

## GENESIS 20, 21 ABRAHAM MEETS ABIMELECH / SARAH'S PROMISE

### Verse 1

Abraham headed south to Philistine city of Gerar, last stop before wilderness. Twenty-five miles from Hebron, desert dry; less than 10 inches of rain a year  
area Hagar headed to try to go back to Egypt

Why did Abraham move? Probably Lot's situation and family connection made people fear his God would bring destruction on them as well

Time to get out of Dodge for awhile

### Verses 2,3

Abraham fell back on his old line of protection: Sarah is my sister

Common thing in those days to take a sojourner's sister or other relative as a wife as a peace agreement you wouldn't necessarily attack them if your sister lived with them.

Abraham and his company were no small group, caused concern to them

however, Sarah was still a beauty, even at 90, for the king sent for her when he was told of her beauty.

Abimelech Av(father) i(my) melech(king) my father is king

God wasn't about to allow him to sleep with her, lest there be doubt of Isaac's paternity  
you are a dead man!

### Verses 4-7

"I'm innocent!" Even pagans knew what was good and what was evil.

God said, "Yes, and I helped you not to sin. Send her back to her husband and he will intercede for your healing

### Verse 8

Next morning: As everyone was affected, he called in all his servants, to inform them what was going on. They were scared out of their wits.

### Verses 9-13

Mah? What?

What were you thinking, Abraham?

Why would you do such thing to me and my kingdom? What have I done to you?

Abraham: I thought you didn't fear God and you would kill me for Sarah. So, I told her, when we travel, to say, "He is my brother."

### Verses 14-15

Abimelech gave him herds of sheep and oxen plus many servants and returned Sarah to him.

Again, Abraham made out like a bandit, through no good he'd done.

God was blessing him as He had promised and now Abraham was probably the rich man in the land.

### Verse 16

Sarah got a scolding from Abimelech. He addressed Abraham as "your brother," not 'your husband.'

He said he gave Abraham the 1000 pieces of silver so he could buy Sarah a veil to wear (as well as other women in group) so others wouldn't be tempted by her beauty. And, now, Abraham would be the

protector of her.

Verses 17-18

Abraham prayed and all in the king's house were healed and could now bear children.

## CHAPTER 21 / GOD'S PROMISE TO SARAH

Verses 1-4

So Abraham and Sarah remained in the area for some years and Isaac was born and grew there., being circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day.

Verses 5-7

Abraham, 100 and Sarah, 90

Read Luke 1:57-58

Sarah rejoiced, having the pleasure of a child after all those years, and others rejoiced with her. She was no longer judged for being childless. A childless woman was looked on as having some sin in her life for God to close her womb.

Verses 8

in ancient times, weaning came around age of three, sometimes four.

Time for big celebration. The fact that a child survived to that age was call for celebration, and now could eat solid food.

Verses 9-10

Ishmael was now 17 years old.

Translated "mocking," it is more than just that. The Hebrew phrase is "to sport," and has sexual connotations. As mentioned before, sexual intimidation is a Middle east tactic used by some young men to show power and dominance. Ishmael likely had issues of jealousy, now that, in his eyes, his place in line had been usurped.

Galations 4:28-29

Persecuted -Ishmael was cruel to Isaac, in a lascivious manner as well. According to Jewish scholars, he once took Isaac out and "playfully" used for target practice wibow and arrow and with intent to kill.

Sarah would not put up with such behavior. She feared Ishmael would somehow seize or rob Isaac of his inheritance.

So, "Throw out that woman with her son!"

Verses 11-13

Abraham's heart was broken at the thought and resisted doing so , but God said, "Listen to Sarah, Isaac is the child of promise, but, don't worry. I will take care of your other boy and he will be a great nation, too."

Verse 14

Early in morning Abraham took lehem (bread) and a skin of (mayim) water and sent her out.

What a shock it must have been to Hagar and Ishmael! They had been going on in life thinking they would be part of the family of Abraham living there. Suddenly their world was turned upside down! They some bread;they had some water.

They “wandered” (they reeled and vacillated) It was as if she didn't know what to do or which way to go.

Verses 15-17

Out into the desert-Probably trying to get to Egypt again, but she had no water left. Only to wait for death. She, as any mother, could not bear to see her child die, so, she sat a bowshot away. Here is another implied reference to bow or hunter. She lifted up her voice and wailed.

Verse 17

The Angel of the Lord heard Ishmael.

God called out from aloft, in the sky above, to Hagar, “Malach?” What's wrong with you?  
“Al tirah.” Fear not.

Verse 18

“Get up! Pull him up with your hand!” in other words, “Have strength and courage!”

Verse 19

God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water.

In vain, we don't see what is around us or what is ahead. We don't focus on the blessings we do have. One person put it this way- “We focus on the hole, not on the donut.”

Verses 20-21

And God EXISTED with the lad. He was always there, every minute, just as he is with each of us. Ishmael matured, living in the wilderness and was an archer. (Root word for archer -”to increase.”) This is third reference to 'archer.”

Reread Gen. 16:12

He did become a large group of people,, called the Arabs: much bigger group than the Jews. History tells us that his descendants were famous for being excellent archers. Archery goes with both hunting and war. He stayed in the wilderness of Paran, living as a nomad. Ancient records say he was a highwayman, robbing travelers through the desert. mountains. Paran is located in Arabia and has topography similar to Afghanistan.

As her duty if Father is unavailable, Mama got him a wife from Egypt. Sound like she made it back to her people.

Verses 22-34

Meanwhile, back at the ranch....

Abimelech and Phicol, his army general, (Philistines) meet with Abraham.. This is a big deal; a military confrontation. Abraham has an army of men, too.

But, Abimelech saw that God was with Abraham and wanted a deal with him instead of war. He wasn't stupid.

In ancient times, there was no ownership of grazing lands. Nomads would use it, then move on and later someone else would use it.

Abimelech said, "Seeing all my kindness toward you, I want your promise you won't cheat me or lie to me while you are living here."

So, do you think he might have a reason to think Abraham might lie?

Abraham said, "I will swear shabah."

Shabah is "to seven oneself." To repeat 7 times to make a covenant.

But, Abraham had a bone to pick with Abimelech. Big trouble at the well. The well he had dug was taken over by Abimelech's herders. And that well was life or death for them. Abimelech claims this is the first time he'd heard of the problem.

So Abraham brought him sheep and oxen, then seven lambs he gave as evidence he had dug the well.

That place was then and still is called Beer Sheva, The Well of of Seven ( Well of the Oath)

Abraham worshiped the God there, planted tamarisk trees to honor the Lord and remained in Philistine land for a long while.

It is now the southernmost city of Israel. Solomon made it a fortified city in his day, to protect the border area of Israel.

Today's videos

1. The story of Abraham's well and the Confrontation with Abimelech.
2. Sergio and Rhoda / Fresh Water by the Dead Sea