

Patriarchs Study and Discussion Questions

Lesson Four: Isaac's Birth and Abraham's Test – Genesis 20-22

Read Genesis 20.

- 1) Based on the interaction between God and Abimelech in verses 2-7, was Abraham's the only family for whom God was concerned? See also Psalm 33:13-15.

- 2) How did Abraham sin? Had he done this before?

- 3) Reread God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 17:15-21 and its fulfillment in Genesis 21:1-7.
 - a) How much time transpired between the time God gave Abraham the promise and its fulfillment? See Genesis 17:1 and 21:5.

 - b) Considering this relatively short time frame, what shocking risk did Abraham make in Genesis 20?

 - c) Which verse tells specifically how God protected His own plan?

- 4) Think of a time when you made a bad decision and God mercifully spared you the potentially serious consequence. How does this impact your attitude toward your present life?

Read Genesis 21:1-7.

- 5) Considering your review in question 3, how long before Isaac's birth had Abraham been circumcised? (See Genesis 17:1, 11, 24 and 21:5.)

- 6) Try to put yourself in Abraham and Sarah's place. Were they likely to have connected Abraham's circumcision with Isaac's birth?

- 7) Apply Jesus' words in Matthew 25:21 and Luke 16:10a to Abraham's circumcision and Isaac's birth. What are some of the "little" things with which you need to be faithful this week? Be specific.

Read Genesis 21:8-34.

- 8) What does the story in verses 8-20 teach us about God?

- 9) Consider Abraham's grief in sending his own son, Ishmael, away. Has God asked you to let go and trust Him with something precious? If so, what is it?

- 10) Explain how the testimony (verse 22) and request (verse 23) of the local Canaanite rulers was proof that God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:2 was being fulfilled.

Read Genesis 22:1-19.

- 11) Imagine and describe the thoughts that might have gone through Abraham's mind during the night between verses 2 and 3. What insight does Hebrews 11:17-19 give into Abraham's reasoning?

- 12) In which present circumstance are you struggling to believe that obedience to God is really in your best interest?

Read Genesis 22:1-24.

13) The story of Abraham and Isaac prefigures the central Biblical drama. What is that central drama? See John 3:16, Luke 3:22, and Romans 8:32.

14) What does Abraham and Isaac's story teach us about saving faith? See Genesis 15:6 with John 14:15, 21-24, Romans 2:13, Hebrews 11:8-12, 17-19, James 2:20-24, and 1 John 2:3.

15) According to Genesis 22:1, God *tested* Abraham by asking him to sacrifice Isaac. In what area of obedience are you currently being tested? Considering what you discovered in Question 14, why is your response to this test so significant?