

TO HELP US STUDY

1. How old was Abraham when his promised son was born? _____
2. What did he name the boy? _____
3. What did Abraham do on the day Isaac was weaned? _____
4. Why did Sarah get mad? _____
5. What did Sarah want Abraham to do? _____
6. Did Abraham love Ishmael? _____ How do you know? _____

7. What did Hagar do when her water was gone? _____

8. What did God do to save her? _____
9. What unkind acts in Abraham’s family led to Hagar’s being cast out? _____

10. In what ways are you sometimes less than kind to your family? _____

TO HELP US REMEMBER: Young ones – Ephesians 4:32, “Be kind and compassionate to one another”.
Older ones - Ephesians 4:31-32

TO CHALLENGE TEEN THOUGHT

God promised Hagar that he would bless Ishmael: “I will make him a great nation.” In a good Bible dictionary (in the church library if you don’t have one), read about Ishmael and found out what nation descended from him

TIPS FOR TEACHING PARENTS

Why did Sarah want to send Ishmael away? Was it because Ishmael “mocked” Isaac as the King James Version reads in Genesis 21:9? Or, did the very sight of Ishmael disgust Sarah? Was Sarah so prejudiced and jealous of the Egyptian handmaid and her son that she was angry without cause, as the RSV reading of the verse seems to indicate? Did she see Ishmael as a threat to Isaac’s later inheritance?

Which is right? You need to wrestle with these questions, for your answer changes, the whole point of the story. If Sarah saw Ishmael actually mistreating her son, then our children will readily accept the fact that Ishmael “got his”—that he was punished justly for his unkindness. But if Sarah just lashed out in petulance and God supported her in it, where is the justice?

Perhaps it will help to read Galatians 4:9. Beyond a doubt, Paul and the Holy Spirit understood Genesis 21:9 to mean that Ishmael “persecuted” Isaac. Add to this your current knowledge of Hagar’s haughty cruelty on previous occasions and you will see why Sarah was unhappy. And you will have a powerful lesson for any of us who might be tempted to treat the members of our families unkindly.

FOR ADULT STUDY: Gal. 4:21-31; Prv 16:24; Rom 12:9; 2 Pt. 1:7; Mt 5:3-9; Gal 5:22, Jas 3:17; Eph 4:1-2; Col 3:21; Eph 5:28-33; 6:1-4