

A PROMISE KEPT Sunday, October 13, 2013

Unifying Topic: A PROMISE TO SARAH

Lesson Text

I. A Son Is Promised (Genesis 17:15-17)

II. The Battle Of Unbelief (Genesis 18:9-15)

III. God's Faithfulness Manifested (Genesis 21:1-7)

The Main Thought: For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. (Genesis 21:2, KJV).

Unifying Principle: We often rejoice at the birth of a new member in the family or community. What does a birth mean to a family or community? Abraham and Sarah saw their child as evidence of God's faithfulness in keeping the promise to create a nation.

Lesson Aim: To show how God would honor His promise to Abraham by using his wife Sarah.

Life aim: To help us understand what it means to really trust God and to rejoice when we see the manifestation of what He has promised.

17:15 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

17:16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

17:17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

18:9 And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

18:10 And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

18:12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

18:13 And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

18:14 Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

18:15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

21:1 And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

21:2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

21:3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

21:4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

21:5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

21:6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.

21:7 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.

HISTORY

Chapter 17:1-14 God appears several times to Abram and now at the age of 99yrs, God tells Abram to walk before Him and be perfect and blameless. God already knows about Ishmael. He is now 13 years old. However, again God is establishing His covenant between He and Abram, multiplying him exceedingly. Abram couldn't do anything but fall on his face as God talked with him. God lets him know that His covenant with him will make him the ¹father of many nations. Now, it is determined by God that ²Abram's name is changed to Abraham— for He has made him, father of many nations! With this change comes ³fruitfulness. Many descendants will ⁴become nations from Abraham ⁵forming kings. This covenant would extend to all of Abraham's seed, ⁶from generation to generation being a God unto Abraham and his seed forever. The land will be given to the seed of Abraham for an everlasting possession—the land of Canaan (**w1-8**).

¹Abram will become the father of many nations.

³Abraham will be exceedingly fertile.

²His new name will be Abraham.

⁴Nations will descend from his line

⁵His descendants will be kings.

⁶This is a perpetual covenant to include Abraham's descendants.

⁷The entire land of Canaan will belong to Abraham and his descendants.

God tells Abraham in order to keep His part of the covenant that he and his offspring after him throughout their generations must obey and honor its terms. In obedience God commanded every man child circumcised—at eight days old, the excess skin around the tip or foreskin of the penis shall be cut off. This would also include men, because if they were bought with money or stranger which was not their seed, they had to be circumcised. This was a token and a sign of God's covenant. And any man child that is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people because he had broken the covenant (**vv.9-14**).

LESSON:

Genesis 17:15-17 A Son Is Promised

17:15 And God said unto Abraham, **As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.**

Just as Abraham's name was changed, Sarai, God speaks to him and tells him that his wife Sarai's name will be changed to Sarah. "Sarai" meant "my princess", and "Sarah" means "princess." Now when Abraham calls his wife's name, he is really saying "princess." A name change in Scripture reflects a change in destiny. ¹God really did not regard Hagar as Abraham's wife. The wife that God recognized was Sarah. God's promises would come through her.

17:16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. God explains to Abraham that Sarah will no longer be barren. God Almighty will overcome Sarah's barrenness and bless them with a son. God pronounces a double blessing upon her! A son will come from her and she will be the mother of nations; and many kings will come from her. The blessings coming through Sarah will bless Abraham with the promised son.

17:17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, **Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?**— Abraham couldn't help but worship God again by falling on his face, laughing, and saying within his heart—*"Me, be a father?"* As if to say, *'this is a good one!'* He thinks about their age; he being 100—his body dead, and she being 99—her body barren. Abraham thinking in the flesh that it was impossible for he and Sarah to have a child, as old as they were, but with God all things are possible— Just as it was with Mary without a man, bearing the Christ child. The Hebrews thought it a great blessing to have children, and if they didn't, they felt God was angry with them for some reason. Laughter is a good medicine when you don't know what else to say. Laugh, if you must, until faith takes hold in the Almighty God.

Genesis 18:9-15 The Battle Of Unbelief

18:9 And they said unto him, **Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.** Abraham sitting in the doorway of his tent, looked up, and immediately saw three men standing nearby—The Lord and two angels! He ran to meet them and bowed himself toward the ground. He gave them food and water. During or after the meal they spoke to him, they asked about his wife Sarah. *"Where is Sarah thy wife?"* Abraham answered that she was in the tent.

18:10 And he said, **I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.** The Lord comes all the way from heaven to give Abraham and Sarah an announcement. He says at the same time next year, life will come to Sarah, and Sarah will give birth to the promised son. Sarah being in the tent heard this.

18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Abraham was old and Sarah had already gone through the change of life. Sarah was very well aware that changes in her body had made it impossible in the natural to have a child.

18:12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, **After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?**— Sarah was caught off guard for it was quite unbelievable and she began to laugh within herself, knowing that she and Abraham were too old. She implied in her laugh, *'how can I, whose old, have the pleasure of sex and bear a*

¹ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/Genesis/26.html>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

child, and Abraham being so physically old?’ She was really thinking of the physical impossibility not thinking of God’s possibility.

18:13 And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?— God asked Abraham point blank, *‘why did Sarah laugh when she heard what I said?’* God delivered a promise that Sarah would bear a child, and He will make good on His promise. Sarah is wondering about her age: how old she is—all in the natural, the physical. God makes things happen supernaturally! Yes it’s funny to Sarah when you’re not thinking spiritually!

18:14 Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. God makes it very clear now; set your eyes upon Me!— Is any thing too hard for (Me) the Lord? He declares, *“I’m coming back about this time next year. When I arrive, your wife Sarah will have a son.”* God is saying, *‘I want to make this perfectly clear to the both of you!’*

18:15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh. Oh my, as if God didn’t know. That’s what Sarah did, she literally lied and God rebuked that lie. God called Sarah to the carpet because He knew that she laughed. Sarah denied it out of fear. Fear is a common motive that leads to lying. We are afraid that our inner thoughts and emotions will be exposed or our wrongdoings discovered. But lying causes greater complications than telling the truth. As Sarah finds out, God knows all, even behind closed doors.

Genesis 21:1-7 God’s Faithfulness Manifested

21:1 And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken. It had been 25yrs. since God had given Abraham the promise of a son. Now the waiting was over. How does God fulfill His promises? He proves Himself, His Word, and His power. God uses His power to do exactly as He has promised. He visited Sarah exactly as he had said, and He did unto Sarah as He had spoken.

21:2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. God allowed Sarah to become pregnant. She conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age at the appointed time God had spoken of.

21:3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. The father usually named a new baby. However, the name was announced by God to Abraham in 17:19. Therefore, Abraham named his son born to him whom Sarah bare, as God gave the name, Isaac. It was all so funny to the both of them—because Abraham and Sarah burst forth in laughter when the announcement that a son was to be born, so guess what, the name Isaac means "he laughs" or laughter."

21:4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. As God had commanded Abraham, at eight days old Isaac was circumcised.

21:5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. Abraham recognized his dependence upon God; the birth had to be a miracle because Abraham was 100 yrs old, well beyond childbearing years. This had to be from the power of God!

21:6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. Again I ask, how does God fulfill His promises? He stirs joy and rejoicing over His power. Sarah was just bubbling over with joy. Remember her response when she heard that she was to bear the promised son? She laughed and then denied it. But it was God who made her laugh and it was God who caused everyone else to rejoice with her; everyone who had heard of the Promised Son.

21:7 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born

him a son in his old age. Lastly, it was God who had performed this miracle of enabling her to bear a child for Abraham. God fulfilled His promise, and the godly line was preserved, the line through whom the promised seed, the Savior of the world was to come.

- God gave Sarah a son named Isaac.
- Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau.
- Jacob became the father of the twelve sons who would give rise to the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Israel, some centuries later, would give the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to the world.

Simply stated, the line of Isaac would be the descendants through whom God would send His Son into the world. Sarah's son was the chosen line of the promised seed. There is more—there are similarities of the birth of Isaac and the birth of Jesus Christ. The birth of Isaac actually foreshadowed or pointed to the birth of Christ:

1. There were the miraculous births of the two children:
 - a. Isaac's birth—both Abraham and Sarah were beyond childbearing years.
 - b. Christ's birth—He was born of a virgin.
2. The times for both births were set or appointed by God.
3. Both Isaac and Christ were the promised seed or son.
4. There was the assurance of God's power in both births.
 - a. Sarah was too old, but God assured her of His omnipotent, unlimited power.
 - b. Mary was a virgin, unmarried, but God assured her of His omnipotent, unlimited power.
5. Both children were named by God Himself.
 - a. God chose the name Isaac for Sarah's son.
 - b. God chose the name Jesus for His own Son, the Savior of the world.
6. Both children brought great joy to their mothers and caused their mothers to focus upon God and what He had done.

SUMMARY:

In this chapter, God changes Abraham's wife's name from Sarai, "*my princess*" to Sarah, "*princess.*" God further tells Abraham that He will bless Sarah. She will be the mother of nations and kings of peoples will come from her and Abraham will receive a son by her. This was such good news that Abraham fell to the ground and laughed to himself thinking of his age and Sarah's age and wondering will a son come from them. (17:15-17).

Sarah was in the tent when the Lord asked where she was. God, knowing where she was, promises that He will certainly return to them about this same time next year and upon returning Sarah will have a son. Sarah listening to this behind the tent door begins to laugh to herself because she and Abraham were old and past childbearing age. She doesn't even know how to feel such pleasure. The Lord knew Sarah had laughed, and asked Abraham why did Sarah laugh? Does she doubt that she can have a child in her old age; why did she laugh? God lets Abraham know that there is nothing too hard for Him. Sarah denied she laugh out of fear. God lets her know that she did laugh (18:9-15).

God kept His promise and visited Sarah exactly at the appointed time He had spoken of, and Sarah became pregnant and bore Abraham a son in his old age. Abraham named his son Isaac. When his son was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded. At the time of Isaac's birth, Abraham was 100yrs old. Sarah said, "God has made me laugh and now everyone will laugh with her. Sarah would not have dreamed that she would have a baby and give Abraham a son (21:1-7).

APPLICATION:

There are not many who keep their promises like God. He's always doing the impossible which is more than what we can do. Try Jesus, He satisfies.