

Faith and Deeds Part 14

“20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” (James 2:20-24 KJV)

We will continue in this message to study the faith and the deeds of Abraham as God was leading him. We will read ***Genesis 21***, and explain and observe how Abraham obeyed God and walked with deeds to fulfill the call of God in his life.

“1 And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.” (Genesis 21:1-3 KJV) Here the Lord fulfilled His promise to Abraham and Sarah; Sarah got pregnant with a miracle from God and gave birth to a son whom Abraham called Isaac as God instructed him.

“4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.” (Genesis 21:4 KJV) Here Abraham obeyed God about the rule of circumcision and he circumcised Isaac on the eighth day as God commanded. We spoke before about circumcision that we are no more required to do circumcision in the flesh, but we are called to be circumcised from our sinful nature, **and therefore, for this regard we are called to deal with the sinful nature of our children, in that we need to discipline them and raise them up in the fear of the Lord.**

“5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.” (Genesis 21:5) God finally fulfilled to Abraham what He had promised him at the age of one hundred years. **In the same way for us today, we need to continue to obey, trust God and do what is right because God shall fulfill what He had promised to us in the Scripture and we just need to wait and it will surely come.**

“6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.” (Genesis 21:6 KJV) Sarah here also enjoyed what God had given to her when He fulfilled His promise to her and Abraham, therefore she started to testify, ***“7 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.” (Genesis 21:7 KJV)***

“8 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.” (Genesis 21:8 KJV) **Isaac was fed on his mother breast; Sarah was ninety years old when she breast fed Isaac and he grew; and that is a good teaching and good encouragement for the mothers today to breast feed their children.**

With the grace of God Isaac grew and on the day of his weaning Abraham made a feast, most probably to thank God for all what He accomplished in the life of Isaac and how He sustained Sarah to breast feed him.

“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.” (Genesis 21:9-11 KJV) Here, Ishmael who was born to Abraham by Hagar started to mock Isaac, which most likely was out of jealousy, and that disturbed Sarah and moved her to say to Abraham that he needed to cast out the slave woman and her son from his life, and she further explained to him that Ishmael cannot be heir with Isaac. For such reason Abraham was grieved because he was not happy to hear that and he was not accepting to send away Ishmael from him. But at that time what Sarah spoke to him to send Hagar was the timing of God for him to do that. God had already told him before that Isaac will be his heir and now came the time to implement that.

“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.” (Genesis 21:12 KJV) Here God confirmed to Abraham of what he needed to do. God told him the following:

“Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman;” which means don't be sad of what will be taken away from you, and don't be sad of what I asked you to cast out. **Certain times God bless us by taking away certain things from us.**

“in all that Sarah hath said unto thee”; it means do not be sad of what you heard from Sarah about your second wife and her son. **Don't be sad when people are telling you the truth of what you need to do.**

“hearken unto her voice”; means listen to Sarah and obey what she said to you because that is the same of what I want you to do. **God wants you to obey the instructions and the advice that Godly people are telling to you.**

“for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.” God here again was confirming to Abraham that through Isaac things will go according to the will of God and not through Ishmael. God told that to Abraham and now He was repeating that to him again. **God will not change His Word and what He had told you and you need to heed the voice of God and what He is telling you.**

“13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.” (Genesis 21:13 KJV) God again comforting Abraham and assuring him that he will take care also of Ishmael and will bless him. What God was telling to Abraham that he does not need to be worried about Ishmael because He was also concerned about him and will make him a nation, because he was also the seed of Abraham. **You need to obey God and do what He said to you especially when it come about things in pertain to sin in your life.** The relationship of Abraham with Hagar was a second wife and in the sight of God a man should have one wife and not two. As well as not having children is not a reason to go and marry another woman. Therefore Abraham needed to separate himself from Hagar and Ishmael allowing God to care for them. Abraham should not go along his emotions and he should not go along his own understanding but he should obey God and trust Him and cleanse himself from the wrong that he did 17 years ago when he and Sarah moved without the leading of God when Sarah gave her

maid Hagar to Abraham to have children from her and from that day troubles started in the life of the family of Abraham.

“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.” (Genesis 21:14 KJV) Here Abraham obeyed God diligently. Immediately on the second day he sent Hagar away with bread and bottle of water and with Ishmael sent her away, and she wandered in the desert. **Here the deeds of Abraham went along his faith in God by obeying fully what God instructed him to do.**

“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 bow shot: 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.” (Genesis 21:15-16 KJV) Hagar being a single mother sent by Abraham, needed to bear the full responsibility of her son Ishmael. As we noticed here her faith was shaken, and after the water with her was spent, she casted Ishmael under a small tree, and went away because she was not able to witness the death of her son; she left him and started to cry. Although she was a victim of what Sarah and Abraham did, but still God wanted her to be accountable to her child, **and that is the teaching that God want to impart to us today, that single mothers they need to be accountable to their children, earn and provide for them.** Hagar said, ***“Let me not see the death of the child,”*** she wanted to give up her responsibility being the watchman over the child, but she was not aware that if she will do that the child will die but if she will persevere the child will grow with God’s help and he will be blessed.

“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.” (Genesis 21:17 KJV) But God cared and had concern to Ishmael the son of Hagar. **God cares and have concern for the single mothers and their children.** The angel of God, the Lord Himself came to help Hagar and Ishmael. Jesus who appeared previously to her while she was pregnant, He is again here visiting her to aid her in rescuing and raising her child. He assured her not to be afraid when He said to her, ***“fear not”***, and that He heard the cry of the child.

“18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.” (Genesis 21:18 KJV) **God will continue to insist on the single mothers and single parents to care for their children.** God restored Hagar back to her ministry and commissioned her to go and lift up her son and to hold him with her hand being the responsible person before God to care for him. God here also once again assured her that He will bless him and 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.” (Genesis 21:19 KJV) God opened the eyes of Hagar and she saw a well of water, the provision of God for her and for her child to live and to be sustained even in the wilderness through the provision of God. **Single mothers and single parents will be sustained with the provision of God and His miracles in their lives.**

Now we can see clearly as one of the single parents will obey God, the other partner will be given the chance to repent and follow God: As Abraham obeyed God, Hagar as well obeyed the voice of God. Therefore, Abraham’s obedient act of faith in obeying God helped Hagar to obey God also. When Abraham obeyed God and sent Hagar away, God opened her eyes and she could see the presence of God in her life and the life of her child and she obeyed Him.

“20 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.” (Genesis 21:20 KJV) God was with the child as they lived in the desert, and God provided for him and made the child to learn the profession to be a hunter using the arch to hunt his food and what God was providing for him.

“21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.” (Genesis 21:21 KJV) Ishmael was living in the desert of Paran, and even in that place God was with him, and when he became a man his mother took him a wife from Egypt. **Obedient single parents, their children will have good families. Hagar reaped her obedience that Ishmael had a good family. Hagar set a good example for her son about how a family should be raised, in a onetime marriage. When she did not remarry she had given a good example to her son that he should marry once and marry a single lady and not a married one.**

We should have wholesome thinking: We should not be tempted to think in a way contradict to God’s will and ask the following questions: ***‘How about Abraham how he will feel about Ishmael?’*** or ***‘How about Hagar how she will manage Ishmael without his father?’*** or ***‘How she will live without a man?’*** or ***‘How about Ishmael, will he not ask about his father?’*** The wholesome thinking is that God is in full control and He will provide and take care as the single parents obey Him. The life of single parents is not suffering but joy in God’s presence. It will be a life of suffering if they chose to disobey God.

The children of the single parents will grow up knowing God’s will. Ishmael grew up knowing God’s will. The Scripture did not inform us that Ishmael met his father. He knew that it was God’s will that he will be taken care of by his mother. The Scripture informs us he met his father Abraham after his death; Ishmael with his brother Isaac buried Abraham: ***“8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. 9 And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre.” (Genesis 25:8-9 KJV)*** Ishmael taught that he was born as result of sin. His mother Hagar’s good example and his father Abraham’s good example taught him God’s principle about the family. Ishmael as mentioned in the Bible was married once and had twelve children. ***“12 Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham: 13 And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, 14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, 15 Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah: 16 These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations. 17 And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people.” (Genesis 25:12-17 KJV)*** **Single parents will reap the fruit of their obedience to see good families for their children. Disobedient single parents who will refuse to separate from the adulterous relationships, or who will remarry while the parents of their children are still alive, their children will do the same and will have**

broken families. They will pass the sin and the same curse to their descendants. Obedient single parents who are willing to come out from adulterous relationships and abide by God's call to remain single and care for their children will cut off the curse of adultery from descending to their children and will raise obedient children who will know the principle of God's Word of what family is all about.

My dear and beloved: You may ask why we learn from the example of Hagar? *First*, it is not only the example of Hagar but as well as the good example of our father Abraham who sent Hagar away. *Second*, Hagar's example is the Word of God and let us learn from the Scriptures to abide and live in Godly life so we can reap the fruit, **"4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. 5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: 6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."** (Romans 15:4-6 KJV) Let us commit ourselves to the Lord based on the principles that we received from the Word of God in this message.

Let us pray ...

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord, thank you for your Word that teaches me to be away from emotions and to live my life according to your will and abide with the plan that you have for me in my life. Lord thank you for blessing me by taking away from me certain harmful things away from my life.*

Now confess and renounce all your sins. Confess your pride and confess all your emotions and living and doing according to your will and wishes. Confess and renounce your non willingness to discipline your children. Confess and renounce the sin of adultery of the second marriage. Confess your lack of commitment to God and to His Word and His will. Renounce your stubbornness and delay obedience and being bad example to others. Confess your lack of reading God's Word and the life of prayers. Lord I repent, forgive me the following sins

Lord I commit myself to walk after your Word and will and not after my emotions and plans. Lord I commit myself to discipline my children and raise them in the fears of you. Lord I commit myself to teach against second marriage and to do your will in dealing with the issue of the unlawful marriages, and to teach single mothers and single parents to live according to your will and plan for them.

Lord, thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who responded to the message that we received today from you and who are willing to sent their second partners with their children away. Lord help them to accomplish your will in full. Lord cleanse them fully from the sin of adultery. Lord restore them fully back to you and use their testimonies to attract others to come to you and to know you Jesus that you are the true God. Lord I pray for those single mothers and single parents, help them in their lives, protect them and provide for them, answer their prayers and lead them to continue to do your will and the assignments that you entrusted to them, that they will be a testimony and a good example to others to follow.

Lord help us as a church to continue to deal with the issue of unlawful marriages and to guide and direct single parents in their lives how to do your will and assist them in raising their children in a Godly way. Lord refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the Spiritual gifts that we need to go and serve you. Lord lead us to go and evangelize making new disciples and train new workers to go and plant more Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the Whole will of God.' Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

Faith and Deeds Part 14. James 2:20-24. Genesis 21:1-21. Genesis 25:8-9, 12-17. Romans 15:4-6.

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