

WELL OF THE OATH
Genesis 21:9-34

INTRODUCTION

Genesis 20 & 21 involve a number of characters – Abraham, Sarah, Abimelech, Isaac, Hagar, Ishmael. In Genesis 21:9-34 we observe an event that occurs at the well of Beersheba, which means “**Well of the Oath**”. Wells were vital places in Scripture. Life support came from these sources of water. Often contentions & hostility arose over their ownership, and sometimes we see emotional ties to their location. Many meetings took place at wells, and a pattern is often observed. 1. A man journeys from a foreign land. 2. He encounters a girl or girls. 3. Someone draws water. 4. The girl runs home and reports it. 5. The visitor is invited to dinner.

DIGGING DEEPER

Read Genesis 21:9-34 several times. Hagar will meet with Jesus at this “**Well of the Oath**”. As we consider this Scripture, ask the Lord to help you make personal application. This true event holds lessons that can bring peace in the most difficult of life’s situations.

Pray for wisdom and understanding, and let’s begin.

I. Genesis 21:9-11. Changing family dynamics. Remember the context here – Isaac, the child of promise, is born and joy fills Sarah and Abraham’s house. But not all are happy. Ishmael was born to Hagar 16 years ago, and has enjoyed favored status till now. Obviously not the son of promise, Ishmael is jealous of Isaac and makes fun of him constantly. Sarah wants Hagar and Ishmael gone. This bothers Abraham – he loves Ishmael, but the consequence of his impatience 16 years earlier has caused this situation. **Remember, the fruit of the Spirit is PATIENCE.** Society breeds impatience. Let’s resist a tendency to hurry up and “help God out” by rushing things. God’s timing is perfect. *Selah*

II. Genesis 21:12-14. Abraham’s difficult decision. Abraham is heartbroken at the thought of casting Hagar and her son out, but holding on to this relationship will only make things worse. God reassures him that He has a plan for Ishmael. Although it is hard to see how God is arranging the situation, he must let them go and entrust his child into the Lord’s hands. Abraham provided some necessities, and sent Hagar and Ishmael away. **There may be times when the best thing we can do for people we love is to let them go and trust the Lord to take care of them.**

III. Genesis 21:15-21. God answers the cry of anguish. Unloved and put out by family, Hagar is hurting. They are out of water. Hagar is desperate **Job 3:24**, crying “*the days of my affliction take hold of me*” **Job 30:16**. But Jesus hears her cry and can sympathize with her plight **Psalms 22:14**. In testing & crisis He is reliable. **James 1:2-4, Romans 5:3-4**. When God sends trouble our way, when we are desperate enough, in our anguish of soul – Jesus opens our eyes and shows us a well of water, this “**Well of the Oath**” where we find a relationship that is real and we can trust Him. **In the wilderness of Beersheba, Hagar comes to know God can be trusted.**

IV. Genesis 21:22-34. More “well lessons”. Despite mistrust in the past (Genesis 20), Abimelech and Abraham are reconciled. They did not count past sins, but shook hands and moved forward, having their word be good enough. Also, this well had been taken over by Abimelech’s servants without his knowledge, so it was restored to Abraham. Abraham made a covenant with him, giving seven ewe lambs as a witness. He also planted a tree and worshipped the Lord there.

Beersheba - Hagar is saved there. Abraham worships there. A tree is dedicated there. Jacob is comforted there. Elijah runs there. Clean, cool water – a fountain, source of comfort and strength - We get all this in Jesus Christ.

CONSIDER God has wells for your life to draw from:

- Jesus Christ, wellspring of our salvation..... *Isaiah 12:2-3*
- Jesus Christ, source of living water *John 4:10,14*
- Jesus Christ, giver of the Holy Spirit..... *John 7:37-38*

PRAY

- Special services: Christmas morning (10:30 service), Prophecy update December 28, Prophecy Conference 1/20-21.
- Christmas outreach – the “blessing fence” for gifts to donate for families in the body & community – abundance!
- Piecemaker’s Quilters fellowship, Widows of Faith fellowship, new teen Bible study on Wednesday evenings.
- Prayer ministry – Pray that folks will be moved to join in the various prayer meetings that gather throughout the week.
- Local & regional outreaches – Christmas Community Chorus; Pastor Ray Tomkins & Calvary Chapel Webster.
- International missions (info in foyer) – Agape’ Lifeline in India. The Irular project.