

Watchman Part 6

The Issue of the Single Parents

Single parents' situation will arise out of wrong principles of how to have a family. Many are the women and men who became victims of men or women who used them and they found themselves with children out of the realm of marriage, out of what the Word of God and what God ordained for the family; like fornication, adultery, rape, live in, prostitution, multiple marriages, or divorce and remarriage. All these are unlawful marital relationships between man and woman. The Scriptures teach us that certain relationships between man and woman need to be terminated even if children had come out of that.

The story of Hagar and Ishmael: *"1 Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. 2 And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. 3 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. 4 And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes. 5 And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee. 6 But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thine hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face. 7 And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. 8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. 9 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. 10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. 11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. 12 And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. 13 And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? 14 Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered. 15 And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. 16 And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram."* (Genesis 16:1-16 KJV)

Abraham and Sarah thought that they would build a family and have children through the relation of Abraham with Hagar, but that was not God's will. Abraham was married, he was ineligible for a second wife, and Hagar was a victim of a wrong decision of Sarah and Abraham.

Hagar might be happy for the first instance to have Abraham as a husband, especially when Hagar came to know that she was pregnant, *"and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes."* (Genesis 16:4 KJV) That pride and

the despise that Hagar had toward Sarah was the work of the flesh in Hagar, and she received the consequences of that. But, it was also the shortcoming, of Abraham and Sarah who both allowed this second marriage to happen.

After what had happened there were disturbances in the family. Sarah started to blame Abraham for the situation, *"5 And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee."* (Genesis 16:5 KJV) When that took place, Abraham should send Hagar away, but instead of that he handed over the responsibility of Hagar to his wife, *"But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thine hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee."* (Genesis 16:6 KJV)

"And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face." (Genesis 16:6 KJV) Then the angel met Hagar and instructed her, *"Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands."* (Genesis 16:9 KJV) Hagar was a servant and she needed to go back and work and submit to her master, so she can feed herself. **Hard work is God's provision for single parents to provide for themselves and their children. The angel did not send Hagar back to Abraham but to Sarah for God will not approve adultery. Abraham was not the one to provide for Ishmael.**

God wanted Abraham to send by himself his second wife Hagar, so it will be clear teaching to everyone. The meaning of Hagar is 'flight', 'departed', or 'separated', and truly Hagar needed to be sent away by Abraham.

God told Hagar that she will give birth to a son and she will name him Ishmael. The meaning of Ishmael is 'God hears'. **Truly God hears the cry and prayers of the single parents.** That was the first encounter of Hagar with the Lord; Hagar met the Lord and seen Him, *"13 And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? 14 Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered."* (Genesis 16:13-14 KJV)

The crisis that Hagar passed through was a way for her to know God. She was mistreated by Sarah her mistress, and even when she ran away she was directed by the angel of God who sent her back to Sarah her mistress. **The various trials and the troubles that every single parent is passing through are a way for them to know God and to experience Christ. Therefore, these points are important for the church to declare to the single parents to direct them well of what they need to do. The church should be consistent in this teaching and to pray for the single parents to understand, that they will be blessed by the Lord as they will obey the instructions and focus on their ministry as watchmen and watchwomen to take care of their children.**

God was gracious to Abraham, and He fulfilled what He promised him, that Sarah will conceive and gives birth to a son who will be an heir for Abraham. Truly, after fourteen years, when Sarah gave birth to Isaac and after he was weaned the following events happened that led to the departure of Hagar and Ishmael from Abraham: *"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 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. 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.” (Genesis 21:8-21 KJV) The following points we can learn from the Scriptures about single parents:

A. God declares His will to the single parents to be separated from their adulterous relationship: God declared His will in full to Abraham to send Hagar away. God spoke to Abraham to send Hagar and her son away. God knew it was a painful thing for Abraham to do, “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) God wanted Abraham to control his feelings and emotions and repent fully and correct the wrong thing that he did against God’s will. His relationship with Hagar was adultery and he needed to send her away. God confirmed to Abraham that he needed to send away Hagar, and God confirmed that Hagar needed to live as a single mother to care for her child. **Single mothers, single fathers, or single parents are ways of God to correct such sin of adultery or fornication.**

A single parent is the justice and righteousness of God to raise Godly children and to preserve Godly principles for marital life. The church should have a clear mind to deal with single parent issues. We need to instruct them that they and their children will be blessed if they will separate themselves from the adulterous relationships and concentrate on their children. The Lord will bless their children as they will do that.

Sometimes the adulterous relationship will be sustained for many years, for example, Abraham continued his relationship with Hagar for seventeen years, but finally, he needed to obey God and send her away. **What I need to say here that a long immoral relationship still needs to be broken and the man and woman need to be separated and set free from the sin of adultery.**

B. God declares His will that He will bless the children of the single parents if the adulterous relationship will be terminated: God promised Abraham that He will bless

Ishmael and care for him. “13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.” (Genesis 21:13 KJV) As Abraham would obey God, then the Lord will bless the child. **Some go with their emotions keeping the immoral relationship and will tell, who will take care of the child and the mother, and they will keep the adulterous relationship. But that is ungodly. You need to obey God and trust Him; you obey Him and do your part and He will do His part. God will care for single parents and care for their children.**

C. The single parents will try escaping their responsibility of watching and caring for their children: Hagar was tempted to escape her responsibility as a watchwoman and a caregiver for her child, Ishmael. “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 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 21:14-16 KJV) Hagar, her faith failed her, (because being alone, in the desert, in hot weather, without water or provision, and no hope), and she thought that she cannot do, being a watchwoman over the boy when she said in **Genesis 21:16, “Let me not see the death of the child.”** But later on, she overcame because God was with her. **The same for the single parents today, they should not give way to temptations and give up and go back to the previous life of sin, or to get remarried again. Sure, they will be able to make it and care for their children because God is with them.** God will encourage single parents as He encouraged Hagar. “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) God told Hagar, “What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.” The Lord encouraged Hagar and took away her fear. **The Lord will continue to encourage the single parents to continue to do their ministry, being watchmen and watchwomen and care for their children.**

D. God will continue to insist on the single parents to care for their children: He confirmed to Hagar her ministry as watchwoman to care for her child when He told her, “18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.” (Genesis 21:18 KJV) That was the second encounter of Hagar with God. The Lord here instructed her and confirmed her once again her ministry, to take care of the child herself and promised her that He will bless the child; that He will make him a great nation. God did not advise her to go and marry because Abraham the father of her child was still alive. **Thus, we advise the single parents to be watchmen and watchwomen to care for their children, for they can do it without having another partner and fall into adultery again. The Lord will help them and bless their children as long as they obey God.**

E. God shall provide for the single parents: God provided for Hagar, “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, as a watchwoman for her son Ishmael, and showed her His provision to her as she will obey Him. **In the same way, God will open the eyes of single parents as watchmen and watchwomen over their children and will enable them to see God’s provision for them and their children.**

F. 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. Abraham's obedient act helped Hagar to obey God. 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 obeyed Him.

G. God will provide for the children of the single parents: God was with the boy and provided for 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 made the child grow and gave him a job and profession. Ishmael became an archer. **God will provide for the children of the single parents beyond our imagination. As they will obey the Lord He will care for their children, make them grow, educate them, and give them a suitable profession and job to sustain their livings.**

H. Obedient single parents, their children will have good families: Hagar reaped her obedience - a good family of Ishmael, ***"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) 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.

I. 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: 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.**

J. 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 after Abraham sent him away with his mother. He knew that it is 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 sons, ***"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 who became faithful watchmen and watchwomen for their children 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 and fornication 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.**

K. Let us learn from the Scripture: People may ask why we learn from the example of Hagar? ***My dear and beloved: First***, it is not only the example of Hagar but as well as a 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 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)

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the Cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that teaches me your ways and your will to be a watchperson to my children.

Confess your sins and renounce them. Renounce the sin of second marriage, the immoral relationship outside the marriage life, and the wrong thoughts and the wrong emotions that would lead you to insist to do your own will and sin against God. Renounce your non willingness to be a watchman or watchwoman to watch and care for your child or children as a single parent and take the full responsibility on them. Lord forgive me, I repent of the following sins _____.

Lord I commit myself to abide with your Word and doing your will in regard to the issue of single parents. Lord gives me the strength and the good health and the perseverance to achieve that. Lord, as a single parents, I am willing to watch over my children _____. Lord, as I will obey you then fulfill your good promises to me and to my descendents, this all I ask and pray in Jesus name Amen.

Lord thank you for my brothers and sisters who repented of their sins and who committed their lives to be watchmen and watchwomen according to your Word in this message. Lord bless them, protect them and give them the strength to care for their children in the fear of yours and provide all their needs. Lord provide all their needs so they can continue to go and do your will. Lord bless their children and prosper them and make them grow, educate them and train them to have skills and professions. Lord reward all the single parents' labour and pain and let them see the good families of their children.

Lord bless us as a church, and help us and lead us as we continue to preach and teach your Word and encourage single parents to do your will toward their children. Lord refill us with

the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need to go and serve you; to evangelize, making disciples, training workers and to plant more Bible studies and congregations for the church. 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.

The Issue of the Single Parents Part 1. Genesis 16:1-16. Genesis 21:8-21. Genesis 25:8-9, 12-17. Romans 15:4-6.

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