

<b>Bible Text</b> <b>New International Version</b>	<b>Who are the people involved and what is the situation?</b>	<b>What traits of God are displayed in this story?</b> <b>What are the traits of the people?</b>	<b>In what ways do you see yourself in this story?</b> <b>How is God inviting you to respond?</b>
<p><b>Gen. 16:1-15</b>  <b>Hagar and Ishmael</b></p> <p><b>16</b> Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; <sup>2</sup> so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her."</p> <p>Abram agreed to what Sarai said. <sup>3</sup> So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. <sup>4</sup> He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.</p> <p>When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. <sup>5</sup> 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."</p> <p><sup>6</sup> "Your slave is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.</p> <p><sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. <sup>8</sup> And he said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?"</p> <p>"I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> Then the angel of the LORD told her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her." <sup>10</sup> The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count." <i>(continued)</i></p>			

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<p><b>Gen. 16:1-15 - <i>continued</i></b></p> <p><sup>11</sup> 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,<sup>[a]</sup>            for the LORD has heard of your misery.</p> <p><sup>12</sup> 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<sup>[b]</sup> all his brothers.”</p> <p><sup>13</sup> She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen<sup>[c]</sup> the One who sees me.” <sup>14</sup> That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi<sup>[d]</sup>; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.</p> <p><sup>15</sup> So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne.</p> <p>a. Gen 16:11 - <i>Ishmael</i> means <i>God hears</i>          b. Gen 16:12 - Or <i>live to the east / of</i>          c. Gen 16:13 - Or <i>seen the back of</i>          d. Gen 16:14 - <i>Beer Lahai Roi</i> means <i>well of the Living One who sees me</i>.</p>			

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<p><b>Gen. 17:15-21</b></p> <p><sup>15</sup> God also said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. <sup>16</sup> I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.”</p> <p><sup>17</sup> Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, “Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?” <sup>18</sup> And Abraham said to God, “If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!”</p> <p><sup>19</sup> Then God said, “Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac.<sup>a</sup> I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. <sup>20</sup> And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. <sup>21</sup> But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year.”</p> <p>a. Gen 17:19 - <i>Isaac</i> means <i>he laughs</i>.</p>			

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<p><b>Gen. 18:1-15</b> <b>The Three Visitors</b></p> <p><b>18</b> The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup>Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord,<sup>[a]</sup> do not pass your servant by. <sup>4</sup>Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. <sup>5</sup>Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant."</p> <p>"Very well," they answered, "do as you say."</p> <p><sup>6</sup> So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. "Quick," he said, "get three seahs<sup>[b]</sup> of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread."</p> <p><sup>7</sup> Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. <sup>8</sup>He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> "Where is your wife Sarah?" they asked him. "There, in the tent," he said.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> Then one of them said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son." Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. (<i>continued</i>)</p> <p>b. Gen 18:3 - Or <i>eyes, Lord</i> c. Gen 18:6 - That is, probably about 36 pounds or about 16 kilograms</p>			

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<p><b>Gen 18:1-15 – <i>continued</i></b></p> <p><sup>11</sup> Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. <sup>12</sup> So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, “After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?”</p> <p><sup>13</sup> Then the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ <sup>14</sup> Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”</p> <p><sup>15</sup> Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, “I did not laugh.” But he said, “Yes, you did laugh.”</p> <p><b>Gen 21:1-20</b>  <b>The Birth of Isaac</b></p> <p><sup>21</sup> Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised. <sup>2</sup> Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. <sup>3</sup> Abraham gave the name Isaac<sup>a</sup> to the son Sarah bore him. <sup>4</sup> When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God commanded him. <sup>5</sup> Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.</p> <p><sup>6</sup> Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.” <sup>7</sup> And she added, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.” (<i>continued</i>)</p> <p>a. Gen 21:3 - Isaac means <i>he laughs</i>.</p>			

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<p><b>Gen 21:1-20 - continued</b>  <b>Hagar and Ishmael Sent Away</b></p> <p><sup>8</sup> The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. <sup>9</sup> But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, <sup>10</sup> and she said to Abraham, “Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.”</p> <p><sup>11</sup> The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. <sup>12</sup> But God said to him, “Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring<sup>b</sup> will be reckoned. <sup>13</sup> I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring.”</p> <p><sup>14</sup> Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the Desert of Beersheba.</p> <p><sup>15</sup> When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes. <sup>16</sup> Then she went off and sat down about a bowshot away, for she thought, “I cannot watch the boy die.” And as she sat there, she<sup>c</sup> began to sob. <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>b. Gen 21:12 - Or <i>seed</i>  c. Gen 21:16 - Hebrew; Septuagint the <i>child</i></p>			

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<p><b>Gen 21:1-20 - continued</b></p> <p><sup>17</sup> God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. <sup>18</sup> Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation."</p> <p><sup>19</sup> Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.</p> <p><sup>20</sup> God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer.</p>			

**Reflections**

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Sarah's barrenness was a trial to her, and she doesn't entirely trust God to work His promised miracle in and through her. Name a trial in your life. Where do you see God's hand in this trial?

Hagar twice learned that God hears a person in distress. How have you been met by God in your time of need, whether you were fleeing from a problem or trying to find a way forward?



# The God Who Sees: a Study of Women in the Bible

## Prayer Requests

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