

# Abraham-Sarah and Challenge of Ishmael *Husband Wife Interactions*

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# What We Will Learn

- To protect Isaac, Sarah demanded Ishmael and mother sent away
- Dilemma for Abraham
  - Ishmael was his son
  - Sarah his wife (Sarah-Abraham are one)
- God resolved conflict
  - Fulfilled Sarah's demand
  - Protected and provided for Ishmael
- Genesis 21

# Beyond Expectation

## Birth of Isaac

- Sarah gave birth to a son
- Beyond expectation
- Abraham was 100 years old
- Sarah was 90
- Genesis 21:1–7 [Birth of Isaac]
- Genesis 17:15–18 [Abraham's doubt]
- Genesis 18:10–15 [Sarah's doubt]

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## Genesis 21 (NKJV)

1 And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken.

2 For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

3 And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him—whom Sarah bore to him—Isaac.

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## **Genesis 21 (NKJV)**

4 Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him.

5 Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.

## Genesis 21 (NKJV)

6 And Sarah said, “God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me.”

7 She also said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have borne him a son in his old age.”

- Abraham expressed doubt when God promised that Sarah will bear a son
- Even offered God an alternative

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## **Genesis 17 (NKJV)**

15 Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name.

16 And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.”

## Genesis 17 (NKJV)

17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”

18 And Abraham said to God, “Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!”

- Sarah also expressed doubt

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## **Genesis 18 (NKJV)**

10 And He said, “I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son.” (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.)

11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing.

## **Genesis 18 (NKJV)**

12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, “After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?”

13 And the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, saying, ‘Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?’

## **Genesis 18 (NKJV)**

14 Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.”

15 But Sarah denied it, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid.

And He said, “No, but you did laugh!”

# Sarah Demands Expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael

- Sarah saw Ishmael mocking Isaac
- At Isaac's (birthday?) weaning ceremony
- Ishmael was 14 years old
- Isaac, maybe, was two
- Sarah demanded Abraham expel Hagar
- To protect Isaac from Ishmael
- Genesis 21:8–10

## **Genesis 21 (NKJV)**

8 So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.

9 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing.

## Genesis 21 (NKJV)

10 Therefore she said to Abraham, “Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac.”

- Send Hagar away with Ishmael
- To deny Ishmael any opportunity to become a problem to our son, Isaac

# Sarah's Demand Became Dilemma for Abraham

- Ishmael was his son
- How could he expel his son?
- Sarah was more important to him than anything
- Would not overturn Sarah's demand
- God stepped in to resolve the conflict
- Genesis 21:11–13

## Genesis 21 (NKJV)

11 And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son.

12 But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called.

## **Genesis 21 (NKJV)**

13 Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed.”

## **Genesis 21 (NIV)**

12 But God said to him, “Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.

13 I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring.”

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# God Resolves Abraham's Internal Conflict

- Accept Sarah's demand
  - Don't worry about Ishmael
  - He also will become a nation
  - But your inheritance belongs to Isaac
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- Potentially dividing disagreement
  - Resolved quickly and permanently

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# What We Learned

- Abraham faced two conflicting responsibilities
  - Provide for son Ishmael
  - Heed his wife's demand
- God stepped in to resolve the conflict
- Provided solution that accomplished both objectives
- Resolved Abraham-Sarah disagreement
- Quickly and permanently

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