

In the Beginning

Genesis 21:1-34

- **25yrs** ago God made a promise to Abraham to make a great nation from his lineage and after that promise we read Abraham went to Bethel and built his first altar to the Lord and its there we see him begin to call on the name of the Lord. After that wonderful display of worship a famine hits the land and Abraham pulls up stakes and journeys south entering Egypt, its there we see Abraham instead of trusting in the Lord he is relying on self asking his wife Sarah to lie.
- It seems he got away with it until **10yrs** later with Sarah and Abraham wavering whether God could fulfill His promise of giving them and heir despite their advanced age, they decide that what God had promised to them by the Spirit was only going to be accomplished in the flesh. So Sarah in her worldly wisdom picks a handmaiden she had gotten out of Egypt named "**Hagar**" and gives her to Abraham in order to produce an heir and that is the origins from where we're introduced to Abraham's first son a young man named "**Ishmael**".

V1-34

- **V1-7 25yrs** and waiting the promise is fulfilled and little "**Isaac**" is born and where Sarah had laughed in unbelief she is now laughing with joy at the sight of God's Word to her coming true. Notice this all happened in God's timing and not in there's **V2**, one of the most needful but difficult lessons believers must learn is patience, for patience leads to trust, and trust obedience, for when we lack patience, we go back to trusting ourselves, and we become disobedient.
- **V8-9** what should have been a celebratory time becomes a territorial battlefield, as young Isaac now around three yrs old is ready to move his diet from milk to that of meat, but it's met with trouble. This event of Isaac being weaned meant he is maturing and that spells trouble for the older son "Ishmael" who up until Isaac being born was still considered the heir to Abraham, that has now changed as Isaac has taken his place in the family hierarchy and that breeds jealousy.
- Ishmael is between **17-19yrs** old depending on whether Isaac was weaned at **3** or at **5**, either way he is considered a man in those times, but there's a conflict brewing, Sarah had promised to raise Ishmael as her own, on her knees, but obviously she didn't, a clear separation has occurred, a rip, from which Satan is going to create a gaping hole that will never be mended. **Gen 16:12** God said about Ishmael that everywhere he goes there will be conflict and that's exactly what you see in the Middle East as there will never be peace until the Anti Christ comes deceiving and promising and giving false assurances until the people actually believe he's god.
- There's a spiritual connotation as well for like a natural parent's joy seeing their child go from milk to solid food so it is with our Heavenly Father seeing his kids be able to sink our teeth into the meat of scriptures and extract truth for themselves and no longer dependent upon a spiritual mom or dad but able to see things from the Word that applies to them personally.

- Although the conflict was inevitable what's apparent is it came from Ishmael not Isaac, and it's during a time in which Isaac is seen as maturing that Ishmael decides to attack him. Satan does the same thing to us during times that should be celebratory his desire is for us to think were not really growing-maturing, he scoffs at us, ridicules us, mocks us, in hopes of discouraging us.
- **V10-11** even though Sarah was the catalyst of this very bad idea almost two decades earlier she is not having it affect her long awaited joy filled promise and she tells not ask Abraham to get rid of him. Folks this was not **1Pet 3**, or cultural norm, as the undoubtedly head of every family was the husband and women had very few rights in that culture yet Sarah has no problem in going to Abraham and telling him Ishmael has got to go and go now, this distressed Abraham greatly.
- **Gen 17:18-20** Abraham was told that Sarah would have a son and to name him "**Isaac**" and afterward he cries out concerning "**Ishmael**" hoping that this wouldn't mean the demise of Ishmael but that he would be blessed also, God told him he would but the promise was with Isaac. So he knew this day would come for God told him two nations would come from them but he like any father who loves their children still didn't look fondly on the day that he lets them go
- **V12** is a wife's favorite verse, as Abraham told to listen to her, but it's not because he's to give in to her emotions-feelings, no it's because it lines up with His will. **V13-14** God reminds Abraham what he had already told him how He would take care of Ishmael, but for Abraham Ishmael was sort of a backup plan just in case things didn't work out with Isaac, then he'd still have Ishmael in the background, God blows that plan up and tells him to listen to Sarah and let Ishmael go.
- To show he's trusting God notice he doesn't send them out with camels and servants just bread-water, this is an example how we need to trust God with our kids more than what we can provide or our protection. The solution to the existing problem was "**to get rid of the son of the flesh**" as there was to be no reconciliation with the flesh, no peaceful coexistence, just complete and total separation. **V15-21** we see both God's promise and provision as He supernaturally preserves him in the wilderness, Jesus Himself speaking to them, then teaches him how to hunt and protect, and gives him a wife, all to fulfill His promise that Ishmael would be a great nation.
- **V22-24** no hostility treaty is made with Abimelech ruler amongst the Canaanites, this may or may not be the same one who Abraham wronged many yrs ago, but no doubt this shows how even the unbelievers living around Abraham recognizes that God is with him > **Gen 12:2**- God is making Abraham's name great so Abraham can tell others how great the Lord is. **V25-32** a dispute about a well that Abimelech's servants had taken by force and he wants it back and Abraham presents living lambs to represent their Covenant, and he calls the well "**Beersheba**" well of the oath, and Abimelech agrees and a peace treaty is struck > **Prov 16:7**.
- **V33-34** Abraham afterward calls on the "**Name of the Everlasting God**", I want to point out a few things about what Ishmael represents in scripture and what Isaac represents.

- A.** When it comes to the flesh we must starve it not provide for it - for almost two decades Abraham was providing for Ishmael until it was time for Isaac to grow and God stopped it
- B.** Flesh and Spirit cannot live together- the flesh loves to mock and laugh at spiritual things
- C.** Isaac was born of a miraculous birth- Ishmael was born of calculated worldly scheming
- D.** Isaac was prophesied by the Spirit- Ishmael is the result of a lack of faith and disobedience