

Gen. 21:1 And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

Gen. 21:2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

Gen. 21:3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

Gen. 21:4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

Gen. 21:5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

Gen. 21:6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, *so that* all that hear will laugh with me.

Gen. 21:7 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born *him* a son in his old age.

Verse one tells us that the Lord kept His promise (as always) and that Sarah became pregnant and gave Abraham a son at the very time God had promised. Probably in today's time, Sarah would have had the world at her feet from her beauty. She would have been and probably was the envy of many. But beauty on the outside isn't what brings happiness. Sarah felt empty. Isaac's birth was such a joyous event that he was given the name of laughter, Isaac. They knew that everyone would recognize their son as a special gift from God (because of Sarah's age) and would laugh with them.

Abraham circumcised Isaac when he was eight days old—again quick to obey God. As I think about it, it seems Abraham was always quick to obey God when he was given instruction. It's just when he made certain decisions on his own that he messed up. We should feel so blessed to have so much direction spelled out for us in the scripture. We don't get to see the Lord or hear His voice in person, but we do have His word as a guide chock full of examples, object lessons, and direct commands. We also have the gift of the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence.

Gen. 21:8 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the *same* day that Isaac was weaned.

Gen. 21:9 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

Gen. 21:10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *even* with Isaac.

Isaac grew and was weaned and Abraham held a great feast to celebrate. Ishmael, who was at least 14 by now, was caught mocking (Isaac presumably) by Sarah. I'm sure after being his father's pride and joy for so long, he was threatened by Isaac, the son of his father's wife—not the son of a slave. Sarah had waited so long for a son, that it probably scared her to see Ishmael act that way. So, she told Abraham to get rid of Hagar and Ishmael since Isaac would be Abraham's heir—not Ishmael.

Gen. 21:11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

Gen. 21:12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Gen. 21:13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

The thought of sending Ishmael away was distressing to Abraham because he loved his son. But God again tells him what to do—and again he obeys without hesitation. God tells him to do exactly as Sarah had said. He also promises Abraham that Ishmael will father a great nation as well. (From my perspective, that doesn't seem like much of a comfort. From Abraham's perspective, it must have been a great comfort. There is much in scripture that is left untold. God has told us what we need to know to live for Him and accomplish His purpose. This is exactly what He did for Abraham—told him all he needed to know at the time.)

Gen. 21:14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave *it* unto Hagar, putting *it* on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

Gen. 21:15 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

Gen. 21:16 And she went, and sat her down over against *him* a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against *him*, and lift up her voice, and wept.

Gen. 21:17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.

Gen. 21:18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.

Gen. 21:19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

Gen. 21:20 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.

Gen. 21:21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

So, early the next morning Abraham gives Hagar some food and water and sent her away with her son. He knew that God would provide for them based on His promise to make Ishmael a nation. She left and wandered in the desert. When they ran out of water, she put the boy under a bush and then went to another bush "a bowshot" (I assume that would be the length of the flight of an arrow) away and sat down. She didn't want to watch her son die. The Hebrew for the word "against" indicates that she sat in sight of or opposite to the boy. It's a bit unique to think of a boy that age nowadays being so obedient in these circumstances for one thing.

When you first read the verses, you would think we are hearing about a mother and her small child, but Ishmael is a teenager. I can picture him leaving with an air of defiance ("If you don't want me, see if I care.") and a spirit of protection for his mother. After his mother left him, she must have felt able to give vent to her

emotions, and so she started crying. Ishmael must have been crying also, because God heard the voice of the “lad.” One boy out of whatever the number of people on earth—and God heard him crying. God sent His angel to comfort Hagar. He tells her not to be afraid—that God has heard her son’s cry. She is told to go get her son and keep going because God would make a great nation from him. So God cleared her vision, and she saw a well of water and filled the water skin and gave her son a drink. They listened to God. God was with Ishmael as he grew during their sojourn in the wilderness, and he became an archer. They lived in the wilderness of Paran (in the Sinai peninsula). When he was older, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt, her homeland.

Gen. 21:22 And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phicol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God *is* with thee in all that thou doest:

Gen. 21:23 Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son’s son: *but* according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned.

Gen. 21:24 And Abraham said, I will swear.

Gen. 21:25 And Abraham reproveth Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech’s servants had violently taken away.

Gen. 21:26 And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I *of it*, but to day.

Gen. 21:27 And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant.

Gen. 21:28 And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.

Gen. 21:29 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What *mean* these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?

Gen. 21:30 And he said, For *these* seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well.

Gen. 21:31 Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they sware both of them.

Gen. 21:32 Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phicol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines.

Now the scene shifts back to Abraham. King Abimelech and Phicol, his commander, had noticed that God was with Abraham in everything he did. So they met with Abraham and asked him to “swear before God” that he would not mistreat Abimelech, or his children, or his descendants. He asks Abraham to demonstrate kindness to him and his country—the same kindness they had shown him, an alien in their land. So Abraham swore his promise. Then Abraham told the king that some of his servants had seized a well of water from him. Abimelech told him that this was the first he had heard about it. So Abraham brought sheep and cattle to Abimelech and the two men made a treaty. Then Abraham set apart 7 ewe lambs from the flock, and Abimelech wanted to know why. Abraham told him that the 7 lambs were a witness or pledge that he had dug the well that was seized. Abimelech accepted the lambs and they swore an oath. The place of the well was called Beersheba, the well of the oath. Afterward, the king and his commander returned to the land of the Philistines.

Gen. 21:33 And *Abraham* planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.

Gen. 21:34 And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days.

Abraham planted a grove of trees in Beersheba and called on the name of the Lord—the Eternal God. Abraham knew God as the self-existent, eternal and mighty God. Then we are told that Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines for many days.