

Joyful Life Bible Studies

WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

SARAH (Sarai)

Lesson 2

FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. Review last week's study of Eve. Think about this: Eve is mentioned only four times in the Bible yet the impact of her sin has affected every generation since. She focused on the forbidden, dialogued with the devil, and influenced her husband to sin. How will you avoid following her example?

2. This week we will be studying Sarah, a woman of great strengths and great weaknesses. For a brief introduction to her life scan the following verses and record one thing that stands out to you:
 - a. Genesis 11:27-12:20

 - b. Genesis 16:1-6

 - c. Genesis 17:15-22; 18:1-15

 - d. Genesis 21:1-7; 23:1,2

3. Begin your lesson with prayer expressing your desire and commitment to learn and grow through your study of Sarah's example. Write your prayer here.

*For whatsoever things were written aforetime
were written for our learning,
that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures
might have hope.*

Romans 15:4

SECOND DAY: Read Genesis 11:27-12:20

1. Sarah's (Sarai) story begins in Genesis 11:29-31. The Lord changed Sarai's name to Sarah which means princess (Genesis 17:15b). Read these verses and record what you learn about her.
 - a. But Sarai was barren (verse 30a). In that culture for a woman to be barren was the ultimate sorrow and shame. A childless woman felt she had failed in her primary reason for existence and was under God's judgment. Even today, barrenness is often very agonizing. Share a way we might be able to encourage a childless woman.

2. Ur was located close to the Euphrates River in Mesopotamia, which IS now called Iraq, near present-day Baghdad. It was noted for its highly advanced culture and was known for its many gods. Sarah turned from the paganism of Ur and left the security of her homeland. Using Genesis 12:1-10 write a brief news report of this move.
 - a. Consider that Sarah was approximately 65 years old when she left her familiar and comfortable environment to follow her husband to an unknown, distant land. She willingly went on this dangerous pilgrim journey. What does this reveal about her character?

 - b. Abram and Sarah had a limited knowledge and understanding of the LORD at this point, yet they obeyed. What does Hebrews 11:8-10 declare about this?
 - (1.) How should this speak to us about our faith and obedience?

3. View an incredible episode in Sarah's life through the lens of Genesis 12:10-20. In your own words describe this part of her story.

- a. Even though on this occasion Abram failed in his faith, how did God protect Sarah?

(1.) What does this reveal about our Lord?

Challenge: Read about a similar lapse of Abraham's faith in Genesis 20:1-18. Give a brief report of this account.

We can trust an unknown future to a known God.
Corrie ten Boom

THIRD DAY: Read Genesis 16:1-6

1. God had promised Abram a son (Genesis 15:4,5), yet Sarah remained barren. Read Genesis 16:1-6 to observe Sarah's plan to help God fulfill His promise. What was her idea?
 - a. Although Abram was 86 years old (Genesis 16:16), what was the result of his union with Hagar?
Answer from Genesis 16:15.
2. Consider the serious results of Sarah's mistake of giving Hagar to Abram. According to Genesis 16:4-6 what heartaches did she bring into her household?

Advanced Students: Identify the group of people today who claim to be descendants of Ishmael. Keeping this in mind, what are the current consequences of Sarah's actions?

3. Sarah possessed great strength, yet Genesis 16:1-6 reveals her weaker side. What do you see?
 - a. What lesson is there in this for us as Christian women?
 - b. Waiting for the fulfillment of a promise is often difficult. How might we encourage another believer to continue to wait in faith concerning an unfulfilled promise from the Lord?

*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.
In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.
Proverbs 3:5,6*

FOURTH DAY: Read Genesis 17:15-22; 18:1-15

1. When Abram was 99 years old God changed his name to Abraham (Genesis 17:1-5). It was at this time that God spoke to him specifically about Sarah bearing the promised son. Read about this in Genesis 17:15-22. Describe what happened at this point in the story.
 - a. Sarah was almost 90 years old and Ishmael, Hagar's son was 13 (Genesis 17:25). God had repeatedly promised Abraham a son. Abraham and Sarah must have assumed that Ishmael was the promised son. What do you think Sarah must have thought and felt now?

2. Read Genesis 18:1-15 and look at the surprising encounter that Abraham and Sarah experienced. Summarize this momentous event.

Advanced Student: Research and identify the three visitors of Genesis 18.

3. Record a few observations you make about Sarah from Genesis 18:9-15.
 - a. Seriously consider the question: *Is there anything too hard for the LORD?* How does Luke 1:37 answer this?
- (1.) Share a way this ministers to you today.

He is able, more than able to accomplish what concerns you today!
-selected

FIFTH DAY: Read Genesis 21:1-7;

1. God's timing is always perfect. In Genesis 21:1-7 we see the fulfillment of His promise. Record key phrases from the following verses that tell us about this miraculous event:
 - a. Genesis 21 :1,2
 - b. Genesis 21 :3,4
 - c. Genesis 21:5
 - d. Genesis 21:6,7

(1.) Sarah had waited 25 years to hold this son in her arms. God told them to name their son *Isaac* (*Genesis 17:19*), which means *laughter*. What do you think is significant about this name?

2. The story of Sarah ends in Genesis 23:1,2. Notice how old she was when she died. What does this suggest about the length of time that she enjoyed being a mother to her promised son?
3. According to Hebrews 11:11 and I Peter 3:1-6 how is Sarah an example for us today?
 - a. Share at least one thing you want to apply to your life from her example.

Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!
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SIXTH DAY: Review

1. What impressed you the most about Sarah's life story?
 - a. Tell why.

