

Life Even After- Sarah the Doubter

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 17 – Genesis 23 | **SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE:** Galatians 4:21-31 | John 11:38-44 | Matthew 17:20 | Ephesians 3:20 | 1 Peter 3:6 | Hebrews 11:11 | Hebrews 11:6

INTRO

Sarah was barren, and even laughed in the face of God. In football there is a rule that has been in effect for several years called the challenge flag. If we feel that the referee hasn't seen something correctly, we can throw a challenge flag and have them review it. If the call stays the same, then we lose a timeout. But if they change the call on the field then we are awarded the right call. There are some times we want to throw a challenge flag on God. We want to challenge the call that he has made. Sometimes we are afraid to throw the flag, we could be risking a time out, or in God's case, we may tick him off by asking. Sarah was barren, and for a Jewish woman to be barren was not fair. He promised Sarah that she would have a baby, and she didn't get pregnant, adding insult to injury.

SERMON POINTS

- **There are many times we are waiting on a blessing but we seem to be barren. Life doesn't seem fair.**

While Sarah was barren with pregnancy and childbirth, a lot of people are barren with life itself. They just can't seem to make things come to life, and they seem to have lost the life that they once had. When that happens, we see life as unfair. We have heard all the promises of Jesus, of how he has come to give us abundant life, but we don't seem to have abundant life. We are spiritually barren. They heard God say there was going to be a baby, and we hear what God says, but he is taking too long.

Why would it have to take this long if it is coming out of your mouth?

- **Sometimes the promises of God causes doubt.**

Martha and Mary probably felt doubt when Jesus didn't show up when they thought he should have. Sarah thought she would help God out, because He did mean that she was going to have a baby! She let her husband (Abraham) sleep with the handmaiden, and then that will help God keep his promise. Out of them helping God comes Ishmael, and he is called the child of the flesh, not the child of the promise. Because she didn't think He could pull off what is promised, she went to man's way to do it.

- **Whenever you mix man's way with God's way, you delay God's way from happening.**

Galatians 4:21-31 speaks of this as well. We actually delay what God is going to do when we add human opinion to it. There was a 25 year gap in the giving of the promise and the experience of the promise. And the reason is because there was doubt. Sarah didn't believe it could happen. Abraham and Sarah both laughed. Sarah believes she cannot get pregnant, but God is going to make it so clear that when he fulfills the promise, that you will have no doubt who gets the credit. There will be no one to thank but God. Once you are clear with the promise it is not too late for God to pull it off even though it is outside the natural order of things.

- **We cannot judge what the spirit of God is saying through the eyes of what the world thinks.**

Example: God is giving me a vision to start a school, but the natural man says that is crazy and will cost too much and there will be too many problems. The Spirit is saying to purchase an old drug store, and make it a coffee house to minister to people in your community. The natural says, "They want too much, and what do you know about running a business? There was already a coffee house there, and it didn't work.." The spirit is saying to go minister to families, and the natural asks what its going to cost.

The spirit is saying walk through the door, but we will not know what is on the inside of it until we step in. A little faith in a big God is all you need, but a lot of faith in a little God won't help you. Sarah needed help understanding that even though what God had promised was outside the natural order of things, God would do what He said He would do.

- **God wants to teach you something while you wait.**

During the 25 years of delay of the promise, two major events happened: 1) the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah 2) Abraham telling Abimelech that Sarah was his sister. God closed all the wombs up until Sarah got out, and then all the women were able to get pregnant again in Abimelech's kingdom. God was saying, "I control what lives and what dies. Your lack of faith is keeping me from fulfilling the promise that I have given to you." Did you know that your doubt can block God? In the case of Mary and Martha, Jesus didn't pray to the Father until they moved the stones and until he saw their faith, He didn't move. In this case, He delayed 4 days. In Sarah's case he delayed 25 years.

Faith is not the feeling of having a great idea, faith is the action that you take about that idea.

(Matthew 17:20) ...faith of a mustard seed. God can do things inside the natural order of things, but every now and then we need to be reminded that God can do the unthinkable.

(Ephesians 3:20) Don't think for a minute that God can't do it, because He can do what He wants, when He wants, with who He wants and that includes you.

- **If God is making you wait, then it means that he is up to something special.**

(Genesis 21:1-3) God is reminding Sarah that He always gets the last laugh even if it is outside the order of things.

- **No matter who you are, God can speak to you. He spoke to Sarah just like he spoke to Abraham.**

(1 Peter 3:6) God is using her for an example to New Testament women. We also know that Sarah believed God, because in Hebrews 11:11 it reads that by faith Sarah conceived. It took 25 years for her faith to catch up with God's promise.

(Hebrews 11:6) Without faith it is impossible to believe God. God has all of these promises, but we don't have enough faith to walk through the open door that He has provided for us.

(Genesis 23:1) Sarah lived 127 years. She is the only woman in the Bible that we know how old she was when she died. God wants you to know that not only can he keep his promise but he can keep you around to enjoy it. She was able to raise Isaac, and he would have been 37 when she died.

Maybe you are about to check out on God, because you feel like he has checked out on you. I can promise you He has not gone anywhere.

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