

February 8, 2026

Pastor Andy McClellan

Title: “The Blessings of Belonging to God”

Series: Genesis: Beginnings

Text: Genesis 21:1-34

1. God's people are receptive **PARTNERS** in covenant with Him, vv. 1-7 (*see also 17:1-2, 7-8, 19-21; Deuteronomy 7:9; Isaiah 41:8; John 15:8-16; 2 Corinthians 6:1*).
2. God's people are **PRIVILEGED** heirs in covenant with Him, vv. 8-21 (*see also 15:4-5; Romans 8:17; 9:7; Galatians 3:29; 4:21-30; Hebrews 11:18*).
3. God's people are blessed **PILGRIMS** in covenant with Him, vv. 22-34 (*see also 12:1-3; Ephesians 2:19; Philippians 3:20; Heb. 11:8-16; 1 Peter 2:11; 3:11-13*).

FOR FURTHER STUDY & DISCUSSION

1. In your life, how often do things happen exactly as you expect or precisely as someone tells you they will? How does the author make it clear that Genesis 21 is the precise fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham? What does that tell you about the power of God and His Word? While God doesn't always tell us exactly how everything in life will go, what are some things His Word has guaranteed to us, and how does that influence your daily decisions?
2. In what way is Abraham a partner in the covenant that God has made with him? What does he do after receiving the gift of Isaac? While God does the work to fulfill His promises, what is our role as receivers of His promises? How is our obedience to God in the present evidence of our gratitude for His work in the past and faith in His future work? If there is no gratitude or obedience, what does that indicate that we need God to do in our lives?
3. Have you ever been a member of a club, gym or other organization? What benefits came with that membership? How were members marked differently than non-members? In this chapter, Isaac and Ishmael are both children of Abraham, but only Isaac is considered the heir of Abraham and child of the promise. What's the difference between them? How does one become a child of promise? How does this point to the Gospel (see the cross references in point #2 above)?
4. What about Abraham's relationship with God led Abimelech to believe he needed a treaty with him (vv. 22–23)? What evidence could he see of God's blessing on Abraham's life? Despite those blessings, where is Abraham living by the end of the chapter? Where is he *not yet* living? Why does Abraham plant a tamarisk tree at Beersheba (hint: it symbolized covenant, provision, and endurance)? How does this action reflect faith in God's future promises rather than settling into the present? In what ways are we, as God's Church, blessed like Abraham—yet still *not yet* living in the Promised Land? What might your own “tamarisk tree” look like as an expression of faith, patience, and hope?

NEXT WEEK: Genesis 22

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