

Face to Face

with

Sarah

First Day

Her Story

“But all of us who are Christians have no veils on our faces, but reflect like mirrors the glory of the Lord. We are transformed in ever-increasing splendor into His own image, and this is the work of the Lord who is the Spirit.” (II Corinthians 3:18 PHILLIPS)

This week we will be looking at the life of Sarah. Just as Eve is remembered as the mother of mankind, Sarah is remembered as the mother of the nations. Sarah was the first Hebrewess, mother of the nation of Israel! She and Abraham, leaving their home in Ur of the Chaldeans to follow God’s call to Canaan, were chosen by God to begin the race of people that would be His own. Sarah’s life, like ours, is a mixture of strength, faith, weakness, and doubt. She is a wonderful character to study. We will begin by looking at what Scripture tells us about Sarah. *This is her story.*

Sarah’s story covers several chapters of Scripture. Read the following verses and, in a few sentences, summarize the events described there:

Genesis 12:1-20 _____

Genesis 16:1-6 _____

Genesis 17:1-8 _____

Genesis 17:15-21 _____

Genesis 18:1-15 _____

Genesis 21:1-13 _____

What was Sarah's *sorrow*? _____

What was her *blessing*? _____

What did she *learn*? _____

Second Day

Her Manner

Who is She?

“...Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.” (II Peter 1:5-7)

Sarah's name means "princess" or "chieftainess."

Today we will be looking at the *character* of Sarah. Consider the Scripture you have read on Sarah's life (you may reread the portions that will help you today) and use the following words to describe her:

- *Her strength*

- *Her weakness*

- *Her self-reliance*

- *Her faith*

Sarah's character is an interesting blend of a strong will, self-reliance, and faith. We readily see the strong will and self-reliance, as we consider the story of Abraham and Hagar. Scripture tells of her strong faith. First, we see her in the Hebrews Hall of Faith: "By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised" (Hebrews 11:11 NASB). Second, I Peter 3:6 cites Sarah as our example of submission. Her submission also reveals her faith.

In what way are you most like Sarah: in your *self-reliance*, or in your *faith*? _____

How did Sarah's *character* help to create some of the problems she faced? _____

How did Sarah's *character* help to fix some of the problems she faced? _____

What do you learn from Sarah? _____

Third Day

Her Hope

"And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord." (Luke 1:45 NAS)

Today we will focus in on Sarah's *hope*. From what you have studied about her this week:

What was her *need*? _____

What was her *hope*? _____

What was God's *promise*? _____

One of the things that stands out in the study of Sarah’s life is the fact that she failed to wait for God to fulfill His promise of a son. Sarah got anxious, took things into her own hands, and made the biggest mistake of her life. In fact, we are still paying for the mistake Sarah made. Right now we see the crisis in the Middle East and know that it is a direct result of Sarah’s attempt to *help God* fulfill His promise. One of the biggest lessons we can learn from her life is the lesson of *waiting*. Waiting on God is always hard, but it is always the right thing to do.

What are you waiting on God to do at this time in your life? _____

- Do you feel He has given you a promise for this?

In what way is *waiting* linked to *hope*? _____

Perhaps you are tempted to take things into your own hands, like Sarah did....

- What have you done during this waiting period that has been in *self-reliance*?
- What have you done during this waiting period that has been in *faith*?

That man of great faith, George Mueller, considers this verse his testimony: ***“For from of old they have not heard nor perceived by ear, neither has the eye seen a God besides Thee, who acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him”*** (Isaiah 64:4 NASB).

Do you expect God to do great things for you? Isaiah says that we can’t begin to comprehend the way God is going to act on our behalf, *when we wait for Him!*

- What great things do you expect God to do because you are waiting on Him?

Memory Verse:

Habakkuk 2:3 begins with this promise: *“For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it hastens toward the goal, and it will not fail.”* It ends with this exhortation: ***“Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay”*** (Habakkuk 2:3b NASB). This is our memory verse this week – begin memorizing it today!

Fourth Day

Her Gifts

What a beautiful picture Sarah's life gives us of the blessings that come from having a submissive spirit! Sarah was far from perfect, but she learned her lessons in God's school of obedience, leaving a legacy for all women on the importance of personal surrender. Two New Testament Scriptures record what God would have us remember about Sarah, the one called "Princess." She is the only other female besides Rahab to receive honorable mention in the Hebrews 11 Hall of Faith. I Peter 3:4-5 records her as one of the women who exhibited the incorruptible ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God: "*For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid....*"

Submission is humble obedience to another's will. It may sound easy by definition, but don't be fooled! The woman with the submissive spirit has made the *deliberate choice* to yield her will to another and that involves a tremendous amount of inner strength. In the Christian walk, this heart attitude is the *key* that unlocks the promises of God.

Submission for Sarah meant a lifetime process that involved *following, trusting, waiting* and *learning*. She followed Abraham as he followed after God, which meant leaving the security and comfort of home and family, and being on the move constantly, adapting to difficult changes on a day to day basis. While a hostage in a foreign king's harem, Sarah had to trust God when her own husband failed her. When she became tired of waiting for God's promise of a son, Sarah took matters into her own hands and decided to *help* God fulfill His promise. When her harsh dealings with Hagar created intolerable tension in their home, Sarah learned a painful lesson: the difference a gentle and quiet spirit can make.

For one hundred and twenty-seven years Sarah followed, trusted, waited, and learned as she submitted to God and to her husband. God honored her obedience with the fulfillment of His promise: "*And the Lord did for Sarah as He had promised*" (Genesis 21:1 NASB). What about you? Are you willing to submit yourself to God and to trust Him with the outcome? Submitting yourself will mean much the same as it did for Sarah....

1) Following even when you don't know where you're going.

Where is God leading you at this present time and what is your heart attitude about following Him? _____

Will you humbly submit to following Him at all costs? _____

2) *Trusting even when you can't see the reality of your faith working.*

In what way is God asking you to trust Him at the present time? What is holding you back? _____

Will you humbly submit to trusting Him at all costs? _____

3) *Waiting even when you can't stand the suspense.*

Has the suspense of waiting resulted in your own attempt to answer your prayer? _____

Will you humbly submit to waiting for Him to fulfill His promise to you no matter how long it may take? _____

4) *Learning even when you can't figure out the lesson involved.*

What do you think God desires to teach you through your current circumstances? _____

Will you humbly submit to learning the lesson He has for you? _____

God has gifted you with all you will need to follow, trust, wait, and learn from Him right where He has you at this present time. Don't look to the right or to the left; keep your eyes fixed on Him alone. As you willingly submit to Him in obedience, you make possible the fulfillment of all He has promised to do in your life! God's Word says His promises are backed by all the honor of His name. Take Him at His word today and put yourself in His loving hands!

Fifth Day

Her Legacy

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” (Romans 15:4)

How will you be remembered? How would you like to be remembered? What will you leave behind of benefit for others? What you do and say today will leave imprints for others to view tomorrow.

Taking a closer look..

- What impression did Sarah leave with you this week?

- How might her example impact women in today’s world?

Taking a personal look....

- What did you learn about the link between your submission and God’s faithfulness?

- Which of the four areas of submission you studied are most difficult for you: *Following - Trusting - Waiting - Learning?* What can you do about it?

Passing it on...

- What lesson from Sarah’s life would you like to pass on to someone else? Will you make this the prayer of your heart in the coming week?

Sixth Day

Your Prayer

Each day this week you have examined up close – face to face – a woman of the Bible: her *story and manner; her promise and hope; her gifts and legacy*. Throughout the process, as you learned about her, you also learned about yourself.

Now the focus shifts to *Your Prayer*. Each week during your group time you will have the opportunity to pray in agreement with the other ladies for the things you write down on this personalized page. Keep an updated account in the *Praise* list each week as God answers your petitions. This year let’s come boldly to His throne and learn to pray the **BIG PRAYER** with expectancy! The only prerequisite for such boldness is being *humble* and *real* in His presence.

Prayer: Write out your prayer for each of the following...

I praise God for (an aspect of His marvelous character) _____

I confess to God _____

I thank God for _____

I ask God for _____

Promise: Write out this week’s *promise* in the space provided...and learn to pray this promise from Scripture.

Praise: If God has answered a prayer request for you this week or fulfilled a desire of your heart, please write it out and date it as a stone of remembrance.

