Bible institute as a young believer and getting this text was one of the greatest blessings from attending that institute.

I have given this example before, but I find it to be very instructive: when the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, there was a word-by-word, letter-by-letter comparison between the text of Isaiah 53 in the Dead Sea Scrolls (100 B.C.) and the Masoretic text (A.D. 900). There are 166 words in Isaiah 53, but only 17 letters are different. 10 of these letters represent a slightly different spelling of the same word and 4 letters represent minor stylistic changes (such as, conjunctions). The most dramatic difference in these manuscripts, copied down over 1000 years apart from one another, is the 3 letter word *light* in v. 11, which had been dropped out of the MT.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*; ©1972 by Campus Crusade for Christ; p. 22. He takes this from p. 15 of John Lee's *The Greatest Book in the World*; who is quoting an unnamed author from an article in the *North American Review*.

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Here's a table which I have seen in both Geisler and Nix and McDowell's books.

**The Manuscripts of Ancient Texts**

Author	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Approximate Time Span between original & copy	Number of Copies	Accuracy of Copies
Lucretius	died 55 or 53 B.C.		1100 yrs	2	----
Pliny	61-113 A.D.	850 A.D.	750 yrs	7	----
Plato	427-347 B.C.	900 A.D.	1200 yrs	7	----
Demosthenes	4th Cent. B.C.	1100 A.D.	800 yrs	8	----
Herodotus	480-425 B.C.	900 A.D.	1300 yrs	8	----
Suetonius	75-160 A.D.	950 A.D.	800 yrs	8	----

<b>Thucydides</b>	460-400 B.C.	900 A.D.	1300 yrs	8	----
<b>Euripides</b>	480-406 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1300 yrs	9	----
<b>Aristophanes</b>	450-385 B.C.	900 A.D.	1200	10	----
<b>Caesar</b>	100-44 B.C.	900 A.D.	1000	10	----
<b>Livy</b>	59 BC-AD 17	----	???	20	----
<b>Tacitus</b>	circa 100 A.D.	1100 A.D.	1000 yrs	20	----
<b>Aristotle</b>	384-322 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1400	49	----
<b>Sophocles</b>	496-406 B.C.	1000 A.D.	1400 yrs	193	----
<b>Homer (Iliad)</b>	900 B.C.	400 B.C.	500 yrs	643	95%
<b>New Testament</b>	1st Cent. A.D. (50-100 A.D.)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Cent. A.D. (circa 130 A.D. f.)	less than 100 years	5600	99.5%

This table was taken from <http://carm.org/manuscript-evidence> This table indicates to us that there is no book quite like the Bible, and certainly no ancient book which is like the Bible.

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[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Here’s another table with the **Earliest Manuscripts of the New Testament**:

<b>Individual Biblical Manuscripts</b>	<b>Date Written</b>	<b>Earliest Copy</b>	<b>Time Span</b>
<b>Magdalene Ms (Matthew 26)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> century	50-60 AD	co-existent (?)
<b>John Rylands (John)</b>	90 AD	130 AD	40 years
<b>Bodmer Papyrus II (John)</b>	90 AD	150-200 AD	60-110 years
<b>Chester Beatty Papyri (N.T.)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> century	200 AD	150 years
<b>Diatessaron by Tatian (Gospels)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> century	200 AD	150 years
<b>Codex Vaticanus (Bible)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> century	325-350 AD	275-300 years
<b>Codex Sinaiticus (Bible)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> century	350 AD	300 years
<b>Codex Alexandrinus (Bible)</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> century	400 AD	350 years

(Total New Testament manuscripts = 5,300 Greek manuscripts, 10,000 Latin Vulgates, 9,300 others = 24,000 copies). (Total manuscripts compiled prior to 600 AD = 230).

Since this chart was made, my understanding is, the total number of complete and partial ancient New Testament manuscripts is now around 26,000.

From: <http://debate.org.uk/topics/history/bib-qur/bibmanu.htm>

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**Genesis 16:13** And so she calls a name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah [Who spoke to her and is walking away], the One speaking unto her, “You [are] a God of seeing [she calls out to Him, realizing Who He is],” for, she had said, “Have I even here seen after Him Who is seeing me?” “I am out here in the desert, alone, and I have seen the God who always sees me?”



Here is what we can understand from this verse. God came to Hagar and told her what she needed to do. God did not stick around to walk her back to Abram's compound. She recognizes that she was hearing God, that she was seeing God. She learned about Y<sup>e</sup>howah Elohim from Abram. She had learned from Abram that God is omniscient—He is always seeing her. This is the characteristic by which she knows God, and now she has seen God. So what she is saying, even though it is clunky in the Hebrew, makes perfect sense. Abram told her about Y<sup>e</sup>howah; what stuck out in her mind was His omniscience—He could always see her. And now, she has seen God.

So, even though the actual text is in question, we are still able to come up with clear conclusions of what the passage is telling us.

Hagar left Abram's compound because she was upset. Hagar left because she was treated poorly. Hagar attempted to change her environment, something that I have observed women do quite often in my own personal life. God is telling Hagar that a change of environment is not the solution to her problems. God does *not* tell Hagar, "Good, you have escaped from slavery; now keep on running!" In at least two instances where slaves have made their escape from slavery (Hagar and Onesimus, who belonged to Philemon), God told them to return to position as slaves (God told Onesimus through Paul).

God places us in an environment, and we live in that environment to glorify Him. Hagar belonged with Abram and Sarai. It was doubtless that through Abram or Sarai, Hagar learned of the God of Seeing and she believed in Him, receiving righteousness exactly as Abram had, through her faith in the God of Seeing (Genesis 15:6).

One of the reasons that God wants Hagar to return to Abram is, *she has just seen God*. God wants Abram to know this. God will not appear to Abram for 13 years, while Hagar's child grows to be a young man. The last recorded words spoken by God were spoken to Hagar; not to Abram. So Abram needs to know this. When Abram listened to his wife Sarai and had sex with Hagar, this was the wrong move. He should have been listening to God rather than to his wife. Therefore, God is going to set Abram aside for a time.

**Genesis 16:13** And so she calls a name of Y<sup>e</sup>howah [Who spoke to her and is walking away], the One speaking unto her, "You [are] a God of seeing [she calls out to Him, realizing Who He is]," for, she had said, "Have I even here seen after Him Who is seeing me?" [or, less literally, "I am out here in the desert, alone, and I have seen the God who always sees me?"]

Sarai, Abram's wife, had suggested to Abram to impregnate her slave girl, Hagar; and he did. Sarai became incredibly jealous, and she gave Hagar such a hard time that she fled their household. God met her out in the desert, as a very pregnant Hagar began to walk to Egypt, and He told her to return to Sarai, her mistress.

We can easily infer that Hagar has been a believer for some time because:

### Hagar believes in the Revealed God

- She was Sarai's personal maid, and even though Sarai does not always demonstrate the virtues of Christian maturity, she is still a believer and the source of Israel.
- God came to Hagar and spoke to her
- Hagar called upon the name of the Lord
- V. 13b says that she has seen and she has been seen; that is, she has seen God after God has seen her
- She will obey God's command
- Information for parts of this chapter could have only come from Hagar. Therefore, her recollection of her running away and speaking to God suggests that she wrote at least a portion of Genesis.

On the other hand, she demonstrated mental attitude sins toward Sarai in Genesis 16:5b, which were unnecessary and exercising some restraint and some humility may have smoothed over this situation. Also, her son, Ishmael, and his progeny, will reveal a predilection for mental attitude sins (Genesis 16:12). This does not mean that they were unbelievers but it reveals the destructiveness of mental attitude sins.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

Hagar recognized that this was God speaking to her and she would return and obviously tell her master, Abram, all that happened. She has seen the God of Seeing; the God of Seeing has spoken to her; so it would be human nature for Hagar to tell Abram about this meeting and what God said.

Furthermore, God wants Abram to know this. God wants Abram to know that He has spoken to Hagar, but not so recently to Abram. God's plan always moves forward, with or without us; and it will pick up with Abram specifically once he has seen to the details of his child by Hagar.

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**Upon so was called to a well Beer-lahairoi; behold, between Kadesh and between Bered.** Genesis 16:14 **Therefore, he called the well Beer-lahairoi; look, [it is] between Kadesh and Bered.**

**Therefore, the well was named Beer-lahairoi [which means, *Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*], and it is located between Kadesh and Bered.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Targum (trans. By Cook)	Wherefore she called the well, The Well at which the Living and Eternal One was revealed; and, behold, it is situate between Rekam and Chalutsa.
Latin Vulgate	Therefore she called that well, the well of him that liveth and seeth me. The same is between Cades and Barad.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Upon so was called to a well Beer-lahairoi; behold, between Kadesh and between Bered.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Therefore she called the well, Beer-di-khaya-khizan (which means, the well of the Living One who saw me). Behold, it is between Rakim and Gadar.
Septuagint (Greek)	Therefore she called the well, The well of Him whom I have openly seen; behold it is between Kadesh and Bered.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	Therefore, that well is called Beer-lahai-roi [Or the Well of the Living One who sees me or whom I've seen]; it's the well between Kadesh and Bered.
Contemporary English V.	That's why people call the well between Kadesh and Bered, "The Well of the Living One Who Sees Me."
Easy English	That well is called Beer Lahai Roi. (Its name means 'the well of the Person who lives, who sees me'.) Hagar called it that because there, God saw her. The well is between Kadesh and Bered.
<i>The Message</i>	That's how that desert spring got named "God-Alive-Sees-Me Spring." That spring is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.
New Century Version	So the well there, between Kadesh and Bered, was called Beer Lahai Roi. This means "the well of the Living One who sees me."
The Voice	Because of this, the well between Kadesh and Bered is called Beer-lahai-roi, <i>which means, "Well of the Living One who watches over me."</i>

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	[And from that point on] she called that well, 'The Well of He Whom I Openly Saw.' Look; it [still can be found] between Cades and Barad!
God's Word™	This is why the well is named Beer Lahai Roi [Well of the Living One Who Watches Over Me]. It is still there between Kadesh and Bered.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	So she called that well, the Well of him who lives and looks on me; it is between Cades and Barad.
New American Bible (2002)	That is why the well is called Beer-lahai-roi. It is between Kadesh and Bered. Beer-lahai-roi: probably "the well of living sight," i.e., the well where one can see (God) and yet live.
New American Bible (2011)	That is why the well is called Beer-lahai-roi.* It is between Kadesh and Bered. <b>Beer-lahai-roi:</b> possible translations of the name of the well include: "spring of the living one who sees me"; "the well of the living sight"; or "the one who sees me lives."
New Jerusalem Bible	This is why the well is called the well of Lahai Roi; it is between Kadesh and Bered.
New Simplified Bible	That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi (Well of the Living One Who Sees Me). It is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.
Today's NIV	That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	So over the well was called Beer-lahai-roi ( <i>The Living Well Saw Me</i> ). It's here between the rest-stop and Bered.
Bible in Basic English	So that fountain was named, Fountain of Life and Vision: it is between Kadesh and Bered.
Conservapedia	Therefore the oasis was called Beer-lahai-roi. One can find it between Kadesh and Bered.
The Expanded Bible	So the well there, between Kadesh [ <sup>C</sup> also known as Kadesh Barnea in northeast Sinai] and Bered [ <sup>C</sup> location unknown], was called Beer Lahai Roi [ <sup>C</sup> the well of the Living One who sees me].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	So the well was named " the Well of the Vision of Life." It is situated between Kadesh and Bered.
HCSB	That is why she named the spring, "A Well of the Living One Who Sees Me." It is located between Kadesh and Bered.
NET Bible®	That is why the well was called [The verb does not have an expressed subject and so is rendered as passive in the translation.] <b>Beer Lahai Roi</b> [The Hebrew name Beer Lahai Roi (יָאֵר יַחַל רֹאִי, yā'ēr lakhay ro'ī) means "The well of the Living One who sees me." The text suggests that God takes up the cause of those who are oppressed.]. (It is located [Heb "look." The words "it is located" are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.] <b>between Kadesh and Bered.</b> )

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	This is why the well has been called Be'er-Lachai-Ro'i [well of the one who lives and sees]; it lies between Kadesh and Bered.
exeGesés companion Bible	Therefore the well is called Beer Lachay Roi; behold - between Qadesh and Bered.
Kaplan Translation	She therefore named the oasis, 'Oasis to Life my Vision' (Be'er LaChai Ro'i) [Or 'Well of the lifegiving vision,' (HaKethav VeHaKabbalah); 'Well of the vision of the Living One' (Rashi; Targum); or 'Well to the Living One who sees me' (Ibn Ezra). Ibn Ezra identifies this with Zimum (or in other versions, Zimzum), where the Arabs hold an annual festival. This is Zemzem near Mecca. According to this, however, Hagar headed into the Arabian Peninsula rather than toward Egypt.]. <b>It is between Kadesh</b> [This is Kadesh Barnea (compare Numbers 13:26 and 32:8). The Targum renders

this Rekem, which is identified as Petra, 43 miles due south of the Dead Sea (cf. Genesis 16:14, 20:1). Others say that it is an area some 55 miles southwest of the Dead Sea. (Cf. Tosafoth, Gittin 2a, s.v. Ashkelon).] and Bered [Or Bared. The Targum renders this Chagra, the same as it does for Shur; see note on Genesis 16:7. Targum Yonathan, however, has Chalutzah. Kadesh and Bered were some 20 miles apart, and the oasis was between them on the Shur Road.]

Orthodox Jewish Bible [Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; hinei, it is between Kadesh and Bered.](#)

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

- The Amplified Bible* [Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi \[A well to the Living One Who sees me\]; it is between Kadesh and Bered.](#) This, "it is between Kadesh and Bered," is further proof of the antiquity of the original names, since the place had to be identified to the reader in the time of Moses.
- Concordant Literal Version [Therefore she calls the well "Bar-lechi-rai.Behold! It is between Kadesh and Bered.](#)
- Context Group Version [Therefore the well was called "Well of the Living One Who Sees"; look, it is between Kadesh and Bered.](#)
- Emphasized Bible* [On this account, is the well called, the well of the life of vision, lo! it is between Kadesh and Bered.](#)
- English Standard Version [Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi \[Beer-lahai-roi means the well of the Living One who sees me\] \[ch. 24:62; 25:11\]; it lies between Kadesh \[ch. 14:7; 20:1; Num. 13:26\] and Bered.](#)
- Green’s Literal Translation [On account of this, the well was called, The Well of the Living One Seeing Me. Behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.](#)
- New King James Version [Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi \[Literally Well of the One Who Lives and Sees Me\]; observe, it is between Kadesh and Bered.](#)
- New RSV [Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi \[That is the Well of the Living One who sees me\]; it lies between Kadesh and Bered.](#)
- Syndein/Thieme [Therefore the well was called Beerlahairoi {B@'er la-Chay Ro'iy - means 'the well of Him Who lives and sees me'}. Behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered. {Note: We don't have recorded here what happens. But we know from other verses she came back and there was no further persecution. She returned to the 'mess' and God did take care of the problem. She had her son and they lived with Abram and Sarai for many years.}](#)
- Third Millennium Bible [Therefore the well was called Beerlahairoi \[that is, The well of Him that liveth and seeth me\]. Behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.](#)
- Young’s Updated LT [Therefore has one called the well, “The well of the Living One, my beholder;” lo, between Kadesh and Bered.](#)

**The gist of this verse:** This well, which was located between Kadesh and Bered, was therefore named B<sup>e</sup>’êr Lahey Rô’îy.

Genesis 16:14a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s #
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong’s #5921 BDB #752
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i> ]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	adverb	Strong’s #3651 BDB #485

## Genesis 16:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Together, 'al kên (לעַן) mean <i>so, upon the ground of such conditions, therefore, on this account, on account, for this reason.</i>			
qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name</i> [when followed by a lamed]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
b <sup>e</sup> êr (בְּאֵר) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> -AIR]	<i>well, pit; spring</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #875 BDB #91
These 3 words + the preposition are taken as one word, a proper noun:			
B <sup>e</sup> êr Lahey Rôîy (בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאֵי) [pronounced b <sup>e</sup> -AIR-lah-HAY-row-EE]	<i>Well to Life of Seeing, Well of the Living One Who Sees Me; transliterated Beer Lachay Roi, Beer-lahai-roi</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #883 BDB #91

**Translation:** [Therefore, he called the well Beer-lahairoi;...](#)

We would have expected the passive voice (therefore, the well was called...) and we do not have the feminine singular verb (which means she would have named the well). The nearest masculine noun is Ishmael, who has not yet been born. It is likely that, many years later, he is the one who named this well.

V. 14 is a continuation of v. 13b and it is a play on words from v. 13a. V. 14 begins with a preposition and an adverb, translated *wherefore* in the KJV and *therefore* in the NASB. The preposition is 'al (לַעַן) [pronounced gah] means *above, over upon, against* and the connotation is a downward aspect to it (even in the translation *against*). The adverb is one that we have covered before, kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane], and it means *so*. Both words are found together in Genesis 20:6b 42:21b and in many other places. Literally, we would translate this *upon so*, but that makes very little sense. It is translated *upon the ground of such conditions* or, quite simply *therefore* and is often used when citing the origin of a name, custom or proverb. We will translate it *on this account*. *Was called* is obviously the passive voice but we do not have the passive stem. The verb from Genesis 16:13a is found again, the word qârâ' (אָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW] and it can be *to call, to summon, to proclaim*. Here it is in the Qal perfect masculine singular, so it would be translated *he had called* or *he had proclaimed*. *Well* is preceded by the definite article lamed ל as a prefixed preposition. This indicates the indirect object of a verb or the direction towards an object.

The designation of the well is *Beer-lachairoi*. The first word means *well*; the second might mean *the living* (it is an adjective possibly with a lamedh prefix); and the last word we just translated as *him seeing me*. The translation of the designation would be *the well of the living; him seeing me*. The latter part of the verse gives its location,



and I have got to come up with a reasonable translation for *behold* or *lo*, both of which sound horribly archaic. This demonstrative particle is also translated *of a certainty, surely*. I wonder if *it is* or *this is* might fit the bill, convey the meaning, and not sound so goofy.

**Map of Beer-Lachairoi** from [News You can Believe](#); accessed December 1, 2013.



**Genesis 16:14b**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
bêyn (בֵּינָם) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
When this preposition is found more than once, it is most accurately rendered <i>between</i> (and translated only once).			
Qâdêsh (קִדְשָׁה) [pronounced <i>kaw-DAYSH</i> ]	<i>sacred, holy, set apart; sanctuary; transliterated Kadesh, Kedesh</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #6946 and #6947 BDB #873
This city is in the extreme southern portion of Judah and is the same as Kadesh-barnea.			
wê (or vê) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bêyn (בֵּינָם) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>in the midst of, between, among; when found twice, it means between</i>	preposition	Strong's #996 BDB #107
Bered (בְּרֵד) [pronounced <i>BEH-rehd</i> ]	<i>hail; transliterated Bered</i>	proper singular noun/location	Strong's #1260 BDB #136

**Translation:** ...look, [it is] between Kadesh and Bered.

A description of the location of this well is given, which is between Kadesh and Bered.

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

Genesis 16:14 Therefore, he called the well Beer-lahairoi; look, [it is] between Kadesh and Bered. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:14 Therefore, the well was named Beer-lahairoi [which means, *Well of the Living One Who Sees Me*], and it is located between Kadesh and Bered. (Kukis paraphrase)

Interestingly enough, although Hagar calls Jehovah a *God of Seeing*; she is not the one who names this well. The well where she is, was later named, *Beerlahairoi*, which means “The well of the Living One seeing me.” God is alive; the God Who sees her is living. The name given to this well testifies that God spoke to her.

Although we do not know for certain who named the well, it is the Hebrew morphology which suggests that someone else named the well. Therefore, it is possible that Abram even asked to know where the well was and traveled there, hoping to speak to God as well. That is conjecture; but it is not an unreasonable one. It is possible, also, that she and her son would return to this well, when they exit Abram’s household 13 or 14 years from now (Genesis 21:9–21) and it is possible that her son names the well. It is possible that, she told Abram what happened and Abram told all of his people what happened; and the well just took on that name, as a result.

We do not know for certain where Beerlahairoi is, despite some folks associating it with this or that well. We simply do not know. Kadesh is in southern Judah, so we reasonably assume that this is a well which would have been along the desert road to Egypt. We can only make guesses as to where Bered is, as it is mentioned only here in the Bible. It appears to be further along this route toward Egypt (but not too far from the land of Canaan).

Kedesh, generally called Kedesh-barnea, has already been mentioned in Genesis 14. You may recall that the kings from the east, led by Chedorlaomer, did not strike those who rebelled against them from the east or from the north—the direction where they would be expected—but went around them, struck the Amalekites and the Amorites in the southwest, and then turned around at Kedesh, and struck the rebels at Sodom and Gomorrah, coming from a direction that was unexpected.

When the Jews, after the exodus from Egypt, first enter into the Land of Promise, it was from the south while they were headquartered in Kedesh–barnea. Their assault on the land was half–baked and half–hearted, and out of step with God’s will. Therefore, they were decisively defeated and pushed back (Num. 13–14). As a result of their failure here, the Jews will spend about 38 years living near Kedesh (Num. 20:1 Deut. 1:2 2:14).

Although most people speak of the Jews as wandering throughout the desert, it is very possible that they stayed in one place for most of this time. There is nothing in the Bible which suggests that the Jews wandered in this desert area because they were confused and could not find the Land of Promise. They went right up to the land of Canaan, had a serious misstep at that point (they did not exercise faith in God), and backed off. For the next 38½ years, the Jews just cooled their heels near Kadesh, while God killed off the older generation who failed. When that generation had died off, then the next generation advanced into the Land of Promise (but at a vastly different entry point).

After invading the Land of Promise, this new generation, led by Joshua, would conquer much of Israel. In their march across Israel (Joshua invaded central Palestine from the east), they would eventually move down south and conquer this area near Kadesh, and it would be given to the tribe of Judah (specifically to Caleb); after which time, we will never hear about this particular Kedesh again (Joshua 10:41 14:6–7 15:3).

Hagar is in this general area right now and will return to this area in Genesis 21.

Back to Genesis 16. Hagar returns to Abram and Sarai. She tells them what occurred to her and how she spoke to God (there is no reason why she would keep this secret from Abram, who introduced her to the God of Seeing).

**And so bears Hagar to Abram a son and so calls Abram a name of his son who bore, Hagar, Ishmael.**

Genesis  
16:15

**Hagar bore to Abram a son and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.**

**Hagar gave birth to a son for Abram and Abram named him Ishmael.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Jerusalem targum	And Hagar bare Abram a son, and Abram called the name of his son whom Hagar bare, Ishmael.
Latin Vulgate	And Agar brought forth a son to Abram: who called his name Ismael.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so bears Hagar to Abram a son and so calls Abram a name of his son who bore, Hagar, Ishmael.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram called his sons name, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Hagar bore a son to Abram; and Abram called the name of his son which Hagar bore to him, Ishmael.

Significant differences:

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar gave birth to their son, and he named him Ishmael.
Easy English	Hagar had a baby son for Abram. Abram named his son Ishmael.
Easy-to-Read Version	Hagar gave birth to Abram's son. And Abram named the son Ishmael.
New Century Version	Hagar gave birth to a son for Abram, and Abram named him Ishmael.
New Life Version	Hagar gave birth to Abram's son. And Abram gave his son who was born of Hagar the name Ishmael.
New Living Translation	So Hagar gave Abram a son, and Abram named him Ishmael.
The Voice	So Hagar <i>returned home and</i> gave birth to Abram's son. Abram named his son (that is, the one born to Hagar) Ishmael.

#### **Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	So, Hagar bore a son to Abram; and Abram named the son that Hagar bore to him, Ishmael.
Christian Community Bible <i>God's Word™</i>	Hagar gave birth to a son and Abram called the child Hagar bore him, Ishmael. Hagar gave birth to Abram's son. Abram named him Ishmael.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Agar, then, bore a son to Abram, and called him Ismael;...
New American Bible (2011)	Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram named the son whom Hagar bore him Ishmael. Gn 16:2; Gal 4:22.
NIRV	So Hagar had a son by Abram. And Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had by him.
New Jerusalem Bible	Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave his son borne by Hagar the name Ishmael.
New Simplified Bible Today's NIV	Hagar bore Abram a son. Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear	Hagar begot Abram a son. Abram called his son's name which Hagar begot, Ishmael.
Conservapedia The Expanded Bible	Hagar did bear a son to Abram. Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Hagar gave birth to a son for Abram, and Abram named him [his son which Hagar bore him] Ishmael.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	And Hagar gave birth to a son to Abram, and Abram called the name of his son by her, Ishmael.
HCSB	So Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son Hagar had.
NET Bible®	So Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, whom Abram named Ishmael. Heb "and Abram called the name of his son whom Hagar bore, Ishmael." <i>Whom Abram named Ishmael.</i> Hagar must have informed Abram of what the angel had told her. See the note on the name "Ishmael" in 16:11.
NIV, ©2011	So Hagar [S ver 1] bore Abram a son [Ge 21:9; Gal 4:22], and Abram gave the name Ishmael [Ge 17:18; 25:12; 28:9] to the son she had borne.

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	Hagar bore Avram a son, and Avram called the son whom Hagar had borne Yishma'el.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Hagar births Abram a son: and Abram calls the name of his son, whom Hagar births, Yishma El:...
Hebrew Names Version	Hagar bore a son for Avram. Avram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Yishma'el.
Kaplan Translation	Hagar bore Abram's son. Abram gave the name Ishmael to his son, who had been born to Hagar.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Hagar bore Avram ben; and Avram called shem bno, which Hagar bore, Yishmael (Ishmael).
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Haḡar bore Aḡram a son, and Aḡram called the name of his son, whom Haḡar bore, Yishma'ēl.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram called the name of his son whom Hagar bore Ishmael. Ishmael was the first person whom God named before his birth (Gen. 16:11). Others were: Isaac (Gen. 17:19); Josiah (I Kings 13:2); Solomon (I Chron. 22:9); Jesus (Matt. 1:21); and John the Baptist (Luke 1:13).
Concordant Literal Version	And bearing is Hagar for Abram a son, and Abram is calling the name of his son which Hagar bears for him, Ishmael.
World English Bible	Hagar bore a son for Abram. Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.
Young's Updated LT	And Hagar bears to Abram a son; and Abram calls the name of his son, whom Hagar has borne, Ishmael.

**The gist of this verse:** Hagar delivers Abram's son, who is then named Ishmael.

<b>Genesis 16:15a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (i) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## Genesis 16:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yâlad (דָּלַי) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>to give birth, to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
Hâgâr (הָגָה) [pronounced haw-GAWR]	<i>flight, fugitive; transliterated Hagar</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #1904 BDB #212
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>o</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾAb <sup>e</sup> râm (אֲבִרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
bên (בן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

**Translation:** Hagar bore to Abram a son...

We assume that Hagar has returned to Abram, and that she bears him a son, which would be his first son.

## Genesis 16:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
bên (בן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʾâsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
yâlad (דָּלַי) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>to give birth, to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
Hâgâr (הָגָה) [pronounced haw-GAWR]	<i>flight, fugitive; transliterated Hagar</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #1904 BDB #212



## Genesis 16:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Yish <sup>e</sup> mâ'êl (יִשְׁמָעֵל) [pronounced <i>yish-maw- GALE</i> ]	<i>whom God hears; God is hearing</i> and is transliterated <i>Ishmael</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3458 BDB #1035

**Translation:** ...and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.

We do not know the interaction of Abram and Hagar at this point in time, but I would reasonably assume that Hagar returned, spoke to Abram, told him that God spoke to her, and told her to name the boy Ishmael, which means *God hears*. God heard her cries as she left Abram's compound.

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

Genesis 16:15 Hagar bore to Abram a son and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 16:15 Hagar gave birth to a son for Abram and Abram named him Ishmael. (Kukis paraphrase)

Quite obviously, Hagar listened to God and returned to Abram and Sarai. It says here that Abram named his son. No doubt, Hagar returned, told them Jehovah Elohim had told her to return, and that the name of her son was to be *Ishmael*, as per God's instructions.

In the Hebrew, this is Yish<sup>e</sup>mâ'êl (יִשְׁמָעֵל) [pronounced *yish-maw-GALE*], which means *whom God hears; God is hearing* and is transliterated *Ishmael*. Strong's #3458 BDB #1035. Hebrew names which have an *'el* in them refer to God. *Shâma'* means *to hear*; and when a yodh (י) is added to the front, that indicates the imperfect (continuous or future) tense. When she returns to the Kadesh area when Ishmael is a young lad, God will hear them.

The name *Ishmael* indicates that God heard Hagar, as she walked through the desert, so many months pregnant, crying and complaining of her situation. God saw her and God heard her, testified to with the designation *the God of Seeing* and Ishmael's name, *God hears*.

In order for this passage to be recorded in the Word of God, Hagar would have had to relate this entire incident to Abram. It would only make sense that a woman who was this close to Abram, who has seen Jehovah Elohim, would tell him all that happened. Furthermore, because this is an appearance of God, Abram knew that it needed to be recorded in the Word of God.

This, by the way, is another great act of humility by Abram. When he met Melchizedek, Abram recognized his authority and his relationship with God, which is why he paid Melchizedek a tithe. Now here, even though God has appeared to Abram 3 times, Abram does not sweep this 4<sup>th</sup> appearance under the rug. God appeared to Hagar and not to Abram because it is Abram who screwed up, listening to the voice of his wife (Genesis 16:2). Since Hagar said *Ishmael* is the name God gave to her son, Abraham names him *Ishmael*.

Obviously, Abram has taken a great interest in this child, giving him the name that God had told Hagar to use. Abram clearly believed that God spoke to Hagar. We know this because he recorded<sup>11</sup> this incident in the Word of God and because he names this son, Ishmael.

<sup>11</sup> There is no passage anywhere in the Word of God which suggests that Moses wrote the book of Genesis. Moses is called the author of the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, but *never* with Genesis.

Abram raised this young man as his son, despite the discord which no doubt existed in their household. Given Abram's wealth, his "wives" (Sarai and Hagar) could have lived in different tents. However, Hagar is Sarai's slave-girl. From events which take place in Genesis 21, it will appear that Sarai and Hagar remained as mistress and servant-girl, which is going to continue to be a source of tension. After all, Abram may become a bit more assertive and tell either Sarai or Hagar to lighten up; but this sort of command would be heeded only temporarily.

I should add that, whenever the Bible speaks of a polygamous union in any detail, there are always considerable problems associated with that union. Consequently, there will always be friction between Sarai and Hagar; and, between their respective children and their descendants (Galatians 4:22–28, which passage we will study in the future).

Just in case this particular topic interests you, I have covered the **Doctrine of Polygamy** for a different study. ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#))

Ishmael did eventually become a man who had 12 sons, and his family rapidly multiplied in number. Some of them would become famous traders (Genesis 37:25); and, in an odd twist of fate, Joseph, who is Abram's great grandson, would be sold to an Ishmaelite caravan heading to Egypt many years later (Genesis 37:27–28 39:1). So, at a time when the Abrahamic line through the son of promise was very limited in number, the line through his other son, Ishmael, had grown considerably.

There apparently came a time when the Midianites and the Ishmaelites either joined forces or intermingled (Judges 7–8), so that we do not hear about the Ishmaelites as a separate people in any of the historical literature after that point. Midian is mentioned a few times after this in the history presented by the Bible.

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**And Abram [is] a son of eight a year and six years in a bearing of Hagar Ishmael to Abram.** Genesis 16:16 **And Abram [was] a son of 86 years when Hagar bore Ishmael to him [lit., Abram].**

**And Abram was 86 when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)	And Abram was the son of eighty-six years when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.
Latin Vulgate	Abram was four score and six years old when Agar brought him forth Ismael.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And Abram [is] a son of eight a year and six years in a bearing of Hagar Ishmael to Abram.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Abram was 86 years old when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael for Abram.
Easy English	Abram was 86 years old when Hagar had Ishmael.
Easy-to-Read Version	Abram was 86 years old when Ishmael was born from Hagar.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Abram was eighty-six years old at the time.
New Berkeley Version	Abram was 86 when Hagar bore him Ishmael. All Arabians accepting Moslem instructions, claim descent from Ishmael.

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to [him].
Christian Community Bible	<i>Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael.</i>
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Abram was eighty-six years old at the time of Ismael's birth.
NIRV	Abram was 86 years old when Hagar had Ishmael by him.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Hagar begot Ishmael to Abram when Abram was a son of eighty six years.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael to Abram.
NET Bible®	(Now [The disjunctive clause gives information that is parenthetical to the narrative.] Abram was 86 years old [Heb "the son of eighty-six years."] when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael [The Hebrew text adds, "for Abram." This has not been included in the translation for stylistic reasons; it is somewhat redundant given the three occurrences of Abram's name in this and the previous verse.] .)

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	...and Abram is a son of eighty-six years, when Hagar births Yishma El to Abram.
Hebrew Names Version	Avram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Yishma'el to Avram.
Kaplan Translation	He was 86 years old [This was the year 2034. In Genesis 16:3, Abraham was 85 years old. This, then, was in the year 2033. In Genesis 12:4, Abram was 75 years old when leaving Charan in the year 2023. According to the genealogies, Abram was born in 1948 <sup>12</sup> ] when Hagar bore his son Ishmael.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Avram was fourscore and six shanah when Hagar bore Yishmael to Avram.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And Abram is eighty six years of age when Hagar bears Ishmael for Abram.
Context Group Version	And Abram was 86 years old, when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.
NASB	Abram was eighty-six years old [Gen 12:4; 16:3] when Hagar bore Ishmael to him [Lit Abram].
New King James Version	And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.
New RSV	Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him [Heb Abram] Ishmael.
yndein/Thieme	And Abram was fourscore and six years old {86 years old}, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram. {Note: In Genesis 17:1 - the next verse - Abram is now 99 years old. For thirteen years, RBT says peace reigned in the household. God took care of the problem as He promised Hagar and Abram 'waited on the Lord' as he should have from the beginning. God kept his promise AFTER Abram passed the test to 'wait on the promise of the Lord'.}
World English Bible	Abram was eighty-six years old, when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.
Young's Literal Translation	And Abram is a son of eighty and six years in Hagar's bearing Ishmael to Abram.

**The gist of this verse:** Abram is 86 years old when Ishmael is born.

## Genesis 16:16

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

<sup>12</sup> This is putting together 3 of Kaplan's interconnected footnotes.

## Genesis 16:16

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾAb <sup>e</sup> rām (אַבְרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father;</i> and is transliterated <i>Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
sh <sup>e</sup> mônîym (שְׁמוֹנִים) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> -moh-NEEM]	<i>eighty</i>	indeclinable plural numeral; adjective	Strong's #8084 BDB #1033
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shêsh (שֵׁשׁ) [pronounced shaysh]	<i>six</i>	masculine form of numeral	Strong's #8337 BDB #995
shânîym (שָׁנִים) [pronounced shaw-NEEM]	<i>years</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>to give birth, to bear, to be born, to bear, to bring forth, to beget</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered <i>when [such and such happens]</i> . It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.			
Hâgâr (הָגָר) [pronounced haw-GAWR]	<i>flight, fugitive;</i> transliterated <i>Hagar</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #1904 BDB #212
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yish <sup>e</sup> mâʿêl (יִשְׁמָעֵל) [pronounced yish-maw-GALE]	<i>whom God hears; God is hearing</i> and is transliterated <i>Ishmael</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3458 BDB #1035
lâmed (לְ) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾAb <sup>e</sup> rām (אַבְרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father;</i> and is transliterated <i>Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4

**Translation:** And Abram [was] a son of 86 years when Hagar bore Ishmael to him [lit., Abram].

This was not God's plan for Abram and Sarai, so God will put Abram aside for the next 13 years to allow Ishmael to grow into a young man.

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

At 86, Abram is still able to father a child. He has now been in the Land of Promise for 11 years. 14 years will pass after this before Abram sires the child of promise. In the next chapter, we will jump ahead 13 years.

There is one more important consideration: God appeared to Hagar; He did not appear to Abram. In fact, over the previous 10 years, God appeared thrice to Abram. However, Abram will not hear directly from God for the next 13 years. He was given second-hand information from Hagar, who speaks to God; but Abram will not speak directly to God for a very long time. Why? When Abram impregnated Hagar, that changed things dramatically for Abram. God had been promising Abram a son, but now, God will place Abram on a shelf to wait for 13 years, as Hagar bears this son who grows to an young adult age before God makes it possible for Abram to have his own son by Sarai. So, 13 years of silence, during which time, God speaks to Hagar but not to Abram. Abram was out of step with God's plan because he listened to his wife rather than to God.

Isaac, Abram's son with Sarai, would be a great blessing to Abram and Sarai. However, this blessing is put off 14 years. Have you ever done something which postponed blessing from God? That is exactly what is happening here.

The Jews will do this when God comes to them in the flesh as Jesus Christ. God comes to the Jews in the flesh and He will offer them the Kingdom of Heaven. He tells them to change their mind about their legalistic religion (*repent*, in the King James' vernacular) and to accept the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ. However, The Jews will reject Him, and God will put them on the shelf; God will postpone His blessing to the Jews for many years (so far, over 2000 years) and God will, instead, bless the gentiles who come to Him in faith. God will no longer speak directly to the Jews, but His Word will resonate with the Gentiles (just as they did with Hagar, who is a Gentile); and for a period of time (13–14 years), God's promises to Abram are set aside. These promises are not cancelled out; nor do Hagar and her son take the place of Abram and the son God promised to him. God's promises to Abram stand; those promises are not cancelled out. However, God will wait for a time before He fulfills these promises to Abram.

For a decade, God had come to Abram and made promises directly to him; and, for two millennia, God had come to the Jews and made promises directly to them. They were His people and He was their God. However, for a time, God's direct communication with Abram will be set aside; and, similarly, for a time, God's direct communications with Israel will be set aside. However, God's promises to the Jews have not been forgotten, cancelled out, or transferred over to the church; just as His promises to Abram were never forgotten, cancelled out, or somehow transferred over to his son Ishmael.

So here we have, way back in the book of Genesis, a parallel situation to the Jews and believers in the Church Age. This is the sort of thing a great author often does—he telegraphs the future by some incidents which take place early on in the book. God telegraphs such things to us as well. In the first book of the Bible, there are seeds for many things which will come to pass; there are parallel circumstances and there are seeds for the great and most fundamental doctrines that we know today. There were 40 or 50 human authors who recorded the Word of God over a period of maybe 2000–3000 years; but God the Holy Spirit was the co-Author, who carried these men along as they wrote, not dictating the words to them, but supernaturally acting through them, in such a way that their very words reflected their personalities, their vocabulary, their frames of reference, and their emotional connection to the things which they wrote; while simultaneously communicating the complete, connected and undiluted Word of God to those of us who read and study the Bible. These very words and phrases which we study are at once God's complete Word to mankind as well as the actual words which these men thought and recorded.

Genesis 16:16 **And Abram [was] a son of 86 years when Hagar bore Ishmael to him [lit., Abram].** (Kukis mostly literal translation)



Genesis 16:16 And Abram was 86 when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael. (Kukis paraphrase)

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## A Set of Summary Doctrines and Commentary

### An Abbreviated Exegesis of Genesis 16:

Bible translation used: The Scriptures 2009. Unless otherwise noted, all other quotations will be taken from this translation as well.

In the Scriptures 2009, instead of *God*, we have the word *Elohim*, which is a transliteration from the Hebrew. The other name for God, YHWH (or Jehovah, Yahweh, Adonai, Lord, JHWH, Y<sup>e</sup>howah) is represented with the actual Hebrew יהוה. The reason for there being so many different words used here is interesting. Originally, the Hebrew was written without vowels—not just YHWH, but every single Hebrew word. Because the Hebrew Scriptures (which we know as the Old Testament) were read aloud so often, the reader could look at the Hebrew consonants and know the word that was there. In fact, the Masoretes, who preserved the Bibles' pronunciation, introduced diacritical marks in the 7th century A.D. (these are vowel points, which was added above and below the original Hebrew text). Up to that time, every word in the Bible was read aloud except for one, and that was YHWH. When the Jews came to this proper name, they said, *Adonai* (= *Lord*). As a result, the Jews preserved the pronunciation of the Biblical text for all but one word. Of the nearly 100 translations of the Old Testament to which I refer, any one of those eight forms may be found—and one of them, the Message (I believe) uses *GOD*. Furthermore, Bible translations are not necessarily consistent at this point. One place we may read *Lord*, and elsewhere we may read *Jehovah* in the same translation.

Genesis 16:1 And Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no child. And she had a Mitsrian [= *Egyptian*] female servant whose name was Haġar.

Abram and Sarai have certainly talked about God's promises. First Abram tried to help God out in the previous chapter by saying, "Oh, by a descendant, You simply mean someone born in my house, like Eliezer of Damascus, right?" God told Abram, "No, wrong. You will sire this child."

Sarai considers this and decides, since she cannot have children, that they would follow the ancient custom of having a child by her personal servant. That could be done and the resulting child could be treated as the child of Abram and Sarai.

Genesis 16:2 And Sarai said to Abram, "See, יהוה [= *YHWH*, *Y<sup>e</sup>howah*] has kept me from bearing children. Please, go in to my female servant. It might be that I am built up by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.

Sarai has been thinking about this for awhile and so, she offers up her solution.

In both cases, the human solution is not the solution. Abram cannot help God and Sarai cannot help God. Neither approach is the true solution.

Abram should have, at the very least, called upon God and asked, “What about this idea of Sarai’s? Is she on the right track here?” But Abram did not do this.

Perhaps he considered, Hagar is a beautiful young thing; why not give Sarai’s idea a try?

Genesis 16:3 And Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Haġar her female servant, the Mitsrian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Kena’an [= Canaan].

Abram, listening to the voice of his wife, decides to give this surrogate birth a shot. He and Sarai both know that Sarai is not going to give birth to anything.

Genesis 16:4 And he went in to Haġar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

Hagar is very fertile and she becomes pregnant easily.

Genesis 16:5 And Sarai said to Abram, “My wrong be upon you! I gave my female servant into your bosom. And when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes. Let הויה judge between you and me.”

Sarai was not happy about any of this. Hagar, who is supposed to be Sarai’s personal servant, is now acting all haughty because she is carrying Abram’s son—something that Sarai was unable to do.

Sarai had never factored into this idea her own feelings and what might result from Abram fathering a child by Hagar.

Hagar has come to the realization that the most important and powerful man in her periphery is Abram; and now she is carrying his son. That changes the power dynamic dramatically.

Genesis 16:6 And Abram said to Sarai, “See, your female servant is in your hand, do to her what is good in your eyes.” And Sarai treated her harshly, and she fled from her presence.

Abram is, no doubt, rather frustrated with this situation. He did what his wife suggested; and now, somehow, things are worse. *How the heck did that happen*, he wonders.

Sarai treats Hagar despicably and Hagar finally flees her unjust mistress.

Genesis 16:7–8 And the Messenger of הויה found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur, and He said, “Haġar, Sarai’s female servant, where have you come from, and where are you going?” And she said, “I am fleeing from the presence of Sarai, my mistress.”

God does not happen upon this whole thing after the fact and then go running after Hagar in hot pursuit. God knew from eternity past that this was going to take place. God needs to give Hagar some time to vent and some time to consider the real situation she has placed herself in.

God, when speaking to someone out of fellowship, asks questions; and these questions often elicit the confession of sin. Her running away from her mistress is a sin.

Genesis 16:9 And the Messenger of הויה said to her, “Return to your mistress, and humble yourself under her hand.”

God sends her back.

Genesis 16:10 And the Messenger of הויה said to her, “I am going to increase your seed greatly, too numerous to be counted.”

God also makes a promise to Hagar not too different from His promises to Abram.

God is not in the habit of making promises to unbelievers. From everything else that I read here, Hagar clearly believes in the Revealed God, the God of Abram.

Genesis 16:11 *And the Messenger of הוה said to her, "See, you are conceiving and bearing a son, and shall call his name Yishma'ël, because הוה has heard your affliction.*

God tells Hagar what to name her son. He suggests this name because God heard of her difficulties.

Genesis 16:12 *"And he is to be a wild man, his hand against every one and every one's hand against him, and dwell over against all his brothers."*

God warns of what sort of man Ishmael is going to be. Mostly, he will be raised by his mother, and it is not unusual for a child raised only by the mother to lack self-discipline.

Genesis 16:13 *And she called the Name of הוה who spoke to her, "You are the Ėl who sees," for she said, "Even here have I seen after Him who sees me?"*

Hagar recognizes that this angel is God. She even asks, "How can I see after God has seen me?" In other words, "How is it possible for me to still be alive after seeing and hearing God?"

Genesis 16:14 *That is why the well was called Be'ër Laḥai Ro'i, see, it is between Qaḏēsh and Bered.*

This well was apparently known for a long time. The name means, *Well of the Living One Who Sees Me.*

Genesis 16:15 *And Haḡar bore Aḇram a son, and Aḇram called the name of his son, whom Haḡar bore, Yishma'ël.*

Hagar names her son *Ishmael*, as God commanded her.

Genesis 16:16 *And Aḇram was eighty-six years old when Haḡar bore Yishma'ël to Aḇram.*

Abram is 86 years old when Ishmael is born.

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## Addendum

### What We Learn from Genesis 16

1. Sarai represents grace and Hagar represents the law. A child born by Sarai will represent God's grace and power; a child born through Hagar will represent the works of the flesh.
2. We learned how Abram should have figured out that his child of promise must come through Sarai.
3. God's plan cannot include human merit or human works. All such work must be completely and totally excluded from the plan of God.
4. There was enough information for Abram to figure out that he should have said "no" to Sarai's plan. He had the example of Adam and the woman; he knew the line of the first recorded bigamist went nowhere; and God did not suggest or bless a surrogate union.
5. We found out that various non-exact translations of the Bible can be very helpful in understanding some passages.
6. Abram has the authority in his relationship with Sarai. He could have said "no" on the basis of his

## What We Learn from Genesis 16

- leadership position.
7. Two women under the same roof can be a real headache (might not need the Bible in order to understand this).
  8. Given these two women under the same roof, it is Abram's responsibility to sort everything out. He renigs on his responsibility and places this into Sarai's hands. That is a mistake.
  9. The Angel of Y<sup>e</sup>howah is God.
  10. God's timing is impeccable.
  11. We found out why God could not simply allow Hagar to go from slavery to freedom; why God sent her back to Sarai and Abram.
  12. Our understanding about slavery is very distorted today. We believe that it is wrong in every instance; and most people could not imagine any circumstance where slavery would be right. However, there are legitimate kinds of slavery.
  13. A mere angel cannot guarantee Hagar (or Abram) to guarantee that they will have many descendants. Only God can say, "I will definitely multiply your descendants."
  14. A father is responsible to bring up his son and, when applicable, his grandson. But the father is not responsible for the sins of his descendants.
  15. Corrupted text in the Bible does not destroy the Divine nature of the Word of God. Even if we cannot determine exactly what the correct translation is, we can determine enough so that there are no major or minor doctrines which are affected by textual transmission.
  16. There is no comparison whatsoever between the Bible and other ancient literature texts. The Bible has far more copies, and copies which are much closer in time to the original documents. To doubt the text of the Bible would logically require you to doubt the accuracy of the text of every ancient manuscript.
  17. We determined that Hagar is clearly a believer in the Revealed God.
  18. God puts Abram "on the shelf" for 14 or so years, before moving ahead with His promises to Abram. God will do much the same thing to the Jewish people when they reject their Messiah.

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The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

## Josephus' History of this Time Period

### CHAPTER 10.

#### HOW ABRAM FOUGHT WITH THE ASSYRIANS, AND OVERCAME THEM, AND SAVED THE SODOMITE PRISONERS, AND TOOK FROM THE ASSYRIANS THE PREY THEY HAD GOTTEN.

4. Now Abram dwelt near the oak called Ogyges,--the place belongs to Canaan, not far from the city of Hebron. But being uneasy at his wife's barrenness, he entreated God to grant that he might have male issue; and God required of him to be of good courage, and said that he would add to all the rest of the benefits that he had bestowed upon him, ever since he led him out of Mesopotamia, the gift of children. Accordingly Sarai, at God's command, brought to his bed one of her handmaidens, a woman of Egyptian descent, in order to obtain children by her; and when this handmaid was with child, she triumphed, and ventured to affront Sarai, as if the dominion were to come to a son to be born of her. But when Abram resigned her into the hand of Sarai, to punish her, she contrived to fly away, as not able to bear the instances of Sarai's severity to her; and she entreated God to have compassion on her. Now a Divine Angel met her, as she was going forward in the wilderness, and bid her return to her master and mistress, for if she would submit to that wise advice, she would live better hereafter; for that the reason of her being in such a miserable case was this, that she had been ungrateful and arrogant towards her mistress. He also told her, that if she disobeyed God, and went on still in her way, she

## Josephus' History of this Time Period

should perish; but if she would return back, she should become the mother of a son who should reign over that country. These admonitions she obeyed, and returned to her master and mistress, and obtained forgiveness. A little while afterwards, she bare Ismael; which may be interpreted Heard of God, because God had heard his mother's prayer.

5. The forementioned son was born to Abram when he was eighty-six years old: but when he was ninety-nine, God appeared to him, and promised him that he Should have a son by Sarai, and commanded that his name should be Isaac; and showed him, that from this son should spring great nations and kings, and that they should obtain all the land of Canaan by war, from Sidon to Egypt. But he charged him, in order to keep his posterity unmixed with others, that they should be circumcised in the flesh of their foreskin, and that this should be done on the eighth day after they were born: the reason of which circumcision I will explain in another place. And Abram inquiring also concerning Ismael, whether he should live or not, God signified to him that he should live to be very old, and should be the father of great nations. Abram therefore gave thanks to God for these blessings; and then he, and all his family, and his son Ismael, were circumcised immediately; the son being that day thirteen years of age, and he ninety-nine.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-1.htm> accessed . Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*; Book 1, Chapter 1.

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Alfred Edersheim wrote a book called *The Bible History, Old Testament*, which is very similar to Josephus, where he simply rewrites much of what is in the Bible, and adds in notes and comments as he deems to be relevant.

This comes from Chapter 13 , entitled *The Twofold Promise of "a Seed" to Abraham—Ishmael*.

## Edersheim Summarizes Genesis 16

Precious as the promise of God to Abram had been, it had still left one point undetermined who the mother of the promised seed was to be. Instead of waiting for the direction of God in this respect also, Sarai seems in her impatience to have anticipated the Lord; and, as we always do when taking things into our own hands, in a manner contrary to the mind of God, as well as to her own sorrow and disappointment. Ten years had elapsed since Abram had entered Canaan, when Sarai, despairing of giving birth to the heir of the promise, followed the common custom of those days and countries, and sought a son by an alliance between her husband and Hagar, her own Egyptian maid. The consequences of her folly were a lack of peace in her home, then reproaches, and the flight of Hagar. What else might have followed it is difficult to tell, had not the Lord in mercy interposed. None less than the Angel of the Covenant Himself appeared to the fugitive slave, as she rested by a fountain in the wilderness that led down into her native Egypt. He bade her return to her mistress, promised to the son whom she was to bear that liberty and independence of bearing which has ever since characterized his descendants, and gave him the name of Ishmael - the Lord hears, - as it were thus binding him alike by his descent, and by the Providence that had watched over him, to the God of Abram. Hagar also learned there for the first time to know Him as the God who sees, the living God, whence the fountain by which she had sat henceforth bore the name of "The Well of the Living, who beholds me." So deep are the impressions which a view of the Lord makes, and so closely should we always connect with them the events of our lives.

Hagar had returned to Abram's house, and given birth to Ishmael. And now ensued a period which we must regard as of most sore trial to Abram's faith.

From <http://www.lewendwater.org/books/v1bhot.pdf> accessed December 2, 2013. Some of the old verb forms were updated.

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It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

<b>A Complete Translation of Genesis 16</b>	
<b>A Reasonably Literal Translation</b>	<b>A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase</b>
<b>Sarai talks Abram into using her maid Hagar as a surrogate</b>	
And Sarai, the wife of Abram, had not given birth [to children] for him. She had a maid, an Egyptian, and her name [was] Hagar.	And Sarai, the wife of Abram, had not given birth to any children for him. However, she did have a maid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.
Sarai said to Abram, "Listen now—Y <sup>e</sup> howah has restrained me from giving birth. [Therefore] go in, please, to my maid; [and] perhaps I will be established on account of her."	Sarai said to Abram, "Listen now: Jehovah has restrained me from giving birth. Therefore, go in unto my maid, please; and perhaps I will have children by means of her."
And Abram listened to Sarai's voice.	And Abram listened to Sarai's voice.
Sarai, the wife of Abram, took Hagar, the Egyptian girl, her maid (after ten years, Abram had lived in the land of Canaan). She gave her to Abram, her husband, to wife [lit., to <i>him to wife</i> ]. He went into Hagar and she conceived.	Sarai, the wife of Abram, took Hagar, the Egyptian slave girl, and she gave her to Abram, her husband, to wife (Abram has lived in the land of Canaan for ten years). Abram went into Hagar and she conceived.
When she saw that she had conceived, her mistress is insignificant in her eyes.	When she realized that she had conceived, she considered her mistress, Sarai, as insignificant.
<b>Abram gives Sarai complete control over her maid</b>	
So Sarai said to Abram, "[Let] my injury [be] upon you. I [even] I have give my maid into your control, but when she saw that she had conceived, I have become diminished in her eyes. Y <sup>e</sup> howah will judge between you and me."	So Sarai said to Abram, "Let this injury against me be upon you. I certain gave my maid to you, but as soon as she saw that she had conceived, I then became diminished in her estimation. Let Jehovah judge between us."
Abram said to Sarai, "Look, your maid [is] in your power; do to her [whatever is] right in your [own] estimation."	Abram said to Sarai, "Listen, your maid is in your power; you may do to her whatever you think is right."
Consequently, Sarai afflicted Hagar [lit., <i>her</i> ] and she fled from her presence.	Therefore, Sarai afflicted Hagar, causing her to run away.
<b>The Angel of Y<sup>e</sup>howah reaches out to the runaway Hagar</b>	
The Messenger of Y <sup>e</sup> howah found her beside a spring of waters in the desert-wilderness near the spring on the road to Shur. And He said, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, from where have you come and where are you going [to]?"	The Angel of Jehovah found her beside a spring of waters in the desert-wilderness near the spring which is on the road to Shur. And He asked her, "Hagar, maid of Sarai, where did you come from and where to you think that you are going?"
She answered, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."	She answered him, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."
The Messenger of Y <sup>e</sup> howah said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit [yourself] to her control."	The Angel of Jehovah then said to her, "Return to your mistress, Sarai and submit yourself to her."

A Complete Translation of Genesis 16	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
The Messenger of Y <sup>e</sup> howah said to her, "I will certainly multiply your descendants so that they cannot be numbered because of [their great] multitude."	The Angel of Jehovah said to her, "I will certainly multiply your descendants so that they cannot be counted because of their great multitude."
The Messenger of Y <sup>e</sup> howah said to her, "Listen, you [are] pregnant and giving birth to a son. You will call his name Ishmael because Y <sup>e</sup> howah has heard your affliction. Furthermore, he will be a wild ass of a man. His hand [will be] against all [others] and the hand of all [others will be] against him; and he will dwell facing his brothers."	The Angel of Jehovah said to her, "Listen, you are pregnant and about to give birth to a son. You will call his name Ishmael because Jehovah has heard your afflicted cry. Furthermore, he will be a wild ass of a man—his hand will be against all those around him and the hand of all others will be against him; and he will live in opposition to his brothers."
Hagar recognizes that she spoke with God	
Therefore, she called the name of Y <sup>e</sup> howah, the One speaking to her, "You [are] an 'El of seeing [or, ( <i>Who is</i> ) <i>visible</i> ];" for she [also] said, "Have I seen Elohim and [I] live? Am I [able to] see after He sees me [or, <i>I have seen after Him seeing me</i> ]?"	She called the name of Jehovah, the One speaking to her, "You are a God of seeing;" and she also said, "Have I seen God and lived? Am I able to still see if He sees me?"
Therefore, he called the well Beer-lahairoi; look, [it is] between Kadesh and Bered.	Therefore, the well was named Beer-lahairoi [which means, <i>Well of the Living One Who Sees Me</i> ], and it is located between Kadesh and Bered.
Hagar gives birth to Ishmael	
Hagar bore to Abram a son and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. And Abram [was] a son of 86 years when Hagar bore Ishmael to him [lit., <i>Abram</i> ].	Hagar gave birth to a son for Abram and Abram named him Ishmael. And Abram was 86 when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael.
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### Doctrinal Teachers\* Who Have Taught Genesis 11

	Series	Lesson (s)	Passage
R. B. Thieme, Jr.	1976 Abraham (Genesis 11:26–22:24) (#600)	#58–74	Genesis 16:1–16
	1963 Dispensations (#201)	#25	Genesis 16:1–16
Ken Reed	<a href="https://www.lakeeriebiblechurch.org/exegesis/">https://www.lakeeriebiblechurch.org/exegesis/</a>		Genesis 38–50
Dr. Robert Dean	<a href="https://deanbible.org/old-testament-menuitem/genesis-menuitem">https://deanbible.org/old-testament-menuitem/genesis-menuitem</a>		Genesis 1–50
Bill Wenstrom	<a href="https://www.wenstrom.org/index.php?option=com_libwritten&amp;view=libwritten&amp;selCat=2&amp;Itemid=124">https://www.wenstrom.org/index.php?option=com_libwritten&amp;view=libwritten&amp;selCat=2&amp;Itemid=124</a>		Genesis 1–50
Jack M. Ballinger	<a href="http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/genesisindex.html">http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/genesisindex.html</a>		Genesis 1–49

Ron Snider

<http://www.makarios-bible-church.org/oldtest.html>

Genesis 1–50

\* By doctrinal teacher, I mean a man whose primary focus is the teaching of the Word of God, verse-by-verse and book by book. A believer under the teaching of such a man should fully understand the gospel and rebound after less than a month in attendance.

When it comes to teaching, I should think that a 45 minute teaching session would be the bare minimum; and that, at least 3x a week (with provisions for getting teaching in some way on the other days of the week). Although this man may interact or even learn from other teachers, he should clearly be the authority over his church; and the authority over him is the Word of God and God the Holy Spirit (Who guides the pastor in his study).

ICE teaching would also be a part of the package, ICE being an acronym standing for Isagogics (a teaching of the history of that time in order to understand the context of a passage), Categories (a study of categories of Bible doctrine), and Exegesis (a close study of each passage, word-by-word whenever necessary).



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