

Genesis 21

The Birth of Isaac (vss.1-7)

Some observations about the grace of God from this passage:

- ✚ **Grace** is God doing what He says, ie. doing what He promised.
- ✚ **Grace** is the creation of new life according to God's timetable.
- ✚ **Grace** brings joy and laughter to lives in despair.
- ✚ **Grace** produces obedience to cut off confidence in the flesh.
- ✚ **Grace** accomplishes things that originate in the mind and heart of God and not of man.
- ✚ **How do these observations expand and make Biblical our understanding of "grace"?**

Hagar and Ishmael sent away

- ☛ vss.8-10 As God's Promise (Isaac) grew, the fruit of Abraham and Sarah's fleshly decision was driven out.
- ☛ Although Hagar and Ishmael were treated harshly, it was God's purpose and will that only the offspring of faith prevail to become the sole heir of God's promises to Abraham. God's plan to save mankind, from the very foundations of the earth, has never included human effort. God's offspring, ie. God's kind, would not come through Adam's fallen seed. In other words, it is only children of the promise who will inherit eternal life.
- ☛ Nevertheless, for Abraham's sake, God took care of the outcasts; for they were thrown out not because of something wrong they had done but because of their master's lack of faith.

Treaty with Abimelech at Beersheba

- ☞ Abimelech, recognizing God's anointing on Abraham, sought peace with him. This pagan ruler not only demonstrated a fear of God but also the integrity to confront Abraham about his deceptiveness.
- ☞ Abraham's belated complaint about Abimelech's servants seizing his well also revealed another character flaw – not dealing with offenses but rather harboring them and using them as a basis for speculation about people.
- ☞ In essence, God was causing Abraham to face the lingering issues caused by his old nature. Simultaneously, the Lord was demonstrating His faithfulness to His promise of blessing those who bless Abraham and cursing those who curse him.
- ☞ Here at Beersheba, which means Well of the Oath, Abraham was consistently reminded of his promise to be honest, especially when dealing with fears and anxieties.

DISCUSSION: As God fulfilled His promises in Abraham's life, what was God doing through the recorded events? With regards to the primary theme of names in Genesis,

what is the significance of 21:33, "...and there he called upon the name of the LORD, the Eternal God."?

Genesis 22

Abraham Tested

- † This test demonstrated Abraham's faith in God's resurrection ability (Heb.11:17-19)
- † This test experientially and emotionally unified Abraham with the Father who would ultimately sacrifice His only begotten Son for the sins of the world.
- † This test was the culmination of years of preparation starting back in Genesis 12 when God first called Abram to go to "the land I will show you."
- † This test revealed to Abraham in the deepest and most mysterious way, the name of the Lord – the God who so loved the world would redeem sinful people through the death and resurrection of His only Son, the Son whom He loved, the true and better Isaac, Son of Joy and Laughter.
- † Moreover, this test required full dependence on the Lord as well as complete obedience. It is only this faith / obedience which unites us to the one true God who is constantly at work to reconcile and redeem a world of people who naturally seek to make names for themselves rather than call on the name of the Lord. But by His grace, through faith (a gift from God), we are saved from corruption and darkness and delivered into His glorious kingdom of light, the dominion of His Son.
- † Lastly, only faith in the resurrection is true Biblical saving faith from which we are credited righteousness. The faith of Abraham is the faith of Jesus Christ, namely that God can, does, and will raise the dead. Check out Romans 4:18-25 where the Apostle Paul describes and explains in detail true faith.

Nahor's sons

vss.20-24

As Abraham passed this final and most critical, significant exam, God was already at work in the life of Abraham's brother, Nahor, preparing a bride for Abe's son. Notice the mention of Rebekah, Isaac's wife to be.

DISCUSSION: What insights can we gain into God and His tests from this little passage?