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**Trusting  
God in  
Difficult  
Times**

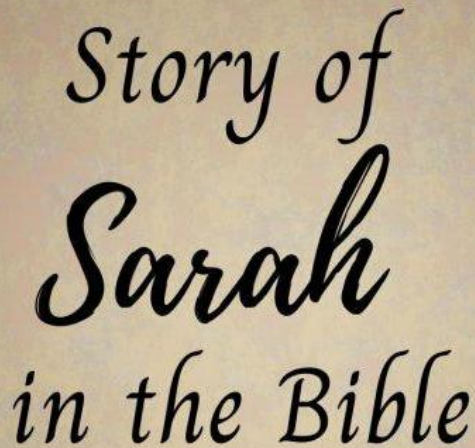
**SARAH**

Today, we're looking at the life of **Sarah**, Abraham's wife.

- Scripture honors her as a woman of **faith**, yet her story is painfully real.



# Sarah, Abraham's wife



Story of  
Sarah  
in the Bible

- She was a godly woman.
- Her story is found in Genesis 12-23.
- She is mentioned in the NT.
  - Praised as a woman of **faith** (*Hebrews 11:11, ESV*)
  - Given as a **model** for Christian women (*1 Peter 3:5-6, ESV*)
- YET...she struggled with doubt, manipulated and wounded people around her, and laughed at God.

# Road Map: Trusting God in Difficult Times

**Background:** Sarah's story

1. Sarah's **Mistrust and Manipulation**
2. God's **Provision of His Promise**
3. Sarah's **Legacy of Faith: Lessons for Us**

# Sarah's story...

- God called Abraham and his family to a foreign land. God gives Abraham the **promise** that a nation will come from him.

*<sup>1</sup> “The LORD had said to Abram, ‘Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.’ <sup>7</sup> The LORD appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your **offspring**, I will give this land.’ ” (Genesis 12:1, 7, ESV)*

**At age 75, Abram [Abraham] receives a **promise** and call from God. With excitement and hope, he leaves everything.**

**Sarah leaves with him!**

**The promise was for Sarah, too. But she had to wait...**

# Sarah's story...

First, Abraham probably thought everything would be peaceful and joyful...

## YET THINGS TURNED OUT DIFFERENTLY THAN HE EXPECTED:

- Abram **lies** that his wife Sarah was his sister (Gen. 12)
  - *“I know what a beautiful woman you are. When the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me but will let you live. Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you.” (Genesis 12:11-13)*

# Mistrust: In her **fear**, Sarah goes along with Abraham's plan.

- Spoiler Alert! Abraham **will lie AGAIN** that Sarah was his sister (*Gen. 20*)
  - He protects himself **at Sarah's expense**.
  - Abraham's lies **reject** her.
  - Pharaoh **rejects** her. (*Gen. 12*)
  - Later, another King will **reject** her. (*Gen. 20*)
- **Sarah's Fear & Mistrust grow.**



# The Promise.

- Genesis 12:7 *Offspring* mentioned and promised.
- Genesis 15:3-6 Abram **again** receives the promise of a *son*...

<sup>3</sup> *“And Abram said, ‘Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir.’*

<sup>4</sup> *And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: ‘This man shall not be your heir; your **very own son** shall be your heir.’*

<sup>5</sup> *And He brought him outside and said, ‘Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.’ Then He said to him, ‘So shall your **offspring** be.’*

<sup>6</sup> *And he [Abram] believed the Lord, and He counted it to him as righteousness.” (Genesis 15:3-6)*

# The promised baby is delayed...

- Abram HAD to have told Sarah the promise...
- BUT she had to wait...wait...wait...wait...
- Mistrust: Did she feel she couldn't trust her husband?
- Did she generalize that mistrust to God?

Sarah believed in God and trusted Him for salvation.

But she didn't trust Him in this area of her life.

In her impatience and fear, she decides to take matters into her own hands.

**Manipulation:**



*Dear Sister, Are you waiting on God to fulfill His promise?*

By this time Sarah has waited  
10+ years for a son.



She **manipulates**  
people around her  
in an attempt to  
control the  
situation.

Control Issues

# Manipulation: Hagar & Ishmael

- She **offers her servant** Hagar **to Abraham** to bear a son. He accepts.
- Hagar becomes pregnant and begins to disrespect Sarah.
- Sarah grows **bitter** and begins mistreating Hagar.
- Hagar runs away to the desert but is sent home by an angel.
- And Sarah has to live -childless- with her servant and her servant's son.

# Good desires can turn into sin.

- Paul interprets this story of Sarah and Hagar in Galatians 4: 21-31.
  - Hagar = human effort/slavery
  - Sarah = promise/grace
- When we don't trust God's promises, we create our own solutions—and they bring **bondage**.
- Her own **manipulation and need for control** trap Sarah.

# The Promise Renewed:

- 13 years later- Genesis 17
- Abraham is 99; Sarah is 84.
- God **changes Abram's name** to Abraham [Father of many]
- Upon hearing the promise renewed, Abraham laughs, but **obeys** God's command and circumcises all the males.
- 3 visitors tell Abraham that they will have a son in a year!

# The Promise:

*“Sarah was listening in the tent and heard these things. Abraham and Sarah were very old. Sarah was past the right age for women to have children. So she laughed **to herself** and said, ‘I am old, and my husband is old. I am too old to have a baby.’ ”*

*(Genesis 18:10-12 ESV)*

**Is anything  
too hard for the  
LORD?**

**I will return to you  
at the appointed  
time next year  
and Sarah will  
have a son.**

**GENESIS 18:14**

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# Mistrust: Sarah overhears and laughs!

- Laughter is her response to the **waiting** and **rejection**.
- Her laughter is **disbelief** that the promise will come true. **She has lost hope.**
  - We doubt.
  - We often feel rejected.
  - We question God.
  - We try to take control.
  - We are in bondage by our ungodly choices.
- **But God doesn't reject her for laughing! He confronts and transforms her.**

# God Provides His Promise!

After 25 years of waiting for the promise, **Isaac is born.** (*Gen. 21*)

**Sarah is a mother at 95 years old.**







# Lessons from Sarah:

- Maybe you've been praying for a breakthrough, but all you feel is stuck.
- Or maybe the silence is making you question if God even sees what you're walking through.

## ➤ Nothing is impossible with God!

*"But Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.' " (Matthew 19:26, ESV )*

*Sarah in the Bible*

Matriarch of Faith & Promise



## Lessons from Sarah:

### ➤ God is patient with slow faith.

- **We can believe and mistrust at the same time.**
- **We can believe God eternally, but not practically.**
- Where has your disappointment turned into cynicism?
- Once her son was born, Sarah laughed again **for joy!**
- Sarah was the same woman, with a **different heart.**

# When Trust is Tested...

- We often say we trust God – until life becomes uncertain.
  - When the prayers go unanswered...
  - When the timeline of our dreams stretches longer than expected...
  - When people let us down...
  - When circumstances don't make sense...
  - When the waiting is too long...

# Lessons from Sarah:

## ➤ God always keeps His promises.

➤ [but not all our desires are promises]

*“By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised.” (Hebrews 11:11, ESV)*

- The Bible is full of promises.
- He promises to fight for us.
- He promises to give us strength.
- He promises to be with us and to protect us.

# Lessons from Sarah

## ➤ God's delays are purposeful shaping.

- How often do we doubt His timing and take matters into our own hands?
- How often do we find something else to worship when it seems He's forgotten us?
- Waiting can be discouraging, especially when we don't see evidence of God working. But here's the truth we can hold on to today:  
*"The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him."  
(Lamentations 3:25)*
- Even when our wait feels long, **we can trust His timing**. God's delays are not His denials. He is still moving, still shaping, and still preparing what's best for us—even when we can't see it yet.

# Lessons from Sarah:

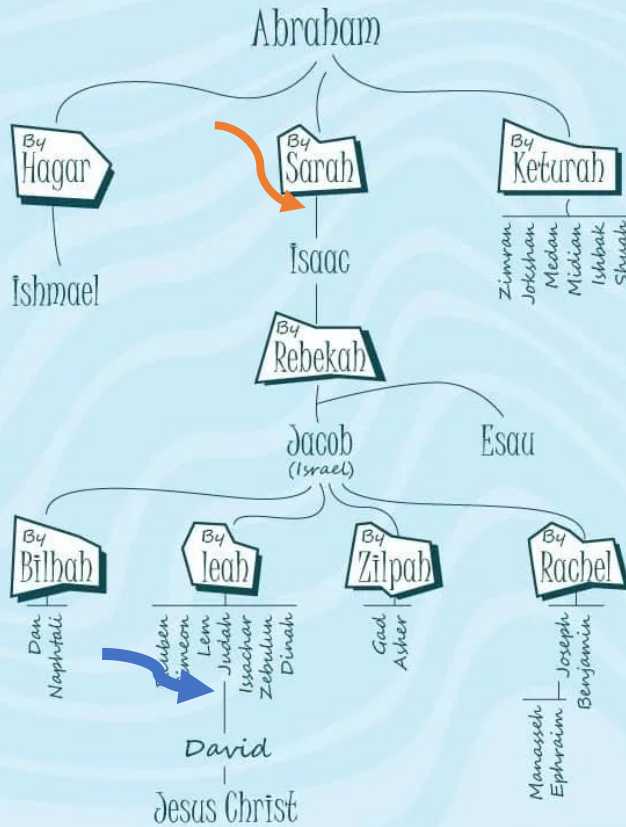
➤ God redeems our desires through Jesus Christ.

We often make mistakes that will cause us to fall and fail, but we will **become more mature in our faith as time passes!!**

Remember that Sarah is mentioned in the NT. Peter says,

*"I am talking about women like Sarah. She obeyed Abraham, her husband, and called him her master. And you women are true children of Sarah **if you always do what is right and are not afraid.**" (1 Peter 3:6 ESV)*

# Lineage Of Abraham and Sarah to Jesus



# When life gets hard...

- **What are your challenges?**
  - Infertility
  - Broken marriage, spouse an unbeliever
  - Long-term suffering
  - Unanswered prayer or singleness
  - Absent children
  - Jobs, finances, etc.
- Remember:
  - **Sarah waited 25 years.**
  - **Some people wait a lifetime.**
- **God fulfills all His promises, just not always in the way or timing we expect.**

# Takeaway Thoughts

1. We **submit** to God not because we have to, but because **He is trustworthy**.
2. We need to place our **focus on Him** and not the situation.  
"THE LORD WILL PROVIDE" → JEHOVAH JIRAH
3. We should be **disciplined in seeking God!** Through Scripture & Christ, God has already prepared what's best for us!

Following God isn't always easy but it is always worth it.

- **He sees us!**
- **He cares about us! (even when others reject us).**
- **He answers our prayers in His timing.**
- **We can trust in Him.**



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