

## UNLIKELY HEROES #2

### SARAH: THE MOTHER NATIONS

“Unlikely heroes are not always the people who do grand things.  
Sometimes they are simply the ones who continue wait on God.”

#### Hebrews 11:11 (KJV 1900)

**11** 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.

#### BIO FOR SARAH:

1. Husband: Abraham
2. Nationality: Chaldean (Pagan culture)
3. Occupation: Housewife
4. Age: 127
5. Children: Isaac
6. Scriptural Setting: Her story is told in Genesis chapters 11-23

#### INTERESTING FACTS:

1. She is known for:
  - a. Being barren. (Genesis 11:30)
  - b. Laughing at the promise of God. (Genesis 18:10-15)
  - c. Giving birth to Isaac in her old age (Genesis 21:1-6)
2. God changed her name from Sarai to Sarah (Genesis 17:15-16). Sarai means “one who strives”, but Sarah mean’s “princess” and “mother of nations”
3. Sarah was both the wife and half-sister of Abraham. This was not an uncommon occurrence in ancient civilizations.
4. She is the woman most mentioned by name in the Bible - 60 times.

#### NOTABLE EVENTS IN HER LIFE:

1. Genesis 11:29-31 – Leaves Ur of the Chaldeans in Mesopotamia (Modern day Iraq) for Canaan. Age 65.
2. Genesis 12:10-20 – Her husband asked her to conceal their marriage from the Pharaoh in order to save his own life.
3. Genesis 16:1-6 – Because she was still barren after waiting 10 years for child, she convinced her husband to have a child with her handmaiden, Hagar. Age 75.
4. Genesis 18:10-15 – She personally hears the promise from God regarding Isaac. Age 89.
5. Genesis 21:1-6 – Isaac is born to Sarah. Age 90.
6. Genesis 23:1-2 – Sarah dies in Hebron. Age 127.

#### NOTABLE NEW TESTAMENT REFERENCES:

1. **Hebrews 11:11** – The writer of Hebrews indicates that it was Sarah's faith that gave her strength to receive the promises of God. He also uses Sarah to help define what faith is. Faith is judging that God will keep His word.
2. **1 Peter 3:5-6** – Peter cites Sarah as an example for women to follow; noting specifically her relationship with Abraham and how she modeled godly submission.
3. **Galatians 4:21-31** – Paul uses the stories of Hagar and Sarah as an allegory to illustrate the two covenants (Old Testament & New Testament). One is born of the

flesh (OT) and the other is a product of divine promise or Spirit (NT). Hagar conceived naturally. Sarah conceived supernaturally. This also illustrates the new birth discussed by Jesus in John 3:1-8.

**TAKE HOME STUDY QUESTIONS:**

1. How does waiting demonstrate one's faith? What is the difference between waiting and simple inaction or slothfulness?
2. Barrenness for a woman in Sarah's time had a profound stigma connected to it. Sons, in particular, were needed to carry on the family name and livelihood. How do you think Sarah's barrenness would have affected her feelings of security (particularly with Abraham) and significance (her status in society)?
3. What do you think it means when the writer of Hebrews 11:11 says that Sarah "judged him faithful" in reference to God? How did this verdict affect her ability to wait on God?
4. Read Genesis 17:15-16. The name Sarah means princess. What is significant about God changing her name from Sarai to Sarah?
5. Read 1 Peter 3:5-6. Peter refers to Sarah as an example for women to follow. He indicates that Sarah's life was one lived in victory over fear. What do you think some of the fears were that Sarah had to battle? How do you think she overcame these?
6. Read Genesis 16:7-15. After Sarah gave Hagar to her husband there was hostility between the two of them. How will this hostility continue to be played out in Ishmael's life? (verse 12)
7. Read Genesis 17:18-22 and Genesis 21:6. What is the significance in Isaac's name meaning laughter? What is the difference between the laughter described in chapter 17 and the laughter mentioned in chapter 21?

**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

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