

Genesis

Lesson 9: Abram, Sarai and Hagar

This is a simplified lesson for younger children. For scriptural support, and to find out more, please see the versions of this lesson for older children.

God sees everything. And He saw what happened after Abram returned home from rescuing Lot and the other people who'd been captured.¹ He saw Abram give Melchizedek a tithe of the goods he'd recovered. He heard Abram say "no" when the king of Sodom offered him the rest of the goods as a reward. And He heard Abram ask the king to let the men who'd helped him with the rescue have their share of the reward.

God saw all of these things and must have been VERY pleased. It showed that Abram wasn't selfish. He was trying to live God's way of life - the "give way". So after Abram went home, God spoke to him. He told Abram that he was going to have a GREAT reward! God was going to give him a son. And one day his descendants² would be like the stars in the sky - there would be too many to count!

This probably made Abram very happy. He and Sarai didn't have any children because Sarai was barren.³ But Abram knew that if God said he would have a son, then he would, because God never lies!

Ten years went by, and Abram and Sarai STILL didn't have any children. So Sarai had an idea. She asked Abram to marry her handmaid, Hagar. Then Hagar could have a baby for her. You see, in those days men could have more than one wife. And if Hagar had a baby, it would belong to Sarai.⁴ That was the custom then.

¹ This was covered in Lesson 8.

² A person's descendants are their children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and great, great grandchildren, etc.

³ This means that she couldn't have children for some reason.

⁴ Hagar "belonged" to Sarai because she was her handmaid. So any children Hagar had also "belonged" to Sarai.

Genesis

Lesson 9: Abram, Sarai and Hagar

Abram thought Sarai's idea was good, so he married Hagar. Maybe their son would be the one that God had promised him!

Hagar Runs Away

After a while Hagar found out that she was going to have a baby. This should have made Sarai happy, but it didn't. Instead, it made BOTH women cross! Hagar started being nasty to Sarai and then Sarai started being mean to Hagar! And Sarai was SO mean to Hagar that Hagar ran away from her!

Hagar ran until she reached a spring of water in the desert. Then God sent an Angel to talk to her. He asked her what she was doing in the desert. He listened when she told him that she was running away from Sarai. But then he told her to go home to Sarai and to obey her, because Sarai was her mistress.

This wasn't what Hagar wanted to hear! But she was happy to go when she heard what the Angel of the Lord said next.

He told her that she would have a baby boy, who she should name Ishmael. And through Ishmael she would have many descendants. One day there would be too many to count! This was the same promise that God had made to Abram, so no wonder Hagar was happy. She probably thought that her baby was the son God had promised to Abram.

But then the Angel of the Lord told Hagar something else. He told her that her son would grow up to be like a wild man! Ishmael would always be fighting people and people would always be fighting him.

Genesis

Lesson 9: Abram, Sarai and Hagar

God's Promises Come True

Everything the Angel told Hagar came true. She did have many descendants and some of those descendants are still living today! They are the Arab people who live in some of the countries around Israel. And guess what they do? They fight a lot!! Just like the Angel of the Lord said they would. You see, God always keeps His promises - and when He says that something will happen it always does!

We'll continue Abram's story in our next lesson and find out whether Ishmael was the special son that God had promised him.