

Genesis 21:8-21ⁱⁱ

The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac." The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring." 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 about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, "Do not let me look on the death of the child." And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. 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? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him." Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink. God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

ii About Genesis 21:8-21

Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian servant, had borne Ishmael when it seemed impossible for Sarah to conceive. Her fertility was a sore point with Sarah who remained childless. After Sarah gave birth to Isaac, the child of God's promise to Abraham and Sarah, Sarah's jealousy erupted and she considered Ishmael's presence a threat to the inheritance destined for Isaac.

She demanded that Abraham get rid of Hagar and the child. Though reluctant to do this, Abraham is reassured by God that they will be all right. So he took them to the wilderness and sent them off. When her provisions ran out, Hagar cried to God in her despair. God answered by sending an angel to ensure their survival. God continued to be with them as the child grew and prospered.