



BAND of BROTHERS

FALL SERIES 2022 – WEEK 9

### Genesis 20:1-21:34: God is With You

*At that time Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army said to Abraham,  
“**God is with you in all that you do.**” – Genesis 21:22 ESV*

- **On the Move**

- We ended last week with Lot and his daughters living in a cave in Zoar
  - We don’t see Lot again
- Abraham journeys to the territory of the Negeb and lived in Gerar
  - While sojourning there he is waiting for God to fulfill his promises
  - We’ve been here before
    - Left Canaan for Egypt (Genesis 12)
    - Left Hebron for Gerar (Genesis 20)

*And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, “**She is my sister.**” And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. – Genesis 20:2 ESV*

- Again, we’ve been here before  
*When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, “I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. **Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me** because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake.” – Genesis 12:11-13 ESV*
- It shows Abraham does not believe that God is with him
- Abraham’s motivation was to save his own skin
- His fear drove his actions

- **God’s Divine Intervention**

*But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, “**Behold, you are a dead man** because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man’s wife.” – Genesis 20:3 ESV*

- God steps in to save Sarah
- God turns an ill-conceived plan into a blessing
- Nothing will stop God's sovereign plan from happening
- God was with Sarah

*"Lord, will you kill an innocent people? Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she herself said, 'He is my brother.' **In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this.**"* – Genesis 20:4-5 ESV

- In Abimelech's defense, he had not knowingly done anything wrong
- Abimelech was encountering God
  - o As a pagan, he knew he was dealing with a divine power
  - o God accomplished His will through His omnipotence and omniscience

*Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know that you have done this in the integrity of your heart, **and it was I who kept you from sinning against me.** Therefore I did not let you touch her."* – Genesis 20:6 ESV

- Nothing can stop God from accomplishing His will
- This will be a constant theme throughout Abraham's life
- The same is true for you and me

*Many are the plans in the mind of a man,  
but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.* – Proverbs 19:21 ESV

#### • **Abraham's Mistrust**

- Abraham knew he had been promised a son from Sarah
  - o His actions show his doubt that God will do what he says
  - o God wouldn't let this get in His way

*Abraham said, "I did it because I thought, '**There is no fear of God at all in this place,** and they will kill me because of my wife. Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife. And when God caused me to wander from my father's house, I said to her, '**This is the kindness you must do me: at every place to which we come, say of me, 'He is my brother.'**'"* – Genesis 20:11-13 ESV

- Instead of apologizing, Abraham attempts to justify himself
- This is what he has done since the beginning
  - o This tells us he has always had some form of doubt in God's plan
  - o However, this did not stop God from accomplishing His plan
  - o In fact, God blesses Abraham
  - o He receives sheep, oxen, servants, land, and Sarah

*Then Abraham prayed to God, and **God healed Abimelech, and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children.** For the Lord had closed all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife. – Genesis 20:17-18 ESV*

- Bareness struck all of Abimelech's women because of his actions with Sarah
- How Ironical that Abraham was praying for God to heal these barren women, but continued to doubt that God could give him a son
  - o God just caused an entire city of women to become fertile
  - o Why could he not do the same for Sarah?

- **The Birth of Isaac**

***The Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as he had promised. And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him, Isaac.** – Genesis 21:1-3 ESV*

- These verses are proof that God delivers on His promises
- God did what he said he would do
  - o Sarah conceived
- Remember the reaction of Abraham and Sarah when they were told they would have a child one day

*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 17:17*

- God achieved the impossible
- A 100-year-old man and a 90-year-old woman had a child
  - o This confirmed that God was faithful to His promises

*Is anything too hard for the Lord? – Genesis 18:14*

*"Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! **Nothing is too hard for you.**" – Jeremiah 32:17 ESV*

- Abraham and Sarah both wanted to believe in the promises of God
  - o Sarah's bareness seemed impossible to get past
- At the right time, God shows that he is with them and fulfills His promise
  - o Isaac becomes the child of the promise
  - o Remember what God said about Isaac

***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. 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 12:2-3 ESV*

- Abraham and Sarah found great joy in Isaac
- However, through Isaac would come one that would be the hope of the nations

*For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given;  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,  
and his name shall be called  
**Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**  
Of the increase of his government and of peace  
there will be no end. – Isaiah 9:6-7 ESV*

*You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’ **God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.** – Acts 3:25-26 ESV*

- At just the right time God did what he said he would do
- We can trust the promises of God
- This is another example of God being with Abraham and Sarah

- **What about Ishmael?**

- Moses goes forward three years to the weaning of Isaac
- Abraham throws a feast to celebrate this
- The anger of Sarah swells when she sees Ishmael

*But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, laughing. So 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.**” – Genesis 21:9-10 ESV*

- Ishmael was doing nothing wrong
  - o Most likely he was enjoying himself
  - o To Sarah, he was a constant reminder of a mistake she made
  - o But why did Abraham not want to do this?

*Sarah, your wife, will give birth to a son for you. You will name him Isaac, and I will confirm my covenant with him and his descendants as an everlasting covenant. **As for Ishmael, I will bless him also, just as you have asked.** I will make him extremely fruitful and multiply his descendants. He will become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. – Genesis 17:19-20*

- How would Ishmael be a great nation if he was cast out?
  - o Him and his mother would surely die
  - o Abraham, again, was not trusting God

*But God told Abraham, “Do not be upset over the boy and your servant. Do whatever Sarah tells you, for Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted. But **I will also make a nation of the descendants of Hagar’s son because he is your son, too.**” – Genesis 21:12-13 ESV*

- God was confirming that he was in control
- Sarah responding the way she did was all part of His plan
  - o Separation between Isaac and Ishmael was needed for God to fulfill His plan through Isaac

- **God is with Ishmael and Hagar**

*When the water was gone, she put the boy in the shade of a bush. Then she went and sat down by herself about a hundred yards away. “**I don’t want to watch the boy die,**” she said, as she burst into tears. - Genesis 21:15-16 ESV*

- We tend to think of Ishmael as a small child in these verses
  - o He was most likely 16 or 17
  - o We see the love a mother has for her son in a desperate time

*And 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.** Up! Lift up the boy, and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make him into a great nation.”. – Genesis 21:17-18*

- God protects both Hagar and Ishmael
  - o God heard the voice of Ishmael
    - He would have grown up hearing about Yahweh
    - He could have been praying
    - God doubles down on his promise to make him into a great nation

***And God was with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.** – Genesis 21:20-12 ESV*

- Ishmael would go on to marry an Egyptian woman and have 12 sons (Genesis 25)
  - o His offspring become the Arab nations that are a constant problem for the Israelites

*He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone’s hand against him, **and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen.** – Genesis 16:12*

- **God is Faithful**

*At that time Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army said to Abraham, “**God is with you in all that you do.** Now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my descendants or with my posterity, but as I have dealt kindly with you, so*

*you will deal with me and with the land where you have sojourned.” And Abraham said, “I will swear.” – Genesis 21:22-25 ESV*

- Abimelech could tell that Abraham was blessed by God
  - He had been made into a great nation and would continue to do so
  - God was fulfilling his promises

***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. Genesis 12:2 ESV***

- A pagan king seems to get that more than Abraham does
  - Abraham and his family had grown significantly
  - Abimelech recognized something Abraham did not
    - God was with Abraham
    - He was blessed
    - Can the same be said of us?
- **Discussion questions**

Abimelech noticed that Abraham was blessed. Based on how we live our lives would our non-Christian friends say the same about us?

It is often repeated that “God was with \_\_\_\_\_.” Do we truly believe this of ourselves?

Like Abraham, we can take matters into our own hands. Where area of your life do you need to trust God in? Do we actually trust God or do we just say that we do?



BAND of BROTHERS

FALL SERIES 2022 – WEEK 10 HOMEWORK

**WEEK 10: Genesis 22:1-24 – The Lord Will Provide**

This is one of the most confusing and controversial chapters in all the Bible. But we will attempt to explain the purpose behind God's command that Abraham sacrifice the son for whom he had so long waited. But this passage reveals how easy it is to misplace our hope. Isaac was the fulfillment of God's promise but was never intended to become a substitute for God. In a sense, Abraham had begun to place all his confidence in the gift rather than the Giver. The main point of the passage is found in the simple phrase: "The Lord will provide" (Genesis 22:14 ESV). God wanted Abraham to place all his confidence and hope in Him. Isaac was a blessing from God but was never meant to take the place of God in Abraham's life. God had provided Isaac and He also provided a substitute to die in Isaac's place.

- I want you to read through this chapter with the mindset of a father. Put yourself in Abraham's sandals. Write down what thoughts go through your mind as you hear God's commands. How would you have responded had you been in Abraham's place?
- Read pages 263-280 of Ken's Devotionary™ on Genesis.
- Look at verses 1-3. Moses presents this part of the narrative in a rather matter of fact and unemotional manner. But what jumps out at you in this passage? How does it make you feel?
- Now turn your attention to verses 4-6. The only one who knows the true purpose for their trip in Abraham. What comes into your mind when you consider that this trip took 3 days?

What does he tell his servants that he and Isaac are going to do?

Read John 19:17. What similarities do you see between Isaac and Jesus?

- Read verses 7-8. Keep in mind that Isaac is probably 16-17 years old at this time. He is no longer a child. So, he is old enough to understand that something is not quite right. What do you think Abraham means by his answer to Isaac's question? Is he really exhibiting faith or simply trying to calm his son's growing anxiety?
- Read verse 9-14. While Isaac seems to be a silent and innocent victim in this story, what characteristics does he exhibit in this trying ordeal?

Do you think Abraham was really going to go through with the sacrifice of his son? If so, why?

Read Hebrews 11:17-19. What does this passage tell us about Abraham's thought process and intent on that fateful day?

- Read Genesis 22:15-19. God reiterates His covenant promise yet again. But why do you think God says, "because you have done this...I will?" Is His fulfillment of the covenant based on Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son? Had Abraham failed to go through with the plan, would God have gone back on his word?
- Verses 20-24 seem a bit out of place and form an anticlimactic end to a very startling story. But verse 23 contains the key to their placement at the end of the chapter. Take a few minutes to look at chapter 24 to see why Moses added these verses.