

**A. Birth of Isaac
(1-8)**

The Character of God

-The faithfulness of God's Word

"...as he had said" (1)

"...as he had promised." (1)

"...at the time of which God has spoken to him." (2)

Promises concerning Abraham's offspring...

*Gen 12:1-3; 13:14-16; 15:1-6; 17:1-8,15-21; 18:9-15

-The greatness of God's power

*Rom 4:19; Heb 11:11

"Sarah conceived..." (2)

"in his old age..." (2)

"Abraham was a hundred years old..." (4)

"Yet I have borne him a son in his old age." (7)

How old was Sarah?
(Gen 17:17)

-The deliberateness of God's actions

"...at the time" (2)

Compare to Rom 5:6

**B. Belittling of Isaac
(9-19)**

The Severity of the Mocking

-Severity in the record of it

צחק (tsachaq) "laughing" (9)

"Mocking" (NIV, KJV, NASB)

"Scoffing" (NKJV)

Gal 4:21-31 "persecuted him"

Same root as word "Isaac"

Compare "visited" to 1Sa 2:21 - God does what He has promised - Sarah will conceive by Abraham

¹The LORD *visited* Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did to Sarah as he had promised.

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

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

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

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

⁶And Sarah said, "God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh over me."

⁷And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

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

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

¹⁰So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son, for the son of this slave woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac."

¹¹And the thing was very displeasing to Abraham on account of his son.

The Compliance of Abraham

"Abraham called the name of his son...Isaac." (3)

*Gen 17:19

"Abraham circumcised his son Isaac...as God had commanded him." (4)

*Gen 17:9-14

The Carol of Sarah

Carol = Song of joy, rapture, or gladness

-The power of God

"...in his old age." (7)

-The witness for God

"...will laugh over [with] me" (6)

The Celebration for Isaac

"great feast" (8)

Isaac = **Laughter**

*Abraham laughed for joy when God told him of the promised birth (Gen 17:17)

*Sarah laughed in unbelief when she was told about the promise of Isaac's birth (Gen 18:12-15)

*Sarah laughed for joy when Isaac was born (Gen 21:6)

-Severity in the repetition of it

Gal 4:29 does not imply a one-time action.

-Severity in the reaction to it

"Cast out this slave woman with her son" (10)

Compare to Gen 16:5-6

The Separation from the Mocker

-The demand for it (10)

Righteousness - Demand for separation was justified because of the persecution against Isaac

Reaping - Sarah is reaping the consequences of what she sowed in Gen 16:2-4

Recognition - Sarah doesn't recognize Hagar as a "wife" of Abraham (Gen 16:3), but calls her a "slave woman"

-The distress about it (11)

Ishmael has been with Abraham for at least 15 years (17 if Isaac was weaned at 3 as was customary in the ancient near east).

Abraham is also continuing to reap the consequences of his iniquity in Gen 16:2-4.

The decree for it (12)

Why does God approve of Sarah's demand?

Because Ishmael was "persecuting" Isaac (Gal 4:29)

The doing of it (14)

Promptness - "rose early"

Provisions - "bread and a skin of water"

The declaration in it

Gal 4:21-31 - Paul interprets this story allegorically:

- Ishmael, being a child of a bondmaid, represents the law
- Isaac, being a child of a freewoman, represents grace

¹²But **God** said to **Abraham**, "Be not displeased because of the boy and because of your slave woman. Whatever **Sarah** says to you, do as she tells you, for through **Isaac** shall your offspring be named.

¹³And I will **make a nation** of the son of the slave woman also, because he is your offspring."

¹⁴So **Abraham** rose early in the morning and took **bread and a skin of water** and gave it to **Hagar**, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed and wandered in the wilderness of **Beersheba**.

Beersheba - Southern boundary of Palestine

¹⁵When the **water in the skin was gone**, she put the child under one of the bushes.

¹⁶Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot, for she said, "**Let me not look on the death of the child.**" And as she sat opposite him, **she lifted up her voice and wept.**

Angel of God - Compare to Gen 16:9-11

¹⁷And **God heard the voice of the boy**, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? **Fear not**, for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is.

¹⁸Up! Lift up the boy, and hold him fast with your hand, for **I will make him into a great nation.**"

¹⁹Then **God opened her eyes**, and she saw a well of water. And **she went and filled** the skin with water and **gave the boy a drink.**

The Saving of the Mocker

-The destitution (14-16)

Lost - "wandered" implies that she was lost in the wilderness.

Lifelessness - Ishmael is left to die.

"water...was gone"

"death of the child"

Lamentation - "lifted up her voice and wept"

The compassion (17)

"God heard the voice of the boy..."

"Fear not..."

The proclamation (13, 18)

"Make him into a great nation"

Compare with...

*Gen 16:10; 17:20

The illumination (19)

"God opened her eyes"

The appropriation (19)

"She went and filled...gave the boy a drink"

It's not enough to see and hear, we must also respond to God's message with action (Jam 1:19-25)

Visited

1 Samuel 2:21 (ESV)

²¹ Indeed the Lord visited Hannah, and she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew in the presence of the Lord.

Promises Concerning Abraham's Offspring

Genesis 12:1–3 (ESV)

¹ Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Genesis 13:14–16 (ESV)

¹⁴ The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, ¹⁵ for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. ¹⁶ I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted.

Genesis 15:1–6 (ESV)

¹ After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ² But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." ⁴ And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." ⁵ And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." ⁶ And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Genesis 17:1–8 (ESV)

¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, ² that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly." ³ Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, ⁴ "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵ No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. ⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. ⁷ And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. ⁸ And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."

Genesis 17:15–21 (ESV)

¹⁵ And God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶ I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.” ¹⁷ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, “Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” ¹⁸ And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!” ¹⁹ God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. ²⁰ As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation. ²¹ But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year.”

Genesis 18:9–15 (ESV)

⁹ They said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” And he said, “She is in the tent.” ¹⁰ The Lord said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. ¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. ¹² So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?” ¹³ The Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ ¹⁴ Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.” ¹⁵ But Sarah denied it, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid. He said, “No, but you did laugh.”

Greatness of God’s Power

Romans 4:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb.

Hebrews 11:11 (ESV)

¹¹ By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised.

How Old Was Sarah?

Genesis 17:17 (ESV)

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

Deliberateness of God’s Actions

Romans 5:6 (ESV)

⁶ For while we were still weak, *at the right time* Christ died for the ungodly.

The Compliance of Abraham

Genesis 17:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him.

Genesis 17:9–14 (ESV)

⁹ And God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. ¹⁰ This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹ You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. ¹² He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, ¹³ both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴ Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

Isaac = Laughter

Genesis 17:17 (ESV)

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

Genesis 18:12–15 (ESV)

¹² So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?” ¹³ The Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ ¹⁴ Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.” ¹⁵ But Sarah denied it, saying, “I did not laugh,” for she was afraid. He said, “No, but you did laugh.”

Severity of the Mocking (Laughed / Mocked)

Galatians 4:21–31 (ESV)

²¹ Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? ²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. ²³ But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise. ²⁴ Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. ²⁵ Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. ²⁶ But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. ²⁷ For it is written,

“Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear;
break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor!
For the children of the desolate one will be more
than those of the one who has a husband.”

²⁸ Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. ²⁹ But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. ³⁰ But what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.” ³¹ So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

7464 שָׂחַח (šā-ḥāḥq): v.; ≡ Str 6711; TWOT 1905—**1.** LN 25.135–25.145 (qal) **laugh**, i.e., make a guttural sound related to irony or humor, often with the associative meaning of mocking or reviling (Ge 17:17; 18:12, 13, 15; 21:6+); (piel) (Ge 19:14; 21:9+); **2.** LN 23.61–23.65 (piel) **caress**, fondle, engage in foreplay, i.e., indulge in physical sexual play (Ge 26:8; Ex 32:6+), note: in context of an orgy, then sexual immorality, see also domain LN 88.271–88.282; **3.** LN 33.406–33.411 (piel) **make sport**, make fun of, i.e., humiliate another through actions and words, jesting at the expense of others using dark humor (Ge 39:14, 17; Jdg 16:25+)¹

6711. שָׂחַח **tsachaq** (850b); a prim. root; *to laugh*:—caressing(1), entertained*(1), jesting(1), laugh(4), laughed(2), make sport(2), mocking(1), play(1).²

Severity in the Reaction to It

Genesis 16:5–6 (ESV)

⁵ And Sarai said to Abram, “May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my servant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the Lord judge between you and me!” ⁶ But Abram said to Sarai, “Behold, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please.” Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her.

Reaping

Genesis 16:2–3 (ESV)

² And Sarai said to Abram, “Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her.” And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. ³ So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife.

Recognition as Wife / Slave

Genesis 16:3 (ESV)

³ So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife.

¹ Swanson, J. (1997). *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)*. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

² Thomas, R. L. (1998). *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek dictionaries : updated edition*. Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc.

Beersheba

Beersheba—well of the oath, or well of seven, a well dug by Abraham, and so named because he and Abimelech here entered into a compact (Gen. 21:31). On re-opening it, Isaac gave it the same name (Gen. 26:31–33). It was a favourite place of abode of both of these patriarchs (21:33–22:1, 19; 26:33; 28:10). It is mentioned among the “cities” given to the tribe of Simeon (Josh. 19:2; 1 Chr. 4:28). From Dan to Beersheba, a distance of about 144 miles (Judg. 20:1; 1 Chr. 21:2; 2 Sam. 24:2), became the usual way of designating the whole Promised Land, and passed into a proverb. After the return from the Captivity the phrase is narrowed into “from Beersheba unto the valley of Hinnom” (Neh. 11:30). The kingdom of the ten tribes extended from Beersheba to Mount Ephraim (2 Chr. 19:4). The name is not found in the New Testament. It is still called by the Arabs Bir es-Seba, i.e., “well of the seven”, where there are to the present day two principal wells and five smaller ones. It is nearly midway between the southern end of the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean.³



³ Easton, M. G. (1893). In *Easton's Bible dictionary*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Great Nation

Genesis 16:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ The angel of the Lord also said to her, “I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude.”

Genesis 17:20 (ESV)

²⁰ As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation.

Angel of God

Genesis 16:9–11 (ESV)

⁹ The angel of the LORD said to her, “Return to your mistress and submit to her.” ¹⁰ The angel of the LORD also said to her, “I will surely multiply your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for multitude.” ¹¹ And the angel of the LORD said to her,

“Behold, you are pregnant
and shall bear a son.
You shall call his name Ishmael,
because the LORD has listened to your affliction.

The Appropriation

James 1:19–25 (ESV)

¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵ But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.