

## Genesis 21:1-21

### *The Promised Son is Born to Abraham*

“Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Heb 11:1)

“And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him” (Heb 11:6)

“For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it” (Rom 8:24-25)

So much of our Christian life could be summarized in these three verses

We come to know Christ through faith in Him

- “*he who comes to God must believe that He is*”
  - o Without belief and trust in Christ, it is impossible for us to know Him
  - o Faith is the spiritual link between us and Christ, the object of our faith

We live our lives based on faith

- We drive in cars that we trust will work properly
- We eat food that we trust is safe for consumption
- We sit in chairs that we trust will hold us up

All of us express faith in earthly things

- Most of the time, we don't even think about it
- We take it for granted

It is no different in spiritual realities

- All of us express faith in various principles
  - o Some of these are worthy and worthwhile
  - o Others are idolatrous and dangerous

Thus far in our study of Genesis, we have continued to look at Abraham

- He is far from perfect
- We were reminded of that last week

But Abraham is presented as a man of faith and trust in the Lord

- Step by step, we have followed this man's journey as he left his homeland

God intends for us to learn from his life

- To learn from his moments of faith
- But also to learn from his moments of doubt and distrust

For many years, God has promised that Abraham and Sarah would have a son

- This morning, we see that become a reality

**Let's read Genesis 21:1-21**

God has assured this couple that they would have a son

- In this morning's message, we will see that God's Word is reliable and trustworthy
- **What God promises, He provides**

Specifically, God's Word gives two (2) provisions

- The provision of Isaac, the child of promise
- The provision for Ishmael, the child of the flesh

## **I. The Provision of Isaac, the child of promise (21:1-7)**

Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised. <sup>2</sup> So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him.

Genesis 20 was another one of those lapses in Abraham's life

- He lied to a king in Gerar about his relationship with his wife, Sarah
- As a result of this, he almost lost his life
- And he almost forfeited the future of his family

But God intervened to preserve His promise

- **What God promises, He provides**

God restored Sarah back to Abraham

- The result was that God honored the promise He had given so many years earlier

The text of Genesis 21 opens up with a beautiful statement of God's faithfulness

- **"Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised. <sup>2</sup> So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him"**

Did you notice the repeated emphasis on how the LORD brought about this promise in accordance with His Word?

- **"as He said"**
- **"as He had promised"**
- **"which God had spoken to Him"**

The birth of this son was not an "accident" or coincidence

- **No, it was the perfect timing of God's plan being carried out by the Sovereign Lord**

We will learn that what God promises, He provides

- He had promised a son some 25 years prior<sup>1</sup>
- Now Sarah would conceive and bear a son to Abraham in his old age

Moses draws the attention to Abraham's age and not to Sarah's

- Abraham was 100 years old
- Sarah was 90
  - o She wasn't a spring chicken!

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<sup>1</sup> Leon J. Wood, *A Shorter Commentary on Genesis*, 85.

But God was at work in the physical and spiritual lives of Abraham and Sarah

<sup>3</sup> And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac. <sup>4</sup> Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. <sup>5</sup> Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.

At long last, the son of promise was born

- For so long, Abraham had waited for the LORD to fulfill it

When God's Word comes to an individual, the appropriate response is one of obedience

- God doesn't want us to offer opinions about what we think is best
- God wants us to obey Him...period!

And we see that from the life of Abraham in verses three and four

- He calls the name of his son, "Isaac"
- He circumcises his son on the eighth day

These may not seem like huge steps of faith

- But they were acts of obedience nonetheless

I believe this is one truth that we often overlook

- We tend to measure progress by large choices
- You know, the "big" decisions of life

I think that the Christian life consists of many steps – some big and some small

- It is in the small steps that we really see where our heart is
- Whether we will trust Him in the daily details or not

After renewing the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 17, the LORD speaks to Abraham and reassures him that he will have a son

- “*And I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.*” <sup>17</sup> Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, ‘Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?’ <sup>18</sup> And Abraham said to God, ‘Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!’ <sup>19</sup> But God said, ‘No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him’” (17:16-19)

When Abraham heard of the idea that his wife would give birth, he “fell on his face and laughed”

- He thought this was humanly impossible
- *And he was right*

But Abraham did name his son, “Isaac” – just as God had commanded him

- This root word means “he laughs”
- This idea of laughter will play a pivotal role in this chapter

The second act of obedience by Abraham was in circumcising his son on the eighth day

- “*This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised.*” <sup>11</sup> And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you” (17:10-11)

We know that Abraham followed through with this

- “Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all *the servants* who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's household, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the very same day, as God had said to him. <sup>24</sup> Now Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin” (17:23-25)

Circumcision was the outward mark of the covenant between the LORD and Abraham<sup>2</sup>

- The end of verse four reminds us that circumcision was something that “God had commanded him”
- And Abraham was being obedient

We have another note that Abraham “was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him”

- We know from Genesis 17 that Abraham was 99 when he was circumcised
- Ishmael was 13 years old when he was circumcised
- So Ishmael was born when Abraham was 86

At the time of Isaac's birth, then, Ishmael would have been 14 years old

- He was not an infant or a baby
- He was well on his way to adulthood

<sup>6</sup> And Sarah said, “God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.” <sup>7</sup> And she said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

As the LORD visited Sarah and allowed her barren womb to conceive, she responded appropriately

- She said, “God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me”

Notice once again how the theme of laughter has re-emerged

- When Sarah first heard that the Lord would allow her to give birth to a child, she laughed

That's right, just a year earlier, Sarah had laughed at the thought of being a mother

- Of course, this laughter was one of doubt and disbelief
- We know that because the LORD told her, “Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son” (18:14)

Fast-forward one year and we see Sarah laughing again

- But this time, it is a laughter of amazement and joy
- The boy's name would evoke reminders of God's faithfulness<sup>3</sup>

She is so overwhelmed by God's work that she realizes that others will “laugh with me”

- When they hear the story of how the LORD opened her womb at 90 years of age, everyone will laugh
- But the truth will be told nonetheless

What a change has been wrought in the heart of Sarah

- How God has matured her

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<sup>2</sup> Victor P. Hamilton, *NICOT, Genesis 18-50*, 74.

<sup>3</sup> Allen P. Ross, *Creation & Blessing*, 379.

How God has changed her

- From doubt to trust
- From sarcasm to sincerity

In verse 7 she meditates on these truths, “**Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.**”

- She realizes that only God could have brought all of this about

What was impossible with man is possible with God

- What God promises, He provides

Each one of us has been there

- God gives such great promises in His Word
- We wait and wait and wait
- We show impatience and distrust

But then finally, God’s Word comes to fruition

- And our response is one of amazement

Granted, we may not have given birth in an old age

- But the principle of faith is still the same

God had promised a son for Abraham and Sarah

- God had now provided Isaac, the son of promise

***But God would provide something else in this chapter...***

- Not only had He made a provision of Isaac
- But He also made...

## **II. The Provision for Ishmael, the child of the flesh (21:8-21)**

**<sup>8</sup> And the child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.**

In just a few opening words, Moses summarizes the first few years of Isaac’s life

- We go from his miraculous birth to the time when he “**was weaned**”

In this culture, it was very common for mothers to nurse their children until two or three years old<sup>4</sup>

- Sometimes they would nurse longer than this

So the time when they were weaned from the mother was a cause of celebration

- Hence the reason why “**Abraham made a great feast on the day when Isaac was weaned**”

We have to keep in mind that during these days, for a child to reach this point was a great accomplishment<sup>5</sup>

- Deliveries were oftentimes difficult and dangerous
- Infant mortality was high

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<sup>4</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 2*, 81.

<sup>5</sup> Wenham, 81.

The thought of Abraham providing a “feast” takes us back to chapter 19 when he hosted three “men”

- Two of these were angels
- One of them was the Lord Jesus Christ in His pre-incarnate state

We noticed how generous Abraham was with these three

- But notice here in 21:8 that this was a “great feast”
- Much larger and generous

<sup>9</sup> Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking.

You would think that the entire household of Abraham would be celebrating this special occasion

- But all was not well

During the festivities, Sarah noticing something abnormal

- She saw “the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking”
- Let’s make some observations about this verse

First, Sarah says “the son of Hagar the Egyptian”

- Not Ishmael
- Actually, his name is not used at all this chapter

Second, Sarah says that he was “mocking”

- Most of our English translations have this word

Earlier I told you that Isaac’s name, which means “he laughs,” would be a continual theme throughout this chapter

- Both Abraham and Sarah laughed when the LORD initially told them of his arrival
- Sarah said that all would “laugh” when they heard the story of his miraculous conception

What we have here in 21:9 is another use of the root word for Isaac

- Our translations say that Ishmael was “mocking”
- The Hebrew text says that he was *Isaacing*

What exactly Ishmael was doing, we are not sure

- Other passages in the Old Testament which use this root word tell us that it is a negative, derogatory action<sup>6</sup>
- Obviously, it was negative enough for Sarah to take notice of it
  - o Teasing
  - o Mocking
  - o Scorning

Ishmael would have been a fourteen-year-old young man at the time of Isaac’s birth

- Perhaps he was moved with jealousy for his relative
- Ishmael suddenly realized that he was no longer the heir of Abraham’s inheritance<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Derek Kidner, *Tyndale OT Commentaries, Genesis*, 140.

<sup>7</sup> Wood, 86.

As the apostle Paul would look back on this event between these two, he would write that Ishmael “persecuted” Isaac (Gal 4:29)

- So this was no innocent laughter
- This was a malicious, jealous scorn and ridicule of the new heir

<sup>10</sup> Therefore she said to Abraham, “Drive out this maid and her son, for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac.”

Sarah, whose child was being mocked, immediately tells Abraham to take action

- Remember, this is all taking place during a time of celebration
- Everything should be going well – but it isn’t

Sarah doesn’t mince words, either

- She tells Abraham to “drive out this maid and her son”
- This put a lot of pressure on Abraham

The verb “drive out” is a very harsh and mean term

- This was the word that God used to speak of how He “drove” Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden (3:24)
- This was the same word that God used to speak of how He had “driven” Cain from the presence of God (4:14)

What is Sarah’s motivation?

- Why is she so intent on having Abraham drive them away?
- The Text is clear, “the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac”

Sarah didn’t want Ishmael having any of Abraham’s inheritance

- She wanted her son, Isaac, to have it all

Sarah didn’t even use the names Hagar and Ishmael

- Instead, she referred to them as “this maid” and “the son of this maid”

It is interesting that one act of ridicule and jealousy oftentimes leads to other instances of the same<sup>8</sup>

- Ishmael had ridiculed Isaac
- Now Sarah is ridiculing Hagar and Ishmael

<sup>11</sup> And the matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son. <sup>12</sup> But God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named. <sup>13</sup> And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant.”

Now get the picture

- We are observing a great feast
- The son of promise has been born!
- After several years, Isaac has been weaned from his mother

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<sup>8</sup> W.H. Griffith-Thomas, *Genesis: A Devotional Commentary*, 185.

But Sarah notices Ishmael mocking Isaac

- Jealousy and rage erupt in her heart

Sarah insists that Abraham drive out both Hagar and Ishmael

- She doesn't even want them around anymore
- The motherly instinct has been turned up a few degrees

If you are Abraham, what do you do?

- Well, let's see what he did

Moses tells us that the matter “**distressed Abraham greatly because of his son**”

- Ishmael, his firstborn, caused deep grief for Abraham

By this time, Ishmael is anywhere from sixteen to eighteen

- We know he was 14 when Isaac was born
- This feast is celebrating the time when Isaac was weaned from Sarah – probably two to four years later

Here in the heat of the moment, God speaks to Abraham

- God says, “**Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named**” (21:12)

God actually commands Abraham not to be distressed

- No doubt Abraham felt torn
- He loved Ishmael, his firstborn son
- But he also loved Sarah, his wife

God instructs Abraham to “**listen**” to what Sarah is saying

- At first glance, this may seem a bit awkward
- God was *telling* Abraham to heed what his wife was saying

God had some strong words to say to Adam for doing this, “**because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’; cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life**” (3:17)

- Adam chose to listen to his wife instead of God and we are all paying for it

“**So Sarai said to Abram, ‘Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing *children*. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children through her.’ And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai**” (16:2)

- Abraham chose to follow his wife instead of looking to the LORD

So when we read here in 21:12 that Abraham should obey and heed the word of his wife, we don't expect great things

- Up to this point, to disagree with God's Word has produced some rotten results

But God Himself tells Abraham to heed the word of his wife

- That's right

God was using the counsel of Sarah for His own purpose and plan

- God tells Abraham, “**through Isaac your descendants shall be named**”

Of course, God was able to read Abraham's mind

- He knew exactly what Abraham was thinking
- And He gave the perfect answer to a very difficult situation

God had promised that Abraham's name and blessing would be carried through the son of promise, Isaac

- Not through Eliezer, the servant (15:2)
- Not through Ishmael, the son of the flesh (17:18)

Remember, what God promises, He provides

- He had promised Isaac
- He would provide the future blessing

But God also has a word to Abraham concerning Ishmael, **“And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant”** (21:13)

- In no way would Ishmael be forgotten

God would **“make a nation”** of him

- Why?
- **“because he is your descendant”**

Because he was the son of Abraham, God was allowing him to receive great blessings

- God had already determined that Isaac would be the chosen seed
- But He had already determined that Ishmael would become a **“nation”**

In no way was God abandoning Ishmael

- Instead, He was protecting Isaac

The tension that we have already witnessed would have only intensified as the boys grew older

- God certainly knew this<sup>9</sup>

This isn't the first time that conflict has emerged in Genesis

- Cain and Abel had conflict
- Abraham and Lot had conflict
- Lot and the men of Sodom had conflict

*But God was at work in each of these instances*

We are not told exactly how God conveyed this to Abraham

- Perhaps it was a night dream like He did with Abimelech
- We are not sure

But Abraham has been given a word from God

- Would he obey?

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<sup>9</sup> Ross, 381.

<sup>14</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba.

The very next morning, “**early in the morning**,” Abraham obeyed

- He sought to trust God and comply with what He had told Abraham to do

Did it make sense to Abraham?

- Probably not

But God doesn't ask if something makes sense to us before we act

- He simply exhorts us to trust and obey

Abraham rises early and gives some basic provisions to Hagar and Ishmael

- He gives them “**bread and a skin of water**”

This was a pretty meager amount of food and water when you compare this to the “**great feast**” that took place yesterday

- But then again, a woman would not have been able to carry much

A “**skin of water**” would hold about three gallons

- That is roughly 25-30 pounds<sup>10</sup>
- Can you imagine lugging that around for any period of time?

Abraham not only gives food and water to Hagar

- It seems as if he commits Ishmael to her care as well

For Abraham to let go of his son must have been extremely difficult<sup>11</sup>

- He had spent the last 16 to 18 years with Ishmael
- Now he was having to let go

This is the second time that Hagar has left Abraham's household

- Back in chapter 16, Sarah insisted that Abraham have children through Hagar
- When Hagar became pregnant, Sarah “**treated her harshly**” (16:6) and Hagar fled

But the angel of the LORD told Hagar to return to Sarah and “**submit**” herself under the authority of Sarah (16:9)

Once again, it is because of the actions of Sarah that Hagar is being run away from Abraham's household

- Only this time, Hagar doesn't return

As a matter of fact, after Genesis 21, we never hear from Hagar again in the book of Genesis

But Abraham doesn't know this

- Perhaps he thinks that this will be another quick trip
- But we know better

Soon after leaving, Hagar and Ishmael consume the water and bread

- Moses writes that they “**wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba**” (21:14)

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<sup>10</sup> Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 295.

<sup>11</sup> Griffith-Thomas, 186.

- In other words, they were lost

<sup>15</sup> And the water in the skin was used up, and she left the boy under one of the bushes. <sup>16</sup> Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away, for she said, “Do not let me see the boy die.” And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept.

Hagar felt alone in the wilderness

- She had been there before
- When she fled because of Sarah’s actions, the angel of the LORD had appeared to her, issuing great promises about her son, Ishmael

Here she is again

- Only this time there is no immediate visit from the angel of God

Things seem so hopeless that she thinks that she and Ishmael will die

- She “**left the boy under one of the bushes**”
- Perhaps he had passed out from thirst and heat exhaustion

Whatever happened to Ishmael, Hagar left him for dead

- She put some distance between her and her son so that she would not hear his cries for help

How sad this is!

- Yet, the LORD instructed Abraham to follow through with the plan of Sarah
- Because this was, in essence, the plan of God

Would God intervene?

- What about those promises that the Lord made regarding Ishmael?
- Don’t they seem to be in jeopardy?

Remember, beloved

- What God promises, He provides

<sup>17</sup> And God heard the lad crying; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, “What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. <sup>18</sup> Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand; for I will make a great nation of him.”

God does intervene

- The author states that “**God heard the lad crying**”

Isn’t this interesting?

- The last part of verse 16 says that Hagar “**sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept**”

We know that God heard this since He knows everything

- But God pays attention to “**the lad**”

The angel of God spoke to Hagar once again, just as He did in chapter 16

- “**What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. <sup>18</sup> Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand; for I will make a great nation of him**”

We remind ourselves that Ishmael means “God hears”

- He was first given that name by the angel of the LORD when Hagar ran away from home the first time

Now that Hagar has been driven from Abraham’s household, the angel of God once again “hears” the cry for help<sup>12</sup>

- This is a definite wordplay on the meaning of Ishmael

Hagar couldn’t hear her son

- But God heard his cries for help

What comforting words this must have been for Hagar!

- She was on the verge of desperation
- But God had other plans

I have noticed sometimes that it is at the point of desperation that God acts

- Not until I say, “I can’t” does God act

Hagar had come to the end of her rope

- She had no more knots to tie
- She had literally given up any hopes that she or her son would live
- But God reassures her that He will “**make a great nation of him**”

This is all well and good

- But what good are God’s promises at such a point?

<sup>19</sup> Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink.

Once again, we are reminded that what God promises, He provides

- “**God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water**”

Previously unknown to her was this well of water

- Exactly what she needed
- Exactly when she needed it!

She went and filled the skin with water and gave some water to her son

- Notice the focus is not on herself or her own thirst
- The focus is on Ishmael

God had met a real need at a real time of desperation

- This must have been encouraging to Hagar

If God met this need of water, then He would bring the other promises to fruition

- All of a sudden, the future didn’t look so hopeless after all

An interesting sidenote is that Hagar and Ishmael are no longer under Abraham’s household

- Thus, they are not identified with the Abrahamic Covenant
- God didn’t have to bless and provide for them

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<sup>12</sup> Kenneth A. Mathews, *NAC, Vol. 1B, 273.*

God was extending His grace to those outside the covenant

- In other words, someone doesn't need to be born into the right family in order for God to bless them

The apostle Paul would write in the book of Ephesians, “*remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*”<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ” (2:12-13)

*20 And God was with the lad, and he grew; and he lived in the wilderness, and became an archer. 21 And he lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.*

The next series of events are given more as a summary

- “God was with the lad, and he grew”
- As a late teenager, God continued to minister to Ishmael

He lived in the wilderness

- Probably not far from where he had been left for dead

Ishmael “became an archer”

- He was skilled in hunting wild game in this barren area of the desert

Hagar “took a wife for him from the land of Egypt”

- Normally, it was the responsibility of the father to provide a wife for his son<sup>13</sup>

But Abraham was not around any longer

- So his mother had to perform this duty

The passage in Galatians 4 that I read earlier in the service plays a big part in understanding the relationship between Isaac and Ishmael<sup>14</sup>

- Paul uses these two brothers as an illustration or allegory
  - o Isaac represents those under God's grace
  - o Ishmael represents those under the Law
- These half-brothers were similar, yet entirely different
  - o Same father
  - o Yet entirely different focus in life

God's promises would come through the son of the promise, not the son of the flesh

- Isaac, not Ishmael, would be the chosen seed
- Isaac was born in accordance with the Abrahamic Covenant, which promised unconditional blessings

For those of us who believe in Christ for salvation, we are “like Isaac...children of promise” (Gal 4:28)

- But for those who reject Christ, you are associating yourself with Ishmael who represents those outside the covenant of blessing

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<sup>13</sup> Wenham, 86.

<sup>14</sup> Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*, 369.

## God's Word is full of great promises

- As we rightly apply those to our lives, we learn of God's faithfulness

In a very dark time in the history of Judah, the city of Jerusalem was ransacked and destroyed

- The Temple was leveled

It was in such a context that the prophet Jeremiah uttered these words, “**The LORD's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail.** <sup>23</sup> **They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness**” (Lam 3:22-23)

- In a time when circumstances were hopeless, God's Word was reliable
- In a time when our world is turned upside down, God's Word is trustworthy

Perhaps you are here this morning and things are not going well for you

- I don't know the specific situation and circumstances that you are facing
- But God does

God met Hagar in a time of crisis and desperation

- She literally thought that she and her son would die in the wilderness
- It was as she gave up that God stepped in

Certainly, God expects us to obey His Word

- That is the appropriate response when we are confronted with His Word

But there is also a reminder here that God sometimes waits to intervene until we reach the end of our rope

- The apostle Paul realized this and confessed, “**for when I am weak, then I am strong**” (2 Cor 12:10)

Where is your faith this morning?

- Are you trusting in Christ 90% but trusting in yourself the other 10%?

Trials have a way of bringing us back to reality, don't they?

- God uses these times to see where our trust really is

There is a valuable lesson to be learned from Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar

- It is a lesson that we need to learn as well

*What God promises, He provides*