

# Making Promises

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## Part 1: The Patriarchs

### Review

- God promises to make Abram the father of a great nation, but Abram remains childless. Abram's belief in the promises of God are immediately put to the test. The land he's promised undergoes a famine, then he lies to Pharaoh to save his own life, then he has arranged for his heir to be an adopted slave-son – Eliezer of Damascus.
- Abram considers God's promise trustworthy, and God considered him righteous on the basis of his faith.
- The Lord offers to Abram a sign of his obligation to the covenant that he is offering to Abram by splitting the animals in half, and passing between the animals.
- Abram and Sarai try to fulfill the Lord's promise through Sarai's servant Hagar. The child that results from Abram and Hagar is Ishmael, and he receives a blessing because he is Abram's child. Yet, the Lord reiterates that Ishmael is not the heir of promise, but a child from Abraham and Sarah. Circumcision is given as a sign of the covenant.
- Abraham receives a promise from the Angel of the Lord (the pre-incarnate Son of God), that he will have a child in a year. The Angel of the Lord also agrees, on the basis of God's covenant with Abraham to spare the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah if 10 righteous people are discovered there.

### More Faithlessness, More Faithfulness

- Abraham moves to the **Negev** and fails yet again to trust in the promises of God by attempting to pass off Sarah as his sister. In spite of the faithlessness of Abraham, God remains faithful and works in the situation, rescuing Abraham and Sarah from Abimelech, while also sparing Abimelech from cursing (**Gen. 20:1-13**).
  - The presence of Abimelech on the scene is problematic for some, since Abimelech is identified with the **Philistines (Gen. 21:32-34)** who don't arrive on the scene until 1200 BC or later.
  - A number of texts outside the Bible refer to the people of **Kaptara**, whose place of origin was Crete or somewhere else in the Aegean world. The Bible associates the earliest Philistines with the **Caphtorim**, whose

home was Caphtor, or Crete (**Deut. 2:23; Jer. 47:4; Amos 9:7; Gen. 10:14**).

- One of the main supports for a **late date for the exodus** (ca. 1250) and a corresponding date for the conquest (after 1200) is the reference to the Philistines. If, however, Philistines were living in Canaan in patriarchal times, the traditional date for the exodus (1446) can be allowed to stand.
- Once Isaac finally arrives (2066 BC), Abraham and Sarah fulfill all that the Lord required of them (i.e. naming, circumcision, etc.). However, upon witnessing the **laughter of Ishmael**, Sarah once again banishes the boy and his mom.
  - After God has fulfilled his promise to Sarah, she **casts out Ishmael** for fear that he will "...**be heir with my son Isaac.**" (**Gen. 21:10**)
  - In spite of Sarah's faithlessness, God remains faithful to his promise to Abraham, and he blesses Ishmael because of his **connection to Abraham** (**Gen. 21:11-13, 18, 20-21**).
- Abraham and Abimelech have another encounter over their relationship in the land, where Abraham promises to not deal falsely with Abimelech or his descendants. God's faithfulness is demonstrated yet again in that Abraham comes into possession of **Beersheba**, and gains free passage in the land (**Gen. 21:22-34**).

## Faithfulness

- One final test remains for Abraham in the narrative: God tells him to take his son Isaac and sacrifice him in **the land of Moriah**.
  - Mt. Moriah is the place of **Solomon's temple**, specifically identified with the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite (cf. **2 Sm 24; 1 Chr 21**), but not explicitly with the place of Abraham's sacrifice (**2 Chron. 3:1**).
- Abraham proves that he **fears God**, by trusting the Lord to fulfill his promise to him in providing a replacement for his son on the altar (**Gen. 22:12**).
  - The last time "fear of God" is mentioned in the narrative is in relation to Abimelech (**Gen. 20:11**). Ironically, Abimelech and his men feared God (**Gen. 20:8**), and Abraham did not fear God enough to trust him to **take care of him**.
  - Abraham learns to trust in the Lord, as is evident in the **pre-sacrifice** and **post-sacrifice** identification of Isaac (**Gen. 22:2, 12, 16**).

**Patriarchs: Part 6**

<p><b>Genesis 20:1–13</b></p>	<p><a href="#">1</a> From there Abraham journeyed toward the territory of the Negeb and lived between Kadesh and Shur; and he sojourned in Gerar. <a href="#">2</a> And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.” And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. <a href="#">3</a> But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, “Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man’s wife.” <a href="#">4</a> Now Abimelech had not approached her. So he said, “Lord, will you kill an innocent people? <a href="#">5</a> Did he not himself say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this.” <a href="#">6</a> Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know that you have done this in the integrity of your heart, and it was I who kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not let you touch her. <a href="#">7</a> Now then, return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, so that he will pray for you, and you shall live. But if you do not return her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours.” <a href="#">8</a> So Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all his servants and told them all these things. And the men were very much afraid. <a href="#">9</a> Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? And how have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and my kingdom a great sin? You have done to me things that ought not to be done.” <a href="#">10</a> And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What did you see, that you did this thing?” <a href="#">11</a> Abraham said, “I did it because I thought, ‘There is no fear of God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.’ <a href="#">12</a> Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife. <a href="#">13</a> And when God caused me to wander from my father’s house, I said to her, ‘This is the kindness you must do me: at every place to which we come, say of me, “He is my brother.” ’ ”</p>
<p><b>Genesis 21:32–34</b></p>	<p><a href="#">32</a> So they made a covenant at Beersheba. Then Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army rose up and returned to the land of the Philistines. <a href="#">33</a> Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and called there on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God. <a href="#">34</a> And Abraham sojourned many days in the land of the Philistines.</p>
<p><b>Deuteronomy 2:23</b></p>	<p>As for the Avvim, who lived in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and settled in their place.)</p>
<p><b>Jeremiah 47:4</b></p>	<p>because of the day that is coming to destroy all the Philistines, to cut off from Tyre and Sidon every helper that remains. For the Lord is destroying the Philistines, the remnant of the coastland of Caphtor.</p>
<p><b>Amos 9:7</b></p>	<p>“Are you not like the Cushites to me, O people of Israel?” declares the Lord. “Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?”</p>
<p><b>Genesis 10:14</b></p>	<p>Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom the Philistines came), and Caphtorim.</p>
<p><b>Genesis 21:10</b></p>	<p>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.”</p>
<p><b>Genesis 21:11–13</b></p>	<p><a href="#">11</a> And the thing was very displeasing to Abraham on account of his son. <a href="#">12</a> 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. <a href="#">13</a> And I will make a nation of the son of the slave woman also, because he is your offspring.”</p>

<b>Genesis 21:18</b>	Up! Lift up the boy, and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make him into a great nation.”
<b>Genesis 21:20–21</b>	<a href="#">20</a> And God was with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an expert with the bow. <a href="#">21</a> He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.
<b>Genesis 21:22–34</b>	<a href="#">22</a> At that time Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army said to Abraham, “God is with you in all that you do. <a href="#">23</a> Now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my descendants or with my posterity, but as I have dealt kindly with you, so you will deal with me and with the land where you have sojourned.” <a href="#">24</a> And Abraham said, “I will swear.” <a href="#">25</a> When Abraham reproved Abimelech about a well of water that Abimelech’s servants had seized, <a href="#">26</a> Abimelech said, “I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, and I have not heard of it until today.” <a href="#">27</a> So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two men made a covenant. <a href="#">28</a> Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock apart. <a href="#">29</a> And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs that you have set apart?” <a href="#">30</a> He said, “These seven ewe lambs you will take from my hand, that this may be a witness for me that I dug this well.” <a href="#">31</a> Therefore that place was called Beersheba, because there both of them swore an oath. <a href="#">32</a> So they made a covenant at Beersheba. Then Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army rose up and returned to the land of the Philistines. <a href="#">33</a> Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and called there on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God. <a href="#">34</a> And Abraham sojourned many days in the land of the Philistines.
<b>2 Chronicles 3:1</b>	Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.
<b>Genesis 22:12</b>	He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”
<b>Genesis 20:11</b>	Abraham said, “I did it because I thought, ‘There is no fear of God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.’”
<b>Genesis 20:8</b>	So Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all his servants and told them all these things. And the men were very much afraid.
<b>Genesis 22:2</b>	He said, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”
<b>Genesis 22:16</b>	and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,