

Cultivate Genesis Study
Chapter 21

Read and meditate on Genesis Chapter 21 this week
and prayerfully answer the following questions before Tuesday's class.

Read Genesis 21:1-8

Isaac is born. His name means, "He laughs"

Abraham circumcised Isaac on the 8th day, as commanded in Genesis 17:12.

Read Leviticus 12:3, Acts 7:8, Luke 2:21.

Our God always keeps His promises, and He will always fulfill His promises according to His schedule not ours. 2Corinthians 1:20, *"For every one of God's promises is "Yes" in Him."* What is the greatest promise God has fulfilled in your life?

Are you waiting on a promise from the Lord that just doesn't seem like it will ever happen?

Do you feel that you are getting closer to Him in the anticipation or further away?

Read Proverbs 3;3-5. Pray that the Lord draw you into closer fellowship with Him as you wait for resolution.

1. Look up Scripture on promises and choose a few that speak to you.

In Genesis 21:6 Sarah's laughter is no longer from disbelief in what God promised in Genesis 18, but rather a joyful expression over the goodness and impossible blessing that God gave her in her old age.

In Vs 8 Isaac is weaned. This may have been sometime between 3 and 5 years old.

From Gills Exposition of the Bible-

"and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned; because he had now escaped the dangers of infancy, and had gone through or got over those disorders infants are exposed unto, and had his health confirmed, and there was great likelihood of his living and becoming a man, since now he could eat and digest more solid and substantial food; and this was great joy to Abraham, which he expressed by making a grand and sumptuous entertainment for his family, and for his neighbours, whom he might invite upon this occasion."

Read 1Corinthians 3:1,2 and Hebrews 5:12-14. Have you been weaned, spiritually speaking?

In Vs 9, Ishmael mocked. Read Galatians 4:29

The teenager, no doubt, was not happy with being displaced by Isaac, as the beloved "heir", after being Abraham's pride and joy all his life. The Bible has very strong words about envy and jealousy.

2. Read the following verses. 1Peter2:1, Proverbs 14:30, Genesis 30:1, Job 5:2, Romans 1:29, James 3:16

Which verse stands out to you, and why?

What prevents envy and jealousy? 1Corinthians 13:4, 1John 4:7,8

The longer we live the more regrets we have. Sarah regretted the fact that she gave Hagar, her maid servant, to Abraham and through her he had his first-born son. Sarah declared that she would raise the child as her own and consider him the fulfillment of God's promise.

Pastor Skip said, "Most of the time we just can't send our regrets away like Sarah did, many times we must live with them. But God's Word tells us in Joel 2:25 '*I will repay, you for the years the locusts have eaten...*' the word repay in Hebrew is restore it means to make amends, finish, give again, or make good. Don't wallow in your regrets let the Lord make good, restore that which is broken."

Read Genesis 21:9-14

Barnes- Notes on the Bible-

"He (Abraham) proceeds with all singleness of heart and denial of self to dismiss the mother and the son. This separation from the family of Abraham was, no doubt, distressing to the feelings of the parties concerned. But it involved no material hardship to those who departed, and conferred certain real advantages. Hagar obtained her freedom. Ishmael, though called a lad, was at an age when it is not unusual in the East to marry and provide for oneself. And their departure did not imply their exclusion from the privileges of communion with God, as they might still be under the covenant with Abraham, since Ishmael had been circumcised, and, at all events, were under the broader covenant of Noah. It was only their own voluntary rejection of God and his mercy, whether before or after their departure, that could cut them off from the promise of eternal life. It seems likely that Hagar and Ishmael had so behaved as to deserve their dismissal from the sacred home. "

Vs 13, *“And of the son of the slave woman I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant.”*

Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers-

“The son of the bondwoman—Heb., *of the handmaid*. Hagar is never acknowledged as Abraham’s wife, though her child, as Abraham’s son, receives a noble promise for the father’s sake.”

When reading Scripture are you ever amazed that you have read a passage a certain way and then discover you had made assumptions that aren’t valid?

When Hagar took her son and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba, Ishmael was not a tiny boy when she left him under one of the bushes to die. How old was he?

Ishmael could have been between 16-19 years old when Abraham sent him away. Being an heir of the wealthy Abraham for all his life, he likely had servants waiting on him and providing his every need. It is probable that he was not raised with the skills needed for surviving outside his comfy living arrangements.

3. How important is it to train our children with skills that are necessary for making their way in the world? Do you believe in assigning chores to young children; or do you advocate, “letting children be children as long as possible?”

In either case, what is the most important training parents should conduct with their children? What Bible verses can you find to support your belief?

In vs 17 we see that the young man prayed, and God heard him. He loves us and our children and will do whatever it take to bring them to Himself.

Genesis 21:21 *“He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.”*

Hagar went back to her Egyptian roots to find a wife for her son. Since Abraham was no longer involved with Ishmael, the task of finding his spouse came on Hagar.

Abraham loved his son Ishmael, it was hard for him to send him away, yet he knew that God would take care of him. He had prayed for him back in Genesis 17:18. It can be difficult at times to let our children go but at some point, they must learn to seek God and pray for His direction in their lives not Mom’s or Dad’s. We need to pray for our children, never give up on them.

If you know of friends who is suffering with wayward children please pray for them.

Read Genesis 21:22-30 about the covenant between Abraham and Abimelech.

Vs22-24, "Now it came about at that time that Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, **"God is with you in all that you do;** 23*now therefore, swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my offspring or with my posterity, but according to the kindness that I have shown to you, you shall show to me and to the land in which you have sojourned.*"24 Abraham said, "I swear it."

Abimelech was the title of a Canaanite king. This may not have been the same Abimelech as in chapter 20, but he does mention the "kindness that I have shown you.", so it is possible he is the same man.

When the Lord reminds you of someone who was kind to you say a prayer for them and ask the Lord to show you how to bless them, and then do it.

Abimelech is mindful of Abraham, his wealth and his close connection to God. News may have spread about Sarah's miraculous conceiving and giving birth to Isaac, as well.

Vs.24-26- The well dispute. With no rivers nearby, wells were crucial in that area for the survival of both man and animals. Abraham informs Abimelech that his servants seized (seized, took violently, robbed) a well that Abraham had dug. He takes the time to address this issue before entering the treaty.

Vs 26, "And Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, nor did I hear of it until today.""

4. What is the danger of not addressing and settling offenses quickly? Read Hebrews 12:14,15

Boaz is a good example to us in Ruth 3:18 and in Chapter 4.

Vs 31- Naming Beersheba "well of seven" or "well of the oath".

From Dan to Beersheba was used several times in the Bible, as meaning the whole of Israel.

From Dan, in the north to Beersheba in the south.

Vs 32- 33- Abraham plants a tamarisk tree and calls on The Everlasting God.

5. Read Psalm 106:48, Isaiah 40:28, Jeremiah 10:10, Isaiah 9:6. Which verse stood out, and why?

How daunting is it to think of God as everlasting? Is it easier to think of God in eternity future, than to think of God being eternal in the past? God did not insert Himself into our world. He always existed. And then, at a specific moment time, He created the universe; just like He created you, at a specific moment in time.

6. Do our actions reflect that truth? Have you placed God in a box? Take some time to really meditate on this truth. What has He shown you?

Let us not forget that we have placed our hope and trust in an Everlasting God. A personal, intimate God, yes; but He is still everlasting.