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ISAAC and ISHMAEL

OUR BIBLE STORY by the "Highway and Byway" Preacher.
(A Vision Between the Lines of God's Inspired Word.)
(Copyright, 1905, by J. M. Robinson)

Scripture Authority:—"And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. And the child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast; the same day that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, and 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.' And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son."—Gen. 21:3, 4, 11.



THE sweet, merry laughter of a little child floated out upon the morning breeze, and a mother's tender voice could be heard, as she talked to and played with her darling.

The sounds reached the ears of a woman seated in her tent at some little distance away, and, shifting her position uneasily, as though the harmony and joy in the other tent had struck a discord in her own, she sighed, and muttered to herself:

"What's that, mother?" quickly spoke up a boy who was tinkering over some boyish contrivance in the tent door, but who, at the sound of his mother's sigh and half inaudible words, dropped his work and looked up at her, inquiringly. "Did you speak my name?"

The woman started as one does when suddenly made conscious that the inward emotions have been betrayed. Instantly his sympathetic nature was aroused, and springing lightly to his feet, he went towards his mother, and, throwing himself at her feet and looking up into her face, he asked again, more insistently:

"What is it, mother?"

The relationship between the two was peculiarly close and tender, due largely to the circumstances surrounding the lives of both. The stern service of her mistress Sarah had its recompense in the joy of the coming of the son into her life; and she patiently endured, and lavished her affection upon the boy whom Sarah had coveted and then spurned. The touch of the boy's impulsive hand, his appealing look, his tone of sympathy, quite overcame her, and she burst into tears.

"Don't, mother, don't!" exclaimed the boy, in great distress, while at the same time he caressed her tenderly. "What is troubling you?"

A little girl at the tent door startled them, and they both looked up just as a sturdy boy of between two and three years of age came toddling in. As he caught sight of Ishmael he uttered a gleeful shout, and came running towards him with outstretched hands. A smile lit up the troubled face of the older boy, and for the instant, forgetting the distress of his mother, he stooped to take the baby and have a frolic with him, as was his wont, for ever since the coming of little Isaac, Ishmael had been his loyal admirer and faithful guardian and playfellow, but as he stooped down, his eye fell upon the face of his mother, who with dark, almost evil look, was taking in the whole scene. Quickly checking himself, he turned toward his mother and studied the tell-tale emotions which were playing across her face, while the disappointed baby tugged at his tunic and whined, impatiently. Ishmael had never before seen such looks upon his mother's face, but that they were in some way connected with the little fellow who had so unexpectedly broken in upon them he instinctively felt.

At that instant a shadow fell across the doorway, and the form of a woman appeared. Her quick eye took in the tableau before her. The strained, drawn, hard look on the face of the Egyptian mother, the puzzled, troubled expression in Ishmael's face, and the impatient wall of her little son as he tugged sturdily at the older boy's garments and sought to obtain the accustomed attention which was for some reason he could not understand being withheld.

"Ah, here you are, you little runaway! Come, see what mother has for you," holding up a new garment of rich coloring and finest texture, which the proud mother was preparing for the great festival occasion which was to mark the weaning of the boy and his formal recognition as the sole heir of Abraham's possessions and position.

At the sound of Sarah's voice, Hagar looked up with a startled and guilty expression, and, trying to smile, she bowed low, and then spreading a rug at Sarah's feet, she said, with an effort at composure:

"Will not my mistress be seated?"

"Not this morning, Hagar, there is so much to do in preparation for Isaac's feast, which my hands alone must do, that I cannot," and with a pretense of not having noticed the jealousy and unhappiness of the other woman, she picked up her baby and hastened from the tent.

Hagar, who had risen when her mistress had entered, now paced the floor of her tent in great agitation, and the boy followed her movements in silence, the meanwhile pondering over the circumstances of the morning. Suddenly the mother stopped in front of him and exclaimed, fiercely, almost incoherently:

"The new garment, the great feast? Do you not know what that means for you? Oh, Ishmael!"

And again sobs and tears broke forth, cutting short the mother's words.

"But what of it, mother?" stammered the boy, in a dazed sort of way.

The failure of the boy to appreciate the situation seemed to exasperate the mother, and she exclaimed, passionately:

"What of it! Cannot you understand that you have no part or lot with Isaac? As son of Abraham thou art not, to

share in aught that is his save such beggarly portions as he may give you during his life. The new garment is for the heir! The feast is for the heir! And Abraham and the great sheikhs of all the country round will make merry as Isaac is proclaimed heir! And you," seizing the boy by the shoulders and almost shaking him in the frenzy of her grief and despair, "and you are just Ishmael, son of the bond-slave!"

The first dawning feelings of jealousy and sense of wrong suffered began to rise in the boy's soul as his mother's words and her bitter grief cut deep into his sensitive nature. A feeling of resentment rose within him against those who could cause his mother so much grief, and the fact that his mother's thought was for him, made him all the more responsive to her mood. And with the feelings of jealousy and resentment came a new stirring within of self-reliance and independence. The proud spirit of the boy was touched, and an ill-defined, vague purpose took possession of him that day to achieve apart from anything that Abraham could or would do for him.

On the day before the feast Sarah said to Abraham:

"I like not the manner of Ishmael, of late. He cometh no more to our tent to visit Isaac, and I fear he is angry." And then Sarah went on to tell what she witnessed in Hagar's tent some time before, since which time Ishmael had not been the same.

"It were better that he be not present at the feast to-morrow, lest the celebration in Isaac's honor cause the fires of jealousy to burn within his heart," Sarah continued. "He hath no part with thine heir. Let him go with the sheep herder who leaves with the flocks for the distant pasturage to-day."

Abraham shook his head slowly, while his countenance bore a troubled look.

"It seemeth hard to deny the boy the pleasures of the morrow. I fear thou art needlessly anxious. Should not Ishmael, my son, share in our joys and pleasures, and our pains?"

"Nay," quickly responded Sarah, "but dost thou not remember that the son of the bondwoman can have no part with the son of promise? Hast thou forgotten how the Lord hath spoken, saying that He would make His covenant with Isaac, and not Ishmael?"

The force of Sarah's words evidently impressed Abraham deeply, for as he turned to go, he said in quiet, sad tone of voice:

"I will arrange it according to thy wish."

Late that afternoon Ishmael trudged along behind the flocks, bitter resentment filling his heart.

"They are sending me off to get rid of me for the feast to-morrow," he muttered. "It is not fair! Mother says I have as good right to be there as Isaac, for am I not Abraham's son?"

Such was the burden of Ishmael's thoughts, and the longer he pondered the situation, and the farther he journeyed from home, the more positive became the conviction that previous injustice was being done him. Suddenly he stopped, as a thought flashed into his mind, and he exclaimed:

"I'll do it! I'll do it!"

That night when darkness had fallen and the herder was rounding up some of the scattering sheep, Ishmael slipped away and started back towards home. The next morning he lingered on the outskirts of the tented area, for he dared not make his presence known. As he lay hidden in the bushes near enough to see and hear, he watched the guests arrive, and listened to the busy hum of voices as the visiting and merry-making went on. He saw the gifts as they were borne to Sarah's tent to be presented to little Isaac, and later he saw the latter in his gorgeous robes, such as the heir is accustomed to wear on such occasions, being borne aloft, while the assembled guests bowed before him and then with loud acclaim proclaimed him Abraham's heir and wished him long life and prosperity and power. Then came the feasting, and Ishmael, who had eaten nothing since the night before, found his hunger overcoming his fears, and leaving his hiding place he crept in to where some of the servants were feasting and making merry. Gladly they made place for him, for the boy was a general favorite with them, and while they cast knowing glances at each other, they piled him with questions as to where he had been and why he was not sharing in the festivities.

With a sneer in the direction of Isaac, and a shrug of the shoulders, Ishmael snarled:

"Why should all be given to Isaac? Am I not Abraham's son?"

"The boy is right," chuckled one dark-visaged fellow, by way of encouragement, and then noting the responsive nods on every side, and the brightening of Ishmael's countenance, he continued: "Here's to Ishmael, Abraham's heir."

The spirit of reckless fun then seized the rest of the group. One fellow threw over Ishmael's shoulders in lieu of the robes of the heir one of the brilliant rugs lying on the ground, and all bowed before him in mock solemnity. The commotion drew the attention of the rest of the company, and Sarah beholding, took in the situation at a glance, while the guests thinking it only some merry frolic of the servants turned again to their feasting and chatter.

But not so Sarah, and after the guests had all departed and she and Abraham were alone, her pent-up feelings burst forth.

"Cast out this bondwoman and her son," she fiercely and abruptly exclaimed. "For the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac!"

In bewildered surprise and sorrow, Abraham by questioning learned of the incidents of the afternoon, but the harsh measures which his wife proposed seemed very grievous unto him, for he loved Ishmael, but natural affection often brings one at cross purposes with faith and the plans of God.

Abraham bowed his head in grief and spoke not.

"Cast out this bondwoman and her son," again demanded Sarah, "for he shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac!"

And Abraham, the father of Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, and the father of Isaac, the son of promise, strode out into the night in silence, to fight out the issue alone with God.



FOXTAIL MILLET.

Several Varieties of the Plant Are Being Grown in America—Are Large in Form.

Under the name of Japanese millets several kinds of foxtail millet are being grown in this country. Most of these millets are large in form and yield heavily in seed and forage, under favorable conditions, but do not withstand drought well, and when a dry spell comes they yield to it quicker than do most of our common millets.

There have also been introduced



KOREAN FOXTAIL MILLET.

from Korea millets known as foxtail, which differ considerably from the millets grown in this country and also from the Japanese, says Farmers' Review. We illustrate the Korean millet. This millet has done well on the grounds of the agricultural department in Washington, but as yet little experimentation has been done with them in the country as a whole.

TO ESCAPE INSECTS.

Rotation of Crops Effects Much Good in Ridding Farm of Destructive Life.

On a farm of good size the best way to keep the destructive insects down is to rotate crops. I find that in that way I can generally escape the worst of the insect pests, says a Michigan farmer in the Farmers' Review. Where the same crop is planted on the same field year after year the insects have a chance to establish themselves in colonies. In the case of the plant lice on corn roots there is little danger the first year because the ants are the real mischief-makers. If the field has been in oats the previous year we may expect to find no ants there, for lice do not feed on the roots of the oat plant. Not till corn has been on the same land for several years will the ant invasion become serious, and without the ant invasion we have nothing to fear from the lice.

The Hessian fly is quite easily stamped out by taking away his food supply for one year, but we must do that by depriving this insect of all of his mainstays in feeding—wheat, rye and barley. Not only must we put the land into something else than those crops, but we must be careful that in the field planted to corn or potatoes no volunteer wheat, rye or barley is permitted to grow.

BUTCHERING AT HOME.

Every Farmer Should Do His Own Killing—Old Custom Going Out of Fashion.

The slaughtering of live stock on the farm is going out of fashion altogether too fast. There is no good reason why every farmer should not butcher his own meat as well as market more or less of his own live stock direct to the consumer, says Farm and Home. The illustration shows a very simple and suggestive way of butchering a beef or other animal.

Where a suitable building and windless under a large tree. Simply fasten a stout pulley, a, and rope up among the branches and fasten the end to a spike, b, driven in the trunk.

One Bee Tree.

In June last we cut a bee-tree. The bees, though considerably scattered about by the tree breaking when it struck the ground, were hived and at once went to work. When we went after them, however, the hive was empty. In passing the spot four months later we noticed bees flying, and found the swarm under a portion of the tree. They had built a number of combs, a foot in depth, and had considerable brood and honey, all out in the open air.

Good Drinking Fount.

A good drinking fount for little chicks is made by filling a shallow crock or pan with pebbles about the size of hickory nuts or as large as walnuts, and then filling with water. The chicks can drink between the pebbles, but cannot get wet or drown. The vessels should be scalded out two or three times a week.—Commercial Poultry.

Milk a Perfect Food.

It needs to be frequently repeated that milk is a perfect food, and alone would sustain life. Eggs, bananas and some other foods will do the same. But Irish potatoes will not. Pure, unskimmed milk is adapted to all ages, and is difficult to surpass as food.

ROUGH FEED FOR HOGS.

Animal Man Makes Many Observations, and Gives Out Results of His Experiments.

George M. Rommel, of the bureau of animal industry of the United States department of agriculture, has been making some very interesting observations for several years relative to experiments along the line of feed for hogs. Although the capacity of bulk found in cattle and sheep is generally lacking in hogs, Mr. Rommel's observations show that hogs will thrive on a reasonable amount of roughage.

The results of investigation conducted by many experiment stations are given:

The Kansas experiment station has reported a series of experiments with drought-resistant crops. Three of these experiments had to do with alfalfa hay. In the first place, the hogs used were of mixed breeding—Berkshire and Poland China—representing about the average of Kansas farm hogs. The alfalfa was of good quality.

Two lots were fed, one receiving the hay whole in greater quantity than it would consume, the other having ground hay. In the second test the meal-fed lot received some cotton-seed meal—0.16 pound to each pound of Kaffir corn, which did not affect the hogs seriously. This test was conducted during the most severe weather of the winter, the thermometer registering 32 degrees F. below zero, February 12, ten days after the experiment began.

In the third test the grain was wet with water at the time of feeding. The alfalfa had been cut late and was rather woody.

The Utah station fed one lot of hogs on a mixture of equal parts by weight of chopped wheat and grain, wet. Another lot had the same grain ration with chopped alfalfa hay added. "The alfalfa used was well cured and was prepared by running through an ensilage cutter, the blades of which are arranged for cutting into half-inch lengths." The pigs were thrifty grade Berkshires.

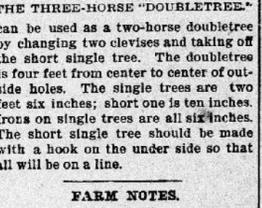
The Montana station fed three lots of hogs to compare the feeding values of a certain ration with sugar beets and alfalfa hay as roughage with a ration of grain only. The lot on grain alone received a ration consisting, during the early part of the experiment, of two parts of damaged wheat and one part of oats, barley taking the place of the wheat during the latter part of the experiment. The hay-fed lot had same ration with alfalfa hay added. The alfalfa hay was run through a cutting box, moistened, and mixed with meal. The hogs were by a Berkshire boar out of high-grade Poland China sows. They had previously had the run of a stubble field, with some clover pasture.

The average of these experiments show that 593 pounds of grain were required for 100 pounds of gain, when no hay was fed, and 505 pounds of grain and 89 pounds of alfalfa hay when hay was fed, a saving of 88 pounds of grain to be credited to the hay fed.

THREE-HORSE DOUBLETREE.

Versatile Instrument Which One Agriculturist Declares Is Best in Market.

Here is a sketch of a three-horse "double-tree" that is the best I have ever used, writes a correspondent of the Rural New Yorker. It is light, and



The three-horse "doubletree" can be used as a two-horse doubletree by changing two clevises and taking off the short single tree. The doubletree is four feet from center to center of outside holes. The single trees are two feet six inches; short one is ten inches. Irons on single trees are all six inches. The short single tree should be made with a hook on the under side so that all will be on a line.

FARM NOTES.

The Frances peach seems to rot badly on the tree. The sun and high winds were good for the cherry bloom.

What are the objections to keeping sheep on a dairy farm?

It is reported that peach stones from California canneries are dried and sold for fuel. They are said to give out more heat than coal in proportion to weight.

At a hotel in Charleston, S. C., we found baked apples and strawberries on the card for breakfast. Careful observation showed that the majority called for apples.

Feed the Cows Well.

Many a cow with fair results could be made to produce double if she had the proper material in the shape of food to work up into milk; the machine may be all right, but the material all wrong. We must have both to have success. She must have both to consume large quantities of nutritious food if she gives a large and paying amount of milk. She cannot consume dry feed enough and digest it, to work her milk producing power to full capacity, without succulent, easily digested foods.—Midland Farmer.

Barrenyard Manure.

Barrenyard manure is one of the most efficient means at the disposal of the farmer to permanently improve his soil. Probably no other fertilizer possesses to so great a degree the power of restoring worn soils to productivity and giving them lasting fertility. One of the best ways to utilize barrenyard manure is to apply it in connection with fertilizing materials as supplement to its fertilizing constituents.—Orchard and Farm.

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