

IMPACT

I **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.
Proverbs 3:5-6

Passage: Hebrews 11:11 “By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because *she judged Him faithful who had promised.*”

Quote: “The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith. The beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety.”
George Muller

God had promised an heir to Abram who would “come from his own body.” The Scriptures tell us that Abram believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.¹ The problem was that Sarai, his wife, was barren. She devised a self-serving scheme to “fix” their problem of childlessness. “Sarai said to Abram, ‘See now, *the LORD has restrained me from bearing children.* Please, go in to my maid; perhaps *I shall obtain children by her.*’ And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.”² The result was a son, Ishmael, and eventual strife within the family. Thirteen years after Abram and Sarai’s scheme, God told Abram that He would bless Sarai and that she would give Abram a son. He also changed their names to Abraham (“father of many nations”) and Sarah (“princess;” “mother of nations”).³ He “fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, ‘Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?’ And Abraham said to God, ‘Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!’ Then God said: ‘No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac.’”⁴ Isaac means “laughter.” Abraham’s laugh was one of delight and not doubt! “And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. He did not waiver at the promise of God through unbelief, but *was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced* that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore it was accounted to him for righteousness.”⁵

When Sarah, who was past the age of childbearing, heard the LORD tell Abraham that she would have a child, she also laughed, but within herself. The Bible

states that “Sarah was listening in the tent door *which was behind (the LORD).*”⁶ “And the LORD said to Abraham, ‘Why did Sarah laugh, saying, “Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?” Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.’ *But Sarah denied it, saying, ‘I did not laugh,’ for she was afraid.*” *Without turning to look at Sarah, “He said, ‘No, but you did laugh!’*”⁷ By God’s grace, Sarah soon came to believe that He would keep His promise. To be sure, the fact that her silent laugh of unbelief was disclosed, and her denial rebuffed as she stood behind them out of their sight shocked her. It also likely started her down the path of faith in God’s ability to do the *seemingly impossible.* When Isaac was born, “Sarah said, ‘God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me.’”⁸ No longer did she laugh in unbelief!

Sarah’s Waivering

Recall the penetrating question that was asked of Abraham. “*Is anything too hard for the LORD?*” The implied answer is “No!” It reminds us of other declarations of God’s omnipotence. Jeremiah exclaimed, “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. *There is nothing too hard for You.*”⁹ As Gabriel told Mary of the virgin birth of Jesus and of John to Elizabeth in her old age, he reminded her that “*with God nothing shall be impossible.*”¹⁰ Jesus reminded doubting disciples that with men some things are impossible, but with God *all things are possible.*”¹¹ “It is not what God can do, but what He will do, and what He has promised to do, that is the ground of faith. He can quench all the fire in hell, but where has He said He will do it?”¹² “This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything *according to His will,* He hears us.”¹³ God keeps His promises! Faith in Who He is and what He can do offers a beacon of hope in the darkest storm, a solid rock upon which to stand in times of doubt, discouragement and defense of the gospel! May He strengthen our faith to believe “the seemingly impossible!”

1 Gen.15:4, 6 2 Gen.16:2 3 Gen..17:5, 15; MacArthur 4 Gen.17:17-19
5 Rom.4:19-22 6 Gen.18:10 7 Gen.18:13-15 8 Gen.21:6 9
Jer.32:17 10 Lk.1:37 11 Matt.19:26 12 Wm. Burkitt 13 I John 5:14