

Genesis 16: structure and key words (NRSV as adapted by Wes)

Now Sarai, Abram's **woman** [*'ishshah*], bore him no children. She had an Egyptian **slave-girl** [*shifchah*]; whose name was Hagar,

SCENE 1: IN ABRAM'S/SARAI'S CAMP: FROM SARAI'S PERSPECTIVE

and Sarai said to Abram, "Behold, please, that YHWH has prevented me from **bearing children** [*yld*]; go, please, in to my **slave-girl** [*shifchah*]; it may be that **I shall obtain children** [*yld*] by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's **woman** [*'ishshah*], took Hagar the Egyptian, her **slave-girl** [*shifchah*]; and gave her to her husband Abram as a **woman** [*'ishshah*]. He went in to Hagar, and she **conceived** [*hrh*]; and when **she saw** [*r'h*] that **she had conceived** [*hrh*]; her **mistress** [*gevirah*] looked small in her **eyes** [*ayin*]. Then Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my **slave-girl** [*shifchah*]; to your embrace, and when **she saw** [*r'h*] that **she had conceived** [*hrh*]; I became small in her **eyes** [*ayin*]. May YHWH judge between you and me!" But Abram said to Sarai, "Behold! Your **slave-girl** [*shifchah*]; is in your hand; do to her what is good in your **eyes** [*ayin*]." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she ran away from her.

SCENE 2: IN THE WILDERNESS: FROM HAGAR'S PERSPECTIVE

The angel of YHWH found her by an **eye/spring** [*ayin*] of water in the wilderness, the **eye/spring** [*ayin*] on the way to Shur. And he said, "Hagar, **slave-girl** [*shifchah*]; of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am running away from my **mistress** [*gevirah*] Sarai." The angel of YHWH said to her, "Return to your **mistress** [*gevirah*], and submit to her." The angel of YHWH also said to her, "I will so greatly multiply your offspring that they cannot be counted for multitude." And the angel of YHWH said to her, "Behold! You have conceived and **shall bear** [*yld*] a son; you shall call him Ishmael, for YHWH 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."

or, "he shall be a free man" [Kraye]
or, "his hand (will be free) from every-
one" [Kraye] or
"his hand with everyone" (Pigott)
or, "and everyone's hand (will be free)
from him"[Kraye] or "and the hand of
everyone with him" [Pigott]
[or, "and he will live in the presence of
all his kin"] [Kraye]

So she named YHWH who spoke to her, "You are El-roi"; for she said, "**Have I** really **seen** [*r'h*] God and remained alive after **seeing** [*r'h*] him?" Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; Behold! It lies between Kadesh and Bered.

SCENE 3: IN ABRAM'S/SARAI'S CAMP

Hagar **bore** [*yld*] Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar **bore** [*yld*], Ishmael. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.