Plaque of Hagar Banished from the House of Abraham, KPM Porcelain, Berlin

Era: 19th century

Materials: porcelain, gilded wood

Plaque dim (in): H 15.5 in / W 12.2 in

Plaque dim (cm): H 38.5 cm / W 12.2 in

Frame dim : H 57 cm / W 54 cm

KPM mark

This exceptional KPM porcelain plaque depicts the banishment of Hagar and Ishmael, after a painting by Adrian Van der Werff (1701). In this scene, Abraham, represented here as a bearded old man wearing a blue and red tunic, is sending away Hagar. Behind him stands an old woman, Sarah, wearing dark clothing. At Sarah's feet stands her son, Isaac, who is holding onto Abraham's leg and tunic. Hagar stands with her back to the viewer, but her bare shoulders expose her youth and beauty. She is wearing a water jug and carrying bread to sustain them in the desert. Hagar is leading her young son, Ishmael, away from the house, and he is turned to look back at his half-brother. This image represents a Biblical story from Genesis 21. Marked on the back: KPM. Letter printed on the porcelain: F. Circa 1880-1890.

Because she was sterile for so long, Sarah, the wife of Abraham, encouraged the union of Abraham and Hagar, one of her Egyptian maidservants. Ishmael was born of this union, but shortly afterward, Sarah became pregnant and gave birth to a son due to divine intervention. Sarah, jealous of Hagar's fertility and wanting to preserve Isaac's inheritance, demanded that Abraham banish Hagar.

This work is after a piece of the same title by Adriaen van der Werff (1659-1722), a Dutch painter of religious and mythological scenes and portraits. His Hagar and Ishmael Banished from the House of

Abraham was extensively reproduced by KPM porcelain painters throughout the 19th century.

KPM or Royal Manufactory of Berlin was founded by Frederick II of Prussia. This plate, with the letter F printed in the porcelain, was created at the end of the 19th century. Royal Manufactory of Berlin, KPM.