

THE PURSUIT OF GOD
Matthew 22:34-40, Genesis 16, 21 (ESV)

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT (Matthew 22:34-40)

34 But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35 And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" 37 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

THE LIFE OF HAGAR (Genesis 16 and 21)

16 1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. 2 And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. 3 So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. 4 And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress. 5 And Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my servant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the Lord judge between you and me!" 6 But Abram said to Sarai, "Behold, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her.

7 The angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. 8 And he said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai." 9 The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her." 10 The angel of the Lord also said to her, "I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude." 11 And the angel of the Lord said to her,

"Behold, you are pregnant and shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has listened to your affliction. 12 He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."

13 So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "Truly here I have seen him who looks after me."

15 And Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. (God Hears) 16 Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

21 1 The Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as he had promised. 2 And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. 3 Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him, Isaac... 8 And the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. 9 But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, laughing. 10 So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son, for the son of this slave woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac." 11 And the thing was very displeasing to Abraham on account of his son. 12 But God said to Abraham, "Be not displeased because of the boy and because of your slave woman. Whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall your offspring be named. 13 And I will make a nation of the son of the slave woman also, because he is your offspring." 14 So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

15 When the water in the skin was gone, she put the child under one of the bushes. 16 Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot, for she said, “Let me not look on the death of the child.” And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. 17 And God heard the voice of the boy, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. 18 Up! Lift up the boy, and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make him into a great nation.” 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 boy a drink. 20 And God was with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an expert with the bow. 21 He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

HOW WE EXPERIENCE GOD’S LOVE

1. WE EXPERIENCE GOD’S LOVE AS WE REMEMBER HIS PROMISES

Romans 8:28 (ESV)

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”

2. WE EXPERIENCE GOD’S LOVE AS WE RELY ON HIS PLANS

Proverbs 3:5-6

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not rely on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.”

3. WE EXPERIENCE GOD’S LOVE AS WE RECOGNIZE HIS PROVISION

Genesis 21:19 (ESV)

“Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.”

Philippians 4:19 (ESV)

“And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

4. WE EXPERIENCE GOD’S LOVE AS WE REST IN HIS PRESENCE

Psalms 16:11 (ESV)

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

5. WE EXPERIENCE GOD’S LOVE AS WE RECEIVE HIS PARDON

Romans 5:8 (ESV)

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Memory Verse – Matthew 22:37-39 (ESV) 37 And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.