

HISTORY:

20:1-18 Abraham and Sarah find themselves in a predicament when they both lie to Abimelech, king of Gerar that Sarah is Abraham's sister. So Abimelech takes Sarah for himself. But God comes to Abimelech in a dream to let him know that he is as good as dead, for Sarah is a married woman. Abimelech didn't know, but God lets him know that He (God) is the One who kept him from going to bed with Sarah and from sinning against Him. God tells Abimelech to give Sarah, his wife back to him his, for Abraham is a prophet and he will pray for him (Abimelech) and he will live; if not, there will be certain death for Abimelech and everyone that's with him. Abimelech got up early that morning and called all his servants together and told them the story and they became so afraid. Then he called Abraham and asked him what has he done; what has he done to him that he would bring such offense to him and his kingdom—a great sin. This should never have been done—what was he thinking when he did such a thing? Abraham answered him: *"Because I thought that there was no fear of God in this place and they would kill me to get my wife. However she is my half-sister, my father's daughter, not my mother's. I'm the one who told her to say that when God caused us to wander from my father's house."* Abimelech gave Sarah back to Abraham with much wealth and said live where you please. And to Sarah he said, *"I'm giving your 'brother' 1,000 pieces of silver in the presence of all these witnesses."* This was compensation for any wrong that he may have done to her. This will settle any claim against her, and her reputation is cleared; vindicated. Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants, so that they could have children, for the Lord had caused all the women to be barren; closed up their womb because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

LESSON: I. BIRTH OF THE PROMISED SON GENESIS 21:1-7

21:1 **And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken.** It had been 25yrs. since God had given Abraham the promise of a son. Sarai said in 16:2 that *"the Lord had restrained her from bearing."* Now the waiting was over. God visited Sarah meaning he allowed her to conceive just as He made it possible for the wife of Abimelech and the female servants after Abraham prayed, for it was God who caused them not to have children (20:17-18). So, God opened Sarah's womb to conceive exactly as He had said, and He did unto Sarah as He had spoken in His promises. God had proved Himself, by His Word, and His power. God uses His power to do exactly as He had promised. All things are in His timing.

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.** God allowed Sarah to become pregnant. She conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age at the appointed time God had spoken of.

21:3 **And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.** The father usually named a new baby. However, the name Isaac was announced by God to Abraham in 17:19. Therefore, Abraham named his son that was born, Isaac whom Sarah bore.

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21:4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. As the command came from God, Abraham obeyed! And at eight days old Isaac was circumcised.

21:5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. Abraham recognized his dependence upon God; the birth had to be a miracle because Abraham was 100yrs old, well beyond childbearing years, and Sarah had been barren for years. God orchestrated this from the very beginning.

21:6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. Sarah was just bubbling over with joy. Remember when Abraham laughed? (17:17) and when Sarah first laughed? Remember her response when she heard that she was to bear the promised son? (18:12). She laughed and then denied it. It was all so funny to the both of them, so guess what, the name Isaac means *"he laughs"* or *"laughter."* So, Sarah now says that *"it was God who made her laugh"* and it will be God who causes everyone else to rejoice with her when they hear her testimony; hear of the Promised Son.

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. Lastly, Sarah would not have dreamed that she would have children to nurse. It was God who had performed this miracle of enabling her to bear a child for Abraham in his old age. God fulfilled His promise, and the godly line was preserved—the line through whom the promised seed, the Savior of the world was to come.

- God gave Sarah a son named Isaac.
- Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau.
- Jacob became the father of the twelve sons who would give rise to the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Israel, some centuries later, would give the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to the world.

Simply stated, the line of Isaac would be the descendants through whom God would send His Son into the world. Sarah's son was the chosen line of the promised seed. There is more—there are similarities of the birth of Isaac and the birth of Jesus Christ. The birth of Isaac actually foreshadowed or pointed to the birth of Christ:

1. There was the miraculous births of the two children:
 - a. Isaac's birth—both Abraham and Sarah were beyond childbearing years.
 - b. Christ's birth—He was born of a virgin.
2. The times for both births were set or appointed by God.
3. Both Isaac and Christ were the promised seed or son.
4. There was the assurance of God's power in both births.
 - a. Sarah was too old, but God assured her of His omnipotent and unlimited power.
 - b. Mary was a virgin, unmarried, but God assured her of His omnipotent and unlimited power.
5. Both children were named by God Himself.
 - a. God chose the name Isaac for Sarah's son.
 - b. God chose the name Jesus for His own Son, the Savior of the world.
6. Both children brought great joy to their mothers and caused their mothers to focus upon God and what He had done.

II. CONFLICT OVER THE TWO SONS GENESIS 21:8-10

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

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was weaned. Therefore, Abraham threw a great feast for Isaac on the very day he was weaned from his mother's breast. This was apparently a Near East custom of that day: a child reaches 2-3 years old and is weaned from his mother's breast.

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

The celebration of Isaac's passage from infancy to childhood was witnessed by the laughter of ridicule. At some point during the feast, Sarah saw Ishmael (the firstborn son of Abraham by Hagar the Egyptian handmaid of Sarah) mocking Isaac: ridiculing, poking fun of, being mean-spirited, and bitter toward him. This is known as sibling rivalry. Remember Isaac was 2 or 3 years old and Ishmael was 16 or 17 years old. No matter how old or how young, there will be some friction between siblings. This discord seemed trivial at first glance, but not to Sarah who bore the promised child for Abraham. Ishmael was surely jealous, because Abraham was giving too much attention to Isaac. He had all of Abraham's attention for so long. This new child had taken his place with his father. Galatians 4:29 says, *"But then he (Ishmael) that was born after the flesh persecuted him (Isaac) that was born after the spirit..."* Sarah had become jealous, as well.

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.

Sarah does not want Ishmael to inherit any part of Isaac's inheritance. She tells Abraham to cast out the bondwoman and her son (Hagar and Ishmael). Now, Abraham's attention was now split two ways, and he was more focused upon Isaac at the time, than Ishmael, even though he loved Ishmael. Ishmael's mocking had gotten to Sarah and she could not stand it any longer; they had to go. This is the second time Sarah did not seek or trust God's help, but began to tell Abraham what to do again.

SUMMARY:

God kept His promise and visited Sarah exactly at the appointed time He had spoken of, and Sarah became pregnant and bore Abraham a son in his old age. Abraham named his son Isaac. When his son was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded. At the time of Isaac's birth, Abraham was 100yrs old. Sarah said, *"God has made me laugh and now everyone will laugh with me."* Sarah would not have dreamed that she would have children to nurse and give Abraham a son in his old age (90yrs) (21:1-7).

The child Isaac grew, and was weaned and Abraham made a great feast the day he was weaned. The celebration of Isaac's passage from infancy to childhood was witnessed by the laughter of ridicule from Ishmael, the firstborn son of Abraham by Hagar. Sarah tells Abraham to cast out the bondwoman and her son (Hagar and Ishmael) for he will not inherit any part of Isaac's inheritance (21:8-10).

