

# The Birth of the Promised Son

**Key Verse:** *“The LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did to Sarah as he had promised.”*

—**Genesis 21:1,**  
*English Standard Version*

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Genesis 18:1,10-15;**  
**21:1-7**

would have her servant Hagar be the surrogate mother of Abraham’s promised heir.

That idea, however, was not God’s plan. Hagar, now carrying Abraham’s son, turned contemptuous towards her mistress. As a result, Sarah began to treat Hagar harshly, leading her to run away. The child, Ishmael, was apparently unruly, fulfilling God’s prophecy regarding him that, “He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone’s hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen.” (Gen. 16:12, *ESV*) We take instruction from the moral of this story. No matter how good our human reasoning may be, it is always flawed. The divine will is always best and perfect.

Sarah was God’s choice to bear the promised seed. Lest

## **THE BIRTH OF ABRAHAM’S**

long-awaited heir was fraught with challenges of faith. Nevertheless, in due time, the seed of promise was born, marvelously prefiguring the coming of our Lord Jesus. We sympathize with Sarah as her heart ached with the desire to bear Abraham his promised son. With the reality of advancing age facing her, she devised what seemed to be a practical optional plan. Sarah

any suppose that it was by human strength that the seed would come, God permitted Sarah to advance well into old age. “Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah.” (Gen. 18:11, *ESV*) It would take a miracle for this couple of advanced years to have a child. That is exactly what happened. In due time Isaac was born, just as God had planned. The heir of Abraham was finally delivered, even though through a very aged woman.—Gen. 21:2-7

Hope encircled Isaac’s birth. Was he the one referred to in Eden as the “seed” who would crush the serpent’s head? (Gen. 3:15) Would he be the one to lead the human family out of the degradation of sin and death? Would all the families of the earth be blessed in him? In part, yes, and in part, no. Yes, in that he was Abraham’s heir and a great patriarch in the lineage and genealogy of our Lord Jesus. No, in that he was only a picture of the great Redeemer. It is in Jesus that the prophecies, made two millennia prior, realized their fulfillment. As Isaac came at God’s due time, so did Jesus. “When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba! Father! So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.”—Gal. 4:4-7, *ESV*

Paul further states, “If you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.” “Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.” (Gal. 3:29; 4:28, *ESV*) The powerful meaning of these words must not be lost on us. The promise to Abraham that his seed would bless all the families of the earth is our Christian inheritance. To be associated with Jesus in the great work of restoring humanity, healing man’s physical and moral diseases, and helping them to reconcile with God, is an inheritance of priceless value. Thank God for his plan through the promised Son! ■