

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BIBLE TEXT</b> New International Version</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OBSERVATIONS</b> What does the text say?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INTERPRETATION &amp; QUESTIONS</b> What does the text mean to all Christians?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>APPLICATION</b> What does the text mean to me?</p>
<p><b>First IBS Division: Genesis 18:1-15</b></p> <p><b><i>The Three Visitors</i></b></p> <p><sup>1</sup> The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup> Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord,<sup>[a]</sup> do not pass your servant by. <sup>4</sup> Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. <sup>5</sup> Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant."</p> <p>"Very well," they answered, "do as you say."</p> <p><sup>6</sup> So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. "Quick," he said, "get three seahs<sup>[b]</sup> of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread."</p> <p><sup>7</sup> Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. <sup>8</sup> He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> "Where is your wife Sarah?" they asked him. "There, in the tent," he said.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> Then one of them said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son."</p> <p>Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. <sup>11</sup> Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. <sup>12</sup> So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?"</p>			

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<p><sup>13</sup> Then the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ <sup>14</sup> Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”</p> <p><sup>15</sup> Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, “I did not laugh.”</p> <p>But he said, “Yes, you did laugh.”</p> <p><b>Footnotes:</b></p> <p>a. Genesis 18:3 Or <i>eyes, Lord</i></p> <p>b. Genesis 18:6 That is, probably about 36 pounds or about 16 kilograms</p>			
<p><b>Summary:</b></p>			
<p><b>Second IBS Division: Genesis 21:1-21</b></p> <p><b><i>The Birth of Isaac</i></b></p> <p><sup>1</sup> Now the Lord was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah what he had promised. <sup>2</sup> Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. <sup>3</sup> Abraham gave the name Isaac<sup>[a]</sup> to the son Sarah bore him. <sup>4</sup> When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God commanded him. <sup>5</sup> Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.</p> <p><sup>6</sup> Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.” <sup>7</sup> And she added, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”</p>			

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<p><b><i>Hagar and Ishmael Sent Away</i></b></p> <p><sup>8</sup> The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. <sup>9</sup> But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, <sup>10</sup> and she said to Abraham, “Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.”</p> <p><sup>11</sup> The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. <sup>12</sup> But God said to him, “Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring<sup>[b]</sup> will be reckoned. <sup>13</sup> I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring.”</p> <p><sup>14</sup> Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the Desert of Beersheba.</p> <p><sup>15</sup> When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes. <sup>16</sup> Then she went off and sat down about a bowshot away, for she thought, “I cannot watch the boy die.” And as she sat there, she<sup>[c]</sup> began to sob.</p> <p><sup>17</sup> God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. <sup>18</sup> Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation. ”</p> <p><sup>19</sup> Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.</p>			

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<p><sup>20</sup> God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. <sup>21</sup> While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.</p> <p><b>Footnotes:</b>                      a. Genesis 21:3 <i>Isaac</i> means <i>he laughs</i>.                      b. Genesis 21:12 Or <i>seed</i>                      c. Genesis 21:16 Hebrew; Septuagint <i>the child</i></p>			
<p><b>Summary:</b></p>			

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*Holy Spirit Space: Looking Back at Our Own Stories*