

## Bible Study

### Lesson: Genesis 16-18

Why is it so hard for us to wait patiently? When things are not happening in the time frame we want it to, why do some of us resist waiting and try to force and manipulate life circumstances to get what we want faster, even when the act of forcing it to go our way looks and feels wrong?

Instead of waiting patiently to conceive a child of her own, Sarah, Abraham's wife told Abraham to conceive a child with their servant Hagar, "Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not been able to bear children for him. But she had an Egyptian servant named Hagar. 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"(Genesis 16: 1-2). Sarah was on her time frame and not God's. The result of Sarah trying to go ahead of God and not wait, was that Abraham conceived a child with Hagar and Sarah became upset and regretful of her decision (Genesis 16: 4-5). So the outcome of Sarah's action of not waiting patiently was not to her benefit.

We cannot understand all the workings of God, but who would you rather be in control of things knowing how great, powerful, mighty, merciful, omnipresent, and omniscient God is? God works on a different level, on a scale and time frame that our minds cannot grasp or measure.

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Although we are sometimes impatient because we may feel constricted by time, we have to learn the lesson of letting go and letting God. To surrender to God's great purpose in our lives and follow His direction, will lead us to the true desires of our hearts.

Abraham's relationship with God is remarkable. In these chapters we see how clearly God communicates with Abraham and how God reveals things to Abraham in a direct way. We also see how Abraham dialogues with God in His presence. We see this when God appears to Abraham and tells him that he will have countless descendants (Genesis 17: 1-2), when God tells Abraham that he and his descendants will receive the land of Canaan (Genesis 17: 8), and when God tells Abraham that he and Sarah will be blessed with a son and Sarah will be the mother of nations (Genesis 17: 16). We also see this very special relationship when Abraham intercedes for Sodom. When the Lord explains to Abraham that Sodom and Gomorrah will be destroyed because of their sin, Abraham came before the Lord with an inquiring mind, "And Abraham came near and said, Would You also destroy the righteous with wicked? Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it?" (Genesis 18: 23-24). Abraham came to God several times with questions as to the likelihood of the city's destruction, and Abraham continued reasoning with God and petitioning for saving the people of Sodom until he made a case for saving the city for the sake of 10 righteous people, "he said, Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there? And He said, I will not destroy it for the sake of ten" (Genesis 18: 32). In the exchange, when Abraham appeals to God for the people of Sodom,

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you can see the trust between God and Abraham in this open communication, and you can see the reverence Abraham has for God. God is not distant, His Spirit is right here for us to reach out to with questions, to seek the truth, information, and knowledge.

**Take-away: Being patient and waiting for God's timing can be difficult but it is crucial for achieving God's great purpose in our lives/ God is available for our questions and is responsive to our appeals/ We can make intercessions for those to whom our hearts are heavy.**

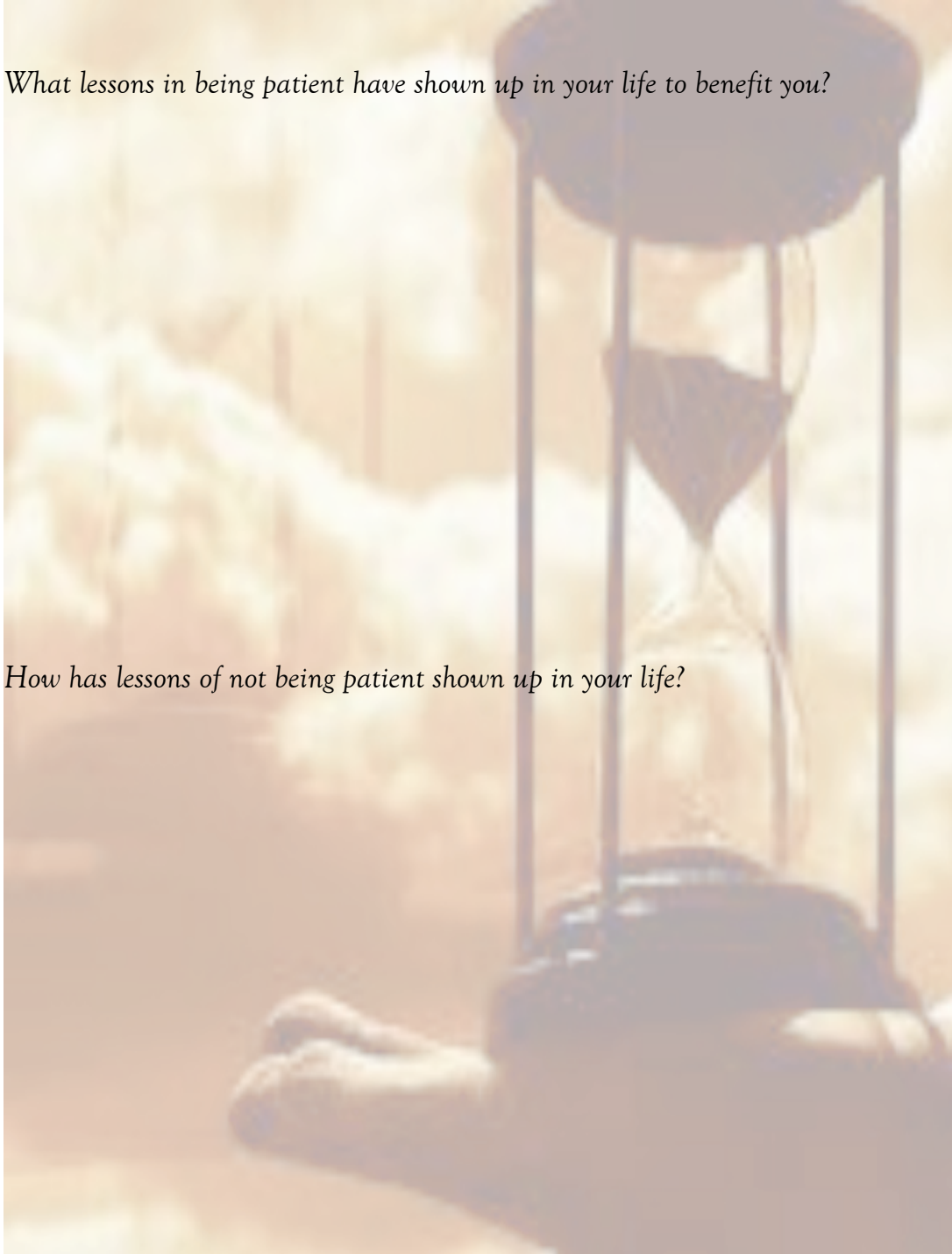
*Notes:*

Devotional

Genesis 16-18

*What lessons in being patient have shown up in your life to benefit you?*

*How has lessons of not being patient shown up in your life?*



## Devotional

*Our God is our Father and best friend, so we can have a free and open dialogue with Him about anything. What is your communication like with God?*

*What is your experience of communicating with God for answers to difficult questions or to appeal for someone else?*