

“Promises, Threats & Covenant”

Genesis 21

Introduction - Genesis 21 is the center of the Isaac birth narrative.

Fulfilling a Promise and Removing a Threat – Genesis 21:1-21

Genesis 21:1-13 – God's Promise Fulfilled – This points to divine intervention as God keeps his promise to Abraham and Sarah.

Concept: Isaac is a type of Christ, they were both miraculously conceived, Isaac by human means and Jesus by divine means.

Summary: Is it possible that this event took place by God's design to send Hagar and Ishmael off to be blessed by God in a different way and so that God could work with Isaac as he matured, found a wife and had his own children?

Genesis 21:14-21 – A Threat Removed – Abraham attends to the conflict, hears from God and sends Hagar and her teenage son (16) away from the only home he has ever known and the home she was sent to be a part of when she left Egypt in Genesis 12.

Summary: The course of history is the course of His Story; and we must see this in the details of this human incident; could this really be a divine moment, as God moves to orchestrate the redemption of his people?

Introduction: The Abraham-Abimelech stories form an inclusive around the birth of Isaac, the first heir of God's promises to Abraham.

The Abimelech Covenant – Genesis 21:22-34

Precept: In this story there is a prescriptive moment. Abraham would not let something as tangible as the well get in the way of his permanent relationship with Abimelech; so he gave Abimelech something to offset the return of his well for the sake of maintaining the relationship.

Conclusion: Romans 4:17-22 - This event points to Abraham as a "prototype of those who are justified by faith" (Morris, 365)

In some regard this was a blended family; Abraham had two sexual partners and the result of that was two sons. Does God need me to care for a child or does he have others who can see to their upbringing and future success?

The resolution of the conflicts in Genesis 21:22-34 should call us to consider that God owns everything and we are simply caretakers.

The blessings that God intended for Abraham's children were of two kinds, first, physical and material; second, spiritual. The most important blessing that we can give to our children is spiritual and this story points to that great truth.