

## When Two Worlds Collide!      Genesis 21:8-21      11.16.2022

Turn in your Bibles tonight to Genesis Chapter 21 and we will be looking at verses 8 to 21. Last week we saw that the son of promise had been born. The promise God made to Abraham, which included Sarah, that he would be the father of a great nation has now come to fruition beginning with their newborn son, Isaac.

Isaac, in the Hebrew, means, he laughs! Now, why is that so meaningful. Remember when God came, with the two angels to visit Abraham. God came to tell Abraham and Sarah they were to have a son within the year. Sarah was in the tent listening and when she heard the Lord say this, “What did she do?” She laughed! She laughed, then she lied. When she laughed, she had said to herself, “After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?”

Thinking no one heard but the Lord heard her and asked why she laughed and said what she said. God said to Abraham, “Is anything not too hard for the Lord?” Sarah denied it, “Who me? I did not laugh!

As we saw last week, after giving birth to Isaac, the promised one, Sarah said, “God has made laughter for me. And she said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

We come to a very important time in the life of Isaac and the family.

### **Genesis 21:8**

***<sup>8</sup> And the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.***

I want us to look at the word child and weaned. The age of Isaac at this time has been a topic of great debate. Jewish tradition places Isaac between the ages of 2 and 5 years of age. The more dogmatic information I researched says Isaac was 3 years of age. We cannot say for certain what the age of Isaac was, but what we can learn is that this is a point of the child’s life that he had become somewhat self-sufficient.

***The Hebrew word for child here is – Yeled – child, son, boy, offspring, youth.***

Indicating that Isaac was definitely beyond being considered a baby. Isaac was more what we may call a toddler.

***The Hebrew word for weaned is – Gamal – to deal fully with, to deal bountiful with.***

When we think of the weaning of a child, what thought most likely comes to our mind. Your child has been weaned off breast feeding or off the bottle and they are able to take on more substantial food. Like this (Jar of Baby Food)! Did we just sit the jar down and say have at? No, we got one of these out(spoon) and we started playing our games to get our child to open their mouths and eat this wonderful food.

There came a time though when we begin introducing them to this:



We put the fork in their hand, and they went at it and they ended up looking like this.



The point here is that the weaning process was much more than just the weaning off of the mother's breast. It was that the child was able to be given chores and responsibility, though still needing some help, they were able and expected to engage in the daily workings of the family.

Were you given chores as a child? I was and they would increase in number and in complexity as I got older. There was no discussion of whether you were going to do them or not or whether you felt like doing them or not. You vacuumed your room, you made your bed, you put your dirty clothes in the clothes basket that was in the laundry room.

You cleaned the toilet, washed down the tub, you took your dirty towel to the laundry room and if there were enough towels you started the washer, put them in the dryer and after they were dried you folded them. You washed the dishes; you dried the dishes. When the trash can got full, you didn't push it down, you took it out. When mom got home with the groceries, you go out and carry them in. Then, you put them in the cabinets.

There was no asking if you would like to help, "Well I don't feel like it today!" If I said that, you know what I was going to feel next. I'm being a little facetious, very little though. We usually got the look or the point of the arm. It doesn't matter what I or you feel like, we were expected to obey. We didn't run the house. There should be limits, there should be expectations, there are certain respectful behaviors that all should be taught.

So, this weaning process was an important time in the maturing process of a child within the Jewish nation and really in all cultures around the world which comes with responsibility and expectations. We all celebrate milestones in our children's lives. Here, it was a time to celebrate to mark this milestone in Isaac's life.

God used this act of weaning not only in the physical but in a spiritual sense. King David wrote this in Psalm 131.

***Psalm 131:1-2***

***<sup>1</sup> O Lord, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. <sup>2</sup> But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me.***

David is sharing that he has matured in his faith, he no longer has that restless spirit that leads to the desires the things of the world, the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, those things that are fleeting. He now is content of what the Lord has done through the Holy Spirit that his desire is for the Lord of who truly satisfies the soul.

A baby becomes restless and cries to get our attention to provide what the baby needs. After being weaned from the mother, the child can now ask for his or her food, help fix his or her own food, and take his or her place at the table to partake of the meal because they were trained and are now expected to do so.

Does God have expectations for us? Does he give us responsibilities to fulfill for the Kingdom of God? Yes and Yes!! Does God expect us to mature in our faith and in our service and worship for the Kingdom of God? We are going to turn to two portions of Scripture. The first 1 Corinthians 3:1-2 and then to Hebrews 5:12-14.

***1 Corinthians 3:1-2***

***<sup>1</sup> But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. <sup>2</sup> I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready.***

What is the milk? It is the elementary teachings that newly saved believers, learn as we begin our walk our life as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The solid food, and we will see it defined as meat also, are the more in depth spiritual and doctrinal teachings of the word that helps us live in obedience of the Word of God and be able to proclaim the Gospel and teach others in some of the more in-depth teachings within God's Word.

The Apostle Paul had arrived in Corinth around 50 to 52 A.D. Paul stayed a year and half teaching the Gospel and the Word of God. This first letter to the Corinthians was written in 55 A.D. Paul had been gone for about 3 years now and the reports coming back to him is that there has not been much growth there. Though he had taught for a year and half and the elders have been teaching, the people are still immature in their faith and in their knowledge of God's Word.

**Hebrews 5:12-14**

***<sup>12</sup> For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, <sup>13</sup> for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. <sup>14</sup> But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.***

I do believe that the Apostle Paul wrote Hebrews, and he is chastising many of the people that are reading this letter, that there should be evidence that they are maturing in their faith and knowledge of God's Word.

We even see the Apostle Peter get in the act here with the emphasis of growing and maturing as a follower of the Lord Jesus.

**1 Peter 2:2-3**

***<sup>2</sup> Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation – <sup>3</sup> if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.***

What Peter is pointing to here is the desire and the passion you have for the milk. Just like a baby craves for the milk, Peter is challenging us to desire, go after, long for the Word of God with the same tenacity if you will, and then the craving goes from the milk:



Get off the bottle, and go for the meat:



Which takes a fork and knife!

Where are you? Are you still on the bottle? Or do you have the knife and fork out. How often are you in the Word of God? We encourage you to have your own Bible Study and devotion time with your family and individually.

We make it pretty easy around here for each of us to get off the milk and get on the meat. We of course have the preaching on Sunday and Wednesday. We have devotions on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. We have Sunday School. There is RightNowMedia, the Women's Bible Study on Friday's, the Chronological reading and study that many of us are going through.

God expects us to get off the milk and get on the meat. God expects us to grow because we have responsibility as a believer to go and make disciples of all nations.

Isaac is weaned and the son of promise is to take on responsibility of the family. The promise of the great nation to be set apart by and for God is now to begin. This is where two worlds to collide.

### ***Genesis 21:9***

***<sup>9</sup> But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, laughing.***

We've seen a lot of laughing haven't we? (Abraham (Joy), Sarah (Unbelief), Isaac named laughter, Ishmael – Laughing/Mocking). The word for laughing at the end of verse 9 is the Hebrew word: *sahaq* – ***to mock, to make sport of, to toy with***. If we go by that Isaac was at the age of the three at the time of this celebration, that would make Ishmael seventeen. There was a 14-year difference between when Ishmael was born and when Isaac was born.

At this celebration, which was to be a very celebratory time for Isaac and the family, Ishmael decides to have a little fun at the expense of Isaac. It goes beyond just having a little fun. We could say Ishmael was bullying Isaac. What was said and done, we don't know. We get a better idea of the intensity of what Ishmael was doing by what the Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians Chapter 4 verse 29.

### ***Galatians 4:29***

***<sup>29</sup> But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now.***

We see two terms here.

1. According to the Flesh
2. According to the Spirit

How was it that Ishmael was born? Abraham and Sarah decided not to wait on God and Sarah told Abraham to be with Hagar and Hagar conceived and bore Ishmael. That was sin! So, according to the flesh physically and spiritually, Abraham and Sarah got ahead of God, they took matters into their own hands, and disobeyed God.

Therefore, Ishmael was born out of the flesh, out of sin! Isaac was the son promised by God! It was through God's sovereign and divine hand that Abraham and Sarah were able to have Isaac born to them. In Romans 4 verse 19 we get a physical description of Abraham and Sarah.

### ***Romans 4:19***

***19 He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb.***

We just saw two words in that verse that describe our spiritual condition in our lostness. Dead and barren! I shared these verses a couple of week ago from, *Ephesians 2:1-2 which tells us we were dead in the trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.*

Ishmael is the representation of our sinful flesh or sin nature. Because of Adam and Eve's disobedience to God's Word and command, sin was brought into this world, we are all born sinners with a sin nature, a sinful flesh. We are in need of salvation. It takes the divine, sovereign hand of God to shine light on the darkness to bring us from death to life through the light of the world himself, Jesus Christ.

There is the conviction through the Holy Spirit for us to begin to see how heinous, wicked our sin is. In contrast to see how Holy, wonderful, loving, just God is, and our sin is against him. Then through repentance and faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit, now lives within our soul and we are born again, born of the Spirit because of our repentance.

Does that sinful nature go away? Here is the paradox. Just as I taught a few weeks ago about the battle that is within because of that very fact. We have the sin nature, but we are new creatures through Jesus Christ! I want to make this point again. In Romans 7, the Apostle Paul speaks to this battle. He says, ***For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.***

Paul is not speaking to a defeatism mentality. The first step of living holy before the Lord is the recognizing that we are in a battle. Therefore, knowing the battle is there, knowing the temptation may come, knowing satan is lurking around the corner, we prepare. We get in God's Word; we stay in prayer, and we fight! Greater is he that is in us that he that is in the world.

We must understand, though there is the battle within, there is a battle that comes from the outside. As described that satan will come against those that seek to live for the Lord Jesus, there will be persecution that will come. Look at the screens at these verses the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy.

### ***2 Timothy 3:10-14***

***10 You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, 11 my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra --- which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. 12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13 while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you have learned it.***

The darkness is always going to try keep the light from shining but when the true light shines up on the darkness the darkness has to flee. In John 1:5, speaking of Jesus, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

Ishmael is a representation of the darkness coming against the light. Ishmael was not the son of promise, Isaac was. It is through Isaac that the Messiah would come to be.

What were the consequences of Ishmaels mocking, persecution of Isaac. Look at verses 10 to 13.

### ***Genesis 21:10-13***

***10 So she said to Abraham, “Cast out this slave woman with her son, for the son of this slave woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac.” 11 And the thing was very displeasing to Abraham on account of his son. 12 But God said to Abraham, “Be not displeased because of the boy and because of your slave woman. Whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall your offspring be named. 13 And I will make a nation of the son of the slave woman also, because he is your offspring.”***

Sarah became very angry when she saw what Ishmael was doing and told her husband to cast out Hagar and Ishmael. Drive them away, pack their bags and get them out! As we read this was displeasing to Abraham. Ishmael was still his son. For 14 years Ishmael was right there with Abraham. God told him to do what Sarah had said because God was going to keep his promises to Abraham on the behalf of both Isaac and Ishmael.

Why couldn't Ishmael stay? This goes back first to the sovereignty of God. God knew Ishmael's heart. If Ishmael stayed there would be constant conflict. Remember this isn't the first time that we saw conflict between Hagar and Sarah either. Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham, Abram at that time, to be his wife. Hagar conceived and after she became pregnant, Sarah dealt very harshly with Hagar, and she fled. God intervened, told Hagar to return, you're pregnant, you will bear a son. Hagar gave a son to Abraham, Ishmael.

Here we get the description of Ishmael's heart:

***Genesis 16:12***

***12 “He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen.”***

Showing the heart of Ishmael. Ishmael was a hard man and a troublemaker. It is the nations that he was the patriarch for that would create the most issues and problems with Israel.

So, for Ishmael and Hagar both to be sent out is a reminder to us to keep sin out of our camp. Keep sin out of our home. Keep sin out of our life.

The whole point here everyone is once again if you disobey God's Word there are consequences that you bring upon yourself. What started this whole mess? Abram and Sarai, Abraham and Sarah, got ahead of God and said, we are going to do it our way! There are two results to that mindset.

One, in our sin, if we continue to say to God, I am going to live this life my way, I refuse to repent of my sin and turn to you as my creator, my savior, and honor and obey you. Then the consequence is Hell.

As true followers of Jesus Christ, God will not leave you nor forsake you. But God will allow you to go your own path and let you feel the consequence, the sting, of your sin to bring you back to a place of obedience.

It is through pain and suffering that we can learn the most. We see the effects of sin and we see the graciousness of God as he is there to respond to our cries and our prayers of deliverance.

We see more of God's sovereignty and his mercy as Abraham obeys God and sends Ishmael and Hagar on their way.

***Genesis 21:14-21***

***14 So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. 15 When the water in the skin was gone, she put the child under one of the bushes. 16 Then she***

*went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot, for she said, “Let me not look on the death of the child.” And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. <sup>17</sup> And God heard the voice of the boy, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. <sup>18</sup> Up! Lift up the boy, and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make him into a great nation.” <sup>19</sup> Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink. <sup>20</sup> And God was with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an expert with the bow. <sup>21</sup> He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.*

Look at this map to see where Hagar and Ishmael were wandering.



The last time we talked about Abraham’s location was when he had traveled to Gerar. So it was from that location that Hagar and Ishmael headed out towards Beersheba and ended up in the wilderness that surrounded that area. What little provision they had has run out and they are at the point of dying. God once again steps in responds to Hagar just as he had when she ran away from Sarah back in Chapter 16.

Hagar knowing, they were just going to die, set Ishmael under some shade and walked away so she did not have to watch her son die. God made a promise that her son, would be a great nation. So, God is here to keep that promise. God speaks to her through who I believe is the person of the preincarnate Christ, to let her know that he heard the young man’s cries, and he would save them both from death.

What do we see here?

We see what is called Common Grace. There is no indication that Hagar or Ishmael were ever believers in God. Common Grace is given to all people whether they are saved or lost. If you are breathing right now you are receiving God’s Common Grace. Do you have clothing, shelter, are you able to enjoy the beauty of God’s creation? Then you are experiencing the Common Grace of God.

As Jesus was preaching the sermon on the mount, he said these words.

***Matthew 5:44-45***



***<sup>44</sup> But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup> so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and send rain on the just and the unjust.***

Though we see that God saved Hagar and Ishmael in a physical sense when he opened her eyes to see the well of water so she and her son could drink and be saved from a physical death. It takes the opening of our eyes in the spiritual sense to see our sin and see the living water, Jesus Christ, that can save us from an eternal death.

As we have seen lies and darkness are going to try to overcome truth and light. When it comes to lies and darkness, truth and light they are worlds apart. There is no neutrality here! Lies and darkness will try to suppress the truth and light. They have already collided. As we have learned on Sunday's as we have gone through the Gospel of John.

Jesus is the light of the world! John 1:1-5 we know this about Jesus.

***John 1:1-5***

***1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.***

It looks dark at times. Don't despair Christian! The Lord Jesus is with you! Look up! Your redemption is near! The truth needs to continue to go out and dispel the darkness! May we be faithful in taking the light of the Gospel to a dark world.