
Words of Truth

Hebrews 11:11-12

By: Brian A. Yeager

“Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable” (Hebrews 11:11-12). Sara was Abraham’s wife (Genesis 11:29). Sara [Sarai and Sarah] was barren (Genesis 11:30). This is something significant as God had made this promise to Abraham: “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him... For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered” (Genesis 12:1-7 and Genesis 13:15-16).

Abraham was concerned about being childless in light of the promises God had made (Genesis 15:1-6). Sara came up with a plan to resolve the problem of Abraham having no child. The plan was one that Sara would regret. Notice: *“Now Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram’s wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes” (Genesis 16:1-4). Sara dealt hard with Hagar until the Lord intervened (Genesis 16:5-16). Yet, this was not the plan God had in mind with His promise.*

When Abraham was ninety-nine years old God informed Abraham that he was to be the father of many nations (Genesis 17:1-6). Circumcision was instituted at that time as an indicator of that promise God had made Abraham (Genesis 17:7-14). This is when we read this promise: *“And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. 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... And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year”* (Genesis 17:15-16 and Genesis 17:19-21).

Both Abraham and Sara had the same reaction when first hearing this news. They both laughed (Genesis 17:17 and Genesis 18:12). The message of God was this: *“And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? 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”* (Genesis 18:13-14). When God desired the barren to have a child, He made it happen (Genesis 25:19-28, Genesis 29:31, Genesis 30:22-23, Judges 13:1-25, I Samuel 1:1-20, and Luke 1:5-66).

Though Sara’s initial reaction was an internal laugh that she tried to deny (Genesis 18:15), here in the book of Hebrews we have read that Sara judged God faithful. So, God kept His promise. Notice: *“And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. 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”* (Genesis 21:1-7).

As things progressed forward, God continued His promise that the seed of Abraham through his wife Sara would multiply as the sand which is upon the sea shore (Genesis 22:17). Moses told the descendants of Abraham and Sara this: *“And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone: The LORD your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude”* (Deuteronomy 1:9-10; cf. Exodus 32:13). That promise was substantial to the faith of God’s people of old. You can see that throughout the history of Israel (I Chronicles 27:23 and Nehemiah 9:22-23). We too should be thankful for Sara. It is through that promise to her that we too are spiritually the children of Abraham and heirs of the promise (Galatians 3:16-29).