



CHAPTERS
20-21

GENESIS

DAY ONE

1. Please read or listen to the chapters read aloud on the YouVersion Bible app at least twice before starting this study guide. When you have finished reading these chapters take a minute to title them in your own words.
2. It is hard to read this story about a man we have come to admire in our study of Genesis. Abraham has shown himself to be a man of great character and faith and yet this is not his finest hour. Why are some lessons so hard to learn?

Touching a hot stove is often a “one and done” experience. But other lessons seem to be a repeated scenario throughout our life. Take a few minutes to consider the lessons you have had to learn repeated times. What was the root problem?

3. What thoughts might Sarah have been thinking when King Abimelech sent for her?

(The KJV, ESV, NLT, and other translations spell this king’s name Abimelech. Some NIV translations refer to him as King Abimelek. This is the Hebrew name for Philistine kings during this period.)

4. Abraham was _____ years old when he left Haran. (Genesis 12:4) He was _____ years old when Ishmael was born to Hagar. (Genesis 16:16) He was _____ years old when the LORD appeared and confirmed the covenant with him. (Genesis 17:1)

We do not know how much time has passed since the three visitors came to Abraham’s tent with the news that Sarah would bear a son, but it could not have been very long. Jump ahead to Genesis 21:5, to see how old Abraham was when Sarah gave birth to their son. Abraham was _____ years old when Isaac was born.

5. Abraham is a man with an abundance of livestock. Sheep need to be moved from area to area to graze them properly and not destroy the vegetation. As we begin Genesis 20, locate Gerar on the map at the end of this study guide.

6. How does Abraham introduce Sarah, his wife, in Gen. 20:2?

Is this a true statement?

Does this incident feel vaguely familiar?

Where were Abraham and Sarah the last time something like this happened?

7. Abimelech, king of Gerar, saw Sarah and instructed his men to take her. Is this a normal response of a king?

What are kings accustomed to having?

Did this make you smile when you read it? Sarah is only ten years younger than Abraham. How old would she be when king Abimelech called for her?

8. God clearly was involved protecting Sarah. The scripture said, the king sent for her but did not go near her. Did you wonder why the king would send for her and yet not be with her?

What might the LORD have done to protect Sarah and this king?

9. How did the king find out about this deception?

10. He had truly been deceived. Who had been deceptive, Abraham or Sarah?

DAY TWO

11. Kings are not always willing to give back things they have chosen for themselves. What did God promise if he did not give Sarah back?

12. King Abimelech is in a hurry to give Sarah back to Abraham. First thing in the morning, the king called in his leaders and told them the events of his night. What was their response?

13. Next, the king called Abraham to stand before him. What questions did he have for Abraham?

14. How do you feel when you have been deceived?

When you were deceived, did you have a few questions for the person who deceived you?

15. What reason did Abraham give for deceiving the king?

16. When you read Genesis 20:13, what did you think?

How might that make you feel as a wife?

Here is a bit of bonus information.

One of my favorite books on marriage relationships was written by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs. It is titled *Love & Respect: The Love She Most Desires; The Respect He Desperately Needs*. We all want to be happy and content in our marriage. When we understand each other's needs, it becomes easier to meet those needs and have peace in our home.

17. Abraham is called the father of the faith by many because he believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness. But even this man of God has weaknesses. What was ruling Abraham's thoughts that caused him to ask such a thing of Sarah?

18. Read Proverbs 14:26-27 and Proverbs 29:25. How might these verses help when we are fearful?

19. Abraham had his reasons why he felt the need to lie to Abimelech. Do you think it even crossed his mind that God might do something to the king for taking another man's wife?

Our sin can lead to unforeseen problems for others. When counting the cost of our actions we must remember to consider the ramifications for others.

20. Why do you believe God included this story in the Bible?

- a. What was His purpose?
- b. What can we learn about our great God?
- c. What does God want us to learn about his people?

DAY **THREE**

21. Sarah is truly an amazing example of one who allows God to be her shield and defense. How are you doing in this area of trusting God as your shield and defender?

22. Are you more like Sarah or more like Abraham?

Is it more like you to respond as Sarah did—to trust God even in the face of what looks like disaster?

Or are you more like Abraham who allowed his fears to override his faith?

23. Fear and faith cannot co-exist. Are you secure in the knowledge of God's love, his care, and his forgiveness?

How does mature faith enable us to be victorious over anxiety and fear?
(Read 1 John 4:17-19 MSG, NIV, and AMP)

24. Genesis 20:17-18 tells us that Abraham prayed and God healed. Do your prayers include intercession for others and their healing (physical, emotional, and spiritual)?

25. Most births are accompanied by the joy of new life, but baby Isaac was even more of an unexpected joy. Can't you just imagine the excitement all around that area as the news spread? Abraham is 100 years old, and his beautiful wife, Sarah, is now 90 years old. God has given them a son! Could anyone deny that it was God who had blessed their home?

This child was the child God had promised, and He has been faithful to His word. This should give us hope as we wait for the promises of God. Genesis 21:1-2 are some of the most wonderful verses in God's word. What did these verses tell us about the LORD?

26. What do you see in verse 2 that shows this is the child of God's plan and purpose?

When did the child arrive?

Again, how old is Abraham at the birth of this son?

How old would Ishmael be at the birth of his half-brother?

27. Abraham named his son Isaac. Do you recall why he named him Isaac? Read Genesis 17:19, 21.

28. Isaac's name means laughter. Can you imagine the smiles and the laughter it brought to have this happy little boy?

29. What act of obedience do you see Abraham faithfully caring out in verse 4?

What had God commanded Abraham in Gen. 17:12?

DAY FOUR

30. When Isaac was weaned (the weaning period could have been 2-3 years), the Bible said Abraham held a great feast to celebrate his son. But not everyone was in the mood for a party. Who was upset?

31. Ishmael has had all his father's attention up to this point, but now things are changing. How well do people usually respond to change?

Why is change often so difficult?

Why might Ishmael see this change in such a negative light?

Do you think he had heard about God's promise of a son for Abraham and Sarah?

Do you think he might have had a few preconceived ideas about how things were going to go now that he had a brother to share his father's love?

Was Ishmael's response a total surprise?

Read Genesis 16:12

32. All too quickly the mood of this story changes. In verses 8-21 we see the result of jealousy in the family unit. What is Ishmael guilty of doing that caught Sarah's attention?

33. Sarah was done with Ishmael. What did she say to her husband, Abraham?

Sarah's words are harsh. Did she have the final say?

34. In verse 11 what are Abraham's feelings? What mixed emotion is he dealing with that Sarah is not?

35. What happened to Abraham to help him deal with this difficult decision?

This should be a great comfort to our hearts as parents. Who is the real caregiver of our children?

36. Can you picture the scene of Gen. 21:14-16?

Abraham provides some supplies and sends Hagar and Ishmael away. The provisions do not last long, and their need becomes obvious. With no help in sight what does Hagar choose to do?

37. Hagar allowed the size of her trial to blind her to the truth. What should she have focused on?

What did she know about God from her previous experience?
If you do not recall, look at Genesis 16:13-14.

38. Ishmael is no longer in the mood to taunt anyone. What has his desperation caused him to do?

39. God will sometimes allow things to become difficult for a purpose. What purpose might their trial serve?

DAY FIVE

40 Even though God had not made a covenant with Hagar or her son, he had compassion on them. God heard the cries of Hagar and her son Ishmael in the desert of Beersheba. What did God provide for Hagar that saved her life and the life of her son?

41. Have you ever experienced a difficulty that made it hard to see God's provision?

Despite your fears and your tears did you find God to be faithful?

42. What became of Ishmael?

Locate the desert of Paran on the map at the end of the study guide. Do you see why it was easy for Hagar to find an Egyptian wife for her son?

43. As this chapter closes, we read about one more encounter with King Abimelech. This time the commander of his army is with him. What did he say he knew about Abraham?

44. What is he asking Abraham to do?

Why would he think this was an important oath for Abraham to take?

If you have forgotten their previous dealings, look back at Genesis 20:1-18. Obviously, King Abimelech has not forgotten.

45. Abraham takes this opportunity to discuss a problem he has had over a well. Water is a valuable commodity in this desert land. What did Abimelech tell him?

46. When we have a problem, it is best to address it quickly with the right people. These men made a treaty that day. What dispute was settled with this treaty?

47. Genesis 21:33 said Abraham called on the name, El Olam, that is the Eternal and Everlasting God. He is the beginning and the end; the one who works his purposes throughout the ages. Read Psalm 90:1-2, Isaiah 40:28, and Romans 1:20. What did you learn about El Olam?



DAY TWO

Question 18

Proverbs 14:26-27 (NIV)

²⁶Whoever fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for their children it will be a refuge. ²⁷The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a person from the snares of death.

Proverbs 29:25 (NIV)

²⁵Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.

DAY THREE

Question 23

1 John 4:17-19 (NIV)

¹⁷This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. ¹⁸There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love ¹⁹We love because he first loved us.

1 John 4:17-19 (MSG)

¹⁷⁻¹⁸God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us. This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we're free of worry on Judgment Day—our standing in the world is identical with Christ's. There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life—fear of death, fear of judgment—is one not yet fully formed in love. ¹⁹We, though, are going to love—love and be loved. First we were loved, now we love. He loved us first.

1 John 4:17-19 (AMP)

¹⁷In this [union and fellowship with Him], love is completed and perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment [with assurance and boldness to face Him]; because as He is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love [dread does not exist]. But perfect (complete, full-grown) love drives out fear, because fear involves [the expectation of divine] punishment, so the one who is afraid [of God's judgment] is not perfected in love [has not grown into a sufficient understanding of God's love]. ¹⁹We love, because He first loved us.

Question 27

Galatians 6:7 (NIV)

⁷Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

DAY FOUR

Question 47

Psalms 90:1-2 (NIV)

¹Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. ²Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Question 47

Isaiah 40:28 (NIV)

²⁸Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.

Romans 1:20 (NIV)

²⁰For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

B I B L E C H A P T E R S

Genesis 20 (NIV)

¹Now Abraham moved on from there into the region of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. For a while he stayed in Gerar,

²and there Abraham said of his wife Sarah, "She is my sister." Then Abimelek king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her.

³But God came to Abimelek in a dream one night and said to him, "You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman."

⁴Now Abimelek had not gone near her, so he said, "Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation?"

⁵Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister,' and didn't she also say, 'He is my brother'? I have done this with a clear conscience and clean hands."

⁶Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you touch her.

⁷Now return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all who belong to you will die."

⁸Early the next morning Abimelek summoned all his officials, and when he told them all that had happened, they were very much afraid.

⁹Then Abimelek called Abraham in and said, "What have you done to us? How have I wronged you that you have brought such great guilt upon me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that should never be done."

¹⁰And Abimelek asked Abraham, "What was your reason for doing this?"

¹¹Abraham replied, "I said to myself, 'There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.'

¹²Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother; and she became my wife.

¹³And when God had me wander from my father's household, I said to her, 'This is how you can show your love to me: Everywhere we go, say of me, "He is my brother."'"

¹⁴Then Abimelek brought sheep and cattle and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham, and he returned Sarah his wife to him.

¹⁵And Abimelek said, "My land is before you; live wherever you like."

¹⁶To Sarah he said, "I am giving your brother a thousand shekels of silver. This is to cover the offense against you before all who are with you; you are completely vindicated."

¹⁷Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelek, his wife and his female slaves so they could have children again,

¹⁸for the LORD had kept all the women in Abimelek's household from conceiving because of Abraham's wife Sarah.

Genesis 21(NIV)

¹Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised.

²Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him.

³Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him.

⁴When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God commanded him.

⁵Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.

⁶Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me."

⁷And she added, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

⁸The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast.

⁹But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking,

¹⁰ and she said to Abraham, “Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.”

¹¹ The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son.

¹² But God said to him, “Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.

¹³ I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring.”

¹⁴ Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the Desert of Beersheba.

¹⁵ When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes.

¹⁶ Then she went off and sat down about a bowshot away, for she thought, “I cannot watch the boy die.” And as she sat there, she began to sob.

¹⁷ God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there.

¹⁸ Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation.”

¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰ God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer.

²¹ While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.

²² At that time Abimelek and Phicol the commander of his forces said to Abraham, “God is with you in everything you do.

²³ Now swear to me here before God that you will not deal falsely with me or my children or my descendants. Show to me and the country where you now reside as a foreigner the same kindness I have shown to you.”

²⁴ Abraham said, “I swear it.”

²⁵ Then Abraham complained to Abimelek about a well of water that Abimelek’s servants had seized.

²⁶ But Abimelek said, “I don’t know who has done this. You did not tell me, and I heard about it only today.”

²⁷ So Abraham brought sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelek, and the two men made a treaty.

²⁸ Abraham set apart seven ewe lambs from the flock,

²⁹ and Abimelek asked Abraham, “What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs you have set apart by themselves?”

³⁰ He replied, “Accept these seven lambs from my hand as a witness that I dug this well.”

³¹ So that place was called Beersheba, because the two men swore an oath there.

³² After the treaty had been made at Beersheba, Abimelek and Phicol the commander of his forces returned to the land of the Philistines.

³³ Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there he called on the name of the LORD, the Eternal God.

³⁴ And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines for a long time again,

¹⁸ for the LORD had kept all the women in Abimelek’s household from conceiving because of Abraham’s wife Sarah.