

## Genesis 21:1-21

Review:

### **Read Genesis 15:1-6**

- Abraham questioned how God could make him into a great nation without any heirs.
- God showed Abraham and reminded him of His promise.
- *“Abraham believed and it was credited to him as righteousness.”*

### **Read Genesis 16:1-2, 15-16**

- Sarah concludes God has prevented her from conceiving (partial truth)
- Sarah's remedy is to accomplish this through Hagar.
- \* Abram was 86 & had a son Ishmael with Hagar

### **Read Genesis 17:1-6, 15-21**

- Vs. 1 *“Abraham was 99 years old”*
- This is 12-13 Years after Ishmael is born. He's been their only son for 13 years
- Vs. 17 Abraham can't believe that he and Sarah will have a child from their old bodies
- God tells Abraham 3 times that the covenant will be with a son from Sarah
  - Vs. 16 *“I will give you a son by her....”*
  - Vs. 19 *“No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son....”*
  - Vs. 21 *“My covenant will be with Isaac whom Sarah will bear....”*

### **Read Genesis 18:1, 9-14**

- Abraham is 99 at this point. Sarah is 89
- God said He would return at the same time next year and they would have a son
- Vs. 11 says they were both clearly past childbearing age.
- Vs. 14 says this promised son Isaac will be born at the ***“appointed time”***

## **I. God's Faithfulness to Sarah 21:1-7**

## **II. God's Faithfulness to Hagar 21:8-21**

## **God's Faithfulness to Sarah Genesis 21:1-7**

### **Read 21:1-2**

Vs. 1a *"The Lord took note of Sarah as He had said"*

- NET/ESV "visited", NIV "gracious to", NASB "Took note of"
- General inference to remembering, and bestowing upon Sarah
- God remembered Sarah, He was gracious toward Sarah just as He said He would.

Vs. 1b *"The Lord did for Sarah as He had promised."*

- **Luke 1:7 Elizabeth & Zacharias** were both advanced in years and Elizabeth was barren due to age
  - Elizabeth says that *"God looked with favor upon her in order to take away her disgrace among men for not being able to bear children."*
  - He takes away her "DISGRACE". • **God's grace removes man's disgrace.**
- **Luke 1:30-31 Mary's Conception** was likewise supernatural
  - God's covenant of a physical nation unto Himself begins with a supernatural birth
  - God's New Covenant of a spiritual nation unto Himself begins with a supernatural birth.

## **God Is Very Clear In His Words to Moses That Isaac Is the Promised Son**

### **Read Vs. 2-7**

- 5 times in 6 verses we see a variation of Sarah *"bore him a son"* or *"born to him"*.
- 4 times in 7 verses we see Isaac's name

## **Isaac Arrives According To ALL The Details God Promised**

- **Vs. 2 *"Born to Abraham in old age at the appointed time, which God had spoken"***
  - **Gen.17:21** *"Sarah will bear a son at this time next year."*
  - **Gen.18:10** *"I will return to you at this time next year and Sarah will have a son."*
  - **Galatians 4:4-5** *"But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoptions as sons."*
- **Vs. 5 *"Abraham was 100 years old"***
  - **Gen.17:17** *"Will a child be born to a man 100 years old?"*
- **Vs. 3 *"And Abraham called the name of his son Isaac..."***
  - **Gen.17:19** *"....and you shall call his name Isaac and I will establish my covenant with him."*
  - **Gen.17:21** *"My covenant I will establish with Isaac..."*
- **Vs. 4 *"Then Abraham circumcised his son on the 8th day just as God had commanded him."***
  - **Gen.17:12** *"Every male among you who is 8 days old shall be circumcised...."*
- **Vs. 6-7 What Once Produced Laughter of Disbelief Now Results in Laughter of Joy**
  - **Gen.17:17** *"Abraham fell on his face and laughed in his heart regarding a son in old age."*
  - **Gen.18:9-15** *".....No, you definitely laughed."*

**Isaac = "Laughter" or "He laughs"**

## **God Was Faithful and Gracious To Sarah**

- God Blessed Her Son From Her Own Body. • God promised to make her "mother of many nations"
- God promised "kings of people shall come from Sarah's lineage" • God removed reproach of barrenness

## **When God Determines To Glorify Himself, He Will Not Share That Glory With Another**

1. Sometimes God expects that we will regulate and police our behaviors and responses
2. Other Times God Makes His Glory Undeniable & Unmistakable
  - Only God can make a 90 year old woman fertile. • Only God can make a virgin with child
  - Only God can walk out of a tomb 3 days later. • Even the plagues (some were somewhat replicated by magicians) Then God stepped it up so there was no confusion about His glory

## **II. God's Faithfulness to Hagar Genesis 21:8-21**

### **Read 21:8-21**

Ishmael Is Not Mentioned By Name Anymore?

- He is only referred to as *"the lad of the maid", "the son of the maid", "the boy"*
- 13 times in 13 verses he's now referenced with pronouns and not his name.

### **Vs. 8-9 Abraham Throws a Great Celebration - But Ishmael Mocks Isaac**

- Isaac probably around 2 or 3 years old. Ishmael has been the son and the focus for 16-17 years
- Ishmael Is Apparently mocking Isaac, or the feast, or the entire idea of the celebration.
- He's old enough to understand the miraculous birth of Isaac.

**Illustration:** *"Big Sister Again", "Big Sister Finally"*

**Mocking** = Same word used when Lot tells his son-in-laws that God is going to destroy the city  
Lot's son-in-laws think he's mocking/jesting about idea of destruction. Ridiculing the idea.

- Galatians Paul likens this mocking by Ishmael as "Persecution"

## **Was This Much More Serious Than Some Sibling Mockery? Probably For 3 Reasons**

### **1. Vs.10 Sarah's Reactions Is Very Stern & Deliberate**

- Sarah seems to go into full "mamma-bear mode"
- Her response is to get Ishmael and Hagar out of the house completely.
- Maybe she considered Ishmael's actions to no longer be safe for Isaac?

### **2. Vs. 11-13 The Matter Distressed Abraham Greatly Because of His Son**

- God appears to comfort Abraham by graciously reminding Him of the promise
- Isaac is the promised seed, but Ishmael will be great as well.

### **3. Paul's Use of This Event In Galatians Serves As A Rebuke to Judaisers Promoting Legalism**

- Paul is reminding that adherence only to the Law leads to bondage
- But life in Christ leads to freedom
- Paul says that one son persecuted the other and was sent away accordingly because he was NOT the son in whom the promise or covenant lied.

## **Interesting Parallels Between Ishmael's Birth and Isaac's Birth**

- **Genesis 16** Hagar Despised Sarah When She Became Pregnant
- **Genesis 21** Ishmael Is Now Mocking Isaac
- **Genesis 16** Hagar Fled From Abraham & Sarah's House To Escape Sarah's Anger
- **Genesis 21** This Time Hagar Is Directed to Leave & Told to Get Out of Their House

## **God's Instruction to Abraham to Dismiss Ishmael May Have Been A Precursor**

**Vs. 12** *"Do Not Be Distressed Because of the Lad For Through Isaac Your Descendants Shall Be Named"*

- God will eventually call Abraham to the mountain with Isaac
- This is much harder when Ishmael is gone. There is no backup plan.
- Ishmael's removal turns Isaac into a first fruit offering.
- "Whoever is found faithful with a little can be faithful with much"
- It was clearly very hard for Abraham to dismiss Ishmael

## **There Is Also Some Interesting Imagery With Ishmael Being Sent Off Into the Wilderness**

### **Leviticus 16:7-10, 20-22**

- Here we have two goats chosen by lot.
- One is Dedicated to the Lord, and the Other Sent Off Into the Wilderness
  - Pilate presented Barabbas & Jesus before crowds (it was custom to free prisoner at Passover)
  - Barabbas is freed and sent out like the scape goat.
- Jesus remained as an atonement for the sins of the world. Barabbas was sent off.
- Here in this passage we have Isaac in whom the covenant is confirmed and perpetuated
- And we have Ishmael sent off into the wilderness

These Guys ARE NOT Atoning Sacrifices Like Jesus & the Goats

There IS NO Salvific Work on Behalf of Barabbas

There is Just An Interesting Imagery of the Vessels God Uses.

### **21:14-17 Abraham Sends Hagar & Ishmael Away**

**Vs. 16** Isn't it interesting that the unit of measurement used here is a bowshot

- **Vs. 20** tells us Ishmael became an archer

## **God Is Faithful To Hagar in 4 Ways In This Mini Exile They Experience**

### **1. God Heard Their Cries**

- **Vs. 16 & 17** Reveal both Hagar and Ishmael crying out to the Lord in distress.
- **Vs. 17** *"Do not fear for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is."*
- **Gen.16:13-14** Maybe she learned to cry out to God from her last experience?
  - Maybe this is even why the angel asks what her crying is about?
  - Gen.16 also implies that she stopped at a well. She needs water again.

### **2. God Reiterates His Promise to Her Because of His Faithfulness to Abraham**

- **Vs. 18** *"Arise, take your son by the hand because I am going to make a great nation of him."*
- Hagar should have known from God's previous promises to her.
- God is gracious to remind us of His faithfulness
- Disciples should have known the prophecies of the Messiah too.

### **3. God Provided For Their Physical Needs**

- **Vs. 19.** *"Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water....."*
- This may have been a supernatural oasis God formed?
- Or, this may have been God leading them to a well that they just had not seen.
- Have you ever been so focussed on your trouble that you didn't see the provision in front?

### **4. God Was With Ishmael, He Became An Archer, He Married, & He Became A Great Nation**

- **Vs. 20-21** *"God was with the lad, and he grew, and he lived in the wilderness, and became an archer.....and his mother took a wife for him."*

**Summary:**

We Have Previously Highlighted How Aspects of God's Covenant With Abraham Can Be Seen As Conditional & Unconditional

**I Believe These Events Reveal The Unconditional Aspects of The Abrahamic Covenant****1. God Was Extremely Faithful and Gracious to Sarah Through Isaac**

- Despite Abraham & Sarah taking matters into their own hands to create a son with Hagar, God was still faithful to give them the Son He Promised.
- God didn't disqualify them and void His original plan when Ishmael came along
- He blessed Abraham and Sarah and took away her disgrace and reproach

**2. God Was Extremely Faithful and Gracious to Hagar Through Ishmael**

- Despite the fact that he was not the promised seed, he was still Abraham's son and God honored that.
- God promised to make Abraham into a great nation. Even though Abraham misappropriated that promise, God still honored it to Ishmael.

**Sarah & Hagar Were Blessed As A Result of God's Faithfulness & Covenant w/ Abraham**

- People around us should be blessed by God's faithfulness to us through the New Covenant of Jesus
- He can be faithful to them too, but our blessings should overflow and impact those around us.

**Our Sin Can Likewise Affect The People Around Us**

- Discord between Ishmael & Isaac leads to discord between Sarah & Hagar which leads to discord between Abraham and Hagar, which leads to discord between Abraham and his son Ishmael, with leads to discord in the world today.
- The present discord in the middle east traces back to these brothers.
- This is all because Abraham and Sarah took matters into their own hands
- God promises to wash our sins as far as the East from the West, but sometimes we must still live with the worldly day to day consequences.

**Ishmael Mocked The Promised Son Isaac- Sometimes Our Actions & Attitudes Mock Jesus**

- We don't stand at the base of the cross and tell Jesus to come down if You're truly God
  - But we mock the cross when we behave like its not enough for our situations.
  - We mock the cross when we fail to stand for what is right and Biblical because we're afraid of the peer pressure or what others might think.
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- Ishmael was probably a little scared, a little angry, a little confused, and most certainly a little jealous.
  - His response was to act out and antagonize Isaac.
  - Have your circumstances ever caused you to act-out with less than ideal faith in Jesus?