

Read Genesis 21:1-7

- How do the first two verses of this chapter set our focus on God?
- Evaluate: Sarah laughs once again, but this time her laughter is different.

Read Genesis 21:8-13

- Read Galatians 4:21-31. How does this section help us understand what was going on in this section of Genesis 21.

- Galatians 4:21-31 – ²¹ Tell me, those of you who want to be under the law, don't you hear the law? ²² For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and the other by a free woman. ²³ But the one by the slave was born according to the impulse of the flesh, while the one by the free woman was born as the result of a promise. ²⁴ These things are illustrations, for the women represent the two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai and bears children into slavery—this is Hagar. ²⁵ Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. ²⁶ But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. ²⁷ For it is written:

**Rejoice, childless woman,
who does not give birth.
Burst into song and shout,
you who are not in labor,
for the children of the desolate are many,
more numerous than those
of the woman who has a husband.**

²⁸ Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. ²⁹ But just as then the child born according to the flesh persecuted the one born according to the Spirit, so also now. ³⁰ But what does the Scripture say?

Drive out the slave and her son, for the son of the slave will never be a coheir with the son of the free woman.

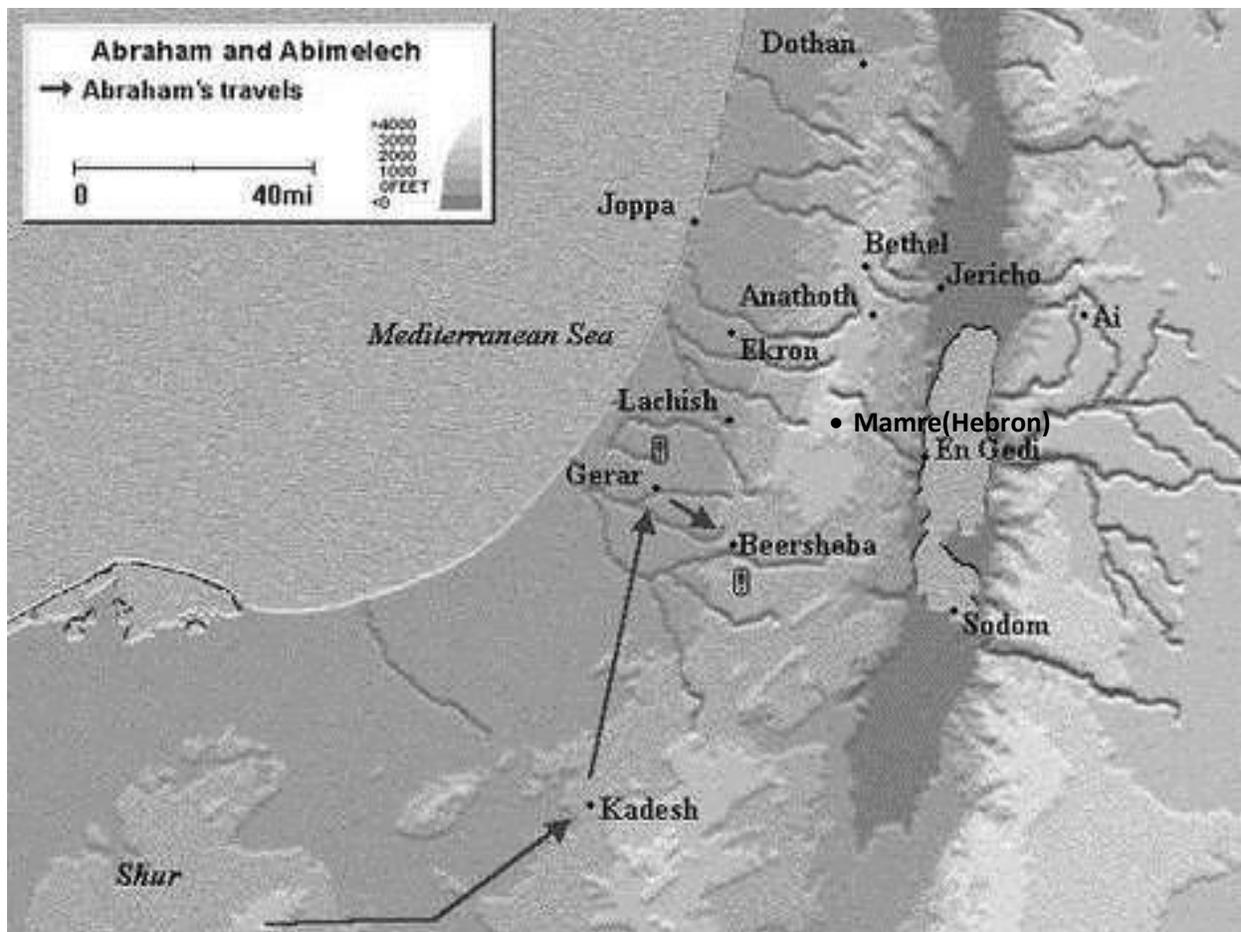
³¹ Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

Read Genesis 21:14-21

- “You’ve got to admire Abraham’s prompt obedience. Although he realized that at his age he would very likely never see his firstborn son again, he sent Ishmael and his mother away the very next morning. He gave them what supplies of food and water they could carry and, with an ache in his heart, watched them head out into the hot, dry southland of Canaan.”
People’s Bible Commentary: Genesis, p.179

- How old would Ishmael be at this time?
- Compare verses 13 and 18. What comfort did/do they give?
- From your knowledge of what comes later in Genesis, how is verse 21 different from what we will be told about Isaac?

Read Genesis 21:22-23



- If Abraham was only a temporary resident without privileges, why did the king and his army commander approach him as an equal?
- To whom was the agreement to apply?
- In verse 23, Abimelech said, “As I have been loyal to you...” How had Abimelech been loyal to Abraham?

Read Genesis 21:24-30

- What was the purpose of the seven ewe lambs?

Read Genesis 21:31-34

- In the Hebrew language, there is a play on words here as you look at the name Beersheba. What does Beersheba mean?
- What does Abraham’s planting of a tree remind you of from earlier in the account of Abraham?
- How do the following hymn verses help summarize what Abraham experienced here?
 - “I leave all things to God’s direction; He loves me both in wealth and woe.
His will is good, sure his affection; His tender love is true, I know.
My fortress and my rock is he: What pleases God, that pleases me.”
 - “My God has all things in his keeping; He is my ever faithful friend.
He gives me laughter after weeping, And all his ways in blessings end.
His love endures eternally: What pleases God, that pleases me.” (CW414:1,4)