Hagar has the unique distinction of being the only woman we know of who was visited by the angel of the Lord not once, but twice. Even Sarah, her mistress, the woman chosen to bear the son through whom the promises to Abraham would be fulfilled, wasn’t afforded such a great privilege. Although Hagar’s lot in life was a hard one, during her darkest days the God who sees saw her need and the God who hears heard her cry. What encouragement this brings to those who find themselves wandering in the desert today. We will begin by looking at what Scripture says about Hagar. This is her story.

Read the following verses and, in a few sentences, summarize the events described there:

**Genesis 16:1-6**

**Genesis 16:7-16**

**By way of reminder, please scan Genesis 21:1-8**

**Genesis 21:9-13**

**Genesis 21:14-21**
What was Hagar’s sorrow? 

What was her blessing? 

What did she learn? 

Second Day Her Manner

“…Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.” (II Peter 1:5-7)

Hagar’s name is Egyptian and it may mean “fugitive,” “immigrant,” or “flight.”

Today we will be looking at the character of Hagar. Consider the Scriptures you have read on Hagar’s life and use the following words to describe her:

- Her strength
- Her weakness
- Her pride
- Her trust

How did Hagar’s character help to create some of the problems she faced?

How did Hagar’s character make a difference in the way she handled her affliction?

Although some of Hagar’s actions and responses to her situation were wrong, for the most part Hagar was a victim. One commentator says of Hagar that she was more sinned against than sinning.
We see a sign of Hagar’s character and of her trust in the God of Abraham when she responded in faith and obedience to His words: “Return to your mistress and submit yourself under her hand” (Genesis 16:9).

Is there a situation in your life in which you need to humbly submit to a person that is less than kind to you? Are you willing to do so simply because that is what God asks you to do? Share your thoughts.

What do you learn from Hagar?

Third Day

Her Hope

“And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord.” (Luke 1:45 NASB)

Today we will focus in on Hagar’s hope. From what you have studied about her this week:

What was her need?

What was her hope?

What was God’s promise?

God spoke His promise concerning Ishmael to Hagar not once but twice! First in Genesis 16 the promise of a future was given when He told her, “I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they shall be too many to count” (verse 10). Then in Genesis 21 He said of Ishmael, “Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand, for I will make a great nation of him” (verse 18).

When Hagar cried out in the wilderness, had she forgotten the promise already given? It is understandable at the time that she would have thought all was said and done, she and Ishmael would certainly die – but if she had remembered the words of her first visitation and somehow found the faith to believe, she would have looked expectantly for the deliverance.

- Is there a promise that God has already spoken to you through His Word that you have perhaps forgotten? How would it make a difference in your situation today to remember and believe the word God has spoken to you?
God’s first words to Hagar were, “What is the matter with you Hagar? Do not fear…” (Genesis 21:17).

Are you afraid of something today? The following are promises of God’s faithfulness to the one in difficulty:

- “Do not be afraid...I am your shield” (Genesis 15:1).
- “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today” (Exodus 14:13).
- “You must not fear them, for the Lord your God Himself fights for you” (Deuteronomy 3:22).
- “Do not let your heart be faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified...for the Lord your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you” (Deuteronomy 20:3, 4).
- “Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you” (Deuteronomy 31:6).
- “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them” (II Kings 6:16).
- “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).
- Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine” (Isaiah 43:1).
- Fear not, for you will not be put to shame; neither feel humiliated, for you will not be disgraced” (Isaiah 54:4 NASB).
- But do not fear...and do not be dismayed...for behold, I will save you from afar” (Jeremiah 46:27).
- “Do not fear, little flock, for it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

Choose one of these fear nots and share how it encourages you in your difficult place today.

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

One of the most precious parts of Hagar’s story is when the Lord “opened her eyes and she saw a well of water” (Genesis 21:19). Either there was a well nearby that somehow she missed, or else the Lord in His omnipotence provided one on the spot. Either way, her need was taken care of by the God who saw her need and who heard her cry.

**Memory Verse:**

“For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers...” (I Peter 3:12). This is our memory verse this week – begin memorizing it today!
Fourth Day

Her Gifts

God knows when and where His children need His touch and exactly how to make His presence known. Although He is never far from us, it is most often in our deepest need that we recognize He was there all along.

Perhaps the greatest and sweetest gift God bestowed upon Hagar was the blessing of His visitation to her. When He saw Hagar, He found her not abiding in the safety of the home, but running away from it, wandering in the wilderness. She was on her way back to Egyptian worldliness and idolatry. Even though the tent of Abram and Sarai meant humiliation for her, God knew it was the place of true safety, both physically and spiritually. Her residence under their tent meant that Hagar, too, was a partaker of the covenant. God needed to redirect her back to the place of protection and blessing.

The gift of God’s visitation to Hagar brought about a three-fold blessing that is applicable to us today. First, there was **gracious assurance** that she was the object of God’s attention. He knew her condition and He was compassionate toward her suffering.

Can you think of anything more comforting than knowing that God sees and hears you in your difficulty? Our memory verse says that His eyes are on the righteous and His ears are open to their cries. Have you taken time this week to thank Him for thinking about you? In the space provided for you, write out your prayer of thanksgiving and offer it to Him:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Not only was Hagar given **gracious assurance**, she was also granted a **hopeful promise**: that she would be the mother of Abram’s seed; that her unborn child would be a son that would become a strong, courageous and prosperous man; and that through him she - an Egyptian slave - would become the ancestress of a powerful nation.

Only God is able to compensate for the difficulties and sorrows life hands to us, and He abundantly does so when we willingly obey Him.

Can you think of a time recently when you obeyed the Lord’s leading and He compensated you for the sacrifice you made? Please share your thoughts.__________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Is there a verse or a word God has given you this week through your study that will continue to be a source of hope and inspiration in the days to come? Write it out here:


Lastly, God’s visitation provided Hagar an *important instruction*. She was told to name her child *Ishmael*, meaning “God hears”, partly as a memorial of His love and mercy, and partly as a reminder to her that He alone is the Source of blessing and prosperity.

If God has given you an *instruction* to follow in your lesson this week, make note of it and see that you are diligent in your personal application of it.


Hagar returned to Abram’s house, submitted to her mistress’s hand, and in due time gave birth to Ishmael. Having received God’s comfort, Hagar responded promptly, submitting to His divine will. Has He ministered His comforting grace to you this week? If so, your gratitude should give way to your obedience. Let Him direct you back to that place of protection and blessing. Nothing else will satisfy!

“And I said, ‘This is my anguish; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.’ I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember Your wonders of old. I will also meditate on all Your work, and talk of Your deeds.

*Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary; who is so great a God as our God? You are the God who does wonders; You have declared Your strength among the peoples.*”

(Psalm 77:10-14)

We should take every opportunity to acknowledge God’s mighty works on our behalf, and to make permanent record of them on the tablets of our hearts. The resulting prayer of our hearts should be as the psalmist’s: “*Direct my steps by Your word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me*” (Psalm 119:133). Close your study today by pausing to remember the goodness of the Lord and then ask Him to keep your feet directed on His path and your heart open to His Spirit.
Fifth Day  Her Legacy

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” (Romans 15:4)

How will you be remembered? How would you like to be remembered? What will you leave behind of benefit for others? What you do and say today will leave imprints for others to view tomorrow.

Taking a closer look...

  o What impression did Hagar leave with you this week?

  o How might her example impact women in today’s world?

Taking a personal look...

  o What did you learn this week about the kind of person that attracts God’s attention and compassion?

  o What did Hagar’s story reveal to you about God’s readiness to go after you and forgive your sin?

Passing it on...

  o What lesson from Hagar’s life do you consider worth passing on to someone else?
Sixth Day  

Your Prayer

Each day this week you have examined up close – face to face – a woman of the Bible: her story and manner; her promise and hope; her gifts and legacy. Throughout the process, as you learned about her, you also learned about yourself.

Now the focus shifts to Your Prayer. Each week during your group time you will have the opportunity to pray in agreement with the other ladies for the things you write down on this personalized page. Keep an updated account in the Praise list each week as God answers your petitions. This year let’s come boldly to His throne and learn to pray the BIG PRAYER with expectancy! The only prerequisite for such boldness is being humble and real in His presence.

Prayer: Write out your prayer for each of the following…

I praise God for (an aspect of His marvelous character)_____________________________________

I confess to God___________________________________________________________

I thank God for___________________________________________________________

I ask God for___________________________________________________________

Promise: Write out this week’s promise in the space provided…and learn to pray this promise from Scripture.
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Praise: If God has answered a prayer request for you this week or fulfilled a desire of your heart, please write it out and date it as a stone of remembrance.
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________