

Tale of Two Pities

Genesis 21:1-21

December 9, 2018

Once upon a time, a Parrot, from a sailor's estate, was inherited by a pastor.

Two elements: Waiting

Laughter

One of the hardest, most painful things we will ever do in our entire life, Wait.

In this passage, Sarah and Hagar- Sarah waiting for a baby, Hagar waiting, hoping God will save— her son is about to die.

Waiting for something we expect, or something we're hoping for, or just any kind of help or relief.

Which type of waiting is harder to endure?

But can't you just keep a stiff upper lip, trust God, don't worry, ---NOT feel the pain?

Hebrews 12:11 "Discipline (training by God) ALWAYS seems to be a thing of pain and not of joy, but those who are trained by it reap the fruit of it afterwards, in the peace of an upright life."

There is enough guilt and condemnation floating around this world. It is okay for you to admit that it hurts when you are experiencing hardships, growing, learning, maturing, being disciplined. You don't have to feel guilty for it hurting when you have to wait for God. "ALWAYS seems to be a thing of pain and not of joy"

In this passage, we have two stories where someone is waiting on God. At their wit's end, desperately wanting something, needing something, from God.

Have you ever been there? Of course you have.

Main point, There Is No Easy Answer to relieve or wipe away how this feels. Faith in God can definitely help a lot, but there is no reason to deny or try to hide the pain or pretend. Especially no reason to try to hide how you feel from God. He knows. It is better to be honest with yourself and honest with God and ask for His help.

6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 4:6-7
NIV

Now- Consider Sarah and Hagar- who had it worse? Which situation was harder?

Tale of Two Pities- It was the worst of times. It was the worst of times.

When sick, which hurts more, severe headache or severe stomach ache? It depends on what you're experiencing currently.

Both- unbearable waiting, waiting for God's help.

Now, for truly the best part of today- reading God's word. Truly one of the most valuable, most important things we possess. God's word. Too often, may seem complicated or tricky.

Why did God have men write His Bible? Purpose? To reveal, to teach us something. Not written to try to mix us up or confuse us. But to help us, to help us learn about God and grow closer to Him.

Intended Meaning Hermeneutic: (hermeneutic- method or theory of interpretation of the Bible) (Kermit Eckelberger-helped translate NIV) What was the **intended meaning** of a passage? What does God want us to learn?

What does it sound like it means when you read it on face value?

Consider context in the text

Consider historical context

Consider social context of then current, intended reader (what would a Hebrew person think when he read this?)

Trustworthy translation - Paraphrases are helpful, but when you are studying, key theological or life issues- consult a more literal translation, NASB(very trustworthy), ESV or look it up on the internet. So easy now!

Commentaries- read what trusted men of God have gleaned from these passages

Listen online to teachings- **Be sure** they are reputable, not tickling men's ears.(telling people what they would like to hear)

Genesis 21:1-21

21 Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised. **2** So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him. **3** Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac. **4** Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. **5** Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. **6** Sarah said, "God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me." **7** And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

8 The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.

⁹ Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking. ¹⁰ Therefore she said to Abraham, “Drive out this maid and her son, for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac.” ¹¹ The matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son. ¹² But God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named. ¹³ And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant.” ¹⁴ So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave *them* to Hagar, putting *them* on her shoulder, and *gave her* the boy, and sent her away. And she departed and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba.

¹⁵ When the water in the skin was used up, she left the boy under one of the bushes. ¹⁶ Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away, for she said, “Do not let me see the boy die.” And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept. ¹⁷ God heard the lad crying; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. ¹⁸ Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand, for I will make a great nation of him.” ¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the skin with water and gave the lad a drink.

²⁰ God was with the lad, and he grew; and he lived in the wilderness and became an archer. ²¹ He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Does God scold either Sarah or Hagar for their pain?

What is the big, main point of this passage? Why did God have this written?

How can we help our friends who are experiencing these types, any type of pain?

Some of you may be wondering—I said - waiting and laughter

Not a whole lotta laughter going on here!

How many times can you find references to laughter in this section of scripture? Count them.

(One is hidden in the translation.) And surely, two unspoken incidents, at least at the end of this story.

Your have turned for me, my mourning into dancing:

You have loosed my sackcloth

and clothed me with gladness. Psalm 30:11