

# Genesis 21:15-21 - It Is Well

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[ 0 : 00 ] Lord, thank you for your word. And Lord, I just pray that you would anoint your word, that you would open it to us, Lord. Open our understanding, Lord. Paul tells us in Ephesians, Lord, that we have been given understanding, that we've been given wisdom, the knowledge of you, Lord.

And so Lord, I pray that we would see you, Jesus, through your word today. And Lord, I pray that we would hear the message that the Spirit wants to speak to the church today. We thank you for the scripture and we thank you for your plan of the ages, starting way back in Genesis, way back here with Ishmael.

And it's still playing out to this day and it's still in your hands. Thank you for that. Thank you, we can be a part of this. And in Jesus' name, amen. The title today is, It Is Well.

So in this chapter, there's two wells. There's gonna be two sources of water. One that God's gonna provide for Ishmael and Hagar and then one that Abraham eventually is going to purchase back from Abimelech.

And the well is Beersheba. Beersheba means well of the oath. So it's going to be referenced here. It was in verse 14 that she wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. But that was Moses writing Genesis and referencing that that's the wilderness of Beersheba.

[ 1 : 13 ] That so they would know what that was. At the time Hagar and Ishmael go out into it, it's not called that because it's not till after that, at the end of the chapter, when Abraham names it as such. The wilderness kind of looked like that.

It's not a lot there. So this is Abraham sent them out into the wilderness of Beersheba or later we're gonna see they dwell in the wilderness of Paran. That's a little bit further south.

I have a map here you can see. So you can see Abraham was in Hebron. He then left for Gerar and then he ends up dwelling in the wilderness of Beersheba, which is in the same area of Gerar.

It's in the country of the Philistines. He stays there. Egypt, you see over there to the west. And then in the middle is the wilderness of Paran. That's where Ishmael is going to stay. And Hagar and Ishmael are a type of that, that they're halfway between the world and halfway between God's country.

And this is where Ishmael ends up. But the wilderness was not a very sustainable place. It wasn't a place you're gonna find a lot of water or food.

[ 2 : 18 ] And this is where Ishmael and Hagar have been sent out into. So if you're Hagar, quite a remarkable woman, but think of this for her and Ishmael. She's been with Sarah and Abraham, Sarai and Abram.

Shortly after God calls Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, he ends up in the land of promise. And then he goes right down into Egypt when there's a famine. And then when he comes out, it says he comes out with men servants and main servants and many cattle.

And so here's Hagar. They come out with Hagar. She's been with them a long time. Number of years later, Sarah has this great idea. Hagar, come on, you're gonna bear a child for me in surrogate with Abraham.

And then Hagar now has Ishmael. She runs away the first time. God meets with her and says, go back, Hagar, because the child in your womb, his name shall be called Ishmael, which means God will hear.

God has heard her cry. Go back, submit yourself to Sarah. She does. Ishmael's born. 13 years later, Isaac comes on the scene. And now at this point, Ishmael begins to kind of mock.

[ 3 : 27 ] It's almost a sense of corrupting. It's not a very good word that you use, that word mock towards Isaac. And Abraham sends them out. Hagar has had it pretty rough, pretty rough.

Only father Ishmael's ever known, the only home he's ever known, he's being sent out of. And they run out of water. Verse 15, and the water was spent in the bottle.

And she cast the child under one of the shrubs. Probably one of these, an acacia, I think it's called, tree. They were shrubs that were known to grow along stream beds.

So it makes sense, right? What's she hoping to find? She's like, I need a source of water. She sees the tree, the brush, and she knows, oh, they grow alongside of rivers. She gets down to the stream bed, and it's dry, right?

She has nothing. But she cast him under one of the shrubs. What did she have? She had a source of water.

[ 4 : 28 ] She had a source of life given to her by Abraham, didn't she? But eventually that ran out. For a while, it sustained her, and it sustained Ishmael. And you know, Hagar, she's not going to drink all the water and then leave Ishmael to die, right?

Sorry, bud. This one was mine. No, she's most likely rationing it out and giving it more to him. This was a strong, remarkable woman. He's dropped. He's probably 17 at this point, and he's already, he's dropped.

She puts him under a bush, and it says she went a bow shot away so that she might not see him die. In other words, she went just out of sight and out of earshot. She said, I don't want to, I don't want to know.

I know it's over. I know he's gone, and I've given up. The word there in the end of verse 14 where it says, she departed and wandered in the wilderness. That word wandered is the same one.

Remember last week, we talked about how Abraham said to Abimelech when God called me to wander from my father's house. And it's the worst word you could use for wander. It means to stagger, to be led astray by a false prophet.

[ 5 : 28 ] It means to be drunk and to stagger. And Abraham saying to Abimelech, this is how God led me from my home. I don't know. I think Abraham's saying, that's what it was like when God said, leave your father's house.

I was like, I don't know where I'm going. That's the word here, wandered for Hagar. She just doesn't know where she's going. Wilderness is an interesting word. It means desert, of course, but it also has the idea of meaning pasture.

It's used in other places of scripture to mean pasture. Abraham, I mean Abraham, Moses took the sheep on the backside of the wilderness to find pasture. It's where they were also, the shepherds would go out and wander to find pasture.

Hosea 2.14, when the Lord is speaking of Hosea's wayward wife, who has run out of her own resources, her own self-efforts, he says in verse 14, therefore behold, I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably under her.

That the purpose wasn't to destroy her, but it was so that she might hear the voice of God. And for Hagar, she's not going to hear God's voice until she's out of all of her own resources.

[ 6 : 39 ] Hagar's source of life had dried up. We must each have our own source of life, but we cannot live off of one another's source, no matter how godly that person is.

I mean, Hagar could think, but this water came from Abraham, father of the faith. I mean, this should last. He's blessed by God. He's, but she had to have her own source.

And her source ran out for her and for Ishmael. And then it says, she lifted up at the end of verse 16. She lifted up her voice and wept.

That idea is of despair. For her, it was over. She lifted up her voice and wept because it was the end. C.S. Lewis in the silver chair there's a quote where he says, crying is all right in its way while it lasts.

But you have to stop sooner or later and then you still have to decide what to do. He's quoting one of his characters who's crying. And at the end, you're still in the same condition you were in the beginning. But I think for Hagar, this wasn't the idea of, okay, now what am I going to do?

[ 7 : 45 ] This was it. It was over. She had no other resources. And it wasn't until her resources had failed that she hears the voice of God. What Hagar assumed was the biggest tragedy of her life, she's about to lose her son, and she's about to lose her life, turned out to be the very thing that brought God's deliverance.

2 Corinthians 4, verse 17 and 18 says, And obviously we've been quoting that all throughout this journey with Abraham.

But notice the connection Paul makes there. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, that works a far more exceeding an eternal weight of glory. So the light affliction, the thing that feels so heavy, isn't in comparison to the weight of what's happening on the eternal side, of what God wants to do in us eternally.

This very light affliction, it can't compare. It feels very heavy to us, but it cannot compare to the size of what is being accomplished in us for eternity. As we do what?

It causes us to do what? We look not at the things which are seen. Our afflictions turn our eyes away from the things which are seen, to the things which are not seen, to the things which are eternal. Hagar's affliction at this point is the only thing that has brought her to this place of desperation where she's going to be able to hear God's voice.

[ 9 : 21 ] And so she casts Ishmael down. She's as far away as she can get. Her heart is broken. This is a mother's heart. She's raised her son.

She's been in a tough situation with Sarah and Abraham there. And she casts him down. She says, let me not see, means to perceive, to know, not just visually see, but I don't even want to know.

I don't want to know when he dies. And she sat over against him and lifted up her voice and wept. What should it say at that point? She sat over against him and lifted up her voice and call on the Lord.

Hagar. Don't you remember Hagar? Don't you remember back in Genesis 16 when the angel of the Lord came unto you and said, I will multiply your seed exceedingly and it shall not be numbered for multitude?

And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, you're with child and she'll bear a son and she'll call his name Ishmael because the Lord has heard thy affliction. And he'll be a wild man. His hand will be against every man, man and every man's hand against him.

[ 10 : 25 ] And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, thou God seest me. For she said, have I also here looked after him that sees me?

Hagar, call unto the Lord. This is the God who heard you before. Where's your relationship been, Hagar? Hagar, these last 13 years, 15 years, 17 years. But she lifted up her voice and wept in despair.

And God heard, again, this is, it's so interesting the way this is written. I would think it should say, if I was writing this, I would say, and God heard the voice of Hagar and responded to her. But it doesn't say that, does it?

And God heard the voice of the lad. He heard Ishmael's voice. Ishmael over there crying out. What was he saying? Was he hearing his mother in the distance wailing and weeping?

Was he laying there and like, God, God of my father, Abraham, please help. You see my mother, you hear her. Help. God heard Ishmael's cry.

[ 11 : 27 ] And the angel of God called to Hagar. Wait, shouldn't the angel call to Ishmael? Well, Hagar is weeping. God hears Ishmael's voice. And then God talks to Hagar.

What is going on here? You see, Ishmael's deliverance was a miraculous intervention by God. It was. It was a miracle. But it came by way of another.

God used another. God used someone who was willing, as we're going to see in this moment, to take a step by faith. And it was deliverance for Ishmael. God uses people. That's just how it is.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word. God uses his word. How shall they hear unless they be sent? How shall they be sent unless they be called?

God uses people. Go you therefore into all the world and preach the gospel, making disciples of all nations. And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. It's just how it is. God desires us to be in fellowship.

[ 12 : 26 ] Many times our needs and our desperate situations will be met by others. God will use others. That doesn't mean in a prayer meeting, they say, Oh Lord, you know my problem.

I need \$75.13 for whatever is next. You know, we don't need to send out emails to everybody and let everyone know. You know, I just want to let you know, if you have any extra cash laying around, send it my way.

Okay? That might be the Lord. No, we don't. That's really cringy and awkward, right? We don't do that. But what do we expect? We expect God to hear us and we expect God to answer.

What we need to be willing to do is receive his answer when it doesn't come in the way that I might expect. If I was Hagar and I expected God to deliver me, I wouldn't do it the way he's going to do it here.

If I was Ishmael and I'm crying out to the Lord, this is not the way I would have expected this to happen. But it's being willing to expect God's deliverance. How do we know when God's deliverance comes?

[ 13 : 27 ] Well, circumstances lined up really well. Well, that just happened to be. You can look all through scripture and you're going to see a whole lot of examples of circumstances lining up and the Lord going, nope, that's not of me.

It's not always the Lord when circumstances line up. So how do we know? And God heard the voice of the lad and the angel of God called the Hagar out of heaven.

So is this the angel or is this God himself? Well, a little bit later, God is going to say to her in verse 18, arise, lift up the lad and hold him in your hand for I will make him a great nation.

Well, that's not an angel making him a great nation. That would be the Lord. So this seems to be the Lord himself speaking. The angel of God called the Hagar out of heaven and said unto her, how do you know if God is bringing deliverance?

It's going to line up with his word. Be in the word. God brings deliverance using people, but through his word. We'll always line up with his word.

[ 14 : 32 ] God's deliverance always lines up with his word. And so Hagar, if you remember, as we read in Genesis 16, said, thou God seest me, the God who sees me.

Well, now she's just found out in verse 17 that the God who sees is also the God who hears. God heard the voice of the lad. When all forsook Ishmael, his mother had forsaken him.

His father forsook him. He was left to die. God was with him. He said, I hear you, Ishmael, and I see you. And he said to Hagar, what ails thee?

That word ails, the translators put it there, but he's literally saying, what? Be Hagar. What? Hagar. What? What, Hagar?

Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad. Hagar, why are you questioning what's going on when you've already been given God's promise? Remember, you've lived with Abraham and Sarah for how many years, Hagar?

[ 15 : 34 ] How do they respond to God's promise when it didn't look like it was going to be fulfilled? Okay, they had that really bad moment with you and Ishmael. But for years, they waited and waited and look what happened.

God's promise was fulfilled in the face of all impossibility. Hagar, God's going to do the same for you. Arise, Hagar. Lift up the lad and hold him in your hand for I will make him a great nation.

And so God's word comes to Hagar and it brings assurance. It brought her assurance. Hagar, I will make him a great nation. I assure you, you will get through this.

It brought comfort, didn't it? It brought hope and it brought future promise to her in this impossible moment. But what did Hagar have to do?

What came before deliverance? Arise, lift up the lad and hold him in your hand for I will make him a great nation. Great. She doesn't know the deliverance.

[ 16 : 32 ] We're going to read next, you know, verse 19 and God opened her eyes. But in 18, he tells her, arise, lift up the lad. Go back to him and pick him up. I'm going to make him a great nation.

She could have said, no. I don't see how that's going to happen. I'm not going to do it. That makes no sense. But she obeyed. She did it. The word of God came before the deliverance came.

And she had to respond in faith. And so she goes and she does that. And then in verse 19, we see that the God who sees and the God who hears, he's also the God who can make me to see as well.

The God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water and she went and filled the bottle with water and gave the lad to drink. So Hagar had a source of life.

She had her own bottle of water. It was given to her by Abraham. Wow. You know, Abraham. But it ran out. God provides a source of living water, a source that won't run out.

[ 17 : 38 ] She took the bottle, she filled it, and she went back to Ishmael. He drank. What if that bottle ran out? Well, she could go back. How many times did she go back and forth? I don't know. But as much as she needed, the source was there that she could fill it and go and meet his need and fill it and go and meet his need.

A.B. Simpson was a, was he in the 1800s, a preacher in the 1800s, and he wrote a lot of good things.

And one of the things he says, he said, God gave me a fortune. He placed thousands and millions of credit at my credit, but he gave a checkbook with this one condition.

You never can draw more than you need at the time. Every time a check was wanted, however, there was the name of Jesus upon it. And so it brought more glory to him and kept his name before the heavenly world, and God was glorified in his son.

Hega had all the water she needed. She had a source. But to get it to Ishmael, she'd have to go back and forth between that source and Ishmael. She had to bring the bottle to him. It's interesting, she didn't bring, the scripture doesn't say she brought him to the bottle.

[ 18 : 46 ] Ephesians tells us, Ephesians 5.18 says, be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the spirit, or be you being continually filled. We're empty, fill up. We're empty, fill up.

Be filled with the spirit. Jesus tells us in John 4 when he speaks to the woman at the well, he said to her, whoever drinks of this water, the water of this well will thirst again.

But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. A living source of water that Jesus has given us.

Are we taking advantage of that? Do I expect that one pastor, I really like his stuff and I listen to him, that one podcast, that one book, well, I'm going to go to church and I'll get, and feel real good.

Am I trusting someone else's source to be my source? Am I thinking that, well, that was really good. I'm just going to remember that message and I've got my little bottle here.

[ 19 : 52 ] It's going to dry up. It's going to empty out. Well, I'm going to go back. I'm going to go back and I'm going to try and find another source. And all the while, the Lord's like, I have a source. Just let me open your eyes to the fact that I want to put, have in you a source of living water that will spring up under everlasting life.

It should be a continuous thing. And so Hagar, having come to the end of her own resources, is now able to partake of God's resources. And so she lifts him up, holds him in her hand, God shows her this well of water, and then she went, dropped poor Ishmael again, thump, and filled the bottle of water and gave the lad to drink.

And God was with the lad and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness and became an archer. So the God who sees, the God who hears, God who can open my eyes, and is also the God who is near.

He was with the lad. God was with Ishmael. But unfortunately, it seems like Ishmael's name means God will hear.

Unfortunately, Ishmael never learned to call upon God in a relationship. Ishmael and Hagar seemed to only use God as a safety net, that help, and he was there. They don't seem to have gone on into relationship with God.

[ 21 : 13 ] God had given Ishmael and Hagar a chance to follow the God who sees, hears, and delivers. But unfortunately, it would appear that neither of them ever moved their relationship beyond this point.

How do we know that? Hagar goes back to Egypt. Her solution for providing for her son, after God provides this well in the wilderness, she doesn't stay there.

She leaves, and she goes to Egypt to provide him a son. She goes back to the world. And as we saw, they ended up in the wilderness of Paran, or literally means the wilderness of the caverns.

Halfway between God's country and halfway between the world, they end up in this cavernous place, which just speaks of hiding out, squirreling away your own provisions, trying to do these things on your own.

And this is where Ishmael ends up. Not fully committed to the Lord, and yet he's not fully of the world anymore. He's just in between here and stuck there.

[ 22 : 12 ] And that's where Hagar goes back to take Ishmael. So God has miraculously provided for them the source of life, a well of water, but neither Hagar or Ishmael seem to fully take advantage of that.

We're going to see next week, Abraham's going to name this place Beersheba or the well of the oath because he's going to take an oath with Abimelech that this well is really his.

He will settle down there and live there. Hagar and Ishmael were there first and had a chance and they left. Abraham is going to understand what he's been given by the Lord.

If you look at the end of the chapter, we're going to cherry pick one of these verses. Look at verse 33. And Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba and called on the name of the Lord the everlasting God.

Abraham will understand something about God that he's never understood before. It's the first time these two words will be put together. Everlasting God. They're not put together until this point.

[ 23 : 28 ] The word everlasting has been used and the word God has been used in the Hebrew but everlasting God have not been put together until now. Abraham will understand that God is more than just this moment and more than just providing in this moment.

He will understand his omniscience his omnipotence that he knows all and that he's there with him at all times. Ishmael never understood that. We have in verse 20 where it says God was with the lad.

God's desire was to be with him and he was but Ishmael unfortunately never chose to have relationship with the Lord and as we read in Psalm 83 in David's day he's writing and saying all the nations even the Ishmaelites are conspiring against you.

In our day in 2023 we still see Ishmael the son of Abraham persecuting the child of promise. But for us I think this morning what is our source of living water?

Right? Is it a little bottle that we're trying to just keep filled keeps running out and so frustrating well I'm going to go and listen to that message again. I've done that.

[ 24 : 46 ] I have had messages that have spoken to me in pivotal times in my life that's like wow that really impacted me and moved me on. And then I'll think if you want to drive I'm going to go and listen to it again. I listen to it and it's like meh didn't really do anything.

You know that was interesting. That guy wasn't as good as I thought he was. No had nothing to do with that. It just happened to be that that was what God used at that time. Can I see beyond that and see that there's a well of water that is to spring up within me a source of living water that will never run out.

And yet scripture says to be continually filled. So there's those two parts. It's like we have the source always at our ready but then God still puts it in our hands and says are you going to take advantage of that?

Are you going to allow yourself to be filled with that so that you can then go and what? Take that to others. Always running between the source and the need. The source and the need. And so Jesus again ending with John 4 13 and 14 where Jesus answered and he said to the woman whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst.

Hagar and Ishmael had an amazing opportunity where God stepped into their life and provided everything they needed and they never moved beyond that. Has God provided everything you need?

[ 26 : 09 ] Yeah. Yeah. These momentary afflictions that are that big you know work having to go to work tomorrow having a hard test tomorrow right? They are an affliction and they're heavy but beyond that look past that and recognize what's God calling to me on the eternal side through this?

Oh he's trying to wake me up that I need to spend time with him. I need to pray about this. I need to be in relationship with him and then that fills me and that satisfies me in a way that nothing else ever could.

Whosoever drinks of this water that I give him shall never thirst. The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Lastly who gives the water?

Jesus. You don't know the source you don't know the one who gives you the water you're not going to have any water. Right? You don't have Jesus. If you don't know Jesus you've got nothing.

You can know about Jesus. You can know where Jesus is. You can hear all about his water. But if you don't have Jesus you don't have that source. He gives it freely. Well Father thank you so much Lord.

[ 27 : 18 ] Different morning different message. Lord just what you're doing in this world we don't want to be callous I guess Lord. Don't want to just see things that are happening and think oh another tragedy.

Lord we want to see through the lens of your word. I want to be able to come to your word and say ah that makes sense. I see what's going on in this world. Because the Bible says this Lord I've never yet met anybody who can disprove your word and I know I never will.

You've done a good job Lord over the last 2,000 years of building your church of putting this word your Bible together Lord. And beyond that Lord past as we've just gone through the creation of count Lord thousands of years into the past before that you've done a really good job of Lord keeping the promise that you gave to Adam and Eve that through that seed through Eve Lord you would bring deliverance and you have protected your word and protected that promise all the way until now.

We know you're going to continue to Lord you have a plan still for Israel and we know you'll protect your people. And Lord today we know you have a plan for us Lord I know that there's a source of living water that we are to each partake of.

I can't live off someone else's source. As much as I love my brothers and sisters as love this body I can't live off of that. I have to have another source.

[ 28 : 45 ] And Jesus thank you for being that source. But Lord first we have to respond in faith to the word. We have to believe what you say in the face of all impossibility and all difficulties we have to believe what you say and respond to that and act upon it Lord.

Because Lord you've magnified your word above your name. So I pray this morning that we would each go to the source each go to Jesus and receive the life-giving water that he gives.

We love you and praise you and would you fill us again Lord? I recognize I have access to the source. How silly that I don't take advantage of it. Lord I guess I'm like almost like Hagar if she's sitting there and God opens her eyes and says there's a well of water and she just still sits there and says well that's good.

Lord that I would get up and I would go to that well and I'd be filled again. Not just for myself so that I can go and find someone else who can't stand and I can help lift them up and I can give them some water and get them to the source as well.

Thank you Jesus in your name we pray. Amen.