

These Kids Are Going to be the Death of Me: Ishmael

06/8/2025 - Andy Deane

Have you ever tried to help God out, only to make things worse? That's exactly what happened when Abram and Sarai took matters into their own hands, leading to the birth of Ishmael, but the mess wasn't his fault. In this message, we'll see how impatience, pain, and even mistreatment can't stop God from seeing us, hearing us, and redeeming our story.

WHAT DOES TRUSTING GOD REALLY LOOK LIKE WHEN LIFE GETS MESSY?

Genesis 16:1-4a

1 Sarai...had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; 2 so she said, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her." Abram agreed... 4a and she conceived.

God's promises don't need our manipulation, just our trust and patience.

- When we grow impatient with God's timing, we often take shortcuts that end up complicating the very thing we were hoping to resolve.
- Rather than scheming like Sarai, faith invites us to trust God's plan and wait with expectancy, even when the wait is long and confusing. Read Galatians 4:21-31.

Genesis 16:4b-6

4b When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. 5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering...May the Lord judge between you and me." 6 ..Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

Impatience rarely fast-tracks the outcome, but it often stretches out some painful consequences.

- Compromise in moments of pressure often leads to relational damage, blame-shifting, and long-term regret, just as it did between Sarai, Hagar, and Abram.
- When we respond to tension with pride, blame, or passivity, we deepen the wounds rather than resolve the problem.

Genesis 16:7-16

7 The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert... 8 And he said, "...where have you come from, and where are you going?" "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered. 9 Then the angel of the Lord told her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her." 10 The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count." 11...you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard of your misery. 12 He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers." 13 She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me..." 16 Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bore..Ishmael.

When God's people have hurt you, God Himself will heal you, and restore you.

- Church hurt is real and painful, especially when it comes from those who were supposed to protect or support us, but God sees, hears, and meets us in that pain.
- Just like Hagar named God "El Roi," we can find deep healing in remembering that God sees our suffering and has not abandoned us, even when people fail us.
- Please text HURT to (951) 425-4425 for information on what church is and isn't, and how to heal from it.

Genesis 17:1-20

1 When Abram was 99...the Lord appeared...and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. 2 Then I will make my covenant between me and you..." 3 Abram fell facedown, and God said, 4 "...this is my covenant...: You will be the father of many nations. 5 ...your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. 6...and kings will come from you. 7 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God... 8 The whole land of Canaan...I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants... 9...As for you, you must keep my covenant... 10 This is my covenant with you and your descendants...: Every male among you shall be circumcised. 11...& it will be the sign of the covenant...15 "As for Sarai your wife...her name will be Sarah. 16 I will bless her & will surely give you a son by her. ...she will be the mother of nations... 17 Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a 100 years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of 90?" 18 And Abraham said... "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!" 19 Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him...20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers..."

When we walk in covenant with God, He not only changes our future, but also our identity & nature.

- God shapes our character through His presence, His commands, and our worship, forming in us a new nature that reflects who He is.
- In Christ, our identity is transformed—we are not defined by our past but by God’s promises, which include a new name, a new purpose, and a future full of blessing
- In Christ, you are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), a child of God (John 1:12), adopted (Ephesians 1:5), forgiven (Ephesians 1:7), sealed with the Spirit (Ephesians 1:13), more than a conqueror (Romans 8:37), God’s workmanship (Ephesians 2:10), a citizen of heaven (Philippians 3:20), righteous in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21), and chosen (1 Peter 2:9).
- 1 Peter 2:9, But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.
- Revelation 2:17, Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.
- Ephesians 3:20, Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.
- John 8:37-40, I know that you are Abraham’s descendants. Yet you are looking for a way to kill me, because you have no room for my word. I am telling you what I have seen in the Father’s presence, and you are doing what you have heard from your father.” “Abraham is our father,” they answered. “If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then you would do what Abraham did. As it is, you are looking for a way to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things.
- Galatians 3:7, Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham.
- You can read more about this situation from Genesis 16-17 in Romans 4 and Romans 9.

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