

Sarah

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a. **Genesis 12**

b. 12:1-5 Introducing Abram & Sarai

¹ *The LORD [YAHWEH, JEHOVAH] said to Abram, "Leave your country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land I will show you.*

² *I will make you a great nation,
and I will bless you.*

*I will make you famous,
and you will be a blessing to others.*

³ *I will bless those who bless you,
and I will place a curse on those who harm you.
And all the people on earth
will be blessed through you."*

⁴ *So Abram left Haran as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. At this time Abram was 75 years old.*

⁵ *He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and everything they owned, as well as all the servants they had gotten in Haran. They set out from Haran, planning to go to the land of Canaan, and in time they arrived there.*

Sarai was 10 years younger than Abram, so she was 65 years old at this time.

See the map on the 2nd page of the student guide.

Here God establishes His covenant with Abraham. God promises to create and establish Abraham's family as a great nation (fulfilled in Israel), and to use that nation to bless the whole world (fulfilled in Christ).

c. 12:10-20 Bad decision in Egypt

Read the story, tell it, and discuss it.

Abram deceives with a half-truth (Sarai was Abram's half-sister, Gen. 20:12) and he puts his own wife in danger because he believes he needs to protect himself.

Where is Abram's faith!?

d. **Genesis 16 Hagar**

For the sake of time, you can limit reading in class to verses 1-4, and 15-16.

This time it is Sarai's turn to show bad judgment. Her idea is similar to "surrogate parenting" which some couples do today -- hiring another woman to be pregnant with their child.

Again, where was Abram's faith? He should not have gone along with this bad plan.

The consequences of this mistake lives with us today. Arab Moslems believe that Ishmael, not Isaac, is the rightful heir of God's promises to Abraham - including the land.

e. **Genesis 17**

f. 17:1-8 Abram >> Abraham

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, ... I am changing your name from Abram to Abraham because I am making you a father of many nations. ...I will be your God and the God of all your descendants... I will give you and your descendants all this land forever.”

"Abram" means "exalted [honored] father."

"Abraham" means "father of many."

g. 17:15,16 Sarai >> Sarah

God said to Abraham, “I will change the name of Sarai, your wife, to Sarah. I will bless her and give her a son, and you will be the father. She will be the mother of many nations. Kings of nations will come from her.”

"Sarai" and "Sarah" both mean "princess." We are not sure what the difference is.

h. 17:17 Their ages

¹⁷ Abraham bowed facedown on the ground and laughed. He said to himself, “Can a man have a child when he is a hundred years old? Can Sarah give birth to a child when she is ninety?”

i. 17:18-21 The child of promise

¹⁸ Then Abraham said to God, “Please let Ishmael be the son you promised.”

¹⁹ God said, “No, Sarah your wife will have a son, and you will name him Isaac. I will make my agreement [covenant] with him to be an agreement that continues forever with all his descendants.”

j. **Genesis 18:1-15** Sarah laughs

¹ Later, the LORD again appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre. Abraham was sitting at the entrance of his tent during the hottest part of the day. ² He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When Abraham saw them, he ran from his tent to meet them...

⁹ The men asked Abraham, “Where is your wife Sarah?”

“There, in the tent,” said Abraham.

¹⁰ Then the LORD said, “I will certainly return to you about this time a year from now. At that time your wife Sarah will have a son.”

Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent which was behind him... ¹² she laughed to herself, “My husband and I are too old to have a baby.”

¹³ Then the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh? Why did she say, 'I am too old to have a baby'? ¹⁴ Is anything too hard for the LORD? No! I will return to you at the right time a year from now, and Sarah will have a son."

*¹⁵ Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I didn't laugh."
But the LORD said, "No. You did laugh."*

k. **Genesis 20** Bad decision again

This story is almost identical to what happened 24 years earlier in Egypt (Genesis 12). Abraham! What's wrong with you!!!? But... notice that Sarah sure wears here age well.

l. **Genesis 21**

m. 21:1-3 Isaac's birth

¹ The LORD cared for Sarah as he had said and did for her what he had promised. ² Sarah became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. Everything happened at the time God had said it would. ³ Abraham named his son Isaac, the son Sarah gave birth to.

n. 21:8-20 Hagar & Ishmael sent away

This is a sad story. The conflict between Sarah and Hagar from chapter 16 never stopped. Ishmael (now 14 years old) learned from his mother's attitude, and he picked on Isaac (about 2 years old). Sarah was fed-up; she told Abraham, "**Throw out this slave woman and her son!**" Abraham loved Ishmael, and didn't want to do it. But God said he should send them away, and that God will take care of Ishmael.

o. **Genesis 23** Sarah's death

Sarah lived to be one hundred twenty-seven years old. (Genesis 23:1)

The rest of the story is about Abraham's negotiation to buy land (a cave) in which to bury Sarah's body. Why so much detail in this story? Many liberal Bible "scholars" laughed at this story, and said it was just fiction. However, several years ago archeologists found records of land contracts from that same time, very similar to Abraham's deal.

LESSONS FOR US:

- ✓ We can trust God's promises, no matter what the situation looks like.
- ✓ Trying to "help" God by doing things our own way instead of His way, leads to greater problems. Disobedience is evidence of disbelief.
- ✓ God is faithful even when we are faithless. He keeps His promises. Grace!
- ✓ Surrogate parenting -- bad idea!!