

04.12.26

## Genesis

### Chapter 21 - God's Peace thru Problems

#### The Solution to Domestic Stress (vs.8-14)

**Genesis 21:8-14:** The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking. Therefore she said to Abraham, “Drive out this maid and her son, for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac.” The matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son. But God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named. And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant.” So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy, and sent her away. And

she departed and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba.

Well, from Genesis 1 to now, Chapter 21, we go through the pages, and what is clear is that God is good, but man isn't. At the very beginning, you see man being selfish and clearly, I would say, uncaring towards those around him. And nevertheless, it is God who covers, it is God who preserves, it is God who gives hope in the midst of that. And the same thing is true as you go through, you see the hatred of man even before the flood, and you see him torturing and killing others, but God comes in and He saves and He preserves mankind. It is God who does that. Man goes and builds a great tower of Babel and rebellion, and his rebelliousness and his defiance, and he enslaves and oppresses man. But God comes in the picture, and He raises up one that would be a venue for blessing, and that is Abraham. Nevertheless, in the midst of Him raising up somebody that would be that source of blessing to mankind, even in that, when He raises up this man, there

are faults and failures within him. And as we've gone through and watched God's raising up of Abraham, we have also seen the grave mistakes and the problems that ensue because either he listens to the wrong people or he reacts according to the way that he feels, and because of that he has to deal with certain issues. It's understandable when you consider that man is in a hostile world and there are pressures all around him to conform to those things. It doesn't take long for man to become focused on preserving himself. And in that self-preservation, he begins to compromise. He begins to do things according to his own will. And I would say also within that whole realm, you begin to think more cynical in the sense of, "I can't trust anybody around me, so I'm going to have to watch out for myself. I'm going to have to take care of myself." So, in so doing, you make certain decisions. Unfortunately, those decisions affect the people around us. It not only affects us in a negative way, but it hurts, it causes pain to those around us. And as Abraham has made certain decisions which seem to be expedient decisions, seem to be decisions that were that which would preserve life; it's caused a lot of problems.

In a way, what we're seeing in this particular passage are some of the problems that have haunted and remained with them now resurfacing. They don't seem to go away, do they? They seem to come back, and you can sense the great accuser coming back and saying, "You do know you're guilty of this?" And sin is a seed itself, and it creates problems and issues and grows as you even see Esau, and it says that he had a root of bitterness. A root of bitterness means that there's something else that's going to be growing as time goes on. And so, as we come to this passage, certain things come to a head.

Now, what's interesting within the context of this is that it's one of the great moments of celebration in Abraham's life. As you start off in this chapter, you see the celebration of having a son, something they've been waiting for probably more than 25 years, but at least 25 years. And now this child is born, this miracle child, really, when you consider 100 years old, Sarah, 90, this child is born, and what a day of celebration it is. But life goes on. And though you have a great day of celebration, the children grow up, things begin to happen, and things

begin to reveal themselves. It is at that point that we pick up in verse 8 of Chapter 21, and it just uses a simple phrase,

(Genesis 21:8) “The child grew...”

It's kind of giving us a point that life goes on, time is moving forward, things are beginning to happen, and the child grew. That is to say, Isaac, the one that was born, the promised one that was given to Abraham and Isaac.

It states this in verse 8,

“The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.”

Actually, on the very day that he was weaned, he made a great feast. Now, you would almost have to ask yourself, “Well, I don't know what the big deal is.” Well, according to the Code of Hammurabi, which is interesting because he was basically a contemporary of Abraham at this particular time, it's not only a time in which a child goes from milk to solid food, but it's a time in which it's actually, if I could put it this way, the beginning of the end of his dependency on his mother. Now, that is not

necessarily a celebration to the mother, but it is a celebration to the father, because now he's going to have somebody wanting to emulate him, somebody's going to go under his shadow, somebody's going to want to follow him. So, the great celebration is now that this one is being weaned from his mother, is now going into his father's hands, and will now be raised fundamentally by his father. It is a great feast on this particular day. And so, there's no doubt that verse 8 is setting us up to, in fact, remind us of this day is a day of great celebration. Now, what Scripture is doing is also showing us how fast things can change. It is amazing to me, you can come together as a family and celebrate a particular moment, one person say one thing, and it just throws everything off base. And then before long, everybody's upset, and they're walking away mad when they should have been coming to celebrate. A great day of celebration. Nevertheless, things begin to go awry.

And that's where we pick up in verse 9. Sarah, if she just had kept her eyes closed and hadn't been looking around, but, you know, mothers do this. And let me just say this,

as in a way I've already emphasized, Sarah's not necessarily extremely happy about this moment, because it's the beginning of the end of this child's dependency on her. And you have to remember, she's been waiting a long time for this child. So, she doesn't want anything to come between that dependency, and she still is very guarded and very protective of her son. I'm not sure exactly when this day is, but from what we understand traditionally, it was usually 2 to 3 years after the child was born. The child is probably about 3 years old. That would actually put Ishmael at about 17 years of age. So, Ishmael's around 17 years old. You have Isaac, who is now 2 to 3. Sometimes they would go as far as 5 years old, but we're going to put it in the category of what was normal. And now it's about 3 years of age.

In the passage, it shows Sarah still keeping her eye on her son.

It says in verse 9,

(Genesis 21:9) “Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking.”

He was mocking her son.

Just an interesting note here. The word “mocking” is the same word as laughter, which is the same name as Isaac. So, it's like taking the name Isaac and beginning to laugh at him with his name and probably making fun of his name. It's okay, I guess, when Sarah laughs at God saying that she's going to have a child, she can be a little mocking in that respect. But when somebody mocks her kid, “Well, that's my kid. And that's my child that I'm having to let go.” And quite frankly, she's not letting go too well. She's not doing too well in this.

“Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar...”

And I think it's interesting, you might want to underline the phrase there, “the son of Hagar.” His name is Ishmael. Why doesn't it say what his name is? “Because he's no son of mine.” So, he's not being thought of as somebody clearly of the family. And the description of, “the son of Hagar,” look at the phrase here, “the Egyptian.” Let's just think back. Why would we have a maid from Egypt? Oh, maybe somebody made a wrong turn. Maybe somebody went down to Egypt when they shouldn't have gone down to Egypt, when they should have trusted in the Lord when

there was a famine in the land. They shouldn't have gone down there. And look at what they picked up. Look what the cat drug in, right? So, you have this sense of regret. You have this sense of bad mistakes. They're all haunting, and they all start coming to the surface.

“... Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham...”

Which shouldn't have ever happened. This is an illegitimate relationship. It should have never happened. The child begins to mock.

(Genesis 21:10) “Therefore she...”

That is Sarah.

“... said to Abraham, “Drive out this maid...””

“Get this woman out. Thrust her out. Drive her out. Push her out. Get her out of here.” It's a very harsh phrase that is used within the passage. And the interesting definition of the word that's used here, “drive out this maid,” there are actually 2 words that you could use for maid. One is “*āmâ*” that's actually used in this text, and it would probably be defined as “slave girl”. But if you were to go

back, in Chapter 16, when Sarah's kind of introducing her maid to Abraham and saying, "Hey, maybe you could have a child through her," she doesn't introduce her that way. She actually uses "*šipḥâ*," which means like a maid that's one of the family. So, she goes from being like one of the family to this slave girl. And the whole description within the passage is making us understand that there's clear hostility that's whelming up within this particular setting.

(Genesis 21:10) "Therefore she said to Abraham, "Drive out this maid and her son...""

Once again, where is the name "Ishmael"?

"... for the son of this maid..."

Repeating once again her slave position and somebody that shouldn't have been with us at all. Obviously, Sarah doesn't seem to handle criticism well. You kind of getting that feeling?

"So, get her out of here."

"... the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac."

Here again, the name “Isaac” means the same thing as the mocking.

(Genesis 21:11) “The matter distressed Abraham...”

Probably in the modern vernacular, it would literally be “broke his heart.”

You can understand that Ishmael has been the son of Abraham for now 17 years. He's been his son. So, the grief of somebody wanting to cast out his son, and that it would be his wife, now you kind of have conflict of interest, right? I mean, it's bad enough that somebody's asking you to do the wrong thing, but now it's somebody that you love and you care for. You've already hurt that person a tremendous amount, so you don't want to not in some way cater to their desires. His heart is breaking because of the fact that he may have to hurt his wife; he may have to hurt his son. I could just see Abraham going, “Weren't we celebrating? Isn't this supposed to be a happy day?” You can just imagine the frustration; the day that was supposed to be probably one of the greatest days of enjoyment and joy is the day that great distress and pain is being felt.

“The matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son.”

“Ishmael- the Lord hears,” the great name that he was given.

(Genesis 21:12) “But God said to Abraham...”

Now, this is where everything begins to change. It's that words, “but God said”. “*‘Āmar,*” at the very beginning of the passage that is used, seems to actually infer a light is shining. When God comes into the picture, of course, things begin to change. And really, hopefully, what we're understanding is that God is the solution to our problems. We make the problems. We cause the heartache. We're the ones that sin, not God. But God comes in and He gives grace and He reconciles. This is fundamentally the thrust of Genesis. God is the One that is good. So, as we come to this, we see the appearance of God, which I think is pretty unique, because up to this point, it's almost like God needs some sort of introduction, but here He just kind of shows up.

Now, when you go back to Chapter 18, as He comes to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, what's interesting within

that moment is that Abraham throws out his arms and welcomes God with open arms. And you see the desire to have a relationship. He didn't know at first, but he was hospitable in spirit and was desirous of hearing from God. And of course, the more that he hears from this individual that comes before him, the more he realizes that it is God and embraces Him and welcomes Him. There's a fundamental principle here, and we're going to go through a number of points that the text is revealing to us. But when God is made to feel welcome in your home and in your life, He'll show up just when you need Him most. And that's a fundamental principle. You have to actually have this relationship with God. Isaiah says that Abraham was a friend of God. Friends show up just when you need them most, right? And certainly, that's what God does within the passage. So, really up to this point, things were looking pretty bad. But now everything changes when God comes on the scene. And God begins to direct within the passage.

It says,

“But God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her...””

I know that some women could probably use this for their influence within their family. We'll probably break your heart as we define exactly what's happening within the passage. But this is not ammunition for you to tell your husband what to do. And this is not ammunition for your husband to do what you tell him to do.

But anyway,

“... whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named.

(Genesis 21:13) And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant.”

(Genesis 21:14) So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy, and sent her away...”

That's an interesting phrase. He didn't cast her out; he sent her away, supplied the needs that she needed.

“... And she departed and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba.”

Well, we're going to continue later on in this passage, but there are so many interesting points within the passage that we see. One is, if you understand all of this, that everybody's upset in this particular setting because of the sin that was committed, because of the errors of Abraham's way, of Sarah's way. Hurt is now coming to surface, and Isaac is being made fun of by his brother. Sarah's laden regret is now surfacing within the passage, grieved over the mistreatment of her baby. You have Abraham, the haunting of his past mistakes, and the fact that there's kind of this abrupt trashing of this day, which he's been longing for probably 25 years, and the hostile feelings that are displayed by his wife that are really oppressing him towards this. And don't forget Hagar and Ishmael. I mean, how do you think that Hagar's feeling like, “Really I can be discarded that easily? Ishmael can be discarded that easily?” “I mean, I thought Abraham... I thought you're my dad.” You can just imagine the feelings that are going on and what seemed at one moment, just

the time of rejoicing, has turned out and been soured. Seemingly everything precious seems to be discarded at a moment. God comes on the scenes, and He comes in not only with His presence, but He comes in with His guidance. And it's this guidance that really gives us fundamental principles in this passage.

And I would say to you, there are going to be times in your family, there are going to be times in your life, in particular, we're seeing domestic stress within this particular passage. So, we're talking about family, right? There are going to be times in your family where things are going to be seen, we're going to see them in disarray, problems, heartache, pain, suffering, anger, all kinds of feelings are brought to the surface. What is it we do? Well, we're going to take these steps. And God actually gives us steps within the passage. So, we're going to start off with God. Go to God. Don't go to man. And in the passage, God's going to establish something. Now, what is He going to establish? Number one, He's going to establish order.

The passage reads this way, if you look with me in verse 12,

(Genesis 21:12) “But God said to Abraham...”

Not Sarah. To Abraham. Now, remember, it's Sarah that's upset. So, why doesn't God talk to Sarah? Because God has ordained order within the household. And God is going to work through that.

If you look with me, just to give you another example, in Titus 1. Paul will write this letter to Titus at a place that, well, clearly is in disarray. Clearly, things are out of order. And so, in Titus 1, he sends this letter to Titus, and he says, “Okay...”

Watch verse 5,

(Titus 1:5) “For this reason I left you in Crete...”

Now, once again, there's probably a reason why people that are rebellious are called “Cretans,” but anyway.

“... I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains...”

See the passage? So, what is this book about? It's about setting things in order. Where does he start off?

Appointing elders. That's where he starts off within the text.

He says,

“... and appoint elders in every city as I directed you.”

“They have to have this character. And by this character, then they're going to oversee. And these overseers must be above reproach.” (Verse 7)

(Titus 1:9) “holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching...”

It states in verse 10,

(Titus 1:10) “For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,

(Titus 1:11) who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families...”

Why? Because there's no order. And so, he begins to not only tell them that there needs to be people that are leading, and more specifically, the men need to take the leadership, but beyond that, he then tells the women, “And older women are to teach younger women.” Well,

that's telling us that wasn't happening; that the younger women are probably telling the older women what to do. So, everything was in disarray because people were listening to the wrong people. I mean, how did all this start?

We'll go back to Genesis 16. And if you look in Chapter 16, I mean, even Sarah is a witness to this.

It starts off in verse 1,

(Genesis 16:1) “Now Sarai, Abram’s wife had borne him no children, and she had an Egyptian maid...”

Which once again, using the word which is like part of the family.

“... whose name was Hagar.”

(Genesis 16:2) So Sarai said to Abram, “Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I will obtain children through her.”  
And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.

(Genesis 16:3) After Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Abram’s wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife.

(Genesis 16:4) He went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight.

(Genesis 16:5) And Sarai said to Abram, “May the wrong done me be upon you. I gave my maid into your arms, but when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her sight. May the LORD judge between you and me.”

(Genesis 16:6) But Abram said to Sarai, “Behold, your maid is in your power; do to her what is good in your sight.” So Sarai treated her harshly, and she fled from her presence.”

By the way, “Hagar” means to run away or flee. So, apparently she had a process in which she would handle things in this way, and it was in this moment she chose to run.

Abraham, in many ways, is actually holding back from his responsibility. He should be telling his wife what to do, but he says, “Treat her any way you want to.” And of course, she treated her harshly, because why? She was upset. If your wife's upset, don't say to her, “Do whatever you want to do.” That's the wrong time to do it. You

might want to say, “Honey, you want to sit down, and we'll talk about it later.” But that's not a good time for her to do whatever she wants to do. All of this really was stirred up because he had listened to the wrong one. So, now what we have is God coming into the picture, and God goes, “Okay, now you listen to Me, Abraham. And then in you listening to Me, what I want you to do is, first of all, above everything else, calm down.”

Look at the phrase as it reads in verse 12,

(Genesis 21:12) “But God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed...””

Well, that's easier said than done. I mean, if something has affected you emotionally, it's affected you emotionally. But here again, I think it's one of the reasons why God calls the men to be the heads of the house. Because they are more apt to be able to control their emotions. Now, in some cases, that may be perceived as a good thing, but in other cases, maybe not. Nevertheless, it's the way God made us. So, He turns to him, and He says, “Abraham, I want you to do what I tell you to do, and I want you to feel the way I want you to feel. I don't

want you to feel the way that you feel.” We like to perceive ourselves as victims that we can't control things, but you can control them. If you couldn't, God wouldn't tell you to do it. And so, God tells him, “I don't want you feeling this way.” Once again, it's hard not to be emotional at a time that's at a very emotional moment. But you consider passages like James 1, “Consider it all joy when you encounter various trials.” That's actually a command, by the way. And Philippians 4 says, “Be anxious for nothing.” So, it's like God saying, “Are you anxious?” And you go, “Yeah, I'm pretty anxious.” He goes, “Stop. Don't be anxious anymore for nothing. But you need to trust Me that I'm working these things in your life. Come to Me. Talk to Me about it. But don't sit there being distressed. I'm not going to let you do that.” So, all the way through, you begin to realize that God has ordained. Interesting passage in 1 Peter 4, where Peter says, “You're having trials and you're being treated harshly and all sorts of horrible things are happening to you?” “Yeah.” He goes, “Don't think some strange thing is happening.” Because I think one of the first things you come up with is,

“This shouldn't be happening to me. This is so strange.” So, Peter goes, “Don't think that it's a strange thing. This is the glory of God resting on you because you've done the right thing.” And he literally turns it around from you feeling sorry for yourself to realizing that God is doing a work even in this. So, what you have is, you have to establish order. God begins to direct. He says, “I'm going to direct you. Then from there, you lead the family.” He then goes into the realm of, “And don't react emotionally. Feel what I tell you to feel. Literally subjugate your emotions to Me.” And look, we want truth to lead us. We don't want our emotions to lead us. We want righteousness to lead us. We don't want our feelings to take control. Once our feelings begin to take control, you're going to make wrong decisions. It's the reason why they're in this mess. Because his wife was all upset, “We should have had a child by now. Take my maid Hagar. This is the answer.” He's feeling the pressure. Emotions are up. And then he makes the decision. But wait a minute, God told him in Chapter 15, “The child is going to come from you.” I mean, He's already promised him the seed. Get back into the promises of God. Get back into what

Scripture says. Am I obeying what He says? Stop with the emotions. Do what is right. And that's what God begins to direct him in.

What's also interesting within the passage is that after He says, "Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid," which I can see that there would be distress for both of them, He then turns and He says, "whatever Sarah tells you, listen..." Now, once again, the reason why he's listening to Sarah this time is because God told him to. Should he have listened to Sarah the first time? No. But what Sarah is saying at this juncture is the right thing. Now, here's a fundamental principle, and one that you just want to hang on your belt. You don't want to lose this one. That you can't disregard what is right just because somebody said it in a wrong way. There are going to be times that people are going to say things with hostility. They're going to say it with vindictiveness, whatever. Maybe it's their anger that's causing them to say it. But if it's right, it's right. When you consider that 2 Samuel 16, you remember with Shimei actually cursing David, throwing rocks at him? And of course, David's general

goes, "Do you want me to chop off this dead dog's head?" And he goes, "No, perhaps the Lord has sent him." And it was a time of humbling in David's life. Because David knew what this was actually a result [of]. He was being cast out of his kingdom because he had failed with his son. And so, he was going to allow God to use whatever source He chose to use to correct him. If it's right, it's right. It doesn't matter if somebody said it in the wrong way. It doesn't matter if somebody said it with the wrong motives. You need to listen. And the phrase that's used within the passage is, "Whatever Sarah says, listen to her." Actually, the word there is, "listen to her voice," which is telling us that God is training Abraham to also be considerate of how Sarah feels. In other words, her voice. "Can you sense how she's broken up over this?" I mean, we tend to almost instantly to take sides. And God is fundamentally saying, "Hagar's hurt, Ishmael's hurt, Sarah's hurt, you're hurt. There's a lot of hurt going around. Let's diffuse this. Let's do the right thing. Let's not react emotionally to the things that people are doing and the way they're doing it. Let's get back to doing the right thing." And He just focuses him on this.

And so, why is He telling him to listen to Sarah?

Because if you look at the end of verse 12,

(Genesis 21:12) “... through Isaac your descendants shall be named.”

Which actually brings us to the next point. You need to go back to the basics, the foundation. What was the basic commandment, the calling of Abraham from the beginning? “I'm going to bless you. I'm going to make you a blessing. It's going to be from your seed.” God's not going to tell him to marry some other woman. He's not going to tell him to do something wrong. He's not going to tell him to have an adulterous relationship in order to have a child. I mean, you don't do wrong to do good. God's not going to do that. So, what's the problem? Well, the problem is that we have a hard time waiting. But in that waiting, God is working in our hearts. He's changing us to put our trust in Him. God is faithful. There's no doubt about that. If, in fact, we go before Him, what's going to happen? All kinds of mayhem, all kinds of sorrow, all kinds of problems. So, what we need to do is go back to the original.

Now, once again, if you go back to Genesis 12, He says to Abraham, "I'm going to send you to another country. I don't want you to bring any of your relatives." Now, he brings Lot, right? Okay, so we have problems with that. But it's in Chapter 13 that there's a dissonance between him and Lot, so now they're pushed away. So, God goes, "Okay, now I can talk to you." So, on top of that, then they go and do this planning of having a child from Hagar, and that messes everything up. And now, we need to get back to that wasn't what it was meant to be like. Let's go back to what the foundation is, "What do I want you to do?" In the disarray of our households, if you'll just get back to some fundamental basics.

Matthew 6:33, "Seek first the kingdom of God." Now, it's a very simple phrase. But you'll be surprised at how it sets things in order. You'll be surprised at how your family will start seeing things differently. Because once God is dishonored by virtue of you putting other things first, then there is no honor in any authority. But if you'll honor God above all, then authority starts coming in and order as well. So, start seeking God first, put Him first in

everything, and you begin to put things in order. Just like, let's go back to the beginning, "I called you from your seed. So, let's start moving this way." So, what God is literally saying is, "We've got to go back to the original plan." "There's something wrong with the original plan. It's not working." "Go back to the original plan." So, this is what he does.

Watch verse 13.

(Genesis 21:13) "And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant."

You and I need to trust the Lord by doing what is right. And I need to trust the Lord to do things that I never could do. It's hard for us to conceive that God is interested. We oftentimes quote the passage of Psalm 138:8. God actually is concerned about the things that concern me? Really? Could that be possible? And nothing could be truer. "This is your descendant. I care about your son." Well, that's hard for us to register, especially in the midst of bad things that are happening, "And my wife's telling me he's got to leave. And it's just, I'm feeling everything being torn apart." And God says, "Trust Me. I

can do things better than you can.” “Well, wait, how will they survive? How will life go on without me involved?” And you almost feel like the passage itself, God is saying, “Well, things haven't gone too well with you in charge. So, why don't you let Me do it?” So, you have a fundamental principle in which God has called upon him to trust Him to do what you couldn't do. “You can't keep this boy. You can't keep this family together. You can't hold these things together.” Faith almost seems like an innocuous thing that seems to make no difference. But it's not a dormant thing. Faith is something that literally changes everything. And as you begin to put your trust in God, when God says, “You just need to do the right thing,” and sometimes the right thing is going to seem cruel.

Joshua shared in the prayer time that when he was arrested, he was talking to his wife on the phone, and he was actually commanding his wife to come get him out of jail. And apparently, I was there at that particular moment with his wife, and I said, “Don't get him out of jail.” Me saying that at that particular moment didn't seem to be a real nice thing to do. Nevertheless, she did the right thing.

And it was in jail that he began to think and reflect upon what he had done. And it is in that God begins to work. There are things that if you just do the right thing, may not seem gracious or generous or benevolent at the moment, but you can't be more benevolent than God. You can't be kinder than God. You can't be more loving than God. God is the gracious One. So, when He tells you, "Let it go," what? Let it go. Because if you don't, you're going to be reaping more sorrow, more pain.

The way it reads is,

"And of the son of the maid I will make a nation..."

"I'm going to take care of him."

And of course, we know according to Genesis 25, from Ishmael will come 12 princes of nations like the 12 tribes of Israel. So, you have 12 princes that come out of Ishmael. And from what I understand, Ishmael will live to be 137 years old, which he's going to live another 120 years. So, apparently, he's going to be okay within the passage. "So, I'm going to take care of your maid. I'm going to take care of your son because he's yours. And I know that you are concerned for him. I know that you

care for him. And I know that this is a desire of your heart. And I'm touched by your desires. But let Me handle it.”  
Turn them over to the Lord.

Then it reads in verse 14,

(Genesis 21:14) “So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy, and sent her away...”

Once again, it is a very interesting point. He did not push her away but sent her away.

“... And she departed and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba.”

Do the right thing. Do it in the right way. Sarah says, “Thrust them out. Kick them out.” God says, “Well, you need to get them out but do it in the right way.” He gives him water and gives them bread. And then he doesn't give him everything he's going to need for the rest of his life, because God says, “You've got to trust Me in that. But send them on their way, show them love, show them care, let them know that I'm involved in their lives, but do

what I say.” “So, you go and do the right thing, you trust Me,” and then you what? Leave the results to God. A fundamental principle.

So, all the way through, what we see are these principles that are basically telling us how to get our family back in order. So, if in fact your family's in disarray, there's arguments, there's pain, there's sorrow, there's hurt, there's anger, what do you do? You go back to God, and you put things in order. Who's in charge here? Head of the house. Whoever the head of the house is, they're in charge. Now, he needs to listen to God. They need to listen to God. At this time, it might be the wife, might be a single mother. She needs to listen to God, and God will direct it. Do what God says. Don't do what you think. Don't think according to your emotions. Don't think according to your feelings. Don't listen to those emotions, because you're going to be hyped up at any given time over any particular situation. That's who we are. Stop. What does the Word of God say? What should we do in this particular situation? And God begins to work on your heart. He begins to call you back to the basics. What is

more important? One of the reasons why I think oftentimes families are divided and separated is because they've made other things priorities that they shouldn't have. You realize as you come to the Book of Philippians. One of the fundamental points of Philippians is to come together in unity. You go, "How in the world do you get a bunch of people together that come to a church from all different walks of life unified?" Well, Paul says, "Get them all sharing the gospel. Make the gospel the fundamental point." And if you make that the fundamental point and understand why we're here, then things begin to go in order.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we give You thanks for Your lovingkindness. We give You thanks for Your direction. We give You thanks for showing up just when we need You most. It is because we welcome You, it's because we long to have You in our presence, it's because You mean a lot to us, and You know that You're welcome. And as our heart is right before You, You come into our lives at these difficult times, and You

begin to direct us, and things begin to not only calm down, but get right side up.

With your head's bowed and your eyes closed, I'm just asking you to evaluate where you are. Who's making decisions? Who are you listening to? Is it God first or is it others? Have you made an emotional decision? Are people telling you to do something and you feel like they have the wrong attitude, but you have to admit it is the right thing? Is it possible that God can use any one to direct us? Are you doing the right thing in the wrong motives? Is your heart right? Do what God says. Do it the right way and leave the results to Him. See if He doesn't bless.