

# Genesis

God's World. God's Story.



## Our Heartbreak and God's Hearing

Genesis 21:8-21

**Big Idea:** When we are heartbroken again, God hears again and is working for His ultimate good again.

### Outline:

#### 1. A House of Laughter and Heartbreak

a. Joyful Celebration for Isaac

b. Jealous Scoffing at Isaac

#### 2. A God Who Hears Again

a. He Hears Hagar in the Wilderness

b. He is Sovereign Over Suffering

#### 3. An Ambiguous Ending with a Horizon of Hope

a. Ishmael Has a Future of Physical Blessing but Has Scorned the Spiritual

b. The Ultimate Horizon of Hope for the Nations and our Suffering

## Discussion Questions:

1. Sarah laughs with joy that God has done something for her once considered laughably impossible (Gen. 21:7). Is there something “impossible” that this passage inspires you to pray for?
2. Who do you sympathize the most with in Abraham’s broken household, Sarah, Abraham, or Hagar and Ishmael? *Why?*
3. How should we interpret Ishmael’s “laughing” at the celebration of Isaac? What does it reveal about the state of Abraham’s household? What does it reveal about the state of Hagar and Ishmael’s heart before God?
4. Hagar finds herself in the wilderness... *again*. Have you had a situation (like Hagar) that was marked by repeated suffering or hardship?
5. How does God’s character and action in this passage compare with His portrayal in the earlier episode of Genesis 16? How is this portrayal of God relevant for someone suffering?
6. How is God’s sovereignty (control of circumstances and the future) shown in this passage? How is the doctrine of God’s sovereignty relevant to a theology of suffering?
7. Do you think Hagar and Ishmael had saving faith in God? *Why or why not?* (see Gal. 4:28-31)
8. The birth of Isaac marks a significant fulfillment of God’s promises. But what is God’s ultimate redemptive plan beyond the birth of Isaac?
9. How does this “ultimate horizon” of God’s promises give us hope in suffering?