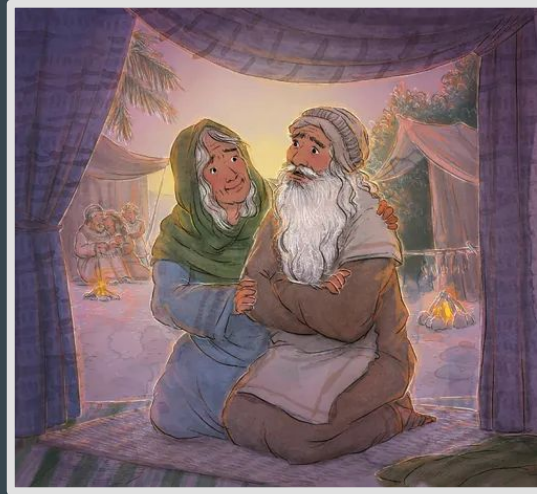
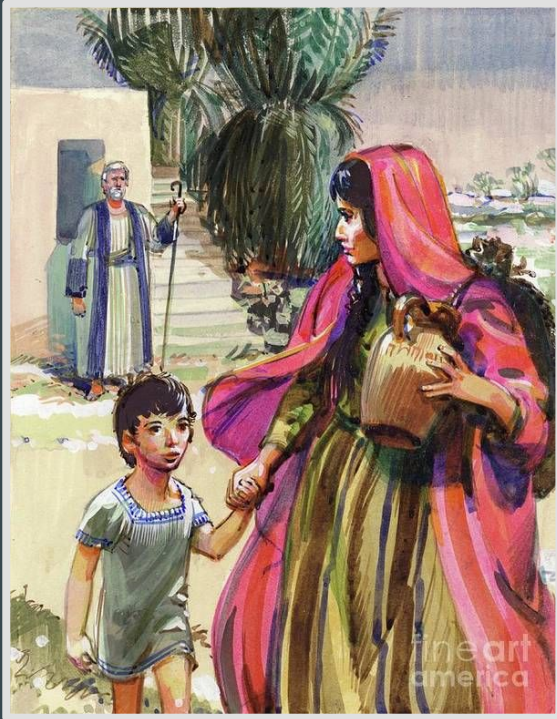


Genesis: a Living Conversation: “A Family Affair”



Genesis 16, 17, 21

Summary



- Abraham and Sarah can't conceive a child
- Sarah gives Hagar to Abraham and they conceive a child
- Hagar gives birth to Ishmael
- Sarah conceives Isaac despite her old age
- Sarah gets jealous and orders Abraham to cast her out
- Abraham sends Hagar and her son to the desert with little food and water
- Hagar puts Ishmael under a bush and cries, God hears her and tells her to go back to Sarah to gain a blessing

Treatment of Hagar

- “Nobody actually asked Hagar about this. And part of me is thinking, maybe Hagar is really not happy about this at all. Abraham is an old man. She’s a young woman.” - Burton Visotzky
- “It's a great career move. C'mon” Robert Alter



Image: Marc Chagall: Hagar In The Desert,
Original Lithograph, Bible 1960

Patriarchy and Misogyny

“There’s nowhere much in the Bible that I know about anywhere where a woman is given birth to, and it is such a big deal” - Elizabeth Swados



“I understand Hagar's position. I understand Sarah's position. Here is an older woman who feels that her sexuality is nil right now. And here is Abraham, got this nice trophy mistress, right? With great muscle tone, probably.” - Bharat Mukherjee



“(…) The famous Egyptian build.” - Robert Alter



Debate about Racism/Othering

“Oh, I don’t need the ethnic dimensions in order to recognize that here’s a human being treating another human being as a thing.” - Lewis Smedes

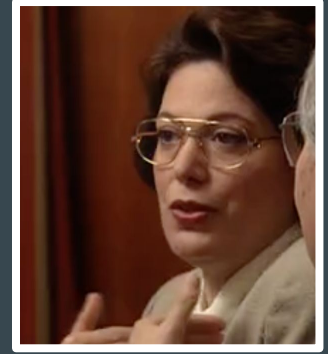
“I think that’s an American lens” - Eugene Rivers

“All we need is to say that Sarah saw Hagar as another. That otherness is what really did it” - Azizah Al-Hibri



Differences between Religions

“First of all, you'll be all very surprised to know that this story is not in the Qur'an. And yet it's a very important story for us because it impacts what we do when Muslims go to the pilgrimage.” Azizah Al-Hibri



“She is already to do what a Jewish woman-- well, or whatever-- the ancient woman is supposed to do. Which is to-- if you can't have a baby yourself, you're supposed to take charge of the future. It says that.” Elizabeth Swados



“We all know, the presence of a religion has been an agent of repression and oppression” - Bill Moyer