

# GENESIS 21 - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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## PROMISE KEEPING GOD - ([SERMON MP3](#))

**Interact with the following statements in the context of Genesis 21 and in the context of your own life.** How do these fit into the story of Abraham and Sarah, and how do they fit into your story?

- *You can trust God's faithfulness. He keeps his word.*
- *You can trust God's power. He can perform the miraculous.*
- *You can trust God's sovereignty. His ways are always right and timely.*
- *You can trust God's compassion. He has a special love for the hurting, broken, and alone.*
- *You can trust God's watch-care. He will protect and provide.*

**Why do you think Sarah reacted so harshly to Ishmael's treatment of Isaac (Gen. 21:9-10)?** Why do you think God compelled Abraham to heed her orders instead of insisting that Ishmael stay? How does (Gal. 4:29) offer insight?

- *List several reasons why Abraham did not want to see Ishmael go.*
- *Why was it necessary?*
- *What promise did God give Abraham concerning this son?*
- *What does (Gen. 21:12-21) show about God's nature? Look up (Psalm 68:5-6; 34:18; Isaiah 54:5) for help.*

**Disobedience has painful consequences.** Whitt it was years after the union of Abraham and Hagar (a union that denied the power of God to fulfill his covenant), Abraham had to face up to his wrong and send his concubine and son away. Sooner or later the consequences for sin will be reaped by the sinner.

- *Can you think of some other biblical examples of where sin remained dormant for a while, but then devastating consequences came to the surface? Can you think of any passages of Scripture that speak to this truth about sowing and reaping.*
- *What do you think of this admonition: "Do not sow your wild oats and then pray for a crop failure. It is unlikely to happen."*

**Faith, patience, and perseverance - that's what it takes to inherit a promise (Heb. 6:12; 10:35-36).** After about 25 years of waiting Abraham was finally rewarded with the birth of a son through Sarah.

- *In what areas of your life is God currently requiring faith, patience, and perseverance?*

- *What result do you expect as an outcome of those attitudes?*

**In what ways was the birth of Isaac like the birth of Jesus?** In what ways were they different?

- *In what way did Ishmael's welfare and future depend on his response to Isaac?*
- *In what way does your welfare and future depend on your response to another child of promise, Jesus Christ?*

**How does Sarah's interaction with Abraham in (Gen. 21:10-11) fit with her description in (1Pet. 3:1-6)?** What should a wife do today when she disagrees strongly with her husband?

**What New Testament contrast do Sarah and Hagar, Isaac and Ishmael, represent according to Galatians 4:21-31?**

**The Apostle Paul later used this story in Genesis 21 to explain why many Israelites had rejected Jesus and the company of believers (Romans 9:6-9).** What truth about God and His chosen people do Isaac and Ishmael illustrate?

**One writer summarized Genesis 21 with this phrase, "The promise fulfilled and the weaning of Abraham."** At first glance it seems like a mistake. Wasn't it Isaac who was weaned? Well, Isaac was weaned physically but Abraham was being weaned spiritually. How does the account of the casting out of Hagar and Ishmael support that?

**The first and second half of Genesis 21 are tied together by the theme of God keeping his promises.** The first portion of the chapter focuses on the child of promise, while the second portion focuses on the land of promise.

- *How do you see God fulfilling his promises (Gen. 12:1-3, 7) in Genesis 21?*
- *Recall what God promised in (Gen. 15:1) and what Abimelech observes in (Gen. 21:22). Has God kept his promise? How?*
- *What promises has God fulfilled in your life?*

**In Genesis 21, we are reminded of "the God who hears" – Ishmael, and "the Everlasting God" – El Olam.**

- *What is the significance of these names of God in the biblical context?*
- *What is the significance of these names of God in your context?*

**How can you let something in this study affect your life? Is there some passage you want to meditate on, some action you want to take, or some change of attitude you want to pray about?**