

Genesis Chapter 21

Verses 1-8

“Abraham circumcised his son Isaac” as a sign of the covenant (17:9-14).

Genesis 21:1 "And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken."

“The LORD visited Sarah”:

To the aged couple (verses 2, 5, 7), exactly as promised, a son was born and the 25 year suspense was finally over with the laughter of derision turning to rejoicing (see verse 6).

The barrenness of Sarah (11:26), had ended.

Genesis 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."

The LORD had been faithful to his gracious promise to Sarah.

"He did as he had spoken."

The object of the visit was accomplished.

In due time, she bears a son, whom Abraham; in accordance with the divine command, for him he calls Isaac.

God's word is true.

He never fails to do what He has promised to do.

He had promised Sarah and Abraham a son.

Genesis 21:3 "And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac."

“Isaac”:

He was the miraculously born son of Abraham and Sarah and was the forefather of the Jews.

Both Abraham (17:17), and Sarah (18:12), laughed at the promise of a son in their old age, but later laughed for joy at his birth (verses 1-8).

He represented the ancestral line of the promised Messiah.

God tested Abraham's faith by His command to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah.

Isaac's obedience also anticipates Christ as the only begotten Son willing to be bound on the altar of sacrifice by His Father.

In Isaac's marriage to Rebekah the faith of Abraham was again tested for 20 years as he awaited a son.

Isaac lived 180 years and fathered both Esau and Jacob. (see Gen 17:19; 26:1-5)

This son, Isaac, was the son of promise, the son of the spirit, not the son of flesh, like his half-brother, Ishmael.

"Isaac" means laughter.

This was the son through whom the promises to Abraham would be fulfilled.

Genesis 21:4 "And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him."

"God had commanded him":

See Genesis 17:12.

This is the first that we read of that was circumcised on that day, according to the divine precept, which Abraham strictly observed.

For though this was the son of the promise, and of his old age for whom he had the most affectionate regard; yet he administered this bloody ordinance on him (see note on 17:11).

Nor did he defer it beyond the time, and was himself the operator, as it seems.

All which shows his strict regard, and ready and cheerful obedience to the command of God.

The blood covenant that Abraham made with God, he fulfilled in his son, Isaac, as God had commanded, when the child was eight days old.

"Eight" means new beginnings.

Genesis 21:5 "And Abraham was a hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him."

"Isaac ... born unto him":

In 2065 B.C., God fulfilled His promise to Abraham (12:2; 15:4-5; 17:7).

In the flesh, a hundred year old man could not father a child; but in the spirit, anything at all is always possible.

Genesis 21:6 "And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, [so that] all that hear will laugh with me."

When Sarah received the promise, she laughed with distrust and doubt.

Sarah expressed her grateful wonder in two somewhat poetic strains.

The first, consisting of two sentences, turns on the word laugh.

This is no longer the laugh of delight mingled with doubt, but that of wonder and joy at the power of the LORD overcoming the impotence of the aged mother.

The second strain of three sentences turns upon the object of this admiring joy.

As I said, Isaac means laughter.

His mother was rejoicing, because she had been truly blessed by God, and she had this baby in her old age.

This had taken her reproach away.

Hebrew women were looked down upon, if they didn't have children.

Her friends were rejoicing with her.

Genesis 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."

The event that nobody ever expected to hear announced to Abraham, has nevertheless taken place; "for I have born him a son in his old age."

The time of weaning, the second step of the child to individual existence, at length arrives, and the household of Abraham make merry, as was the custom on the festive occasion.

Abraham had undoubtedly been embarrassed in front of his friends that he and Sarah had never had children.

No one believed he would ever have a child by Sarah.

In fact, they did not believe themselves, until God sent them hope and a promise.

She could hardly believe it herself, that she had given Abraham a son.

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

“And the child grew, and was weaned”:

He thrived under the nursing of his mother, and through the blessing of God upon him; and being healthy and robust, and capable of digesting stronger food, and living upon it, he was weaned from the breast.

What age Isaac was when weaned is not certain, there being no fixed time for such an affair, but it was at the discretion of parents, and as they liked it.

“Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned”:

Because he had now escaped the dangers of infancy, and had gone through or got over those disorders infants are exposed to, and had his health confirmed, there was great likelihood of his living and becoming a man.

Since now he could eat and digest solid and substantial food, this was great joy to Abraham.

A little boy cannot get too far away from mother, until he is weaned.

Now, Abraham would be able to be with his son.

This was a very special time in this very special little boy's life.

This was reason for celebration with Abraham.

For a man of this age to have a child would make the child everything in the father's eyes.

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

“Son of Hagar ... mocking”:

The celebration of Isaac's passage from infancy to childhood witnessed the laughter of ridicule (an intensive form of the Hebrew for laughing), and offended Sarah, causing her to demand the expulsion of Ishmael and his mother from the encampment (verse 10).

“Mocking”:

This is an intensive form of the verb for Isaac's name, “He Laughs.”

It was used (in 19:14 and again in 39:14-17).

In Isaac, Ishmael saw all his hopes for an inheritance shattered.

The discord may have seemed trivial at first glance, but with time it became a fundamental rift, on the background of which the New Testament would expound the incompatibility of the natural man and the spiritual man (Gal. 4:29).

Genesis 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."

“Cast out ... not be heir”:

Legal codes of Abraham’s day, e.g., of Nuzi and of Hammurabi, forbade the putting out of a handmaiden’s son if a rightful, natural heir was born.

Sarah’s request, thus, offended social law, Abraham’s sensibilities, and his love for Ishmael (verse 11).

Abraham, however, was given divine approval and assurances to overcome his scruples before sending Hagar and Ishmael out into the wilderness (verses 12-15; Gal 4:22-31).

“Cast out this bondwoman and her son”:

This is cited (in Galatians 4:30), as an inspired demand.

Sarah did not care for this teenage son of the slave girl (and especially his making fun of her beloved Isaac).

Jealousy arose.

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 baby had taken his place with his father.

Sarah was jealous, as well.

She wanted to make sure that her son inherited everything Abraham had.

Her request to Abraham was to throw them out.

Genesis 21:11 "And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son."

“And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight”:

The motion that Sarah made to turn out of his house Hagar and Ishmael was not agreeable to him, but the reverse; it seemed an ill thing to him.

It was greatly displeasing to him, and he was unwilling to come into it.

Sarah cannot stand the insolence of Ishmael, and demands his dismissal.

This was painful to Abraham.

Nevertheless, God does encourage it as reasonable, on the grounds that in Isaac was his seed to be called.

This means not only that Isaac was to be called his seed, but in Isaac as the progenitor was included the seed of Abraham in the highest and utmost sense of the phrase.

Abraham proceeds with all singleness of heart and denial of self to dismiss both the mother and the son.

This separation from the family of Abraham was, no doubt, distressing to the feelings of the parties concerned.

Abraham loved Ishmael.

Ishmael was the only son Abraham had for all these years.

To just turn his own flesh and blood out was very hurtful to him.

Genesis 21:12 "And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

"And God said unto Abraham":

Either by an articulate voice, or by an impulse on his mind, suggesting to him what he should do, being no doubt in great perplexity how to conduct between his wife and his son, but God determines the case for him, and makes him easy.

"Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of the bondwoman":

That is, let not the suggestion displease thee, which Sarah has made, to turn out the bondwoman and her son; let not thine affection to the one and to the other hinder compliance with it.

Do not look upon it as an ill thing, or as a hard thing; it is but what is right and proper to be done, and leave the bondwoman and her son to me.

I will take care of them, be under no concern for them and their welfare.

"For in Isaac shall thy seed be called":

See Abraham's previous wish (17:18).

Here is a case where the chronologically firstborn son did not receive the firstborn status (Romans 9:7; Hebrews 11:18).

Genesis 21:13 "And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he [is] thy seed."

"And also of the son of the bond-woman will I make a nation":

Hagar.

A promise already given (Genesis 17:20), but here repeated to render Ishmael's dismissal easier.

"Because he is thy seed":

Thy son according to the flesh, though not after the promise; as Isaac was (see Genesis 4:25).

See verse 18; and also the notes on 16:11-12.

Ishmael was about 17 years old, a customary time for sons to go out to set up their own lives.

God, in essence, was saying to Abraham, you and Sarah schemed and created a problem with this boy that was not part of my plan for you.

The blessings that I (God), promised you are through the spirit, not through the flesh.

God would bless Ishmael, just because he belonged to Abraham, but the real blessing was to come through Isaac and his ancestors.

Isaac would be known as the son of promise.

Through him shall all the nations be blessed.

God told Abraham to do what your wife asked; He would take care of Ishmael, wherever he was.

Genesis 21:14 "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave [it] unto Hagar, putting [it] on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba."

Wilderness of Beer-sheba":

A wide, extensive desert on the southern border of Palestine.

"Beer-sheba" is located 48 miles southwest of Jerusalem and midway between the Mediterranean and the Dead sea.

It was the gateway to the Negev desert to the south.

Abraham and Isaac both settled there (verses 31-34; 26:23-33).

Archaeological excavations were begun in 1969 by Yohanan Aharoni for the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University.

The Early Bronze Age site was quite small, but several wells from the period have been found.

Permanent settlement of the site began in the twelfth century B.C., and it was fortified in the tenth century B.C.

The city suffered massive destruction during the Assyrian invasion under Sennacherib in the eighth century B.C.

The site was reoccupied in the Persian period and is mentioned among the villages of Judah (Neh. 11:27).

The present thriving metropolis is located about one mile west of the mound (tell), which marks the ancient location of the city.

This had to be hard for Abraham to do, but he had the promise of God that He would take care of the child.

Hagar was responsible for Ishmael now (he was on her shoulder as he was her responsibility).

Genesis 21:15 "And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs."

"And the water was spent in the bottle":

It was all drank up by them, being thirsty, having wandered about some time in a wilderness, where they could not replenish their bottle.

"And she cast the child under one of the shrubs":

Not from off her shoulder, but out of her hand or bosom.

Being faint through thirst, he was not able to walk, and she, being weary in dragging him along in her hand, perhaps sat down and held him in her lap, and laid him in her bosom.

But, imagining he was near his end, she laid him under one of the shrubs in the wilderness, to screen him from the scorching sun, and there left him.

Some make this to be Ishmael's own act, and say, that, being fatigued with thirst; he went and threw himself under the nettles of the wilderness.

Ishmael was now, no doubt, thoroughly humbled as well as wearied, and therefore passive under his mother's guidance.

She had then led him to a sheltering bush, and caused him to lie down in its shade, resigning herself to despair.

Genesis 21:16 "And she went, and sat her down over against [him] a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against [him], and lift up her voice, and wept."

"And she went and sat her down over against him, a good way off":

Not being able to bear the sight of her child in his agonies, and, she apprehended, that he was ready to die.

She went from the place where she had laid him, and sat down under one of the shrubs or trees to shade herself, right over against that where her child was, though at some distance.

"As it were a bowshot":

About as far off from him as an arrow can be shot, or is usually shot out of a bow; according to the Jews this was about half a mile, for they say two bowshots make a mile.

Here she sat waiting for what would be the issue, would it be either life or death, which it was the last she expected.

For she said, "let me not see the death of the child" as she could not bear to hear his dying groans, and see him in his dying agonies.

"And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice and wept":

On account of her desolate and forlorn condition, being in a wilderness, where she could get no water, and her child, as she thought, dying with thirst.

Any mother would be disturbed to be cast out with no provisions, and to watch her only child have to die.

She could not bear to watch him starve for water and food.

She moved away from him, but not so far that she could not run to him, if he cried out.

She cried for help, not for herself, but for her son.

Genesis 21:17 "And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he [is]."

“God hear the voice of the lad”:

When desperation turned the lad’s voice of scoffing into a cry of anguish at probable death from thirst (verses 15-16), God heard him whose name had been given years before when God had heard Hagar’s cries (16:11).

It reminded the mother of the promise made to Abraham about her son (17:20).

This is saying, we never wander so far away from God that He will not hear our cry for help.

He, too, heard the lad.

The angel (ministering spirit), called to Hagar in her distress, and told her not to fear.

God had sent help.

Genesis 21:18 "Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation."

“For I will make him a great nation”:

The promise assured Hagar that God would take care of Ishmael (see note on verse 13).

Genesis 21:19 "And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink."

“God also opened her eyes that she saw a well of water”:

From which the bottle was replenished, and she and the lad are ready for their further journey.

It is unnecessary to determine how far this well of water was, but the opening of the eyes was truly miraculous.

It may refer to the clearing of her mind and the sharpening of her attention.

These words appear to me to mean no more than that God directed her to a well, which probably was at no great distance from the place where she sat; and therefore, she is commanded to support the lad, literally, to make her hand strong in his behalf.

In other words, that he might reach the well and quench his thirst.

God encouraged Hagar that He would take care of her and Ishmael.

He repeated the blessing on Ishmael.

The difference in Ishmael's blessing was that his was a fleshly, worldly, blessing.

Isaac's was a spiritual blessing. She immediately saw a well of water.

Genesis 21:20 "And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer."

"And God was with the lad":

To confirm his health, to provide for him the necessities of life, to protect him from danger in the wilderness where he was, and to prosper and succeed him in worldly things; all which is owing to the providential goodness of God.

"And he grew":

He increased in bodily stature, and arrived to manhood; or, "he became great", in riches and in substance, as Ben Melech interprets it.

"And dwelt in the wilderness":

Of Beer-sheba, where he now was, or of Paran after mentioned, a fit place for a wild man to dwell in, as it was said he should be; and by this means the prophecy was then fulfilled (see Genesis 16:12).

"And became an archer":

Skillful in the use of the bow and arrow, both for hunting and slaying of wild beasts, on whose flesh he lived, and for fighting with men, against whom his hand would be.

Ishmael was a teenager, when he first came to the wilderness.

God blessed him and provided for his needs.

He, probably, hunted for a living.

Genesis 21:21 "And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt."

"And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran":

So called from Paran, which was a city in Arabia Petraea; it reached from the wilderness of Shur to Mount Sinai.

This land was very large, desolate, impassable and without water.

From Mount Sinai to Kadesh-barnea it is a journey of eleven days.

Located in the northeast section of the Sinai Peninsula, the area called Arabia.

"And his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt":

Her own country, for as she was an Egyptian (Genesis 16:1); and where they dwelt was not far from it.

According to the Jewish writers, Ishmael had two wives; the first he divorced, and then married the Egyptian.

Egypt has been worldly throughout the Bible.

So he took a worldly wife.

His ancestors were the modern Arabs.

Verses 22-34

A parity treaty formally struck between Abimelech and Abraham guaranteed the proper control and sharing of the region's limited water resources and also assured the king of the patriarch's fair and equitable treatment for years to come.

Genesis 21:22 "And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God [is] with thee in all that thou doest:"

"God is with thee":

Others saw God's hand of blessing upon Abraham and they desired to make a covenant with him (in verse 24).

Genesis 21:23 "Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: [but] according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned."

"Now therefore swear unto me here by God":

By the true and living God, by whom only an oath is to be taken, who was Abraham's God, and whom Abimelech seems to have known and to have been a worshipper of.

Therefore, moves for an oath to be taken by him, which he knew would be sacred and binding to Abraham, could he prevail upon him to swear.

"That thou wilt not deal falsely with me, or with my son, or with my son's son":

Perhaps he had heard that God had promised to give the whole land of Canaan to him and his posterity and among the rest his kingdom, which was a part of it.

Seeing him grow great and powerful, he could not tell how soon it might be or else he would be put in the possession of it, whether in his own time, or his son's, or his grandson's.

Therefore, he desires Abraham that he would swear to do no hurt to them whenever it should be.

"But according to the kindness I have done unto thee":

Thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned; that, as he had given him full liberty to sojourn in any part of his kingdom where he pleased.

So when the whole country should come into his possession that he, or his son, or his grandson, in whatsoever time it should be, might quietly enjoy their own land, and all the inhabitants of it.

At least that they might not be driven out of it, but live in it as he had done.

Abimelech had lived near Abraham, and had observed that God had abundantly blessed him.

Abimelech wanted to make a treaty of peace with Abraham reaching three generations.

Abimelech reminded Abraham that he had been good to him.

Genesis 21:24 "And Abraham said, I will swear."

Sensible of the many favors he had received from Abimelech in times past, and was still indulged with, he very readily agreed to his proposal; and the rather, as he knew by the vision between the pieces, that it would be four hundred years before his posterity should be put into the possession of the land of Canaan.

And therefore, could take an oath that neither he, nor his son, nor his grandson, should be injured or dispossessed.

Genesis 21:25 "And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away."

"And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water":

Before he swore and entered into covenant with him, he thought it advisable to inform him of an affair that had happened concerning a well of water, which in those hot and dry countries, as the southern parts of the land of Canaan were, was an affair of great importance.

And to make complaint of the ill usage of Abimelech's servants with respect to it, and to reason with him about it, that the thing might be adjusted to mutual satisfaction, and so a firm basis and foundation be laid for the continuance of friendship for the future.

Which was wisely done before their alliance and covenant was ratified.

"Which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away":

Abimelech who was, until informed, entirely unacquainted with the action of his servants.

That is, had by force taken the use of it to themselves for their cattle, and had deprived Abraham of it, though it was of his own digging (See Genesis 26:15).

Genesis 21:26 "And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I [of it], but to day."

"And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing":

He pleads ignorance; he knew nothing of it before, nor now which of his servants had done it.

Intimating that if he could know who it was, he should severely reprimand him for it.

"Neither didst thou tell me":

Signifying that he was to blame as he did not complain of it sooner.

Or at least he had no reason to blame him, since he had never informed him before of it, and therefore could not expect to be redressed.

"Neither yet heard of it but today":

He had not heard of it from any others, as the Targum of Jonathan rightly adds, by the way of any explanation.

But that very day, and very probably not till the moment he heard it from Abraham himself.

Abraham agreed to make the peace treaty with Abimelech.

Abraham brought up a very sore subject about a well that Abimelech's men had taken violently.

Abimelech said I only found out about this today; I didn't know about this.

He was trying hard to agree with Abraham.

Genesis 21:27 "And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant."

"And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech":

In gratitude for former favors he had received from him, in token of the friendship that subsisted between them, and for the confirmation of it.

And to show that he was fully satisfied with Abimelech's answer to his complaint, as well as willing to enter into covenant by sacrifice, when such creatures were divided, and the covenanters passed between the pieces, for so it follows.

"And both of them made a covenant":

Or, "cut or struck a covenant".

Cut the sacrifice in pieces and passed between them, in token of the compact and agreement they entered into with each other; signifying that whoever broke it deserved to be cut in pieces as those creatures were.

Genesis 21:28 "And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves."

After the settlement of this dispute the treaty was concluded, and Abraham presented the king with sheep and oxen, as a material pledge that he would reciprocate the kindness shown, and live in friendship with the king and his descendants.

Out of this present he selected seven lambs and set them by themselves.

Genesis 21:29 "And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What [mean] these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?"

When Abimelech inquired what they were, he told him to take them from his hand that they might be to him (Abraham), for a witness that he had digged the well.

Genesis 21:30 "And he said, For [these] seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well."

It was not to redeem the well, but to secure the well as his property against any fresh claims on the part of the Philistines, that the present was given; and by the acceptance of it, Abraham's right of possession was practically and solemnly acknowledged.

A well was very valuable in this dry land.

God had shown His people where to dig wells.

This particular well was in dispute.

Abraham gave the seven ewe lambs to prove the well belonged to him.

They sealed the agreement between them with the gift of animals.

Genesis 21:31 "Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba; because there they sware both of them."

"Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba":

Either Abraham or Abimelech, or both, called it so; or it may be read impersonally, "therefore the place was called Beer-sheba", for two reasons, one implied, the other expressed.

One was, because of the seven lambs before mentioned; so the Targum of Jonathan,"and therefore he called the well the well of seven lambs.

"Beer":

Signifying a well, and "sheba" seven.

The other, and which is more certain, being expressed, is as follows:

"Because there they swore both of them":

By the living God, to keep the covenant inviolably they had made between them.

"Beer-sheba": Was a city, famous in the book of Genesis as the residence of the patriarchs Abraham and Jacob (Gen. 22:19; 28:10; 46:1).

Genesis 21:32 "Thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines."

"The land of the Philistines":

Abraham had contact with early migrations of Aegean traders who settled along the southwest coastal regions of Canaan and who were the predecessors of the 12th century B.C. influx of Philistines, the future oppressors of Israel.

Referring to the coastal plain which was later occupied by the Philistines, beginning in 1200 B.C. and onward.

The reference here clearly identifies Abimelech with the Philistines ("Sea Peoples").

There is ample evidence of Aegean contact with the coast of Canaan that was during the time of Abraham himself.

While the term "Philistine" may be used in anticipation, it is not to be taken as a thing belonging to a period other than that in which it exists.

Mycenaean and Minoan traders from the Greek islands have left pottery remains in this area.

Thus, primitive Philistines, such as Abimelech, are correctly identified as belonging to this people grouping.

It would also stand to reason that Abraham, being a foreigner himself, would seek a trading alliance with these outsiders who would later come in great enough numbers so as to threaten Israel's security.

They both agreed to the treaty at Beer-sheba.

Abimelech and his chief captain, Phichol, returned home confident in the treaty.

"Beer-sheba":

This means well of the oath.

Genesis 21:33 "And [Abraham] planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God."

"Planted a grove":

A tamarisk tree which functioned as a reminder of the treaty concluded between two well know contemporaries, and also as a marker of one of Abraham's worship sites.

"The everlasting God":

A divine name appropriately signifying to Abraham the unbreakable and everlasting nature of the covenant God had made with him, notwithstanding his being only a resident alien and a sojourner in the Land (23:4).

"The everlasting God":

This would be a logical epithet of a deity called upon to support a formal treaty expected to be valid for all time.

The name is one of a series, including El Elyon (14:18), El Roi (16:13), El Shaddai (17:1), El-elohe-Israel (33:20), El-beth-el (35:7).

Each one expresses an aspect of God's self-disclosure.

Genesis 21:34 "And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days."

"And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days":

Even many years, days being sometimes put for years; having entered into covenant with Abimelech, the king of the country.

And having settled a good correspondence with him, and having his friendship and good will, which commanded respect from his subjects; Abraham sojourned very quietly and comfortably for many years, chiefly at Beer-sheba.

The Jewish writers say he sojourned here twenty six years.

This land had not yet been received by Abraham as the land of promise.

It would be the Holy Land of promise, when Moses led the ancestors of Abraham from Egypt, and God fulfilled His promise.

Abraham was a man after God's own heart.

He prayed to God, very often.

Genesis Chapter 21 Questions

1. Sarah bare Abraham a son in his _____.
2. Sarah and Abraham named their son what?
3. What does the name mean?
4. Which son would the spiritual promises come through?
5. How old was Isaac, when he was circumcised?
6. "Eight" means what?
7. How old was Abraham, when Isaac was born?
8. Why did Sarah laugh?
9. Why was Abraham embarrassed?
10. When Isaac was weaned, what did Abraham do?
11. What did Sarah see Ishmael doing?
12. What did Sarah ask Abraham to do with Hagar and Ishmael?
13. Whose side did God take?
14. Why would God make a nation of Ishmael?
15. What did Abraham give Hagar, when he sent her away?
16. Why did Hagar sit a good way away from Ishmael?
17. Whose cries did God hear?

18. Who came to Hagar?
19. When Hagar's eyes were opened, what did she see?
20. What was the difference in Isaac's blessing and Ishmael's blessing?
21. What trade did Ishmael take up?
22. What was the name of the place where he lived?
23. The peace treaty from Abraham to Abimelech was to be good for how many generations?
24. Why did Abimelech want a treaty?
25. What was the controversy over the well?
26. How was it settled?
27. What was the name of Abimelech's captain?
28. What does "Beer-sheba" mean?