

Genesis

Chapter 21:8-21

✠ **Gen 21:8-14** ⁸ *So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.* ⁹ *And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing.* ¹⁰ *Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac."* ¹¹ *And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son.* ¹² *But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called.* ¹³ *"Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed."* ¹⁴ *So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting it on her shoulder, he gave it and the boy to Hagar, and sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba.*

Weaned: *This period in ancient Israel extended to about 3 years, and when it was finished the child was mature enough to be entrusted to strangers. And, as the completion of the period marked the end of the most critical stage of the child's life, it was celebrated with a feast as we see Abraham did for his son Isaac.*

Ishmael was making fun of Isaac during this time of celebration. We notice that there was no mention of this type of celebration for Ishmael. It could have been because he was born from an Egyptian woman, and this may not have been the same custom for the Egyptians.

Another reason could have been because Ishmael as not the son of promise, and Abraham and Sarah seeing the error of their sin, not wanting to celebrate their sin.

But regardless why, we see Ishmael coming against Isaac. "So what" you may be thinking. "It's just a couple of kids or brothers, and harmless fighting."

It is a bid deal if you follow the current events going on in Israel between the Israelites and the Palestinians.

From Isaac came Jacob who God renamed Israel.

✠ **Gen 32:28** *And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."*

And as we will see Abraham was to offer Isaac on the altar to the Lord. But the Palestinians believe that Abraham offered Ishmael on the altar, and all this has to do with the place, as we know now as the "Dome of Rock". This also is the place where the temple was, and is to be built again. So it's considered a Holy place, because that's where Isaac was to be offered to the Lord.

So that's why all the fighting and hatred is always going on between Israel and Palestine, because each one thinks the site is theirs. But the bible is very clear that it belongs to the Israelites and not Palestinians and it is all part of God's plan. God knew what He was, and is doing even today.

We see things as just war or fighting, but God is preparing the way for the antichrist to make his move. What does it all mean to us as believers? It means Jesus will be back at any moment to take us home. Only then can the antichrist be revealed to the world. But the world will not know it's the antichrist, because the world will be blinded because of their hardened hearts toward God and want to serve man rather than God, even as it does now.

But we are getting a bit ahead of the story here. Still we see the jealousy of Ishmael towards Isaac, and the response from Sarah is.

Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac."

Remember that this was Ishmael who was scoffing or making fun of Isaac. So why would Sarah want Hagar to leave also? We know from past studies that Sarah had never accepted Hagar or her son Ishmael. Even now almost 20 years later Sarah has not accepted Hagar as Abraham's concubine even though Sarah was the one to give her to Abraham. And why did God tell Abraham to go ahead and allow it to happen? Let's read it again.

¹¹ And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son. ¹² But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called. ¹³ "Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed."

Sarah was wanting evil to come upon Hagar and Ishmael. But as we see, God is a God of compassion, and even though Abraham and Sarah sinned and through this sin Ishmael was born. God didn't cast him away because he was still a person created by God with no fault of his own that he was born. In fact we see that God even said He would bless Ishmael even though Sarah meant this for evil.

Maybe today you are someone who was not planned or others reject you. But you must remember that God will never reject you. He loves you; in fact He loves you so much that He sent His Son Jesus to die for you. That's right, for YOU, because He loves you and sees you as somebody, and not just any somebody, but somebody special!

So God allowed this to happen to Hagar and Ishmael, but God also made provisions for them, which we will see as we go on.

✠ *14 So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting it on her shoulder, he gave it and the boy to Hagar, and sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba*

Abraham was obedient to God even though he didn't want to do it.

✠ *11 And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son.*

Sometimes there are things we don't want to do, but God says to go ahead and do it. In those times we must remember Abraham's obedience to God.

Hagar wandered into Beersheba. Remember Beersheba? This was where Abraham and Abimelech's men were fighting over the well and Abraham and Abimelech swore an oath to one another.

✠ **Gen 21:31** *Therefore he called that place Beersheba, because the two of them swore an oath there.*

Hagar not only wandered into the place where strife was stopped, but also where a promise was made between two men.

It's interesting that Hagar wandered into this place because there was strife between her and Sarah, and also God made a promise concerning her son Ishmael.

✠ **Gen 21:15-21** *15 And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy under one of the shrubs. 16 Then she went and sat down across from him at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, "Let me not see the death of the boy." So she sat opposite him, and lifted her voice and wept. 17 And God heard the voice of the lad. Then the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, "What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. 18 "Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation." 19 Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. 20 So God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. 21 He dwelt in the Wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.*

Once again this is something we read before, but back then Ishmael was not born yet. Let's look at it again.

✠ **Gen 16:7-12** *7 Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. 8 And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai." 9 The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand." 10 Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they*

shall not be counted for multitude." ¹¹ And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction."¹² He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

Once again we see someone not trusting in God's promise to him or her.

✠ ¹⁰ Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude." ¹¹ And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction."

This is the promise that was made to Hagar, but still she was looking at the current situation and did not believe in God's promise in regards to her son Ishmael.

✠ ¹⁶ Then she went and sat down across from him at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, "Let me not see the death of the boy." So she sat opposite him, and lifted her voice and wept.

But once again the angel of the Lord comforts her with the same words.

✠ 16:10 Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude."

✠ 21:18 "Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation."

Ishmael was not a little baby at this time. In fact he was around 17 years old.

✠ Gen 16:13-16 Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram

Also something else to think about is, even though the promise to make Ishmael a great nation was for Ishmael, God saved Hagar also. Once again God showing compassion, not only to one of Abraham's descendants, but also to his mother who was an Egyptian.

God also shows compassion on you even if you are not a believer.

✠ 2 Peter 3:9 (NLT) The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise to return, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to perish, so he is giving more time for everyone to repent.

Anyone and *everyone* means you to. No matter how bad you messed up or sinned. God loves you and so does His Son Jesus. Jesus died for everyone, not just a select few.

So why doesn't everyone go to heaven then? Because not everyone accepts the free gift from God, which is His Son Jesus and His death on the cross for their sins.

Think of Christmas or your birthday. During this time you will receive gifts from those that love you and care about you. But it's up to you whether you take that gift or not. You could choose to say, "I don't care how much thought or how much you spent on that gift. I refuse to take it." Or you could say, "Thank you so much for this gift. I can tell you put a lot of thought and love into this gift."

What will you do with God's gift to you?

You can say, "I don't care how much you care about me God or even that it cost your Son's life. I refuse to accept your gift."

But on the other hand you can say, "Thank you Father for Your gift of Your Son Jesus for me. I accept this gift even though I am undeserving of it. You love me so much that You say I am deserving of it because You want me with You in Heaven for all eternity!"

I encourage you to accept God's gift of His Son to you. I promise you will never want to exchange it for anything else!