

27:14) "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD."

5. You can Rely on God to be Everlasting (v.33-34)

Abraham called *on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God*.

Jehovah God is everlasting. He continues forever.

a. God is everlasting in His being.

- 1) He is the only being who has always existed. (Psalms 90:2) "*Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.*" God is not limited by time, as we are limited.
- 2) He has never changed. (Malachi 3:6) "*For I am the LORD, I change not...*" He will never change. (Hebrews 13:8) "*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*" He is absolutely stable. (James 1:17) "*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*"

b. God is everlasting in His love.

- 1) To Israel God said, (Jeremiah 31:3) "*... Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love...*" He loves you and me today with that same everlasting love.
- 2) We need not fear that He will leave us. In the book of Hebrews God promises, (Hebrews 13:5) "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*"

📖 *The fact that God is eternal, consistent and has everlasting love assures us that he will **always** be faithful, wise, compassionate and generous.*

Conclusion: If Satan has been using the trials or burdens of life to tempt you to question God's faithfulness, wisdom, compassion, generosity or everlasting love, you need to renew your trust in **Our Reliable God**.

Count your blessings. Recall times He has been faithful to you, given you needed wisdom, showed you compassion, been generous to you, and has loved you with His everlasting love. Our God **IS** Reliable!

Song: Great is Thy Faithfulness, **40**

Our Reliable God

25 July 2021 PM – Genesis 21 – Gen2021 – Scott Childs

Introduction: When I was in Bible College, I owned an old v8 Chevrolet car. It was not fancy, but it was reliable. I remember one winter Sunday morning when the temperature had dropped to -37° C, my reliable old Chevy was one of the few cars that started. Though my Chevy was a reliable car over 40 years ago, today it is likely rusting away in some junk pile. Its reliable days are long gone.

Our reliable God is not like my old car. Since eternity past, He has always been reliable and always will be throughout endless eternity.

Transition: This evening as we study Genesis 21, I want to point out five ways in which you can rely on God.

1. You can Rely on God to be Faithful (v.1-8)

a. God kept His promise to Abraham and Sarah (v.1-5)

- 1) Note in verse 1 the phrases "*as He had said*" and "*as He had spoken*". At least **three times**, God had clearly said that He would give Abraham and Sarah a son (Gen 17:19; 18:10; 18:14).
- 2) After making them wait for many years, God finally visited Sarah, she conceived and bare Abraham a son (v.1-2). **God was faithful to His word**, but why did He make them wait so long? Perhaps it was to develop patience, greater trust in God, to prevent human explanation, or to bring greater glory to Himself. **God knows best!**

b. God's faithfulness overpowered nature (v.6-8)

- 1) Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90. Humanly, it was impossible for Sarah to have a child. (Romans 4:19) "*And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb.*"
- 2) God overpowered nature and made Sarah a mother who laughed with joy (v.6-7).

📖 *Our God is still just as faithful, you can rely on it. Mel and I have never had a large income, but we have never been without food, without clothing, or without shelter. We have experienced many trials, but God has never failed to give us*

His comfort, direction, and peace. God is faithful!

2. You can Rely on God for Wisdom (v.9-13)

a. God was not troubled like Abraham (v.9-11)

- 1) Now that Sarah had a son, she did not want Hagar or Ishmael around. This grieved Abraham.
- 2) Abraham's marriage to Hagar, Ishmael's birth and Sarah's desire to kick them out did not trouble God. Our God is so amazing. He can take our sinful mistakes, forgive them, and turn them around for His glory.

b. God gave Abraham wise direction (12-13)

- 1) God told Abraham that Sarah was right. God directed him to send Hagar and Ishmael away. Isaac was the promised heir.
- 2) God also promised to make of Ishmael a nation because he was Abraham's seed.
- 3) In God's wisdom, He has a plan even for the Arab nations.

📖 *When you need wisdom, you can always depend on God to be wise enough to give you the direction you need. You just need to ask (Jas 1:5).*

3. You can Rely on God for Compassion (v.14-21)

a. God heard Ishmael and comforted Hagar (v.14-17)

- 1) Though it was not God's plan that Hagar become Abram's wife, and though Ishmael was not the son God had promised Abram, God still cared about them.
- 2) God heard Ishmael's voice from under the shrubs. Remember, he was no longer a baby, but about 16 years old. <https://www.gotquestions.org/what-happened-to-Ishmael.html> God also heard Hagar's weeping. He comforted her (v.17).
- 3) *When our son Benjamin was a teenager, he made a scroll saw cutout that says JESUS CARES. That is a comforting reminder to us as it sits on our shelf.*

b. God provided for Hagar and Ishmael (v.18-21)

- 1) God provided a well for Hagar from which she drew water for Ishmael (v.19).
- 2) God was with the lad as he grew up (v.20).

Truly, our God is compassionate to us even when we least deserve it. When you are going through a time of difficulty,

you can always rely on God for compassion. (Lamentations 3:22-23) "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." (Psalms 50:15) "And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." (Philippians 4:6-7) "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

4. You can Rely on God's Generosity (v.22-32)

a. God's generosity was clearly visible (v.22)

- 1) Abraham is still sojourning in the land of the Philistines (v.34). While there, King Abimelech and Phichol the commander of his military visited Abraham and said "*God is with thee in all that thou doest*" (v.22). They could clearly see the generosity of God on Abraham's life.
- 2) How could they see that God was with Abraham?
 - a) Perhaps they saw that God gave Abraham's area better rains, milder winters, or greener pastures.
 - b) Perhaps they saw that God multiplied his herds faster than their own.
 - c) Perhaps they observed that God kept his flocks, herds, servants, and pastures more healthy than their own.
- 3) Whatever it was that they saw, it impressed them, and they credited it to Abraham's God.

b. God generously cared for Abraham (v.25-32)

- 1) Even when conflicts arose between Abraham and Abimelech's servants, God took care of Abraham (v.25-26).
- 2) God showed Abraham how to keep peace with those around him (v.27-32).

📖 *Does God always generously prosper those who place their faith in Him? Not always in a material way; however, in a spiritual way He does. Call to mind again the words of (2 Chronicles 16:9) "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. ..." (Psalms*