

### 08.13 Hagar Cast Out (Genesis 21:8–21; Galatians 4:21–31)

### 08.14 Abimelech and the Well (Genesis 21:22–34)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows  
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

#### Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- (optional) *Herein Is Love Commentary Series: Genesis, A Commentary for Children*, written by Nancy Ganz and published by Shepherd Press in 2002. Thoughts or quotations borrowed from her in the following story will be acknowledged as (*Ganz*).

#### Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach:

- *to wean*: to stop giving mother's milk to a child or an animal
- *to mock*: to laugh outright in scorn
- *to inherit*: to get land, money, and privileges from someone who dies
- *wilderness*: land, sometimes desert or sometimes with trees, where people do not live
- *bowshot*: the distance an arrow is shot from a bow
- *ewe lamb*: female lamb
- *covenant*: an agreement or promise between two or more persons
- *oath*: a strong promise

#### Scripture—Genesis 21:8–34 (KJV)

8 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.

9 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. 10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. 11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. 12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. 13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. 15 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. 16 And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept. 17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. 18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation. 19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. 20 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. 21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

22 And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest: 23 Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou

wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned. 24 And Abraham said, I will swear. 25 And Abraham reprov'd Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away. 26 And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but to day. 27 And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant. 28 And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. 29 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? 30 And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digg'd this well. 31 Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they sware both of them. 32 Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba [well of the oath]: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines.

33 And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God. 34 And Abraham sojourn'd in the Philistines' land many days.

### **Introduction/Review:**

[Read the Abrahamic Covenant.] When God had said Abraham and Sarah would have a son, what was Abraham's response? [He laughed.] What was Sarah's response? [She laughed, not believing she could bear a child at her age.]

After the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham moved to the land of the Philistines in Gerar. There, the king, called Abimelech, said Abraham could live anywhere he chose. It was in this land that Isaac, the son of God's promise to Abraham, was born.

### **Story:**

How Abraham and Sarah must have laughed and laughed as they watched Isaac grow: They laughed at his first smile, at his first holding up his head, at his first sitting up, at his first pulling himself up to stand by holding on, at his first standing by himself, at his first step, at his first eating grown-up food, and at his first running around to play. Isaac was growing up. ✓He was about two or three years old. It was time for him to stop snuggling against Sarah as she nursed him. It was time for him to stop nursing at all. Yes, Isaac was growing up.

#### ***The feast***

On the day Isaac was weaned, Abraham gave a big, special feast. ✓You can only imagine the food and fun everyone had as they celebrated this big, growing-up day for Isaac (Ganz). ✓Everyone was laughing and was happy. Let me rephrase that: *Nearly* everyone was happy. One person was laughing, but his laugh was not of joy but of mockery. ✓Perhaps this person said, "Ha, ha! You are a little brat, just coming off of Mommy's milk. I, on the other hand, have been loved of my father for 16 years. Ha, ha."

#### ***The mockery***

Who was mocking and persecuting little Isaac? Yes, it was Ishmael. ✓Perhaps he was jealous of all the attention Isaac was enjoying. Perhaps he felt underprivileged, knowing he had been born by natural means and Isaac by supernatural means. Perhaps he felt threatened, knowing Isaac was the true son of promise. We don't know why, but we know that Ishmael mocked Isaac.

Someone important observed Ishmael's mocking. It was Sarah. "Get rid of this slave woman, Hagar, and her son, Ishmael," she said to Abraham, "for Ishmael cannot inherit with my son, Isaac."

The growing-up party was spoiled. Ishmael, by his sin of mocking, had caused a huge problem. Sarah was insisting that Hagar and Ishmael be sent away.

Abraham loved Ishmael. He had loved him as his only son for fourteen years before Isaac had been born. He didn't want to send him away. What should he do?

### ***The casting out***

While Abraham was contemplating his dilemma, God said to him, “Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of your bondwoman; in all that Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac shall your seed be called. And also of the son of the slave woman will I make a nation, because he is your seed” (Genesis 21:12, 13). What do these verses say? [Teacher, read them again if students are not forthcoming with an answer. Abraham was to listen to Sarah and send Hagar and Ishmael away because Isaac was the son of promise. God would also make a nation of Ishmael.]

Early the next morning, Abraham gave Hagar some food and water and sent her and her son on their way.

### ***The hard times***

Hagar and Ishmael took off toward the east and ended up wandering around in the wilderness of Beersheba until their water ran out. They were about to die of thirst. Hagar had Ishmael lie down under the shade of a bush, and she walked away quite a distance (about a bowshot away) so that she wouldn't see her son die. Ishmael was crying; Hagar was crying. It looked as if this were the end for them both.

But God heard their crying. The angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, “What's the matter, Hagar? Don't be afraid, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. Get up. Lift up the lad, and hold him in your arms. I will make of him a great nation.” Students, what did the angel of God tell Hagar? [Not to be afraid; to get Ishmael up and hold him; that God would make a great nation out of him.]

### ***The rescue***

Then God opened Hagar's eyes to see a well of water. She got some water, gave it to Ishmael, and they were both refreshed. Their lives were saved.

Would you like to know what happened to Ishmael after that—when he grew up? [Have a student read Genesis 21:20 and 21. 1. God was with him; 2. He grew and lived in the wilderness of Paran, near Egypt or in the Sinai Peninsula [locate on a map]; 3. He became an archer; 4. His mother got him a wife from Egypt, where she was from.] In other Bible passages we learn that he lived to the age of 137 years and that he eventually had twelve sons and several daughters. As far as we know, he didn't see Abraham again. We do know that when Abraham died at age 175 years, Ishmael went to Abraham's funeral.

### ***The covenant***

Meanwhile, back in the land of the Philistines, where Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac lived, God was prospering Abraham. King Abimelech and his army general noticed God's blessing on Abraham. They came to him, saying, “God is with you in everything that you do. Promise us that you will deal kindly with us, with our children, and with our grandchildren.”

“I promise,” said Abraham. “But I do have to say that I have a bit of a problem with your people. You see, I dug a well, and your servants have violently taken it away from me.”

“I had no idea this happened,” said Abimelech. “You never told me; this is the first I've heard about it.”

So the two made a covenant. Abraham gave Abimelech sheep and oxen. Then he got seven more ewe lambs and gave them also.

“What are these seven ewe lambs for?” asked Abimelech.

“They are to witness that it was I who dug this well,” answered Abraham. ✓Perhaps Abraham intended that whenever Abimelech looked at those sheep, he would remember that Abraham had dug the well.

That well became very important. It was called Beersheba, which means “the well of the oath or covenant” because that was where the two promised to be kind to each other. It was in the south of Israel [locate on a map] and is still an important city, being the seventh largest in the country today. It was here that Abraham lived many years, planting trees and calling upon the name of the everlasting God—the eternal,

unchangeable God..

### Lessons from this lesson:

- What lesson can we learn about mocking? [It does no one any good. It causes harm and hurt.]
- What can we learn about God? [He keeps His promises; He helps His own people; He is everlasting.]
- Galatians 4:21–31 teaches us that Hagar is a type or symbol of people who try to be saved by law-keeping. True believers are Jesus are, like Isaac, children of the promise. Just as Ishmael “persecuted” (v. 29) Isaac, so now unbelievers persecute believers. “Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. . . We are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” (Galatians 4:31, 31).
- What lesson can we learn about generosity? [Abraham was generous in giving the seven ewe lambs even though they were a witness of his well-digging.]

### Activities:

- Play dough: food for a feast; a water jug or skin; a bush; seven lambs; trees
- Build a well with Legos.
- Add Hagar and Abimelech to the bulletin board, “Well, Lots of Things Happened at Wells,” begun at Lesson 08.06. For printables and a photo of the finished bulletin board, go to the Extras page at [teachingthebibletokids.org](http://teachingthebibletokids.org).
- Sing stanzas 1–9 of “Abraham” found at Lesson 08.01 or the Songs page at [teachingthebibletokids.org](http://teachingthebibletokids.org).
- Have a contest with a play bow and arrow to see who can shoot a bowshot farthest. Do this in a hallway, and keep students contained.
- Review questions: (Game: A child may shoot an arrow from the toy bow and arrow once for each question answered correctly.)
  1. What did Isaac’s name mean? [Laughter.]
  2. How did Abraham and Sarah laugh? [First in unbelief, then in pleasure.]
  3. Why did Abraham have a feast? [To celebrate the weaning of Isaac.]
  4. Why did Sarah want Hagar and Ishmael to leave Abraham’s home? [Because Ishmael mocked Isaac and because she didn’t want Ishmael to inherit with Isaac.]
  5. How did Abraham feel about sending Hagar away? [He didn’t want to do it.]
  6. What changed Abraham’s mind? [God told him so send Hagar and Ishmael away.]
  7. When Hagar despaired for her life and for Ishmael’s life, what did God do? [He provided a well so that they could be refreshed.]
  8. What did God tell Hagar about Ishmael? [God would make him a great nation.]
  9. Give one fact about grown-up Ishmael. [1. God was with him; 2. He lived in the wilderness of Paran, near Egypt; 3. He became an archer; 4. His mother got him a wife from Egypt; 5. He lived to the age of 137 years; 6. He had twelve sons and several daughters; 7. He didn’t see Abraham again.]

### Memory Verse[s]:

Galatians 4:28—“Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise” [if you have trusted Jesus to be your Saviour].

### Handwork:

- Make a party hat out of poster board or card stock. [See sample below.] Write, “Happy Birthday, Isaac!” or “Happy Growing-Up Day, Isaac!” on the hat. Decorate it with stickers or markers. Tape an elastic string or band to the hat so that it can be worn with the elastic under the chin.

*to wean*

*to mock*

*to inherit*

*wilderness*

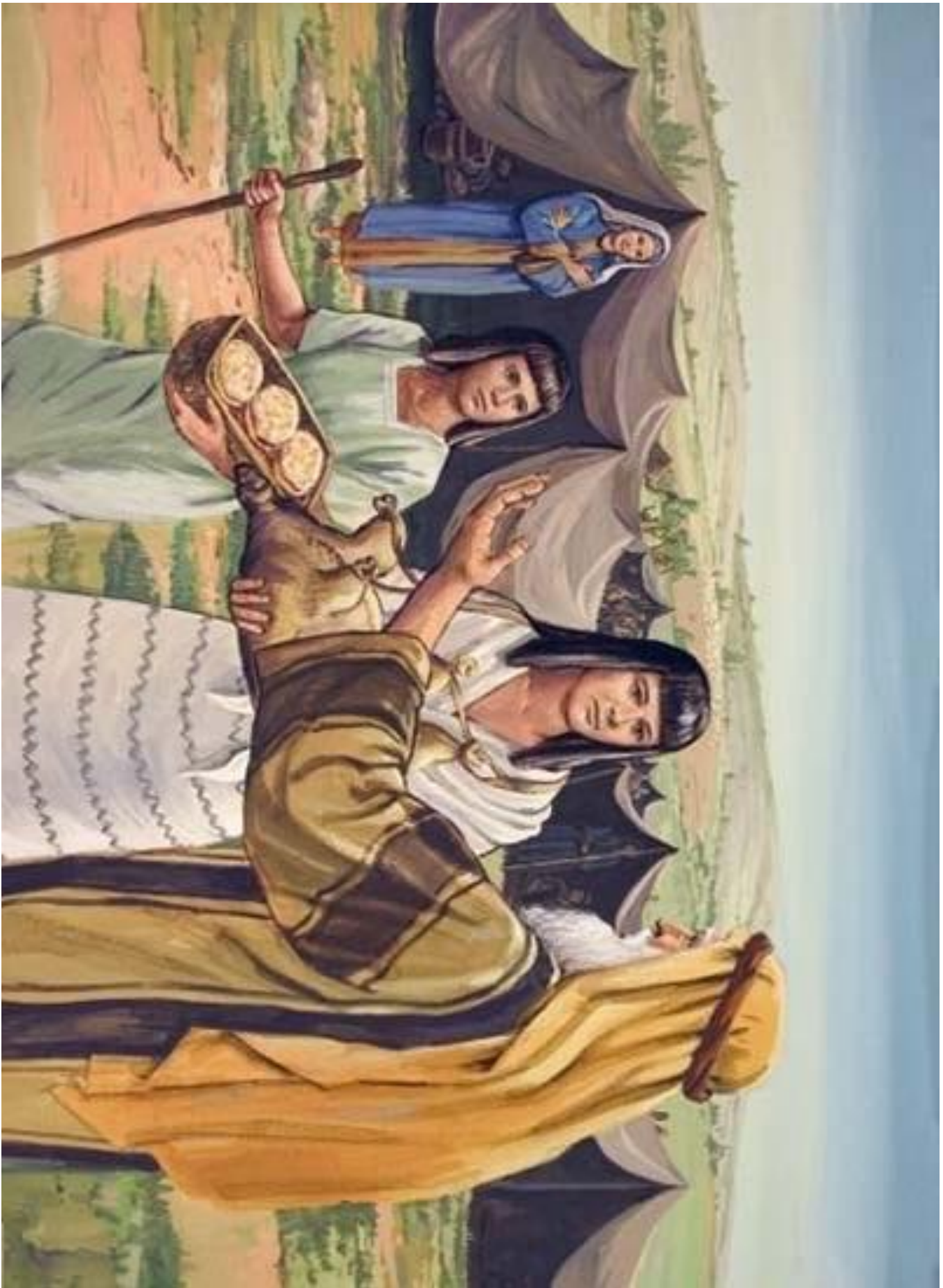
*bowshot*

*ewe lamb*

*covenant*

*oath*

Happy Birthday,  
Isaac!









Ultimate Bible  
Picture Collection



St-Takla.org



3D presentation of Abimelech part of the story. The well is made from a tuna fish can. The sheep are pieces of sheep skin cut up. The ox is made from a piece of leather stapled to a card stock base. The men are from a set of New Testament people formerly sold through Christian Book Distributors. I don't believe they are available now.