

He Knows My Name

THE GARDEN COLLECTION

A Biblical Name Study

Women of Genesis

Student Book

Zillah • Adah • Naamah • Sarai and Sarah • Hagar
Lot's Wife • Lot's Daughters • Rebekah

We begin with the women's names, then follow their lives in Genesis. Each lesson considers their world, their struggles, their encounters with God, and what their stories say to us today.

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My notes

A Biblical Name Study

A name can preserve identity, mark a promise, or invite a question. Genesis also remembers women whose personal names it does not give.

Zillah Shade or shadow. Genesis 4:19, 22-23.

Adah Commonly ornament or adornment. Lamech's wife: Genesis 4:19-23.

Naamah Pleasantness or pleasant. Tubal-cain's sister: Genesis 4:22.

Sarai and Sarah Sarai is traditionally my princess; Sarah is princess or noblewoman. Genesis 17:15-16.

Hagar Name origin uncertain; traditionally connected with flight. God addresses her by name: Genesis 16:8.

Lot's wife Personal name unrecorded in Genesis. Genesis 19:26.

Lot's daughters Their personal names are unrecorded. Their sons are Moab and Ben-ammi. Genesis 19:30-38.

Rebekah Also Rivqah. Original meaning uncertain; traditionally linked with binding or fastening. Genesis 24:15.

Look up Genesis 16:8 and 17:15-16. What do you notice about a name spoken by God's messenger and a name changed by God?

My notes

Zillah

Read Genesis 4:19-24

Meet Her Zillah is one of Lamech's two wives, the mother of Tubal-cain, and the mother of Naamah within the family described in Genesis 4.

Her World She belongs to Cain's family line before the flood. Metalworking, music, livestock keeping, and the growth of human violence appear together in this world.

Her Story Genesis names her beside Adah, records her children, and includes her among the women addressed by Lamech when he speaks of killing and revenge.

What We Often Miss A woman is named within a genealogy often remembered only for its men. Being addressed by Lamech does not mean she agrees with his words.

Her Struggle She lives within a household shaped by polygamy and a man's violent declaration. Her own response and the details of her daily life are not recorded.

Her Encounter with God Genesis records no individual conversation between Zillah and God. Her brief appearance invites us to remember women whose spiritual lives are not narrated.

What Her Story Says to Us Today We can notice a woman beyond her relationship to a powerful man. Her story invites us to value lives that receive little space in the record.

Questions for Reflection

1. Who belongs to Zillah's household? Read Genesis 4:19-22.
2. What does Lamech say to his wives? Read Genesis 4:23-24.

My notes

Adah

Read Genesis 4:19-24

Meet Her Adah is one of Lamech's wives and the mother of Jabal and Jubal, associated with livestock keeping and music.

Her World Her household belongs to Cain's descendants. Family life stands alongside new occupations, artistic expression, and the troubling growth of vengeance.

Her Story She is named when Lamech takes two wives. Her sons' activities are remembered, and Lamech later calls on both Adah and Zillah to hear him.

What We Often Miss A woman's name helps connect the story of human creativity. The mother of a musician has a place in a passage that also tells of violence.

Her Struggle The passage places her within a divided marriage household. It does not tell us her feelings, her influence over Lamech, or whether she challenges him.

Her Encounter with God No personal encounter with God is recorded for Adah. We meet her through the name and relationships Genesis preserves.

What Her Story Says to Us Today A woman is more than her beauty, work, or family role. Adah's brief place in the story invites us to honor a whole person beyond the achievements of her household.

Questions for Reflection

1. What are Adah's sons known for? Read Genesis 4:20-21.
2. How can creativity in our community serve peace and care?

My notes

Naamah

Read Genesis 4:22; 6:18; 7:7

Meet Her Naamah is named as Tubal-cain's sister within the household of Lamech and Zillah. Her one brief mention has drawn centuries of attention.

Her World She appears in the pre-flood genealogy of Cain's family. The passage remembers metalwork, music, and a household troubled by Lamech's violence.

Her Story Genesis preserves her name and family connection but gives her no speech, marriage account, or later episode.

What We Often Miss The narrator names a daughter when many genealogies emphasize sons. A brief mention can draw our attention without supplying a complete life story.

Her Struggle Her personal struggle is not described. The surrounding family narrative raises questions about how a woman lives amid the choices and reputation of her relatives.

Her Encounter with God No personal encounter with God is recorded for Naamah. Genesis includes a wife with Noah in the ark, but does not name that woman.

What Her Story Says to Us Today A person's worth is greater than the amount written about her. We can resist judging someone only by her family and learn to notice overlooked women.

Questions for Reflection

1. What does Genesis actually tell us about Naamah? Read Genesis 4:22.
2. How is Noah's wife described in Genesis 6:18 and 7:7?
3. What draws your attention to a woman whose story is brief?

My notes

Sarai and Sarah

Read Genesis 11:29-30; 12:10-20; 16; 17:15-21; 18:9-15; 20; 21:1-7

Meet Her Sarai, later Sarah, journeys with Abram, later Abraham. God includes her by name in His promise, and she becomes Isaac's mother.

Her World Migration, kinship, rulers, servants, and inheritance shape her world. The social importance of descendants makes prolonged childlessness a heavy household concern.

Her Story Abraham twice denies being Sarah's husband to protect himself when powerful rulers take her into their households. God protects her and declares her a mother of nations (Genesis 17:16).

What We Often Miss God names Sarah as a key participant in the promise. Her importance stands alongside her harmful treatment of Hagar; both belong to the story.

Her Struggle She waits through old age, fears danger, and tries to secure the family's future through Hagar. Her choices affect a woman with less household power.

Her Encounter with God The Lord questions her laughter and affirms the promised birth. Isaac arrives at the appointed time, and Sarah speaks of laughter and wonder.

What Her Story Says to Us Today God's promise includes His daughters by name. Sarah invites us to trust Him in waiting while considering how our fear and decisions affect other people.

Questions for Reflection

1. What changes in Sarah's name and promise? Read Genesis 17:15-16.
2. What question does the Lord ask in Genesis 18:14?
3. How can I wait faithfully without making someone else carry the cost of my fear?

My notes

Hagar

Read Genesis 16:1-16; 21:8-21

Meet Her Hagar is an Egyptian woman enslaved in Sarai and Abram's household. She becomes the mother of Ishmael, whose name is connected with God hearing.

Her World Her status leaves decisions about her labor, body, and future in other people's hands. Her Egyptian identity also marks her as an outsider in the household.

Her Story Pregnant Hagar flees Sarai's harsh treatment. Later, Hagar and Ishmael are sent away and face thirst in the wilderness. God meets their need in both accounts.

What We Often Miss God's messenger addresses Hagar by name. She names the Lord El Roi. The spring in Genesis 16 and the well in Genesis 21 belong to two distinct episodes.

Her Struggle She faces mistreatment, displacement, and fear for her son. Her story reveals the human cost of decisions made by people with greater power.

Her Encounter with God A messenger finds her by a spring and announces Ishmael's future. Later, God hears the boy, calls to Hagar, and opens her eyes to water.

What Her Story Says to Us Today God sees people others overlook and hears distress outside the center of household power. We can respond by listening, seeing, and offering practical care.

Questions for Reflection

1. How does the messenger address Hagar? Read Genesis 16:7-11.
2. What name does she give the Lord? Read Genesis 16:13.
3. What changes when God opens her eyes? Read Genesis 21:17-19. Whose need can I notice?

My notes

Lot's Wife

Read Genesis 19:15-29; Luke 17:28-33

Meet Her Lot's wife is a woman in the household rescued from Sodom. Genesis identifies her by marriage but preserves no personal name or speech.

Her World Her household lives in a city facing judgment. Visitors enter the family home, a threatening crowd gathers, and the family is urged to leave.

Her Story The messengers take the family by the hand and lead them out. During the escape, Lot's wife looks back and becomes a pillar of salt.

What We Often Miss The Lord's mercy is named when the family is brought out (Genesis 19:16). The passage tells us her action but does not explain her inner motive.

Her Struggle An urgent departure separates her from the life she has known. Attachment and loss are useful reflection themes; Genesis does not describe her feelings.

Her Encounter with God She receives rescue and warning through God's messengers. Her story places mercy, urgent instruction, and judgment within the same account.

What Her Story Says to Us Today Jesus tells His hearers to remember Lot's wife. Her story asks us to consider how we respond when God calls us forward and what we are unwilling to release.

Questions for Reflection

1. How does Genesis 19:16 describe God's treatment of the family?
2. What instruction and action appear in Genesis 19:17, 26?
3. Why does Jesus mention her? Read Luke 17:28-33. What might I be clinging to?

My notes

Lot's Daughters

Read Genesis 19:1-8, 15-17, 30-38

Meet Her The two daughters leave Sodom with Lot. They are remembered through a disturbing family account and the origins of two neighboring peoples.

Her World They live amid threatened sexual violence, a father's failure to protect them, destruction, displacement, and isolation. The cave scene follows the loss of their city.

Her Story Fearing that they cannot have descendants, they make Lot drunk and have intercourse with him. They bear Moab and Ben-ammi, ancestors of Moab and Ammon.

What We Often Miss Earlier, Lot offers his daughters to the crowd. The story's moral difficulty includes his conduct, not only theirs. Their later actions are narrated without a command from God.

Her Struggle They face fear about survival and the family's future. Their reasoning leads them into a harmful plan that crosses family and sexual boundaries.

Her Encounter with God God's messengers include them in the rescue. No individual divine instruction authorizing the cave plan is recorded.

What Her Story Says to Us Today Fear can narrow what we believe is possible. Their story invites honest attention to harm, protection of vulnerable people, and the search for wise help in crisis.

Questions for Reflection

1. How does Lot's offer expose his daughters to harm? Read Genesis 19:8.
2. What reason do the daughters give for their plan? Read Genesis 19:30-32.
3. Name their sons and the peoples descended from them. Read Genesis 19:37-38.

My notes

Rebekah

Read Genesis 24-27

Meet Her Rebekah is Bethuel's daughter, Laban's sister, and Milcah's granddaughter. She becomes Isaac's wife and the mother of Esau and Jacob.

Her World Water carrying, hospitality, kinship, marriage, and inheritance shape her world. Her choices help determine the household's future.

Her Story She waters the servant's camels, agrees to leave her family, and marries Isaac. Later she seeks the Lord about her pregnancy and helps Jacob obtain Isaac's blessing through deception.

What We Often Miss Her family asks whether she will go, and she answers for herself. She also takes her question about the struggling children to the Lord.

Her Struggle A difficult pregnancy, parental favoritism, rivalry, and fear for Jacob trouble the household. Her plan to secure the blessing deepens the family's conflict.

Her Encounter with God The Lord answers her inquiry: two nations are in her womb, and the older will serve the younger (Genesis 25:23). This answer does not command her later deception.

What Her Story Says to Us Today God receives women's questions and works through their initiative. Rebekah invites us to practice generous service, seek the Lord, and pursue His purposes without manipulating others.

Questions for Reflection

1. What does Rebekah offer at the well? Read Genesis 24:17-20.
2. What decision does she voice in Genesis 24:57-58?
3. What does the Lord tell her? Read Genesis 25:22-23. When can I seek Him?

My notes
