

The Story of Hagar
From Genesis 16 and 21
Translation, Everett Fox

Chapter 16

“Now Sarai, Avram’s wife had not borne him (children).

She had an Egyptian maid—her name was Hagar.

Sarai said to Avram:

Now here, YHWH has obstructed me from bearing;

pray, come in to my maid

perhaps I may be built-up-with-sons through her!

Avram hearkened to Sarai’s voice.

Sarai, Avram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian-woman, her maid...

and gave her to her husband, Avram as a wife for him.

He came in to Hagar, and she became pregnant.

But when (Hagar) she saw that she was pregnant, her mistress became of light-worth in her eyes.

Sarai said to Avram,

The wrong-done to me is upon you!

I myself gave my maid into your bosom,

but now that she sees that she is pregnant, I have become of light-worth in her eyes.

May YHWH see-justice -done between me and you!

Avram said to Sarai:

Here your maid is in your hand, deal with her however seems good in your eyes.

Sarai afflicted her, so she had to flee from her.

But YHWH's messenger [angel] said to her:

Return to your mistress and let yourself be afflicted under her hand!

And YHWH's messenger said to her:

Here you are pregnant,

you will bear a son;

call his name: Yishmael/God Harkens

for God has hearkened to your being afflicted.

(In the meantime, Abraham and Sara have brought forth, impossibly, miraculously a son named Isaac (Laughter). Now back to the text)

Chapter 21

Now Sara said:

God has made laughter for me,

all who hear of it will laugh for me....

Once Sara saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian woman,

whom she's had borne to Avraham, laughing...

She said to Avraham:

Drive out this slave-woman and her son,

for the son of this slave-woman shall not share-inheritance with

my son Yitzak!

The matter was exceedingly bad in Avraham eyes because of his son.

But God said to Avraham:

Do not let it be bad in your eyes concerning the lad and

concerning your slave-woman;

in all that Sara says to you, hearken to her voice,

for it is through Yitzak that seed will be called by your (name).

But also the slave-woman—a nation will I make of him,
for he too is your seed.

Avraham started-early in the morning,
he took some bread and a skin of water
and gave them to Hagar—placing them upon her shoulder—
together with the child and sent her away.

She went off and roamed in the wilderness of Be'er Sheva.

Now when the water in the skin was at an end, she cast the child
under one of the bushes,
and went and sat by herself at-a-distance, as far away as a bowshot,
for she said to herself:

Let me not see the child die!

So, she sat at-a-distance, and lifted up her voice and wept.

But God heard the voice of the lad.

God's messenger [angel] called to Hagar from heaven and said to her:

What ails you, Hagar? Do not be afraid,
for God has heard the voice of the lad there where he is.

Arise, lift up the lad, and grasp him by your hand,
for a great nation I will make of him!

God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water;
she went, filled the skin with water, and gave the lad to drink.

And God was with the lad as he grew up,
he settled in the wilderness and became an archer, a Bowman.

He settled in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took him a

wife from the land of Egypt.”