

2008-09 BSP#6 Group Time Discussion

L – Low, M – Medium, and H – High, indicate the difficulty of a question. Group leaders should select questions that are challenging to their groups but not so difficult that their group members cannot answer.

(A) “He Opened to Us the Scriptures” - Questions for scriptural reading and discussion **(Time available: 15 minutes. Do at least 2 questions.)**

1. [M] Read Genesis 21:9-11. Why did Sarah’s suggestion bother Abraham so much? (Hint: Consider the relationship between Abraham and Ishmael; also Abraham’s role in creating this unhappy confrontation.)
2. [H] Read Genesis 21:14-19. By this time, Ishmael would have been at least 16 years old (he was born when Abraham was 86 as per Gen 16:16; Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 and 3 years of nursing have elapsed per 21:8.) How do you reconcile this fact with the description of Ishmael in this passage, which appears to suggest that he was rather small, possibly an infant?
3. [L] Read Genesis 21:22-23. Why did Abimelech want Abraham to swear that he would not deal falsely with him? (Hint: What happened in their “first deal”?)

(B) “Did Not Our Hearts Burn?” – Questions for meditation, sharing and prayer. **(Suggested time: 10 minutes)**

Sarah, the mother of Israel, is generally considered one of the OT female characters who prefigure Mary (HA p.149). Her prophetic word in Genesis 21:6-7 foreshadows Mary’s prophetic canticle: “Behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed....” (Luke 1:48). Has God ever done for you what He did for Sarah and Mary – has He ever turned what once seemed too good to be true into a living reality for you? If so, share your joy with your group members.

When the sharing is finished, the group facilitator will lead the group members to pray the Magnificat in Luke 1:46-55, followed by one Glory Be.