



# Living Hope Ministries

## Bible Study

### GENESIS 21

This chapter covers three main incidents: the birth of Isaac, the departure of Hagar and Ishmael, and a new agreement with Abimelek.

Verses 1-7

#### **The birth of Isaac.**

Abraham is 100 years old when Sarah conceives and gives him a son. This was God`s promise and came about in God`s time. The name Isaac means he laughs he laughs, one who rejoices. Certainly Isaac is a source of great joy to Sarah. She has given her husband a son at last. Isaac is circumcised on the eighth day according to God`s command.

Verses 8-21

#### **Hagar and Ishmael are sent away.**

A feast is held by Abraham to celebrate the birth of his son. At the feast it appears that Ishmael is mocking. We have no detail but it upsets Sarah. She urges Abraham to send the boy and his mother away. Abraham finds this difficult because although he loves Sarah, Ishmael is his son. However God speaks to him and tells him that Isaac is the heir of all the promises made to Abraham and that he must listen to Sarah. It seems very sad and harsh but in the great and wider plan of God, Abraham must respond. God promises that Hagar`s son will create a nation separate from what will emerge with Isaac.

Abraham sends Hagar and Ishmael away with some food and water. They wander into the desert of Beersheba. After a while the water has gone and Hagar fears her son will die. However God speaks and tells Hagar not to fear for He will make a great nation from her son. God provides water and the two live in the desert, Ishmael becoming an archer. As time goes by Hagar finds a wife for Ishmael.

How patient and gracious God is with his people. It was Sarah who chose Hagar to be her maid and it was Sarah who gave her to be a wife to Abraham and to give him

a son. We can see how God is watching over the whole situation and despite human frailty, His master plan to bring a line which will lead to Jesus will not be stopped.

Verses 22-33

### **Abraham and Abimelek**

It is interesting that Abimelek has great respect for Abraham and to some degree feels intimidated by him. He recognises God is with Abraham and wants Abraham to respect him as he respects Abraham.

There is a dispute about a well. This was a very important issue in those days and could lead to serious consequences.

They come to an agreement as Abraham makes a gift to Abimelek as a sign that he dug the well.

Abimelek leaves to the land of the Philistines. Abraham plants a tree and he calls on God's name.

### **Points to consider.**

God keeps His promises, have you forgotten or given up on a promise from God to you?

Some decisions can come back to haunt us. How do we handle difficult relationships and choices?

Why do you think God blessed Ishmael?

How did Abraham handle the relationship with Abimelek?

God is with Abraham on this long and difficult journey. What signs do you see of God's hand on you in your journey?