

# SERMON GUIDE

## The Faithfulness of God

### Genesis 21:1-21



#### SERMON NOTES

I went to our GriefShare ministry meeting this week at church. It is a group for those that have experienced grief from loss. The one thing true about everyone there is that they all have the disorienting experience of losing someone they love. Several of the attendees of the group come from outside of our church. The thing that struck me after leaving the session that night was how much we as Christians depend upon God's faithfulness. We look to God's promises. Why? Because there's nothing we can do to undo death. We can't go back or rewind events. The only thing we can do is look forward and cling to the promises God has given us.

It struck me this week after that meeting how often I resolve to trust what God has said. I miss my son like crazy. I long for the day of seeing him again. I long for the day where the world is put to rights. All of those expectations are wrapped up in promises God has made. My hope is anchored to God's Word.

That's been the case for the people of God all throughout time and history. As we look at Abraham's story today, we see the same thing.

#### Exegesis

Genesis 12 marks an important storyline that begins in Scripture: it's the introduction of Abraham's story. Abraham's story is going to run all the way through to the birth of Christ, who is called the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. Abraham is the man God makes a promise to build into a nation and people. In some ways, since Genesis 12 until Genesis 21 has been about waiting for this promised son God tells Abraham is coming. God reiterates the promise in Genesis 12:2, 13:15, 15:4, 17:4, 17:16, 18:10. They have been waiting for 25 years since that initial promise.

**VS 1-7 -- <sup>1</sup> The Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as he had promised. <sup>2</sup> And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. <sup>3</sup> Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him, Isaac. <sup>4</sup> And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. <sup>5</sup> Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. <sup>6</sup> And Sarah said, "God**

*has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh over me.”<sup>7</sup> And she said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”*

God does what He says. We see the statement made 3 different times and different ways that God fulfilled His Word.

**VS 8-21 --** *<sup>8</sup> And the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. <sup>9</sup> But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, laughing. <sup>10</sup> 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.” <sup>11</sup> And the thing was very displeasing to Abraham on account of his son. <sup>12</sup> But God said to Abraham, “Be not displeased because of the boy and because of your slave woman. Whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall your offspring be named. <sup>13</sup> And I will make a nation of the son of the slave woman also, because he is your offspring.” <sup>14</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. <sup>15</sup> When the water in the skin was gone, she put the child under one of the bushes. <sup>16</sup> Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot, for she said, “Let me not look on the death of the child.” And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> Up! Lift up the boy, and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make him into a great nation.” <sup>19</sup> Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink. <sup>20</sup> And God was with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an expert with the bow. <sup>21</sup> He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.*

**Abraham and Sarah have to live with the consequences of their schemes.**

- Tension over Ishmael
- Sarah is jealous
- Abraham is caught in the middle

### **God understands our frailty and weakness.**

- Don't be displeased because of boy and slave woman
- Listen to Sarah (do as she says)
- God is not abandoning them, but entreating Abraham to trust His promises (Genesis 17:20)

### **Abraham demonstrates faith.**

- He saddles up Ishmael and Hagar and sends them away (foreshadows Isaac going up the mountain)

### **Common Grace**

- Hagar doesn't know plan
- God hears, provides
- He is with Ishmael

### **Some promises for us to cling to:**

- God promises that nothing will separate us from His love
- God promises to work everything together for our good
- God promises that He is with us always
- God promises to give us peace
- God promises His plans will prosper not harm you
- God promises those in Christ that we will face no condemnation
- God promises to bless us
- God promises comfort in our pains
- God promises strength in our weakness
- God promises to provide us wisdom and guidance
- God promises all-sufficient grace through Christ
- God promises to be for us
- God promises eternal life through faith in Jesus
- God promises us a world restored and made new
- God promises us that Jesus will return

- God promises to speak to us through His Word
- God promises to provide for us
- God promises victory over Satan

### Close

- 1. God is faithful to His promises and people.**
- 2. God can accomplish His promises against all odds.**
- 3. God fulfills His promises on His timing.**

Our God is a God of promise. What He says, He will do. You never need to doubt or question whether God will accomplish all that He has promised. Faith is living each day trusting God's promises and looking forward to their accomplishment. As we walk through life in a fallen and broken world, we hold to promises. As we await Jesus' return, we hold to promises. And our confidence is this, because we have the track-record of the whole biblical storyline: God will do what He said.



- How was your week? What is one thing you're grateful for and one thing that challenged you?
- How did you grow in obedience to Christ over the last week?
- Where did you go to share the gospel or have a spiritual conversation with someone?
- What is a sin you have been struggling with that you need to repent of?



- **REVIEW**
  - Read Genesis 21:1-21 from the sermon and then have someone else in the group read it again, preferably from a different version.
  - Additional Scripture
    - Psalm 6:8
    - Jeremiah 6:26
    - Amos 8:10
    - Acts 7:8

- Galatians 4:22
  - Galatians 4:29-30
  - Hebrews 11:11-18
- What big takeaways did you have from the sermon?
  - What did this teach you about God?
  - What did this teach you about man?
  - What did this teach you about salvation?
- **REFLECT**
  - What does Sarah's reaction to Isaac's birth tell us about God's promises and timing?
  - Why do you think Sarah demanded that Hagar and Ishmael be sent away? How might this request affect her relationship with Abraham and Isaac?
  - How does Abraham's reaction to sending Ishmael away reveal his character and his faith?
  - What does Hagar's experience in the wilderness teach us about God's care and provision?
  - In what ways do we see God's faithfulness to both Isaac and Ishmael in this passage?
  - What role does trust in God's promises play in the decisions made by each character in this passage?
- **RESPOND**
  - What is a practical step you can take as a result of this sermon?
- **MEMORIZE**
  - **Psalm 8:3-4 – *When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?***



- **BUILD UP:** How will you grow in your love and knowledge of the Lord this week? We have several discipleship opportunities for you to participate in.
  - **MDWK** is a time of education and growth in order to build up the Journey Church body. We offer a handful of intentionally chosen classes that cover a broad range of topics and are taught by quality teachers from within our congregation. Classes are at 6:30p every Wednesday. Contact Morgan Cates ([morgan@tjclive.com](mailto:morgan@tjclive.com)) for more information.
  - **TJC Women** seeks to equip women to be rooted in the Word of God and bold in their faith. Our events and small groups focus on letting the gospel shape all spheres of our lives. Gather is the first Saturday of every month. Contact Laura DiLeonardi ([laura@tjclive.com](mailto:laura@tjclive.com)) for more information.

- **TJC Men** exists to equip men to show Jesus as incomparably glorious in every sphere of their lives. The men's ministry meets on the 2nd Saturday of every month at 8:00a in the student center. Contact Morgan Cates (morgan@tjclive.com) for more information.
- **TJC Students** is passionate to see every parent equipped, every leader developed, and every student disciplined into baptized, self-feeding, disciple making followers of Jesus who are letting the gospel shape every sphere of their lives. Our student ministry meets on Wednesday nights from 6:00p-7:30p for MDWK worship and Sunday mornings at 8:30a and 10:00a for small group. Contact Larry Davis (larry@tjclive.com) for more information.
- **TJC Kids** believes that the Gospel saves, sanctifies, gathers and sends. It is our desire to see our kids understand that the Gospel truly does change everything and we will do this primarily by teaching our kids to love Jesus, showing them they can have fun in the process, and making sure they stay safe. Contact Nick Judd (nick@tjclive.com) for more information.
- **TJC Young Adults** exists to equip young adults ages 18 to 29 in becoming passionate followers of Jesus who enter their life in Christ. We do this through intentional relationships, fellowship, and worship centered around the gospel. The Fount meets Tuesdays at 7:00p. Contact Hunter Christian (hunter@tjclive.com) for more information.
- **SEND OUT:** Who in your sphere of influence needs to hear this story, your story, or the gospel? We have several opportunities for local and international missions.
  - **For the City:** Acts 1:8 calls us to be engaged where we live and among the nations. The people of TJC seek to bring truth, grace, and hope to Lebanon and the surrounding area by mobilizing the church to be salt and light, not only for the city, but for your city. Take part in faithfully and obediently using your gifts to declare God's glory among those who are hopeless living among you today. Contact Jeff Long (jeff@tjclive.com) for more information.
  - **For the Nations:** At TJC we exist to show Jesus as incomparably glorious to Lebanon and beyond. We are ambitious and passionate about strategically taking an active role in finishing the Great Commission as we actively pursue the unreached peoples of the world by mobilizing the entire church to pray, send, go and welcome international friends among us. Contact Shawn Casto (shawn@tjclive.com) for more information.
- **PRAYER**
  - **Pray over any request from your group members.**
  - **Pray for our directional elders:** Erik Reed (lead pastor)
  - **Pray for our replanters:** Gracepoint Church
  - **Pray for our short-term teams:**
    - Europe Team departing on November 1, 2024
    - Central Asia Team departing on March 7, 2025
    - Southeast Asia Team departing on March 7, 2025
    - Europe Team departing on March 21, 2025

- Southeast Asia Team #2 departing on April 25, 2025
- **Pray for our long-term units on the field:**
  - The Wilsons
  - The Grays
  - The Starks
- **Pray for the unreached.** Want to keep up with Unreached People Groups? Download the Unreached of the Day App <https://joshuaproject.net/pray/unreachedoftheday/app>