

# GENESIS

## THE BIRTH OF ISAAC

### EXEGESIS VERSES 1 – 7:

וַיְהִי כִּי יָדַע יְהוָה כִּי שָׂרָה אִמֶּר וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה לְשָׂרָה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר׃<sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:1

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:1 **Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised.** (וַיְהִי כִּי יָדַע יְהוָה וְ) עָשָׂה וְ אִמֶּר אֱשֶׁר כִּי שָׂרָה אִתּוֹ פָּקַד יְהוָה לְ שָׂרָה לְ יְהוָה דָּבַר אֱשֶׁר כִּי שָׂרָה לְ יְהוָה [waw conj. + proper n: yahweh; "and the Lord"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: *phaqad* {lit. *attended to/visited/took care of*}; "took note of"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Sarah"; + prep: *kaph* + rel.pro: 'asher; "as which"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: 'amar; "He said"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: -asah; "and He did"; + proper n: yahweh; "the Lord"; + prep: *lamed* + proper n: "for Sarah"; + prep: *kaph* + rel.pro: 'asher; "as which"; + v/Piel/PF/3ms: *dabar*; "He had utterly spoke/declared/promised" ])

וַתֵּלֶד וַתֵּהֵר וַתֵּלֶד שָׂרָה לְאַבְרָהָם בֶּן לְזָקְנֵי לְמוֹעֵד אֱשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהִים׃<sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:2

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:2 **So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age,** (וַתֵּלֶד וַתֵּהֵר וַתֵּלֶד הָרָה וְ) יָלְדָה לְ שָׂרָה לְ יֶלֶד וְ אִבְרָהָם לְ בֶן לְזָקְנֵי לְמוֹעֵד [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: *harah*; "and she conceived"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: *yalad*; "and she begat/gave birth to"; + proper n: "Sarah"; + prep: *lamed* + proper n: "to Abraham"; + n/com/m/s/abs: *ben*; "a son"; + prep: *lamed* + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: *zequniym* {used 4x; 21:2,7; 37:3; 44:20}; "in his old age" ])

**at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him.** (אֵת דָּבַר אֱשֶׁר מוֹעֵד הָ לְ) אֱלֹהִים [prep: *lamed* + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: *mo-ed*; "at the appointed time of" {same as 17:21; 18:14}; + rel.pro: 'asher + v/Piel/PF/3ms; *dabar*; "which he had utterly spoke"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "to Him"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohim; "God" ])

וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם אֶת־שֵׁם־בְּנֵוֹ הַנּוֹלָד־לוֹ אִשְׁרֵי־יֶלְדָה־לוֹ שָׂרָה יִצְחָק׃<sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:3

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:3 **And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac.** (וְ) לְ יֶלֶד אֱשֶׁר לְ יֶלֶד הָ בֶן שֵׁם אִתּוֹ אִבְרָהָם קָרָא וְ) יִצְחָק שָׂרָה [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: *qara*; + and he called"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: *shem*; "the name of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: *ben*;

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"his son"; + d.a. + v/Niphal/ptc/m/s/abs: yalad; "the one having been born"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "whom"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: yalad; "she gave birth"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; + proper n: "Sarah"; + proper n: "Isaac" {lit. laugh}})

וַיִּמַּל אֲבִרְהָם אֶת־יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ בֶּן־שְׁמֹנֶת יָמִים  
כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים: WTT Genesis 21:4

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:4 Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. (וַיִּמַּל אֲבִרְהָם מוֹל גֹּ' אֶת יִצְחָק בֶּן בֶּן שְׁמֹנֶה יָמִים בְּנוֹ בֶּן אֲבִרְהָם אֱלֹהִים אֵת צִוָּה אֲבִרְהָם) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: mul; "and he circumcised"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Isaac"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: ben; "his son"; + n/com/m/s/constr: ben; "a son of"; + adj/m/s/constr: shemoneh; "eight"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: yom; "days"; prep: kaph + rel.pro: 'asher; "as which"; + v/Piel/PF/3ms: tsawah; "He utterly commanded/charged"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "him"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"])

וְאֲבִרְהָם בֶּן־מֵאָה שָׁנָה בְּהוֹלֵד לוֹ אֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ: WTT Genesis 21:5

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:5 Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. (בֶּן יִצְחָק אֵת ל יֶלֶד ב שְׁנָה מֵאָה בֶּן אֲבִרְהָם ג') [waw conj. + proper n: "and Abraham"; + n/com/m/s/constr: ben + adj/f/s/constr: me'ah + n/com/f/s/abs: shanah; "was a son of one hundred years"; + prep: bet; "when"; + v/Niphal/inf/constr: yalad; "having been born"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Isaac"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: ben; "his son"])

וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרָה צָחֵק עָשָׂה לִי אֱלֹהִים כֹּל־הַשְּׂמֵעַ  
יִצְחָק־לִי: WTT Genesis 21:6

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:6 And Sarah said, "God has made laughter for me; (וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרָה אָמַר ג') אֱלֹהִים ל עָשָׂה צָחֵק לִי אֱלֹהִים אֵת צִוָּה אֲבִרְהָם אֱלֹהִים אֵת צִוָּה אֲבִרְהָם) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar + proper n: "and she said, Sarah"; + n/com/m/s/abs: tsechoq; "laughter" {noun used 2x; Eze.23:32}; + v/qal/PF/3ms: -asah + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "He made for me"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"])

everyone who hears will laugh with me." (ל צָחֵק שְׂמֵעַ הָ כָל) [n/com/m/s/constr: kol; "everyone of"; + d.a. + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: shama-; "the ones hearing/listening to"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms: tsechaq; "will laugh"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "with me"])

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וְתֹאמַר מִי מֵלֵל לְאַבְרָהָם הֲיִנְיָקָה בָּנִים שָׂרָה  
כִּי־יִלְדֵתִי בֶן לְזַקְנָיִי: WTT Genesis 21:7

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:7 **And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? (וְתֹאמַר מִי מֵלֵל לְאַבְרָהָם הֲיִנְיָקָה בָּנִים שָׂרָה [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "and she said"; + interr.pro: miy; "who?"; + v/Piel/PF/3ms: malal; "would have uttered speech/spoke" {speaking as a passing thought; only used here in Gen.; cf.Psa.37:2 translated "wither"}; prep: lamed + proper n: "Abraham"; + v/Hiphil/PF/3fs: yanaq; "she caused to nurse/suckle"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: ben; "a son"; + proper n: "Sarah"])**  
**Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.**" (כִּי בֶן יָלַד לִּי [conj: kiy; "yet/because"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: yalad; "I gave birth to"; + n/com/m/s/abs: ben; "a son"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: zequniym; "in his old age"])

### ANALYSIS VERSES 1 – 7:

1. **Sarah** resumes as the main person of interest extending from chapter 20:18, "...because of **Sarah**.."
2. Her character holds center stage through vs.10.
3. Paralleling the deliverance for Abimelech and his wives able to reproduce in procreation (20:17), so **Sarah** finds blessing in the same vein.
4. The very purpose for Sarah's protection in the preceding context is now revealed.
5. That because of God's plan and promise that she would bear a promised heir by **Abraham**.
6. The possibilities of bearing children by any women in Abimelech's haram was completely overruled by **God** to insure the historical integrity of his Covenant promise (cf.20:18a).
7. The irony of the contrasting deliverances of Abimelech's household and **Sarah** is that the first was based on a deliverance from death (cf.20:3,4); now it is a deliverance ushering in a new life.
8. The new born will in turn provide the lineage making possible the first deliverance spiritually as to the future object of faith necessary to secure salvation in the process of evangelizing.
9. The opening "**Then the Lord took note of Sarah as He had said**" is literally in the Hebrew that Yahweh "**visited/phaqad**" **Sarah**.
10. The words hark back to 18:10 when Yahweh **promised** to "**surely return**" and 18:14 with the reaffirmation to "**return**".
11. The Hebrew of 18:10 noted that the *return* was two-fold, "**returning I will return/shub shub**".
12. The 18:10 phrase emphasized Divine intervention on behalf of both **Sarah and Abraham** to reverse their sexual infertility bringing about the conception of the promise heir (*see notes Gen.18:9-15*).
13. It was 18:14 that emphasized the singular visit (*return*) or the particular occasion of copulation that would bring about conception.
14. The Divine intervention fulfilled the previous promise to **Abraham** in 17:19,21 and then directly to **Sarah** in 18:10,14 as the final clause states, "**and the Lord did for Sarah as He had promised**".

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15. Both the “promise” (to **Abraham** and to **Sarah**) and “visitation” (affecting both **Abraham and Sarah**) are two-fold in application.
16. The results of Yahweh’s visit is divulged in vs.2a, “**So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age**”.
17. This clause advances the narrative some 9 months from conception to giving birth.
18. The reference to **Abraham “in his old age/lamed zequniym”** is a reminder of Abraham’s condition of sexual impotence.
19. Contextually it further serves as an opening teaser reminding the reader of the humor found in both **Abraham and Sarah** concerning the promise (cf.17:17; 18:11-12).
20. It sets the tone for the context in naming their son and Sarah’s continuing reflection on the occasion with humorous considerations in closing.
21. The impact of humor is all in timing and deliverance.
22. The timing was the conception, the deliverance of giving birth becomes the punch line.
23. One might think it funny enough that **Abraham and Sarah** was able to have sex being **old** and sexually dead for some years, but not nearly as funny as **Sarah** getting pregnant and having a kid.
24. It is the birth announcement in view in 21:2; “**at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him**”.
25. The phrase “**at the appointed time/lamed ha mo-ed**” is the same phrase used in God’s words to **Abraham** in 17:21 that “*Sarah will bear to you...*”, and the future result of Sarah’s conception in 18:14 “*and Sarah will have a son*”.
26. Again, the Lord’s “visit” to **Sarah** in vs.1 was His Divine intervention for conception; the result was the birth of their new born **son** based on God’s perfect **appointed time** in vs.2.
27. The birth occurred in the following year of God’s visit to **Abraham** in 17:1ff when **Abraham and Sarah** were 100 and 99 years old respectively (cf.17:17) i.e., 1846 BC.
28. So the events of chapters 17 to 21:2 took place short of a year.
29. The author tells us in vs.3 that **Abraham** named the boy **Isaac** per the Divine prophetic instructions of 17:19.
30. The name **Isaac** is derived from the word “laughter” (BDB 850c) and is connected to Abraham’s laughter in 17:21 and Sarah’s in 18:12.
31. It is the name **Isaac** that suggests this passage is intended to be humorous.
32. The phrases “**his son who was born to him**” and “**whom Sarah bore to him/’asher yalad lamed Sarah**” reiterates the promise that only **Abraham** would sire Sarah’s child in 17:19.
33. This in part is designed to make the event of Isaac’s birth overshadow the events of the Abimelech affair.
34. Abraham’s and Sarah’s failings aside, they enjoyed God’s approbation and desire to bless them in accordance to His word.
35. It reminds us that **God** protects the fulfillment of His word with extreme prejudice.
36. Further, the birth event fact clinches the Covenant promise concerning the promised heir of Whom “*all the families of the earth shall be blessed*” via **Abraham** (12:3).
37. In continued obedience to Divine directives, in vs.4 “**Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him**”.
38. This mention of circumcision has at least a two-fold purpose:
  - A. It is a reminder of the spiritual ramifications attached to the birth with respect to isolation of the ISTA (*see doctrine of...*).

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- B. It is a silent reminder of the authors own incidental sinning as Moses ignored the circumcision of his son (Exo.4:24-26).
39. That the text temporarily turns to a serious tone is poetic license in a comedic role.
  40. In the comedic world this is known as using the “List of Three” formula introducing two serious ideas and then springing a joke. *Toastmaster – October 2012*; “*Lighten up your Speech*” by Judy Carter
  41. Vs.5 then begins the main body of humor, “**Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him**”.
  42. Chronologically Abraham’s **old age** is established and the setting for the background in humor is clearly revealed as his **age** is set against the fact of his sexual impotence.
  43. What was so matter-of-factly reported in vss.1-5 then turns to emotion-driven poetic celebration delivered in a humorous way by **Sarah** in vss.6-7.
  44. In this case, it is **Sarah** that serves the role of comedienne and **Abraham** remaining silent serves as a sort of straight man (the straight man often personifies an authoritarian figure).
  45. The clause, “**God has made laughter for me**/tsechoq –asah lamed ‘elohiym” is an instance of double entendre (meaning).
  46. She remembers her **laughter** earlier when she laughed silently in the tent (18:12,13,15), but that was **laughter** of incredulity (unbelief).
  47. Now **God** has brought about a situation in her life where she finally has a child named “**laughter**” and she finds the whole thing quite humorous.
  48. **God** made her **laugh** in her **old age** with all the odds against her.
  49. The stigma of barrenness was dramatically removed so that “**everyone who hears her story will laugh with me**”.
  50. She uses the exact form of the name “**Isaac**/yitsechaq” in the Qal imperfect form of “**will laugh**” and vs.6b could be translated, “**everyone who hears will Isaac with me**”.
  51. She invites people throughout time to celebrate this remarkable act of Divine grace.
  52. Obviously “**everyone who hears**/kol ha shama-“ refers to those having heard the whole story and celebrates with her the event.
  53. In vs.7 she turns to feature her “straight man”, **Abraham**.
  54. The question “**Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children?**” is rhetorical and answered, “No one!”
  55. As it turned out, **Sarah** only nursed one child.
  56. This was God’s will for her and shows that He controls all aspects of life.
  57. Apparently her womb was once again closed after the birth of **Isaac**.
  58. This illustrates the principle that more is not always better.
  59. She who was last is first in the annals of motherhood due to the circumstances of the birth.
  60. She closes vs.7 making mention of her husband’s debilitating condition in a discreet or more solemn fashion showing respect for her husband.
  61. This is a mark of righteous humor in that all are left knowing what was said has only intentions to lighten the mood and for all to enjoy a little “jocularly”.
  62. Good humor by the +V adjusted believer further expects the audience to hear the humor having its understanding and frame of reference in the light of BD.

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## THE EXPULSION OF HAGAR AND ISHMAEL

### EXEGESIS VERSES 8 – 14:

וַיִּגְדַּל וַיִּנְמַל הַיֶּלֶד וַיַּעַשׂ אַבְרָהָם מִשְׁתֵּה גָדוֹל  
בַּיּוֹם הַגָּמֹל אֶת־יִצְחָק׃

WTT Genesis 21:8

NAS Genesis 21:8 **And the child grew and was weaned,** (וַיִּגְדַּל וַיִּנְמַל הַיֶּלֶד וַיַּעַשׂ אַבְרָהָם מִשְׁתֵּה גָדוֹל בַּיּוֹם הַגָּמֹל אֶת־יִצְחָק׃) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: gadal; "and he grew up"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: yeled; "the youth/child"; + waw consec. + v/Niphal/IPF/3ms: gamal {lit. to ripen}; "was weaned"]

**and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.** (וַיַּעַשׂ אַבְרָהָם עֵשָׂה וַיִּגְדַּל וַיִּנְמַל הַיֶּלֶד וַיַּעַשׂ אַבְרָהָם מִשְׁתֵּה גָדוֹל בַּיּוֹם הַגָּמֹל אֶת־יִצְחָק׃) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: -asah; "and he made"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + n/com/m/s/abs: mishetteh; "a banquet/feast"; + adj/m/s/abs: gadol; "a great one"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: yom; "on the day of"; + v/Niphal/inf/constr: gama; "being weaned"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Isaac"])

וַתִּרְאֵהוּ שָׂרָה אֶת־בֶּן־הַגֵּר הַמִּצְרִי אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָהּ  
לְאַבְרָהָם מִצְחָק׃

WTT Genesis 21:9

NAS Genesis 21:9 **Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking.** (וַתִּרְאֵהוּ שָׂרָה אֶת־בֶּן־הַגֵּר הַמִּצְרִי אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָהּ לְאַבְרָהָם מִצְחָק׃) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: ra'ah; "and she saw"; + proper n: "Sarah"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: ben; "the son of"; + proper n: "Hagar"; + d.a. + proper n: mitseriy; "the Egyptian"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "whom"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: yalad; "she had borne"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "to Abraham"; + v/Piel/ptc/m/s/abs: tsechaq {form used 2x; Gen.26:8}; "utterly mocking/making sport"])

וַתֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָהָם גַּרְשׁ הָאֵמָה הַזֹּאת וְאֶת־בְּנָהּ  
כִּי לֹא יִרְשׁ בֶּן־הָאֵמָה הַזֹּאת עִם־בְּנֵי עַם־יִצְחָק׃

WTT Genesis 21:10

NAS Genesis 21:10 **Therefore she said to Abraham, "Drive out this maid and her son,** (וַתֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָהָם גַּרְשׁ הָאֵמָה הַזֹּאת וְאֶת־בְּנָהּ כִּי לֹא יִרְשׁ בֶּן־הָאֵמָה הַזֹּאת עִם־בְּנֵי עַם־יִצְחָק׃) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "therefore she said"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "to Abraham"; + v/Piel/Imp/m/s: garash; "utterly drive away/expel"; + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: 'amah; "the maid-servant"; + d.a. + adj/f/s: zo'th; "this one"; + waw consec. + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fs suff: ben; "and her son"])

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for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac." (הַ בֶּן יִרְשָׁ לֹא כִּי) [conj: kiy; "for/because"; + neg.part: lo' + v/qal/IPF/3ms: yarash; "he will not inherit/be an heir"; + n/com/m/s/constr: ben; "the son of"; + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: 'amah; "the maid-servant"; + d.a. + adj/f/s: zo'th; "this one"; + prep: -im; "with"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: ben; "my son"; + prep: -im; "with"; + proper n: "Isaac"])

וַיִּרַע הַדָּבָר מְאֹד בְּעֵינֵי אַבְרָהָם עַל אֹדוֹת בְּנוֹ: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:11

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:11 And the matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son. (רַעַע הַ דָּבָר הַ) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: ra-a- {bad}; "and it distress"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: dabar; "the matter"; + adv: me'od; "exceedingly/very much"; + prep: bet + n/com/both/dual/constr: -ayin; "in the eyes of"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + prep: -al; "concerning"; + n/com/f/pl/constr: 'odoth; "the cause of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: ben; "his son"])

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-אַבְרָהָם אַל-יִרַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ עַל-הַנְּעִר וְעַל-אִמְתְּךָ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵלֶיךָ שָׂרָה שָׁמַע בְּקוֹלָהּ כִּי בִיצְחָק יִקְרָא לָךְ זָרַע: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:12

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:12 But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; (עַל וְנִעֲרָהּ עַל עֵינַי בְּרַעַע אֶל אַבְרָהָם אֶל אֱלֹהִים אָמַר ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "But He said, God"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Abraham"; + neg.adv: 'al + v/qal/IPF/3ms/jussive: ra-a-; "do not be bad"; + prep: bet + n/com/both/dual/constr. w/2ms suff: -ayin; "in your eyes"; + prep: -al; "about"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: na-ar; "the young boy/lad"; + waw conj. + prep: -al + n/com/f/s/constr. w/2ms suff: 'amah; "and your maid-servant"])

whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, (כָּל בִּשְׁמַע שָׂרָה אֶל אָמְרָהּ כָּל) [n/com/m/s/abs: kol + rel.pro: 'asher; "all which/whatever"; + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "she says"; + prep. w/2ms suff: 'el; "to you"; + proper n: "Sarah"; + v/qal/Imp/v/s: shama-; "listen"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fs suff: qol; "by her voice"])

for through Isaac your descendants shall be named. (כִּי לְקָרָא יִצְחָק בְּכִי) [conj: kiy; "for/because"; + prep: bet; "by means of"; + proper n: "Isaac"; + v/Niphal/IPF/3ms: qara; "they are called {shall be named}"; + prep. w/2ms suff: lamed + n/com/m/s/abs: zera-; "for your seed/descendants"])

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וְגַם וְיָשַׁבְתִּים אֶת־בֶּן־הָאֲמָהָ לְגוֹי אֲשֵׁימוֹנוּ כִּי זָרַעְךָ הוּא׃<sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:13

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:13 "And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant." (וְגַם וְיָשַׁבְתִּים אֶת־בֶּן־הָאֲמָהָ לְגוֹי אֲשֵׁימוֹנוּ כִּי זָרַעְךָ הוּא [waw conj. + conj: gam; "and also"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: ben + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: 'amah; "the son of the maid"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/abs: goiy; "for a nation"; + v/qal/IPF/1cs: shum; "I will place/appoint/make"; + conj: kiy + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2ms suff: zera- + pro/3ms: hu'; "because your seed/descendant is he"])

וַיִּתֵּן אֶל־הָגֵר שָׁם עַל־שִׁכְמָהּ וְאֶת־הַיֶּלֶד וַיְשַׁלְּחָהּ וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתַּחַע בְּמִדְבַּר בְּאֵר שָׁבַע׃<sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:14

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:14 So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, (וַיִּשְׁכַּם אֲבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר הַיּוֹם וַיִּקַּח לֶחֶם וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־הָאֲמָהָ וְהַיֶּלֶד וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתַּחַע בְּמִדְבַּר בְּאֵר שָׁבַע [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: shakam; "So he caused to arise early"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: boqer; "in the morning"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: laqach; "and he took"; + n/com/m/s/abs: lechem; "bread"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: chemeth; "a water skin of"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: mayim; "water"])

and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy, and sent her away. (וַיִּתֵּן אֶל־הָגֵר אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד וְהַשְׂכָּמָה וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת־הָאֲמָהָ וְהַיֶּלֶד וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתַּחַע בְּמִדְבַּר בְּאֵר שָׁבַע [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nathan + prep: 'el + proper n: hagar; "and he gave to Hagar"; + v/qal/ptc/m/s/a: shum; "placing/putting"; + prep: -al: "upon"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fs: shekem; "her shoulder"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: yeled; "and the child/youth"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms w/3fs suff: shalach; "and sent her away"])

And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba. (וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתַּחַע בְּמִדְבַּר בְּאֵר שָׁבַע [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: halak; "and she walked/depended"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: tha-ah; "and wandered"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: midebbar; "in the wilderness of"; + proper n: be'er - sheba-; "Beersheba" {a well of seven cp.Gen.21:31}})

## ANALYSIS VERSES 8 – 14:

1. Vs.8 ushers in a quick time lapse between Isaac's birth and his being "weaned/gamal".
2. The first couple of years of his life (~2-3; cf.2Macc.7:27: "...have pity upon me that bared you nine months in my womb, and gave you such three years, and nourished you, and brought you up unto this age...") are summed up in the phrase "the child grew/gadal ha yeled".

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3. To celebrate Isaac's independence from mother's milk for nourishment transitioning solely to regular food, **Abraham** "made a great feast-asah mishetteh gadol".
4. This feast was observed by the ancients indicating that the child was mature enough to be entrusted to strangers (cf. 1Sam.1:22,24).
5. It further indicated that the child ended the most critical stage of life assuring it would survive. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
6. The phrase "**on the day**/bet yom" begins focus on two days: A day of conflict (vss.8b-13) and the following day of banishment (vs.14).
7. The feasty merriment takes a sour turn when "**Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking**".
8. The author's reference to Ishmael as "**the son of Hagar**" avoids calling Ishmael by name as does Sarah's reference to him as "**son of this maid**" in vs.10.
9. Only Moses uses the mother's name.
10. The narrative treats Ishmael *persona non grata* to match his unacceptability as an heir to the Abrahamic covenant and part of the Hebrew race.
11. The piel stem of the participle "**mocking**/tsechaq" here has the idea of making sport of or scoffing in jest (cf. Gen.19:14; Exo.32:6; Judg.16:25).
12. Paul equates the "**mocking**" to "*persecution*" in Gal.4:29.
13. Scripture is silent as to what Ishmael was actually doing.
14. The form of the participle *tsechaq* is only used otherwise in Gen.26:8 that refers to **Isaac** as "taking liberties" with his wife Rebekah in a way only a spouse is allowed (cp.26:9).
15. Whatever his actions, it looked to be subjugating using his older age to physically overpower the smaller **Isaac** in a way to mock or belittle his position in the family.
16. It paints a picture of Ishmael lording over **Isaac** in authority.
17. It was enough to incense **Sarah** as vs.10 makes clear.
18. She sets an ultimatum to her husband, "**Drive out this maid and her son**".
19. The emphatic command/imperative of the Piel "**Drive out**/garash" appears out of character from the submissive wife by which all other wives should aspire. Cp.1Pet.3:6
20. It begs to ask why she felt sanctioned to make such demand.
21. The verb was used in 3:24 of man's expulsion from the Garden and in 4:14 of Cain from his profession (where **God** enforces the doctrine of separation).
22. Ironically it is used to describe Pharaoh's expulsion of the Jews from Egypt in Exo.6:1; 11:1 and 12:39, contrasting here to **Hagar the Egyptian** being expelled.
23. Her reasoning is that there is no place for the **son of** a slave to **be an heir** with the promised Covenant **son**.
24. The emphasis on Ishmael's position as a slave is seen as **Sarah** refers to **Hagar** not by name but only by position (**maid/female slave**/'amah used 2x vs.10).
25. This coupled with Sarah's reference to Ishmael **not** being an **heir** "**with my son, with Isaac**/-im ben -im yitsechaq" (employing the preposition -im {**with**} twice) integrating both **Sarah and Isaac with** the Covenant promise (cf.vss.1-3).
26. Sarah's real concern is any challenge of Ishmael to sharing the legal inheritance with **Isaac**.
27. While the reader might think her demand is only out of spite or jealousy, Paul makes clear further in Gal.4:30 that **Sarah** had spiritual legitimacy to her demand.
28. Her immaturity was portrayed in Gen.16 when she schemed to have a foster child through **Hagar**.

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29. Her maturity now deems it necessary to separate her family from anyone that might place the Covenant at risk.
30. She recognizes that God's Covenant plan for her and Abraham was to exclude their previous scheme of adoption and her adjustment to that fact is evidenced in an act of separation.
31. However her application may appear on the surface to others, it was the right thing to do.
32. She now applies the doctrine that **Abraham** should have applied to **Hagar** earlier rather than succumbing to Sarah's marital scheme in 16:2-3.
33. This interpretation departs from the mainline view.
34. However, it answers why **God** gives **Sarah** His full support in vs.12.
35. Application of separation is not always easy as vs.11 makes clear, "**And the matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son**".
36. **Because Abraham** did not exercise the proper authority regarding Sarah's scheme (separating in principle by saying "No!"), he now pays a price.
37. First and foremost he is upset because he has developed an emotional tie with his **son** from **Hagar**.
38. This is a price separation often costs when it is not applied initially towards others as it should i.e., it makes the weight of future separation more difficult.
39. In vs.12, **God** intervenes on behalf of **Abraham** to encourage him to also do the right thing following Sarah's lead.
40. God's intervention supplies the doctrinal realities behind the scenario.
41. This illustrates that **God** will provide with doctrine and others encouragement when we may find ourselves having to make a similar latent application complicated by previous failure.
42. **God** first tells him to "**not be distressed because of the lad and your maid**".
43. The Qal verb "**distressed/ra-a-**" has the connotation of "bad, evil, displeasing" (cf.Gen.19:7; 38:10; 43:6; 48:17).
44. It is used in Gen.19:9 and 44:5 of "doing or treating wrong".
45. Its use in our verses 11 and 12 suggests **Abraham** was "stressing out" because of reflecting upon his previous error concerning **Hagar** and now facing consequences.
46. Up to this point in Abraham's history, it looked as if **God** would let the whole **Hagar** affair "slide".
47. Obviously **Abraham** can't undo what's been done and **God** exhorts him to stop berating himself.
48. The fact is, **Sarah** has the right doctrinal read on the situation and **God** commands him to "**listen to her voice of doctrinal reason/shama- bet qol**".
49. In order for **Abraham** to reorient, he must get his eyes off his **maid** and her **son** and refocus on the Covenant promises.
50. This is the force of the final clause in vs.12c, "**for through Isaac your descendants shall be named**".
51. This clause points to the doctrinal orientation motivating **Sarah** to issue the ultimatum.
52. It gave her the authority to make her demand.
53. It was the insulting actions of Ishmael that prompted her into action to ultimately make the application of separation in the doctrinal vein.
54. The term translated "**lad/na-ar**" used by **God** with respect to Ishmael in vs.12a emphasizes the biological relationship with **Abraham**.

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55. The test of importance for **Abraham** is to get his eyes off of the physical and onto spiritual realities imbedded in God's Covenant promises fulfilled through **Isaac**.
56. This underlines the foundation for the doctrine of separation whereby the spiritual supersedes the physical as to relationships and things of the world.
57. In vs.13 **God** gives **Abraham** further encouragement informing him that the **son** of his positive **maid** will be made "**a nation also, because he is your descendant**".
58. This in fulfillment of the promise to the pregnant **Hagar** in 16:10 and reminder to **Abraham** of God's promise to him in 17:20.
59. The reminder was to emphasize that there was no real cause for concern for banishing Ishmael because **God** already had a plan for him.
60. Not unlike Cain who suffered both banishment and Divine protection, so Ishmael is both loser and winner.
61. Ishmael loses status and property but gains "**a nation/ha goiy**".
62. The major difference between the two is that Ishmael's gain is via blessing by association.
63. In spite of Abraham's part of failure in the **Hagar** affair, his +V and orientation to God's plan fills in the grace for **God** to bless his relationship with Ishmael otherwise.
64. **Abraham** orients to the doctrine at hand and arose **early** the next **morning** to send off **Hagar** and Ishmael.
65. His **early** rise was not that he was eager to see them go, but for some privacy and for them to have much of the cool of the day to begin their travels.
66. To offset starvation and thirst, he provides some "**bread/food and a skin of water/lechem waw chemeth mayim**".
67. The phrase "**and the boy/qaq ha yeled**" is preceded by the direct object marker following the verb "**gave/nathan**" contextually denoting a change of guardianship transferred to **Hagar**.
68. Abraham's affection for the two is realized in the verb "**sent her away/shalach**" not as emotionally detached as Sarah's "**drive out/garash**" in vs.10.
69. Both verbs are the Piel stem showing a final completed act and illustrates that application is application no matter the emotional mindset.
70. Hagar's now faces another test in life as her hopeless situation in the **wilderness of Beersheba** is underscored by the verb "**wandered/tha-ah**".
71. The verb *tha-ah* means to wander aimlessly or hopelessly.
72. It was used by **Abraham** in his confession to Abimelech in 20:13 to indicate travels unknown as to destination (cf.12:1c).
73. The sudden test is thrust upon **Hagar** in which she will find no recourse other than help from **God** in vss.15-21.

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HAGAR'S TRIAL AND DELIVERANCE

## EXEGESIS VERSES 15 – 21:

וַיִּכְלוּ הַמַּיִם מִן־הַחֶמֶת וַתִּשְׁלַךְ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד תַּחַת אֶחָד הַשִּׁיחִים: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:15

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:15 **And the water in the skin was used up, and she left the boy under one of the bushes.** (וַיִּכְלוּ הַמַּיִם מִן־הַחֶמֶת וַתִּשְׁלַךְ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד תַּחַת אֶחָד הַשִּׁיחִים) [*waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: kalah; "and it ended/was consumed"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: mayim; "the water"; + prep: min + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: chemeth; "from the water skin"]* and she left the boy under one of the bushes. (וַיִּכְלוּ הַמַּיִם מִן־הַחֶמֶת וַתִּשְׁלַךְ אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד תַּחַת אֶחָד הַשִּׁיחִים) [*waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3fs: shalak; "and she caused to throw/left"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: yeled; "the youth"; + prep: tachath; "under/beneath"; + adj/m/s/constr: 'echad; "one of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: shiyach; "the bushes/shrubs"]*)

וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתֵּשֶׁב לָהּ מִנְּגַד רַחֵק כַּמֶּטְחָוִי קִשְׁת כִּי אָמְרָה אֶל־אַרְאֶה בְּמוֹת הַיֶּלֶד וַתֵּשֶׁב מִנְּגַד וַתִּשָּׂא אֶת־קֶלֶה וַתִּבְרַךְ: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:16

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:16 **Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away, for she said,** (וַתֵּלֶךְ וַתֵּשֶׁב לָהּ מִנְּגַד רַחֵק כַּמֶּטְחָוִי קִשְׁת כִּי אָמְרָה אֶל־אַרְאֶה בְּמוֹת הַיֶּלֶד וַתֵּשֶׁב מִנְּגַד וַתִּשָּׂא אֶת־קֶלֶה וַתִּבְרַךְ) [*waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: halak; "then she walked/went"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: yashab; "and she sat down"; + prep. w/3fs: lamed; "for her"; + prep: min; "from"; + prep: neged; "before/in front of" {opposite}; v/Hiphil/inf/constr: rachaq; "distancing"; + prep: kaph; "the like of"; + v/Palel/ptc/m/pl/constr: thachah {lit. hurl/shoot}; "a shot of"; + n/com/f/s/abs: qesheth; "a bow"; + conj: kiy; "because/for"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: 'amar; "she said"]*)

**"Do not let me see the boy die."** (אֶל אֶל־אַרְאֶה בְּמוֹת הַיֶּלֶד) [*neg.pro: 'al; "not"; + v/qal/IPF/1cs cohortative: ra'ah; "let me see/look"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: maweth; "at the death of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: yeled; "my boy"]*)

**And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept.** (וַתֵּשֶׁב מִנְּגַד רַחֵק כַּמֶּטְחָוִי קִשְׁת כִּי אָמְרָה אֶל־אַרְאֶה בְּמוֹת הַיֶּלֶד וַתֵּשֶׁב מִנְּגַד וַתִּשָּׂא אֶת־קֶלֶה וַתִּבְרַךְ) [*waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: yashab; "and she sat"; + prep: min + prep: neged; "from before/opposite"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: nasa'; "and lifted up"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fs: qol; "her voice"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: bakah; "and wept/shed tears"]*)

וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת־קוֹל הַנְּעִר וַיִּקְרָא מִלְּאֵד אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הַגֵּר מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מִה־לָּךְ הָגֵר: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:17

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אֶל-תִּירְאִי כִּי-שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶל-קוֹל הַנֶּעֱר בְּאֶשֶׁר הוּא-שָׁם:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:17 And God heard the lad crying; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, (וּ מִלְאָךְ קָרָא וּ נְעָר הָ קוֹל אֶת אֱלֹהִים שָׁמַע ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shama-; "and He heard"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: qol + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: na-ar; "{the voice of} the lad"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: qara'; "and he called"; + n/com/m/s/constr: male-ak; "the angel of"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Hagar"; + prep: min + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: shamaiym; "from the heavens"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + prep. w/3fs suff: lamed; "and said to her"])  
**"What is the matter with you, Hagar?** (לָּהּ הֲגֵרָה לָּהּ [interr.pro: mah; "what?"; + prep. w/2fs suff: lamed; "with you"; + proper n: "Hagar"])

**Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is.** (שָׁמַע כִּי יִרָא אֱלֹהִים שָׁמַע כִּי יִרָא אֱלֹהִים) [neg.adv: 'al; "not"; + v/qal/IPF/2fs jussive: yara'; "let you fear"; + conj: kiy; "because/for"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: shama-; "He has heard"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr: qol + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: na-ar; "{into} the voice of the lad"; + prep: bet + rel.pro: 'asher; "at which/where"; + pro/3ms: hu' + adv: sham; "he himself is there"])

וְקוּמִי שְׂאִי אֶת-הַנֶּעֱר וְהִחַזְקִי אֶת-יָדְךָ בּוֹ כִּי-לִגְוִי גָדוֹל אֲשִׁימְנוּ: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:18

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:18 "Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand; for I will make a great nation of him." (שִׁים גָּדוֹל גּוֹי לָּ כִּי בַּ יָד אֶת חֹזֶק וּ נְעָר הָ אֶת נִשְׂא קוּם) [v/qal/imp/f/s: qum; "arise/stand"; + v/qal/imp/f/s: nasa'; "lift up"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: na-ar; "the lad"; + waw conj. + v/Hiphil/imp/f/s: chazaq {lit. become strong/prevail}; "cause to hold"; + prep: 'eth + n/com/f/s/constr. w/2fs suff: yad; "with your hand"; + prep. w/3ms suff: bet; "on his"; + conj: kiy; "because"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/abs: goiy + adj/m/s/abs: gadol; "as a nation, a great one"; + v/qal/IPF/1cs w/3ms suff: siym; "I will make him/establish him"])

וַתִּפְקַח אֱלֹהִים וַתִּפְקַח אֶת-עֵינֶיהָ וַתֵּרָא בְּאֵר מַיִם וַתִּלְךְ וַתִּמְלֵא אֶת-הַחֲמַת מַיִם וַתִּשְׁק אֶת-הַנֶּעֱר: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:19

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:19 Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water; (וּ פִקַּח ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: phaqaq; "and He

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opened; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/b/dual/constr. w/3fs suff: - ayin; "her eyes"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: ra'ah; "and she saw"; + n/com/m/s/constr: be'er; "a well of"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: mayim; "water"])

**and she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink.** ( מֵלֵא וְהִלֵּךְ וְ) אֵת הַנְּעָר וְהִמְלֵא אֶת הַחֶמֶת הַיָּדָיִם וְהִשְׁקָהּ וְהִנְדִּילָהּ מַיִם וְהִנְדִּילָהּ מֵיַם הַחַמָּת הַיָּדָיִם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: halak; "and she walked/went"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3fs: mala'; "and she filled up"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: chemeth; "the skin"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: mayim; "with water"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3fs: shaqah; "and she caused to give drink"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: na-ar; "to the lad"])

וַיְהִי וַיֵּלֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אִתְּהַנְעָר וַיִּגְדַּל וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּמִדְבָּר וַיְהִי רַבֵּה קַשָּׁת׃ <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:20

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:20 **And God was with the lad, and he grew; and he lived in the wilderness, and became an archer.** ( וְהָיָה אֱלֹהִים אִתְּהַנְעָר וַיִּגְדַּל וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּמִדְבָּר הַיָּדָיִם וַיְהִי רַבֵּה קַשָּׁת הַיָּדָיִם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah; "and He existed"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + prep: 'eth + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: na-ar; "with the lad"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: gadal; "and he grew up"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: yashab; "and he dwelt" + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: midebbar; "in the wilderness"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah; "and became"; + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: rabah; "shooting"; + n/com/m/s/abs: qashshath; "a bow" {an archer}])

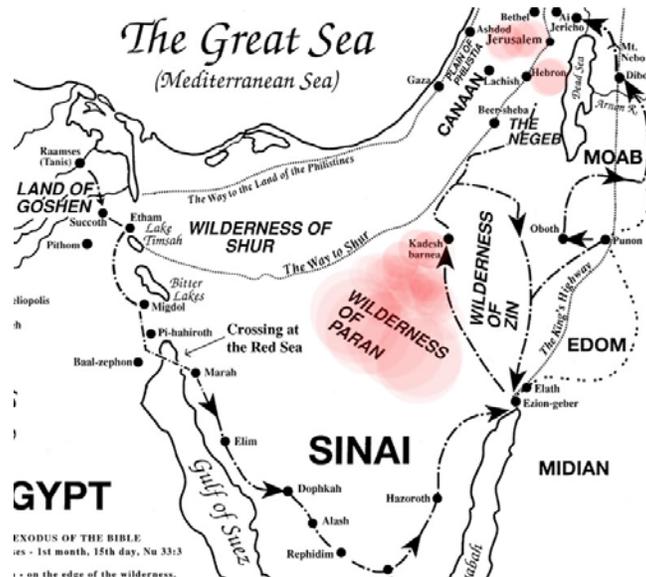
וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּמִדְבָּר פָּאֵרָן וַתִּקַּח לוֹ אִמּוֹ אִשָּׁה מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם׃ <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:21

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:21 **And he lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.** ( וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּמִדְבָּר פָּאֵרָן וַתִּקַּח לוֹ אִמּוֹ אִשָּׁה מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: yashab; "and he dwelt/lived"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: midebbar; "in the wilderness of"; + proper n: pa'ran; "Paran"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: laqach; "and she took"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "for him"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'em; "his mother"; + n/com/f/s/abs: 'ishshah; "a wife"; + prep: min + n/com/f/s/constr: 'erets + proper n: mitserayim; "from the land of Egypt"; end of para: phe

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### ANALYSIS VERSES 15 – 21:

1. An indeterminate number of days pass with **Hagar** and Ishmael wandering in the wilderness of Beersheba (vs.14).
2. She and her son eventually find their water supply exhausted, “**And the water in the skin was used up**/waw kalah ha mayim min ha chemeth”.
3. It appears she was headed South perhaps headed towards the road connecting to Shur being familiar with the area from her previous escapade running from Sarah in 16:7.



4. In the above map, Gerar would be south-southeast of Gaza about halfway to Beersheba for further orientation.
5. It may be that she knew the area somewhat and expected to find **water** nearby, as it did exist (vs.19).
6. Thinking she knew of a watering hole, there would be no great concern to conserve and now find themselves in dire straits.
7. With dehydration, disorientation easily sets in.
8. Having no success in finding the precious substance, she succumbs to emotions, essentially gives up looking and she leaves Ishmael “**under one of the bushes**/tachath ‘echad ha shiyach”.
9. Her first act of preservation is for her son getting him out of the hot sun.
10. She refers to Ishmael twice as “**the child/boy**/ha yeled (vss.15,16), the term derived from “give birth/*yalad*” (cf.21:2,3,5,etc.) to indicate the bond between mother and **child**.
11. The verb “**she left**/shalak” means to cast, throw or hurl.
12. It is used of Joseph’s brothers dumping him into the pit in Gen.37:20,22,24.
13. It doesn’t mean she had been carrying Ishmael as he would be about 14 years old (1860-1846 BC) {actually about 17 years old adding the 3 years for Isaac’s weaning}.
14. It infers that he was weak from thirst and was leaning on **Hagar** for support and she led him to a shrub where she deposited him in the shade.
15. It illustrates how close to death the situation placed them.

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16. Vs.16 reveals just how emotionally distraught **Hagar** had become ready to accept the inevitable without hope.
17. **Hagar** placed some distance between herself and Ishmael or “**about a bowshot away**/rachaq kaph thachah qesheth”.
18. The distance was equivalent to some 60 yards with a low velocity hand-held and released bow and arrow with some estimates of ancient war bows ranging a couple hundred yards.
19. Whatever the exact distance, it was far enough that **Hagar** could cry out loud (vs.16c) without raising alarm for Ishmael, yet still keep Ishmael within view as one can see much farther than **bowshot** range.
20. Her intentions were simply to avoid any discouragement towards Ishmael as to how she perceived the hopelessness of the situation, more so than abandonment.
21. This is seen in the contradictive statement and the cause behind leaving him, “**Do not let me see the boy die**’/al ra’ah bet maweth ha yeled”, while still able to **see** him.
22. Her words express her depth of despair on facing the imminent death of Ishmael, while “**she sat opposite him**/waw yashab min neged” keeping vigil and weeping freely.
23. It’s no stretch of the imagination after being so recently disowned and abruptly abandoned by loved ones to relate to feelings of isolation, hopelessness and helplessness (all pictured in her distancing from Ishmael) as results of **fear** for her son’s life.
24. Yet as vs.17 reveals, she was never truly abandoned or helpless as Divine intervention comes to the rescue.
25. The words, “**God heard the lad crying**” is literally in the Hebrew, “**God heard the voice of the lad**’/elohiym shama- qol ha na-ar” being said by both the narrator and the **angel** (vs.17a,c).
26. The narrative places emphasis on the fact that **God heard** Ishmael rather than **Hagar**.
27. The narrator’s words emphasize God’s essence (omniscience) knowing Ishmael’s situation.
28. The angel’s words emphasize that it was Ishmael’s **voice** to which **God** responds (direction grammatically illustrated by the preposition ‘el i.e., “**...heard toward the voice...**”.
29. Further, the phrase “**where he is**/bet ‘asher hu’ sham” points to the attribute of omnipresence indicating **God** always having Ishmael in sight able to assist as needed.
30. In neither occasion of Hagar’s fleeing oppression in Gen.16 nor in the immediate context do we find mention of **Hagar** praying.
31. By implication, Ishmael has found **voice** in prayer here.
32. This is cause for reflection on the situation.
33. Perhaps Ishmael has assumed the brunt of blame for their plight and now appeals for mercy (the reason for prayer here is moot, only that he was **heard**).
34. The ultimate reason for deliverance is God’s promises to **Hagar** (cf.Gen.16:10-12) and Abraham (cf.Gen.17:20; 21:13).
35. Ishmael in the scenario is an example to teach that even with maladjusted types, their prayers are heard as it relates to God’s promises pertinent to the situation.
36. In other words, God’s promises to **Hagar** and Abraham concerning Ishmael must be fulfilled no matter that their son would end up being a “*wild ass of a man*” (Gen.16:12).
37. Ishmael is a reflection upon God’s grace extended based simply on the promises of BD no matter the spiritual status of the recipient.
38. While **God** responds to the need of Ishmael, it remains the +V **Hagar** with whom He communicates.

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39. She is the true “hearer” of BD of whom Ishmael is blessed by association.
40. The “**angel of God**/male-ak ‘elohiyim” is same-same as the “**angel of the Lord**” (cf.Jdgs.6:20-23).
41. That the title changes from Lord to “**God**” emphasizing the POG more so than its execution is further reflection that the issue at hand in God’s response is BD, the recipient moot otherwise.
42. The phraseology of the “**angel called from heaven**” only occurs again at 22:11:15.
43. It further stresses God’s kingdom (the POG/BD) revealed in time and history.
44. The Lord’s first words are a mild reproof hinting at surprise that literally in the Hebrew is “**What is with you, Hagar?**/mah lamed hagar”.
45. The interrogative pronoun *mah* endeavors to find what character or quality lies behind her actions as we might say, “**What is** the meaning of this...?”
46. It implies that there is really no excuse for her meltdown.
47. The command “**do not fear**/’al yara” is exhortation to stop the prominent STA activity leading her emotionalism.
48. The phrase “**for God has heard**.../kiy shama- ‘elohiyim” is to grab her attention that she is again confronted with the same **God** that hears from which Ishmael derives his name (16:11).
49. Whether **God** manifests Himself physically in Christophany as at the spring of water in 16:7 or calls out from the 3<sup>rd</sup> **heaven**, He is equally engaged in her life as He is not limited to space or time.
50. It is a doctrinal reminder that **God** is always near and never detached from all she and her son do and thus there is no real excuse for her STA episode.
51. **God** always has control of the situation.
52. Vs.18 assumes Hagar’s spiritual reorientation at hand and further supplies the encouragement and pertinent promised doctrine to the occasion, “**Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand; for I will make a great nation of him**”.
53. The command “**arise/stand/qum**” illustrates overcoming her STA emotions and the commands to “**lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand**” looking to her authoritative role in example to Ishmael in application of faith-rest to the situation.
54. She is to get control of her emotions and take charge of the situation with application.
55. The motivating cause for application is the fulfillment of the promise of BD, “**for I will make a great nation of him**”.
56. In vs.19, the spiritual parallels with physical orientation as “**God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water**”.
57. Both the spiritual and physical is a result of Divine providence in orientation (cp.22:13).
58. Not only did **God** renew His promises, He makes provision.
59. A **well** had been there all the time, yet in her grief and STA fear she failed to be observant.
60. This reflects the blinding nature of the STA to the reality of God’s plan in life.
61. **Hagar** follows through in application and **went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink**...problem solved.
62. Her simplistic actions are contrasted to the convoluted perception brought about by her **fear**.
63. How often the STA exaggerates the nature of our tests!!!
64. After a vivid scenic narrative, the narrator sums up the rest of Ishmael’s life in vss.20-21.
65. This explains what happened next and resolves any outstanding issues raised by the obvious dependence of our passage on the Gen.16 episode.

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66. In 16:12, we have the prediction of Ishmael's character and future nomadic life.
67. Vs.21 records the fulfillment of that prediction: "**He lived in the wilderness and became an archer**/yashab bet ha midebbar waw hayah rabah qashshath".
68. His skill as a bowman refers to his hunting prowess and skill as a warrior.
69. The "**wilderness of Paran**" is identified with the high limestone plateau of Et-Tih, stretching from the Southwest of the Dead Sea to Sinai along the west side of the Aqabah.
70. It was in this region that his descendants would habitate (25:18).
71. Normally it was the father that arranged for the marriage of his son.
72. The last glimpse of **Hagar** shows her manfully shouldering the full responsibility for her son's future destiny and welfare "**and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt**".
73. Her faith in the promises enunciated in Gen.16 and our vs.18 prompted her to fulfill her role in this task.
74. This reference to Ishmael marrying prepares the way for the list of Ishmael's sons in 25:12-18.
75. As **Hagar** looked to **Egypt** her native homeland, so Abraham looked to his homeland in Mesopotamia for a wife for Isaac (cf.24:4-5).
76. Though separated from her husband, we find **Hagar** acting in the best tradition of the faith and practice of her husband Abraham.
77. Hagar's faith under adverse circumstances is remarkable, and she remains an unsung hero of biblical lore.
78. As with Abraham and Sarah, we see a mixture of faith and doubt and testing and deliverance that characterizes the human condition and believer's life.
79. Above all, it proves **God** dependable and gracious towards His own and complete commitment to fulfillment of His word.

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### THE FORGING OF ALLIANCE BETWEEN ABIMELECH AND ABRAHAM VSS.22-32

#### SPIRITUAL AND MORAL CONSIDERATION

#### EXEGESIS VERSES 22 – 24:

WTT Genesis 21:22  
 שֶׁר־צָבָאוֹ אֶל־אַבְרָהָם לֵאמֹר אֱלֹהִים עִמָּךְ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה עֹשֶׂה:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:22 Now it came about at that time, that Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, "God is with you in all that you do; (ל אַבְרָהָם אֶל צָבָא שֶׁר פִּיכֹל ו אַבְיִמֶלֶךְ אָמַר ו הִיא הָ עֵת הַ ב הִיהָ עָשָׂה אֶתָּה אֲשֶׁר כָּל ב עִם אֱלֹהִים אָמַר [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah; "now it came about"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: -eth; "at the time"; + d.a. + pro/3fs: hiy'; "that one"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "then he said/spoke to"; + proper n: "Abimelech"; + waw conj. + proper n: piykol {from peh/mouth}; "Phicol" {used 3x, vs.32; 26:26}; + n/com/m/s/constr: sar; "prince/commander of"; + n/com/b/s/constr. w/3ms suff: tseba'; "his army"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Abraham"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/Inf: 'amar"; + saying"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym + prep. w/2ms suff: -im; "God is with you"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/abs: kol + rel.pro: 'asher + pro/3ms 'attah + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: -asah; "in all which you yourself continuously do"])

WTT Genesis 21:23  
 וְלִנְיִי וְלִנְכְדֵי כַחֲסֹד אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי עִמָּךְ תַּעֲשֶׂה עִמָּדֵי וְעַם־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־גִּרְתָּהּ בָּהּ:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:23 now therefore, swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me, or with my offspring, or with my posterity; (וְהִנֵּה אֱלֹהִים ב ל שְׁבַע עֲתָהּ ו) נָכַד ל ו נִין ל ו ל שֶׁקֶר אִם [waw conj. + adv: -attah; "and now"; + v/Niphal/imp/m/s: sheba- {lit. seven used symbolically}; "swear" {i.e., keep perfect}; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "to me"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "by God"; + adv: hinneh; "behold/see that"; + conj: 'im; "if/not"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms: shaqar; "will deal falsely"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "to me"; + waw con. + prep: lamed; "and to"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: niyn; "my offspring" {used 3x, Job 18:19; Isa.14:22}; + waw conj. + prep: lamed; "and to"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: naked; "my posterity" {used 3x same verses as "niyn"}]

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**but according to the kindness that I have shown to you, you shall show to me, and to the land in which you have sojourned.**" (עַם וְעַם עָשָׂה עִמָּךְ עָשָׂה אֲשֶׁר חָסַד הָיָה לְךָ נִגַּד אֲשֶׁר אֶרְיָן הָיָה [prep: kaph; "according to"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: chesed; "the kindness"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "that"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: -asah; "I have done/shown"; + prep. w/2ms suff: -immad; "with you"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms: -asah; "you will show/do"; + prep. w/1cs suff: -im; "with me"; + waw conj. + prep: -im + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: 'erets; "and with the land"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which"; + v/qal/PF/2ms: gur; "you have sojourned"; + prep. w/3fs suff: bet; "in it"])

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבְרָהָם אֲנִי אֲשָׁבֵעַ: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:24

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:24 **And Abraham said, "I swear it."** (וַיִּשְׁבַּע אֲבְרָהָם אֲמַר אֲנִי [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + pro/1cs: 'anikiy; "I myself"; + v/Niphal/IPF/1cs: sheba-; "will swear"])

### ANALYSIS VERSES 22 – 24:

1. **Abimelech** reemerges on the scene now accompanied by **Phicol, the commander of his army**.
2. The proper noun "**Phicol/piykol**" is only used in our immediate context (vss.22,32) and in Gen.26:26 during the time of Isaac.
3. As with the name **Abimelech**, **Phicol** was used as a title rather than a given name.
4. That **Abimelech** is accompanied by his top ranking military **commander** shows mutual respect between two powers as **Abraham** also has a substantial martial reserve (cf.Gen.14).
5. There is no mention of **Abimelech and Phicol** coming to **Abraham** as they were already present at the "*great feast*" (cf.vs.8).
6. The notation "**at that time**" is specific in the Hebrew literally "**at the time, that one**/bet ha – eth ha hiy" looking to the previous occasion of the weaning of Isaac.
7. The festivities spread over several days and **Abraham** had invited the king of Gerar and nobleman as an act of hospitality reciprocating to Abimelech's invitation to make himself at home in his kingdom (cf.20:15).
8. With Abraham's act of hospitality, **Abimelech** takes opportunity to further strengthen the ties of their relationship.
9. The opening statement **to Abraham** "**God is with you in all that you do**" is presented as if both **Abimelech and Phicol** were speaking, though obviously one spoke for both.
10. The important thing is that both were in agreement as to God's affinity for **Abraham**.
11. This implicitly points to the foundation necessary to establish any type of alliance with another: Like-mindedness.
12. If the previous occasion of Gen.20 was indeed in part for the purpose of evangelizing, the proclamation is open acknowledgement of +V existing in Gerar.
13. Abimelech's and Phicol's statement mirror their own appreciation and orientation to **God** and his prophet in like-mindedness.

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14. With some 3 years having passed since “operation deceit”, sufficient observation of Abraham’s life has brought about definite conclusions.
15. First is that the “**God**/’elohiym” that spoke to **Abimelech** in his dream (cf.20:3) reigns in life (sovereignty).
16. This is seen in the fact that they equate **God** as the catalyst to Abraham’s life.
17. Secondly they implicitly recognize Abraham’s +V in orientation to **God** being the requirement on his part for God’s intercession on his behalf.
18. The participial phrase “**in all that you do**/bet kol ‘asher ‘attah –asah” looks to the continuous lifestyle of application by **Abraham** that has provided the evidence for their observation.
19. That **Abimelech and Phicol** openly acknowledge God’s role in Abraham’s life is an indirect witness as to their own orientation to God’s plan as believers.
20. It is this spiritual reality that is the main driving force behind their pursuit of a binding relationship with **Abraham** (+V attracts +V).
21. We make note here that **Abraham** did not pursue the alliance, but his +V is the magnet for the king and his commander.
22. With the spiritual foundation established between the parties, the construction of alliance moves to the next ingredient necessary for success in vs.23: Honesty and loyalty between parties.
23. Without moral considerations, there is no pillar for trust.
24. The words “**now therefore**/waw –attah” assumes recognition on Abraham’s part as to the +V of **Abimelech** and company.
25. It has the idea of “we have turned to you now” (cf.Judg.11:8) in light of the spiritual alliance between parties.
26. The requirement of oath from **Abraham** (**swear to me**/sheba- lamed) is to be understood as *apropos* for both parties (cf.vs.31).
27. **Abimelech** assumes his judicial position as king in delivering the requirements to **Abraham**, the foreigner in his land.
28. That the oath is bound “**by God**/bet ‘elohiym” harks to the supreme power to Whom both men give allegiance.
29. The basic requirement “**that you will not deal falsely**/hinneh ‘im shaqar” is ironical.
30. **Abraham** had just 3 years prior engaged in a perfect example of *shaqar* when he led the Philistine king to believe his female traveling companion was only his sister (chptr.20).
31. If a chide is intended, it must be understood in the light of the necessity for loyalty for a king to extend such an invitation to an alien that has the resource of **God** to put his kingdom at risk in spite of Abraham’s sin failures.
32. In essence, the oath is a reflection of Abimelech’s continued humbleness recognizing that really the success of alliance lies in the hands of Abraham’s willingness to agree.
33. **Abimelech** extends the oath to include application toward his “**offspring**/niyn” and “**posterity**/neked”.
34. These two nouns are always used together and only 3x in the OT. Gen.21:23; Job 18:19; Isa.14:22
35. While they may seem redundant, Isa.14:22 clues us that “**offspring**” emphasizes the name or reputation through one’s progeny with “**posterity**” emphasizing the family lineage.
36. The promise is directed to applying towards the kings reputation as it is mirrored by his successors and as long as the family may reign.

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37. Obviously, **Abimelech** recognizes that a successor may not sustain the kind of moral standards he represents necessary for peace to exist in the future (It lasts at least through Isaac).
38. That **Abraham** can be certain that **Abimelech** will live up to his side of the deal has been observed on his own part (they have observed each other).
39. **Abimelech** reflects upon the evidence, “**but according to the kindness that I have shown to you**/kaph ha chesed ‘asher –asah –immad”.
40. The noun *chesed* (**kindness**) has the strong nuances of loyalty applied in grace (cf.Gen.19:19) and obedience (cf.Gen.20:13).
41. The grace of **Abimelech** towards Abraham is obvious in the invitation to live in the land and obedience is to be considered in Abimelech’s response to doctrine (return of Sarah/saving faith).
42. **Abimelech** expects **Abraham** to extend the same virtues of grace towards Abimelech’s authority and the laws of **the land in which you have sojourned**.
43. This all the while maintaining an open and honest approach to governing authorities to ensure and continue building trust for the parties of alliance.
44. Abraham’s acknowledgement to reciprocate in an alliance is summed up in vs.24, “**And Abraham said, ‘I swear it’**”.
45. Abraham’s promise of word is all that is needed by **Abimelech and Phicol** to pursue formalizing a legal covenant.
46. **Abimelech** has now opened the doors for any issues of spiritual or moral concern on the part of the allied parties to be brought to the table as necessary (parties are on equal grounds in alliance).

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## ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

### EXEGESIS VERSES 25 – 26:

וְהוֹכַח אֲבְרָהָם אֶת־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ עַל־אֲדוֹת בְּאֵר  
הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר גָּזְלוּ עֲבָדֵי אֲבִימֶלֶךְ: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:25

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:25 **But Abraham complained to Abimelech because of the well of water which the servants of Abimelech had seized.** (אֲדוֹת עַל אֲבִימֶלֶךְ אֵת אֲבְרָהָם יִכַח ו) *[waw consec. + v/Hiphil/PF/3ms: yakach {same as 20:16}; "and he complained/filed a legal complaint" {cp.Lev.19:17}; + proper n: "Abraham"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Abimelech"; + prep: -al; "over"; + n/com/f/pl/constr: 'odoth; "the cause of"; + n/com/f/s/constr: be'ad; "the well of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: mayim; "water"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which"; + v/qal/PF/3cpl: gazal; "they seized by force"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: -ebed; "the servants of"; + proper n: "Abimelech"}]*

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ לֹא יָדַעְתִּי מִי עָשָׂה אֶת־הַדָּבָר  
הַזֶּה וְגַם־אַתָּה לֹא־הִגַּדְתָּ לִּי וְגַם אֲנֹכִי לֹא שָׁמַעְתִּי בְלִתִּי  
הַיּוֹם: <sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:26

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:26 **And Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this thing; neither did you tell me, nor did I hear of it until today."** (עָשָׂה מִי יָדַע לֹא אֲבִימֶלֶךְ אָמַר ו) *[waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: "Abimelech"; + neg.part: lo' + v/qal/PF/1cs: yada-; "I do not know"; + interr.pro: miy "who?"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: -asah; "did"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: dabar: "the thing/matter"; + d.a. + adj/m/s: zeh; "this one"; + waw conj. + conj: gam; "and also"; + pro/2ms: 'attah; "you yourself"; + neg.part: lo' + v/Hiphil/PF/2ms: nagad; "did not cause to make known/tell"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "to me"; + waw conj. + conj: gam; "and also"; + pro/1cs: 'anokiy; "I myself"; + neg.part: lo' + v/qal/PF/1cs: shama-; "did not hear"; + prep: bilettiy; "except/until"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: yom; "today"]]*

### ANALYSIS VERSES 25 – 26:

1. With the spiritual and moral foundation of alliance set (positive believers & honesty), another ingredient for success in partnership is revealed i.e., sound ethical standards.
2. This via a test case of property that **Abraham** considers to be his right of use that is otherwise appropriated by **servants of Abimelech**.
3. Whereas morals emphasize one's character, ethics emphasize one's actions towards another.

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4. Proper ethics strives for a sense of fair play (justice) between parties.
5. One may be honest, yet treat another unjustly intentional or not (case and point, Abimelech and Sarah; cp.20:3-5).
6. This is all important in an alliance between two peoples/nations and travel or residence on foreign soil.
7. That **Abraham** and **Abimelech** have established common grounds of equality in agreement, **Abraham** considers the situation conducive to now take a legal matter before **Abimelech**.
8. The Hiphil verb “**complained/yakach**” carries with it legal remedy as it was used regarding Sarah’s legal protection leaving Abimelech’s household in 20:16.
9. It is used in Lev.19:17 (cp.vs.15) for finding legal remedy with another, yet without spite or sin, “... *judging you will judge your neighbor...*”
10. Here it means **Abraham** files a “**legal complaint**” regarding a certain **well of water** that his enterprise personally dug.
11. Not until **Abimelech** makes clear that they are to be allied with one another does **Abraham** bring the matter before him.
12. Abraham’s actions set precedence that a spiritual and moral alliance between the two means respect of property on the parts of both.
13. Otherwise the situation is moot as **Abraham** would have no legal right of claim on foreign soil.
14. Just as **Abraham** is to respect the law of the land, so **Abimelech** should respect the production of toil by Abraham’s own hands as his personal property.
15. Good ethics prohibit forfeiture of property/manufacturing for civil gain.
16. In this case, it was not **Abimelech** that **seized the well**, but others in his service and domain.
17. There is no indication that those responsible for seizure of the **well** did so maliciously and could have thought since **Abraham** was an alien, it was for the taking on behalf of their king.
18. Obviously a king/ruler cannot keep tabs on his subordinates at all times, but what he is responsible for is to ensure the proper treatment of allied visitors.
19. This would mean that there is legal protection afforded the ally.
20. The *chesed/loyalty* of oath is a two-way street (cp.vss.23-24,31).
21. While it seems at the present there is no immediate resolution to the matter, vss.28-30 reveal the likes of a legal writ for Abraham’s future protection.
22. In vs.26, **Abimelech** denies being party to the confiscation on 3 levels:
  - A. Ignorance as to the culprits, “**I do not know who has done this thing**”.
  - B. Unable to have interceded before as there was no previous complaint, “**neither did you tell me**”.
  - C. Lack of any other means of addressing the issue, “**nor did I hear of it until today**”.
23. Although **Abimelech** may claim personal innocence as to the situation, it still does not resolve the issue.
24. It appears that once again he is going to be schooled as to doctrinal expectations placed upon his person to be “blameless/righteous” (cf.20:4,5).
25. Being “blameless” only in part fails as to that kind of righteousness demanded by God.
26. This time, missing Ph<sub>2</sub> application is needed to resolve the matter satisfying experiential +R.
27. He will expose his immaturity as to this Ph<sub>2</sub> requirement for a righteous alliance in the next section when he asks **Abraham** what the 7 ewe lambs are for (cf.vss.29-30).
28. Ethical considerations of alliance demands the surety of legal protection for all concerned.

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## THE CONTRACT RATIFIED

### EXEGESIS VERSES 27 – 32:

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם צֹאן וּבָקָר וַיִּתֵּן לְאַבִּימֶלֶךְ  
וַיִּכְרְתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּרִית׃<sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:27

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:27 **And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them to Abimelech; and the two of them made a covenant.** (וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם לְקַח ו) אַבִּימֶלֶךְ ל נָתַן וּ בָקָר ו צֹאן אַבְרָהָם לְקַח ו) כִּרְתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּרִית [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: laqach; "and he took"; + proper n: "Abraham"; + n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "sheep"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: baqar; "oxen/cattle"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nathan; "and he gave"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "to Abimelech"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: karath; "and they cut" {same as 9:11; 15:18; 17:14}; + adj/m/dual/constr. w/3mpl suff: shenayim; "the two of them"; + n/com/f/s/abs: berith; "a covenant" ])

וַיִּצַב אַבְרָהָם אֶת־שִׁבְעַת כִּבְשֹׁתֵי הַצֹּאן לְבַדָּהֶן׃<sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:28

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:28 **Then Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.** (וַיִּצַב נ) אֶת אַבְרָהָם בַּד ל צֹאן הַ כִּבְשֹׁתַי שִׁבְעַת אֶת אַבְרָהָם [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: natsab; {lit. to stand} "and he caused to set over "; + proper n: "Abraham"; + sign of d.o. + adj/f/s/abs: sheba-; "seven"; + n/com/f/pl/constr: kibesah; "ewe/female lambs of"; + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "the sheep/flock"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fpl suff: bad {lit. alone}; "to themselves" ])

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבִּימֶלֶךְ אֶל־אַבְרָהָם מָה הֵנָּה שִׁבְעַת  
כִּבְשֹׁתֵי הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר הִצַּבְתָּ לְבַדָּנָה׃<sup>WTT</sup> Genesis 21:29

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:29 **And Abimelech said to Abraham, "What do these seven ewe lambs mean, which you have set by themselves?"** (וַיֹּאמֶר אַבִּימֶלֶךְ אֶל אַבְרָהָם אֵלֶּה הֵנָּה מָה הֵנָּה שִׁבְעַת ל נָצַב אֲשֶׁר אֵלֶּה הַ כִּבְשֹׁתַי שִׁבְעַת [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: "Abimelech"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Abraham"; + interr.pro: mah; "what mean?"; + pro/3fpl: henna; "the same"; + adj/f/s/abs: sheba-; "seven"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: kibesah; "ewe lambs"; + d.a. + adj/b/pl: 'allah; "these"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which"; + v/Hiphil/PF/2ms: natsab: "you have caused to set"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fpl suff: bad; "alone to themselves" ])

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וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי אֶת־שִׁבְעַת כְּבָשֹׂת תִּקַּח מִיָּדִי בְעֵבוּר  
תְּהִי־לִי לְעֵדָה כִּי חָפַרְתִּי אֶת־הַבְּאֵר הַזֹּאת:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:30 And he said, "You shall take these seven ewe lambs from my hand in order that it may be a witness to me, that I dug this well." (וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי אֶת־שִׁבְעַת כְּבָשֹׂת תִּקַּח מִיָּדִי בְעֵבוּר בְּיָד מִן לִקַּח [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + conj: kiy; "for"; + sign of d.o. + adj/f/s/abs: sheba-; "the seven"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: kibesah; "ewe lambs"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms: laqach; "you will take"; + prep: min + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: yad; "from my hand"; + prep: bet + prep: -abur; "on account of"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms: hayah; "you will become"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "for me"; + prep. lamed; "for"; + n/com/f/s/abs: -edah; "a witness/testimony"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: chaphar; "I dug"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: be'er; "the well"; + d.a. + adj/f/s: zo'th; "this one"])

וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא בְּאֵר שִׁבְעַת כִּי שָׁם  
נִשְׁבְּעוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:31 Therefore he called that place Beersheba; because there the two of them took an oath. (וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא בְּאֵר שִׁבְעַת כִּי שָׁם נִשְׁבְּעוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם [prep: -al + prep: ken; "upon thus/therefore"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: qara'; "he called"; + prep: lamed + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: maqom; "for the place"; + pro/3ms: hu'; "he himself"; + proper n: be'er - sheba-; "Beersheba"; + conj: kiy; "because"; + adv: sham; "there"; + v/Niphal/PF/3cpl: sheba- {lit. seven}; "they swore an oath"; + adj/m/dual/constr. w/3mpl suff: shenayim; "the two of them"])

וַיַּכְרֹתוּ בְרִית בֵּית־בְּאֵר שִׁבְעַת וַיָּקָם אַבִּימֶלֶךְ  
וַפִּיכֹל שֶׁר־צָבָאוּ וַיָּשׁבוּ אֶל־אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים:

<sup>NAS</sup> Genesis 21:32 So they made a covenant at Beersheba; and Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, arose and returned to the land of the Philistines. (וַיַּכְרֹתוּ בְרִית בְּיָד בְּאֵר שִׁבְעַת בְּיָד בְּאֵר שִׁבְעַת בְּיָד בְּאֵר שִׁבְעַת [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: karath; "so they cut"; + n/com/f/s/abs: berith; "a covenant/treaty"; + prep: bet + proper n: "at Beersheba"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: qum; "and they arose"; + proper n: "Abimelech"; + waw conj. + proper n: "and Phicol"; + n/com/m/s/constr: sar; "the commander of"; + n/com/b/s/constr. w/3ms suff: tsaba'; "his army"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: shub; "and returned"; + prep: 'el + n/com/f/s/constr: 'erets: "to the land of"; + proper n: pelishetti; "the Philistines"])

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### ANALYSIS VERSES 27 – 32:

1. After **Abraham** files grievance over the **well**, the treaty is ratified legally in symbolic form.
2. The legality of the contract is featured with the parenthetical placement of the words, “**cut a covenant**/karath berith” in vss.27 & 32.
3. Vss.28-30 symbolically represent a rider to the main contract with vs.31 presenting a formal title for the legal treaty.
4. It is **Abraham** that now gifts **Abimelech** with **sheep and oxen** (cf.20:14).
5. Whereas Abimelech’s gifts emphasized reparation, Abraham’s gifts symbolize allegiance as a new ally with **Abimelech**.
6. Although in partnership, the territory remains under legal custody of **Abimelech** and a tribute to the sovereign ruler in acknowledgement is in order.
7. As **Abraham** has no real estate to offer in legal representation of bond between two peoples, capital in the form of livestock is substituted.
8. In vs.28, **Abraham** includes an addendum to the treaty.
9. It is via the symbolic addendum that **Abimelech** is taught BD as it pertains to Ph<sub>2</sub> righteousness (this compliments his lesson on Ph<sub>1</sub> +R in 20:3ff).
10. As the preceding vss.25-26 revealed, apart from adamantly defending himself of any guilt in the matter of Abraham’s **well** being confiscated, he made no further moves to resolve the matter.
11. In other words, he fell short in application.
12. The “**seven ewe lambs**/sheba- kibesah” **Abraham** segregates from the **flock** and requires **Abimelech** to take **from his hand** symbolically teaches the doctrine of Ph<sub>2</sub> righteousness.
13. The number “**seven**” in numerology represents completed perfection as illustrated on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of restoration (cf.Gen.2:2,3).
14. It illustrates God’s justice and righteousness as perfect and complete. Cp.Gen.4:15 (+J) cf.7:2 (clean = +R)
15. Further, the Hebrew number **seven** (*sheba-*) has the same consonants as the verb translated “**took an oath**” (vs.31 cp.vss.23,24).
16. This teaches that the binding nature of the treaty rests on the integrity of God’s righteousness and justice experientially.
17. A treaty is only as good as the principles upon which it is written.
18. The “**female lambs**” symbolically represent Christ’s atonement for sin as they were required in the sin offering. Cp.Lev.4:32; 5:6; 14:10; Num.6:14
19. The 7 **ewe lambs** thus teach that only through Christ’s work on the cross is God’s perfect righteousness and justice found.
20. In vs.29, **Abimelech** seeks to know the meaning of Abraham’s actions, “**What do these seven ewe lambs mean, which you have set by themselves**”.
21. Vs.29 reveals Abimelech’s +V to the Ph<sub>2</sub> doctrine that is symbolically embedded.
22. Vs.30 then teaches the application necessary to be in line with God’s +R/+J.
23. The requirement “**take these seven ewe lambs from my hand**” illustrates 1<sup>st</sup> and foremost the necessity of R<sub>B</sub> supplied by means of grace via Christ’s work on the cross (cp.1Joh.1:9).
24. Secondly and just as important is that Abimelech’s actions are designed to effectuate a legal “**witness/-edah**” to the rights of the **well** belonging to **Abraham**.
25. This points to the necessity of application by **Abimelech** to conform to the integrity of their covenant on a Ph<sub>2</sub>/experiential level i.e., R<sub>B</sub> + application.

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26. Whereas **Abimelech** initially held back on any application to the situation, **Abraham** symbolically teaches him the necessity of works as it applies to his life as a believer. Cp.Jam.2:17,20,24,26
27. It is our works that “**witness/evidence**” our faith.
28. It is Abimelech’s responsibility to protect the rights of his allies through application.
29. The teaching of this Ph<sub>2</sub> doctrine is embedded in the form of Abimelech establishing legal protection for **Abraham** as to his rights to the **well** for all future posterity.
30. The addendum is conditional (experiential) upon **Abimelech** taking the **lambs** in response.
31. In vs.31, **Abraham** titles the treaty, “**Beersheba/be’er-sheba**” or the “**well of seven/oath**”.
32. The title recognizes consummation of the treaty as established based on God’s standards of righteousness and justice, Ph<sub>1</sub> and Ph<sub>2</sub>.
33. It reflects the agreement between like-minded +V believers in alliance with one another on the scale of national brotherhood.
34. With the legalities completed (vs.32a), “**Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, arose and returned to the land of the Philistines.**”
35. The grammatical collective singular of the verb “**arose/qum**” as to **Abimelech and Phicol** illustrates the comprehensive unity of government between the allied parties as to both political and military entities.
36. That they “**returned to the land of the Philistines/shub ‘el ‘erets plishetti**” teaches that the intent of the contract and addendum was understood by all that **Abraham** had legal claim not only to the **well**, but had *de facto* possession of the region adjacent to it (cf.20:15).
37. It assumes **Abimelech** GAPing the necessity of application now revealed at a high level.
38. In other words, he was not only evangelized Ph<sub>1</sub>, but is Ph<sub>2</sub> positive giving **Abraham** the doctrinal support to “*swear by God*” (vss.23-24) in the alliance.
39. In summary, the “**Well of 7**” treaty sets precedence for future posterity as to Israel aligning themselves with foreign nations as brotherly allies:
  - A. The nations should be on the same page spiritually and morally (both appeal to Biblical norms and principles both Ph<sub>1</sub> & <sub>2</sub>).
  - B. Proper ethics (fair play) are to be employed to handle any grievance.
  - C. Legal contracts are to be established to protect the rights and property of allied citizens at home and abroad.



## GENESIS

12. The gray-green needles appear to wilt or hang down from the stems and excrete salt on their surfaces that gives the needles a white color.
13. It provides shade and a pleasant coolness and at night moisture increases in the cool air and water vapor adheres to the salt particles excreted on branches and needles forming droplets.
14. In the morning the tiny droplets of water evaporate and cool the tree and the shade below it.
15. The symbolism may be ambiguous, but not without definite pictures.
16. The **tree** finds its foundation for symbolism based on the geography of planting i.e., **Beersheba**.
17. This highlights the principle of the treaty having its foundation in God's +R/+J, Ph<sub>1,2</sub>.
18. The salt content of the tree points to the doctrine behind the Ph<sub>1</sub> and <sub>2</sub> evangelizing of +V that made the treaty possible. Cf.Mat.5:13; Mar.9:50; Col.4:6
19. The refreshing nature of it's shade and coolness points to the refreshing nature of coming into contact and association with like-minded +V. Cp.Rom.15:32; 1Cor.16:18; 2Cor.7:13; Phile.1:7
20. Its hardy nature in an otherwise arid land points to the uniqueness of +V in Satan's world. Cp.Isa.40:3; Mat.3:3; Joh.1:23
21. Its fire suppression points to the deliverance from judgment that made the treaty possible. Cf.20:17,18 cp.Isa.66:16; Heb.10:27; 2Pet.3:7; Rev.18:8
22. The pine tree by application symbolizes eternal life. Pro.11:30
23. In general, the **tamarisk tree at Beersheba** memorializes Abraham's experience concerning Abimelech.
24. It highlights finding +V whereas Abraham expected the opposite.
25. It highlights the evangelizing that occurred through the entire ordeal.
26. It highlights the comradery and unity that resulted in finding +V in Gerar.
27. It highlights the precedent established in principle for Abraham's offspring as a nation in forging alliances with other nations.
28. Not least, it highlights the power of BD coupled with +V over the power of the ISTA and Satan's world.
29. The **tree** in principle symbolizes the **everlasting** reality of all that it pictures.
30. After planting the **tree**, Abraham "**called on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God**".
31. The memorial was sanctified in prayer based on the reputation of the Son and His eternal existence as **God** (singular use of 'el).
32. The prayer honors God's plan to ensure the posterity of all +V in unity as one, no matter setting or exploits of others (good or bad).
33. Vs.34 closes with the author reminiscing that **Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines for many days**.
34. This pictures the freedom ultimately enjoyed by **Abraham** as a result of God's grace.
35. It is in stark contrast of entering the **land** under sin fear and now finding peace and security all around.
36. The oppression of sin is set free by grace.
37. The early **Philistines** were peaceful and lived under a positive king.
38. Later in the time of the Judges and Samuel they became warlike and lived under lords.
39. Abraham's present R&R is the lull before the supreme test of his faith.

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