

Genesis 21:1-21 Responsive Reading

Roles: Narrator
Sarah
Hagar
God – the congregation
Abraham is an actor but he has no voice in this story

Narrator: The Lord was gracious to Sarah, and did as he had promised. She became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age. Abraham called the boy Isaac and circumcised him as God told him too. Sarah said,

Sarah: “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me! Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

Narrator: Isaac grew and on the day he was weaned Abraham held a great feast. But Sarah noticed the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham mocking, and she said to Abraham:

Sarah: “Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.”

Narrator: Abraham was greatly distressed by this because Ishmael was also his son. But God said to him:

God: “Don't be worried about the boy and your slave Hagar. Do what Sarah tells you, because your line will be through Isaac. I will also give many children to the son of the slave woman and they will become a nation, for he too is your son.”

Narrator: Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She walked away and wandered into the Desert of Beersheba. When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under a bush. Then she went away alone and sat down, sobbing.

Hagar: “I cannot watch the boy die.”

Narrator: God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven:

God: “What’s wrong, Hagar? Don’t be afraid, for God has heard the boy crying where he lies. Get up, help the boy up, and support him, for I will make him a great nation.”

Narrator: Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. His mother arranged a wife for him from her people in Egypt.