

Magnolia Missionary Baptist Church of Beaumont, Texas
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Superintendent: Ordained Minister Rev. Samuel O. Simon
Lesson #6 January 4, 2022, to January 9, 2022

Unit II: GOD: The Source of Justice

Subject: Improbable Hope

Text: Genesis 21: 8-20

Key Verse:

God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation (Genesis 21: 17-18, KJV).

Key Terms:

- 1) Hagar – Hebrew: Hagar (haw-gawr’): Sarah’s Egyptian maid; the mother of Ishmael.
- 2) Mocking – Hebrew: tsachaq (tsawkhak’): to laugh; make sport; jesting.
- 3) Weaned – Hebrew: gamal (gaw-mal’): dealt with; ripened; weaned (a child).

Pointers:

- 1) A Mother’s Demand (Genesis 21: 8-10)
- 2) A Father’s Dilemma (Genesis 21: 11-14a)
- 3) An Unlikely Deliverance (Genesis 21: 14b-20)

Introduction:

During things your way will eventually get you into trouble, not just for you but for your family and generations to come. Going against The LORD GOD’S words and ways is what got Adam and Eve in trouble. And when Abraham and Sarah thought that The LORD GOD delayed in HIS promise (God promised to make him a great nation, to bless and make his name great, and to make him a universal benefit to the nations of the earth, see Genesis 12: 1-3) they took matters in their own hands, to make it happen in their own way. The nugget here is when we consistently do things The LORD GOD’S way instead of ours, life is smoother.

Lesson Pointer # 1

- **A Mother’s Demand (Genesis 21: 8-10)**

Allowing conflicts to enter families can cause hurt, rivalry, separation, and loss of lives. But we have been given a guideline by The LORD GOD on how we should not allow self to make decisions for us, but instead to rely on The LORD GOD for our decision making.

The decision by Abraham and Sarah to use Hagar as a surrogate wife set the pattern for conflicts to occur in families. Hagar having a son for Abraham by the name of Ishmael would bring conflict between Sarah and Hagar and Abraham. Now Sarah given birth to Isaac the son of Abraham brought a source of joy for both (read Genesis 21: 1-7). Now, on the day that Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a grand celebration to honor the occasion (Genesis 21: 8). Sarah on this day noticed that Hagar her hand-maid son Ishmael, mocked Isaac and ridiculed him, caused the conflict between them to escalate (Genesis 21: 9). This caused the mother of Isaac (Sarah) to make a demand to Abraham to send Hagar and her son Ishmael away (Genesis 21: 10). Now, do notice, that, once again, Sarah took measures in her own hands and demanded Abraham to send them away, instead she (Sarah) should have sought The LORD GOD'S help to resolve the conflict between her and Hagar. You see when you want to solve a problem, seek the solution (The LORD GOD) and the problem is solved. Sarah lost focus on The LORD GOD'S promise that her son Isaac alone was the promised heir. So, remember, that when we choose to do things our way, except failure and escalation of the problem to occur.

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Lesson Pointer # 2

- **A Father's Dilemma (Genesis 21: 11-14a)**

When Sarah made the request of Abraham to send away Hagar and Ishmael, it caused grief for Abraham (Genesis 21: 11). In Sarah's defense, possibly, in the heat of the moment she gave no thought to the fact that her husband Abraham loved Ishmael as well. Abraham being burdened by this situation took the matter to The LORD GOD, and The LORD GOD reinforced the promise that only Isaac was the promised heir to continue his seed and to heed Sarah's demand (Genesis 21: 12). So, what would become of Ishmael? The LORD GOD assured Abraham that Ishmael would become a great nation because he (Ishmael), too, was Abraham's son (Genesis 21: 13). The LORD GOD is the source of justice and GOD assured Abraham that both his sons were to be treated fairly and equitably. So, Abraham provided food and water for Hagar and Ishmael's departure and sent them away (Genesis 21: 14a). The LORD GOD assures all believers who live in obedient, and have an intimate relationship with GOD, the confidence that The LORD GOD will provide the solution to any conflict or situation, if only they would turn to HIM (The LORD GOD) in faith. Then and only then would they know that true justice prevails because The LORD GOD is its source.

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Lesson Pointer # 3

- **An Unlikely Deliverance (Genesis 21: 14b-20)**

Now, after Hagar and Ishmael were sent out, Hagar lost their way and wandered around in the desert (Genesis 21: 14b). The food and water had now run out, and Hagar helped her exhausted son to a nice comfortable spot under a nearby bush (Genesis 21: 15). Hagar thoughts now was on her son Ishmael. Not wanting to witness her son's sure death, she (Hagar) distanced herself and began to cry in desperation (Genesis 21: 16). Now, that Hagar had distanced herself from Ishmael, the lad (Ishmael) began to cry, and The LORD GOD heard the voice of the lad and responded (Genesis 21: 17). The LORD GOD reminded Hagar that Ishmael's destiny was in HIS (The LORD GOD) hands, and that he (Ishmael) was to be the founder of a great nation (Genesis 21: 18; see Genesis 16:10). Hagar obeyed The LORD GOD and took Ishmael by the hand and lifted him up; her physical eyes were opened, and she (Hagar) saw an unexpected, unlikely, miraculous provision (Genesis 21: 19). Because of The LORD GOD'S faithfulness to HIS covenant promises and HIS commitment to Justice, The LORD GOD gave Hagar and Ishmael a new start. They both received divine care and provision, for The LORD GOD was with Ishmael as he matured into manhood as The Lord GOD had promised (Genesis 21: 20). Hagar and Ishmael were victims of social injustice, but do note, that this ill treatment was The LORD GOD'S way of ensuring the fulfillment of HIS (The LORD GOD) covenant with Abraham. Believers must practice seeking The LORD GOD will first and rely on HIM to solve social injustice and conflicts in HIS (The LORD GOD) way. Then The LORD GOD will open our eyes to experience the improbable hope.

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Nuggets of the Lesson

- 1) When we consistently do things The LORD GOD'S way our life is smoother.
- 2) Seek The LORD GOD first before making decisions.
- 3) To solve problems, remember to seek the solution (The LORD GOD) and the problem is solved, even if it does not go away.
- 4) True Justice prevails because The LORD GOD is its source.

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