

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (May 7, 2023)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

Genesis 21:8-21 describes the sad and painful departure of Hagar and Ishmael from the lives of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac. Now that Isaac is growing up, Sarah feels very uncomfortable when she sees her son playing with the slave's son, and she asks and demands that Abraham throw them out, he is greatly displeased, but God tells him that Ishmael will be protected and blessed. So, Abraham obeys the Lord, and listens to his wife Sarah, and sends Ishmael and his mother Hagar into the desert of Beersheba with enough bread and water that will last some time. Mother and son trusted in the love and promises of their one and only mighty God, the same God of Abraham and his family. Sometimes we make hard decisions when we do not trust God, but He is not going to change his plans because of our lack of patience; His will and promises have to be fulfilled, whether we want it or not. God is a strong, jealous and sovereign God; He is asking us to be role models parents, and to educate our children in his ways, showing them His Love and His Compassion. Although the story of Ishmael and Hagar seems sad, it will have a happy ending, because God promised to take care of them and make of Ishmael a great Nation.

God Protects and blesses Ishmael (Genesis 21:8-21)

⁸And the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. ⁹But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, laughing. ¹⁰So 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." ¹¹And the thing was very displeasing to Abraham on account of his son. ¹²But 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. ¹³And I will make a nation of the son of the slave woman also, because he is your offspring." ¹⁴So 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. ¹⁵When the water in the skin was gone, she put the child under one of the bushes. ¹⁶Then 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. ¹⁷And 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. ¹⁸Up! Lift up the boy, and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make him into a great nation." ¹⁹Then 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. ²⁰And God was with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an expert with the bow. ²¹He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. What does this story tell us about Ishmael and Isaac?
2. What does this passage say about God and His promises?
3. How did Abraham respond to Sarah's pressure?
4. What did God tell Abraham to do with Hagar and Ishmael?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

5. What does a promise from God mean?
6. What lessons can we learn from Hagar and Ishmael?
7. What did it mean to Hagar and Ishmael that God helped them in the desert?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

8. What is the message that God is sending you?
9. How would you have felt if you had been Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, or Ishmael?
10. Who had the hardest time trusting God?

As you spend time praying remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural, easy, and empowering, part of your day. Prayer is talking to God, and God talking to you. Ask God to help you make the right decisions, and trust in God's Holy Promises. ⁷*But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.*

Jeremiah 29:7