

Want a Good Laugh?

Preached at prison, July 2012

Genesis 18:9-15

And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. ¹⁰ And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

¹¹ Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. ¹² Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

¹³ And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? ¹⁴ Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

¹⁵ Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

Background: Abraham and Sarah had been waiting on a promise from God. Something has been missing in their life, something not working with the relationship, the future looked dim. They were not successful at something that was important in life. It looked like the best things in life had passed them by. It looked like he missed his window of opportunity. It looked like their plans had failed. It looked like he missed his last chance. It looked like it was too late now for a comeback. Everything they tried before wasn't working. But despite what things looked like and despite his current situation and dim future and bleak outlook; he was still found waiting and standing on the promises of God; Abraham had no place else to turn but to God. Because he was found waiting, God showed up.

Verse 9 – While visiting God asks him where his wife Sarah is, he said behold, she's in the tent.

Verse 10 – God renews a promise he made before to remind and confirm. When God returns, He states He'll have the promise with Him. Sarah will produce joy and good times on the way. What wasn't working in the relationship before would be working when He comes back by again. He's coming back with a reward. Rev 22:12 – Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his works shall be. God doesn't talk about the problem, only the promise. God shows up and says I can make this bitter thing better. His best comes out of this promise.

God shows up and gives him a word and a promise to encourage Abraham and Sarah while they waited for a breakthrough. What has He promised you? Now Sarah his wife heard the same Word and same promise that Abraham did.

Verse 11 – The problem, the situation, and the current condition looked bad. They had missed out, past their prime. Better days and God’s best was behind them and disappointment was in front of them. It ceased to be...opportunity was gone. She missed it. What she was hoping for didn’t happen. When she looked at herself she said...I’m all messed up. Can anybody here look at yourself and say I’m messed up. Some things ain’t working right in my life. True dat, but God has a word and promise even when you’re all messed up, even when things are missing in your life. Folk connected to you are messed up too...God has a word for that condition also.

Verse 12 – Sarah laughed. The source of her laughter was her impossible condition. Her focus was on the problem and not the promise. It was a laugh of unbelief. Because of the problem, she laughed at the promise. I wonder what that laugh might have sounded like. God says she will experience pleasure again....but she laughed. God says what was broke all these years is about to be fixed....but she laughed. God indicates what ain’t never worked out for you is about to get busy now.....we say “get out” and laugh. God says even though you messed up, I still want to hook you up....we say that sounds crazy and laugh. God says what has been denied to you is about to land in your lap.....we laugh and say impossible. God’s best is on the way.....but Sarah thinks that is just crazy. Be careful not to laugh at the Word.

- When I look at her situation, I might have laughed too.
- Laughed at the power of God. God has the power to save, don’t laugh.

Verse 13 – calls out Abraham because Sarah laughed. If you know where Sarah is then why is she laughing at the Word and promises of God?

- God calls it out because no faith in the Word delays the promise. Faith is often necessary to release the blessing. The blessing and promise comes from the Father. When I pleased my daddy I often got a reward or blessing, bigger piece of pie, extra glass of Kool Aid, stay up a little later, little bit more under the Christmas tree, etc. If you want to please the Father in Heaven you got to have faith, because without faith it is impossible to please God; and faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God....stop laughing at the Word. That’s your key to God’s best.
- Asks the question for another reason, because Abraham was responsible as priest to know the spiritual and faith condition of his wife. See being man of the house and priest of the house means more than just paying the bills, it means being a pastor and shepherd to your wife. It’s not about if she prays longer, been in this longer, knows more Word than you...it’s all about how much faith you got. He asked Abraham because he had a responsibility to cover her. How you handle your priest duties at home might have an impact on when you step into His best. Men, stop punking out and man up. Where’s your wife at?

Verse 14 – God doesn’t address the problem, He highlights His ability and His intent. Not only can He do it, but He wants to. There are two parts of the promise; ability and desire. There is an appointed time for your break through. Meaning, your break through has been scheduled, your break through has an

appointment, it's on the calendar, you have a breakout date....release date for your blessings. When you have faith your blessing get's scheduled.

- Why not give it to them right now? Why make them wait so long? Building up your faith and breaking down the crazy stuff takes some time. There's a process. But He keeps you while you wait. Just stick with Him.....just a test. Took my car to the shop...didn't fix it right away, I had to wait a while. Went to the doctor...had to wait a little while. Went through the drive through....had to wait a little while. But I noticed during my wait that I still had a promise and expectation that things were going to work out and while I was waiting I was still blessed.

Verse 15 – Sarah is busted but tries to deny it. Cover up. But how you gonna cover it up and lie about it when God knows your heart. Earth, Wind & Fire might say, “you can't hide...I bet cha'.” Fear will cause you to do some stupid stuff. (my cottage cheese & office kiss example).

- She laughed to herself meaning those around her couldn't tell she was having a faith crisis. Nothing new under the sun....folk are still laughing on the inside and faking it on the outside. Sarah was looking good, just got out of service and still laughing at the wrong stuff. Outside she was looking like a super saint. That used to fool me, folk in church can be in church, be in service, be around the people of God, hear the Word, and look good on the outside and still lack faith on the inside. Church needs to be real.....stop trying to fake it....you ain't fooling God silly rabbit....stop flashing fake ID.....let's nip this craziness in the bud....be for real and have faith.
- Come clean and confess and repent, she is still trying to fool folks into thinking she all that.
- Lord I believe, help me thou my unbelief. Faking it just pushes the release date further out in the schedule. But you need to get one of those Faith Passes like at Disney World so you don't have to wait so long. Faith will let you move ahead of folks in the blessing line.

Gen 17:16-17

And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

¹⁷ Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

Verse 16 – Promises made from God; I'm going to deliver.

Verse 17 – Abraham falls on his face and laughs. Something different about his laugh and Sarah's laugh.

- Fell on his face in worship and praise. Laughing while he's praising. That's my God!
- Instead of laughing at God, he's laughing with God.



- Issac means he laughs. When I get there I'll be able to laugh about it; but you can laugh now.
- Luke 6:21 – Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh.
- Gen 21:6 - Sarah would laugh in victory in the end.

You need something to laugh about. How about this;

- Jer 29:11 – For I know the plans/thoughts that I think toward you, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.
- Matt 11:28-29 – Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls.
- Isa 40:29-31 – He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not faint.
- Philippians 4:19 – But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.
- Romans 10:9 – That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.
- Isa 26:3
- 155 verses about joy; restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. Isa 12:3 – Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. The joy of the Lord is my strength.

This is how this all works. He'll bring you out and give you a promise. It might take awhile before you get the full benefit and before you realize it in your life but in the meantime, He'll give you a Word and provide and keep you while you wait, you just keep standing on the promises. How you deal with the wait by faith is the key. He'll bring you from the bitter to the better by faith.

The last laugh. Standing on the promises. In memory of Mr. Royal, my mentor.