

CREATOR GOD MAKES A BIG PROMISE TO ABRAHAM (review)

Genesis 11:29 - 16:16

12:4-5 Abraham was 75 years old (and his wife Sarah was 65) when he moved to Canaan.

11:30 Sarah was childless – she could not have children. 15:5 [But] God said to Abraham, “Your descendants will be as many as the stars.” 6 Abraham believed God. So God decided: Abraham’s faith is goodness – God gave Abraham goodness.

This is Option #2:

Abraham believed God —> God made Abraham good —> and Abraham will live forever.

BUT ABRAHAM & SARAH DID NOT WAIT FOR GOD’S PROMISE – THEY MADE THEIR OWN PLAN

16:3 [Then] Abraham lived in Canaan for ten years, 16:1 but Sarah still had no children. Sarah had a female slave named Hagar. 2 So Sarah said to Abraham, “Maybe I can make a family through my slave – my slave will have children for me.” 3 [So] Sarah gave Hagar to her husband - and Hagar became Abraham’s (second) wife. 4 Abraham slept with Hagar – and Hagar became pregnant. 15 So Hagar’s baby was born. And Abraham named his son Ishmael. 16 Abraham was 86 years old when Ishmael was born.

BUT CREATOR GOD REPEATS HIS PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

Genesis 17:1-8

17:1 When Abraham was 99 years old, God appeared to Abraham. God said, “I am Most-Powerful-God. Live for me and always do what is right – 2 I am making my promise to you (again). I will give you many, many descendants. 3 And Abraham put his face to the ground.

And God said to Abraham, 4 “This is my promise to you: You will be the father of many nations – 6 and kings will come from you. 7 My promise to you is forever – my promise is to you and your descendants forever. Abraham, I will be your God – and I will be your descendants’ God. 8 I give all of Canaan to your descendants forever.”

AND GOD MAKES A PROMISE TO SARAH

Genesis 17:15-21 & 18:1-15

17:15 God also said to Abraham, 16 “I will also bless your wife Sarah. I will give you a son by Sarah. I will bless Sarah – and she will be the mother of nations – and kings will come from Sarah.”

17 Then Abraham put his face to the ground – and he laughed. Abraham said to himself, “I will be 100 years old – can I have a son? Sarah will be 90 years old – can she have a child?” 18 And Abraham said to God, “Please bless Ishmael.”

19 Then God said to Abraham, “Yes, I will bless Ishmael. But your wife Sarah will give you a son – and you must name your son Isaac (laugh). (I made a special promise to you: “I will bless all the

peoples in the world through you.”*) I will make the same promise to Isaac.† My promise to Isaac will be forever – and my promise will be to Isaac’s descendants forever.”

20Then God said, “But what about Ishmael? I heard your request for Ishmael – so I will bless Ishmael. I will give Ishmael many, many descendants – and I will make Ishmael into a great nation.

21-22“But my special promise is with Isaac. And next year Sarah will give birth to Isaac for you.” Then God finished talking to Abraham – and God left Abraham.

18:1Then God came to Abraham (again). Abraham was sitting at the door of his tent. 9And Sarah was in the tent. 10God said, “I will come back next year – and your wife Sarah will have a son.” Sarah was by the door of the tent – and she was listening. 12Sarah laughed to herself – she thought, “I am old. My husband is old. Can I have this happiness – can I have a baby when I am old?”

13Then God said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh? Why did Sarah say, ‘Can I have a baby when I am old?’” 14God said, “Is anything too difficult for God? I will come back next year, and Sarah will have a son.”

15But Sarah was afraid. So Sarah lied and said, “I did not laugh.” But God said, “You did laugh.”

GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISE TO ABRAHAM & SARAH

Genesis 21:1-6

21:1God was very kind to Sarah – and God did for Sarah what he promised. 2Sarah became pregnant. And the next year Sarah gave birth to a son for Abraham – the baby was born exactly when God promised. 3Abraham named his son Isaac (laugh). 5And Abraham was 100 years old.

6Sarah said, “God has given me (happy) laughter – and everyone will laugh with me.” 7She said, “No one can believe this! I have given Abraham a son when he is old.”

* Genesis 12:3

† Genesis 26:2, 4 2*God said to Isaac, 4“I will bless all nations on earth through your descendant [Jesus Christ].”*

CONTENT QUESTIONS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Did Abraham & Sarah wait for God's plan? Or did they follow their own plan? (Genesis 16:1-15)

- But did God give up on Abraham and Sarah? (Genesis 17:2)

- How old was Abraham when God repeated his promise? (Genesis 17:1)

So how long did Abraham wait for God to keep his promise?

[About 25 years from God's first promise – Genesis 12:4 & 15:5]

- What was God's name? (Genesis 17:1)

Why is this name important for Abraham?

- What new promise did God make to Abraham? (verses 15 & 16)

- Who would have Abraham's second son? (verse 16)

- But who was Ishmael's mother? (Genesis 16:4, 15)

- What did Abraham do when God said: Sarah will have a son? (verse 17)

Why did Abraham laugh? (verse 17)

What did Abraham forget about God? (Genesis 18:14)

What did Abraham forget about God's name? (Genesis 17:1)

- Who did Abraham want God to bless? (Genesis 17:18)

- Whose plan was it to make baby Ishmael? (Genesis 16:2-4)

Whose plan did Abraham want God to bless:

Abraham & Sarah's plan? Or God's plan?

- But who did God make his special promise to? (Genesis 17:19 & 21)

So, was Ishmael the answer to God's promise to bless the whole world?

²[Over 60 years later] God said to Isaac, ⁴"I will bless all nations on earth through your descendant [Jesus Christ]."

Genesis 26:2, 4

- What did Sarah do when God said: Sarah will have a son? (Genesis 18:10 & 12)

- Why did Sarah laugh? (verse 12)

What did Sarah forget about God? (Genesis 18:14)

What did she forget about God's name? (Genesis 17:1)

Do you think Abraham was a good spiritual leader?

Did Abraham help Sarah remember God's name and God's power?

After he followed Sarah's plan to make Ishmael, was he a weak spiritual leader?

Did Abraham and Sarah encourage each other to remember God's name and power?

Why is it important for a husband and wife to believe God together?

- How did God answer Sarah? What very important question did God ask Sarah? (Genesis 18:14)

How important is this question? What do you think?

- What did Sarah lie about? (Genesis 18:15)

Then what did God say to Sarah? (verse 15)

Does God know everything we think, say and do?

Then, why do we hide our thoughts, words and actions from God?!

- But how did God treat Sarah? Did God give up on Sarah? (Genesis 21:1)

What do you think about God?

- What did Abraham name his new son? (verse 3)

What does Isaac mean? (verse 3)

What was the difference between Sarah's laughter before Isaac was born and Sarah's laughter after Isaac was born?