

Bible Heroes



Hagar & Ishmael

Teachers Story notes

Essential Teachers notes:

The story of Hagar and Ishmael is in part a warning against meddling in God's plans, and in part a demonstration of God's grace and forgiveness. This story is part a storytellers words and part drama. You can use Images of each of the characters involved or you can have children play the relevant parts. You will also need a picture frame or a camera. As you tell each part of the story stop to arrange the family portrait. As always use this as a guide and put the story in your own words.

Main Passage : Genesis 21

Additional Passages : Genesis 16

Today's story is about a family. As we tell the story we are going to stop and make a family portrait. I wonder if anyone here has had a family portrait taken or painted?

God had a great idea. He would choose one man, one man to be the father of a great nation, a nation of God's chosen people. When he found Abraham he was very happy. He told Abraham to leave his home and that he would make Abraham and his children into a great nation. Abraham and his wife Sarah did as God instructed. (pause for a family portrait - Abraham and Sarah)

To be a great nation Abraham and Sarah would need to have children. But both of them were very old. Sarah wasn't sure she would be able to have children but they believed God's word. (pause for a family portrait - Abraham, Sarah & child)

As Abraham and Sarah travelled they went through many adventures. One of their adventures lead them to Egypt. When they returned from Egypt their party had grown bigger. Sarah has taken on a new servant, her name was Hagar and she was an Egyptian.

(optional pause, add Hagar in the background of the family portrait, making it clear she is not part of the family)

After they had been travelling for around 10 years Sarah Had an idea. God had kept repeating his promise to Abraham that he would be a great nation but as Sarah got older and older it became more and more unlikely she would have a child. Sarah's idea was that Abraham could take a second wife, he could take her servant Hagar, who was young, and more likely to have a child. Even though it wasn't God's plan, Abraham agreed. (pause for a family portrait - Abraham, with Sarah & Hagar either side of him)

Sarah's plan worked and Hagar become pregnant. But rather than being happy, Sarah was angry. Hagar stopped acting like a servant. Sarah started to be mean to Hagar, she was so mean and horrible that Hagar ran away. (pause for a family portrait - Abraham and Sarah)

God sent an angel to meet Hagar and told her to return to Abraham and Sarah. The angel said her the baby would be a boy and it would be called Ishmael. Ishmael was a strong child and both Hagar and Abraham loved him, but Sarah was not so happy. (pause for a family portrait - Abraham, with Sarah & Hagar either side of him, Hagar is accompanied by Ishmael)

When Ishmael was a teenager Abraham came back to the camp with some great news. God had told him that Sarah would give birth to a son. Before the year ended Abraham and Sarah had the son God had promised them. The son whose family would be the great nation God had promised them. (pause for a family portrait - Abraham, with Sarah & Hagar either side of him, Hagar is accompanied by Ishmael, Sarah with a smaller child)

Now God had fulfilled his promise Sarah didn't need Hagar and Ishmael anymore. Eventually she convinced Abraham to tell them to leave. Abraham gave them bread and water for their journey and sent them away. (pause for a family portrait - Abraham, Sarah & child)

Now the family portrait looked just like God had promised, but what about Hagar and Ishmael? They walked a long way until the water ran out. Thinking they were going to die they started to cry. God heard Hagar and the boy crying and showed them where a well was. God promised Hagar her son would have a great family. Hagar and Ishmael lived many years in the desert and Ishmael became a great archer.

Even though It wasn't God's plan that Abraham have a son with Hagar, God still protected and guided them.

Today's heroes are Hagar & Ishmael, because they show us the gift of a Guidance