



READ: Genesis 21:1-7 (NIRV)

The LORD was gracious to Sarah, just as he had said he would be. The LORD did for Sarah what he had promised to do. Sarah became pregnant. She had a son by Abraham when he was old. The child was born at the exact time God had promised. Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah had by him. When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him. He did it exactly as God had commanded him. Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born to him. Sarah said, "God has given laughter to me. Everyone who hears about this will laugh with me." She also said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would breast-feed children? But I've had a son by him when he is old."

ENTER THE STORY:

Did you notice that God changed Abram and Sarai's names? God changes Abram to Abraham, which means "father of a multitude," and God promises Abraham that kings would come from his family. God also changes Sarai's name, which means "princess" to Sarah, which means "noblewoman" or "mother of kings." God changed her name because she will have kings come from her too.

Being given a new name with a powerful meaning is great, but Sarah wasn't worried about nations and kings, she just wanted one baby, and it seemed like it was impossible now. Abraham was 99 years old, and she was 90! Sarah's body was as good as dead, and this made Sarah very sad.

But what have we been learning about God through this advent? He is the God that brings life from dead things! He brought life from a dead stump – he brought life from dust – and now he will bring life from a dead womb.

God's response to her says it all, *"Is anything too hard for the LORD?"*

What about you? Do you think there is anything God cannot do? Of course not! Nothing is too hard for God!

After all, God, who made the promise to give them a family as numerous as the stars, is the same God who made those stars and calls them by name! It would be easy for God to help Sarah have a baby.

In fact, wasn't that the whole point all along? God's promise would be impossible for Abraham and Sarah on their own. God would have to do it for them! **AND HE DID!**

Nine months later, Sarah gave birth to a bouncing baby boy. They named their son "Isaac," which means "son of laughter," and Sarah laughed, and laughed, and laughed, because God had given her joy again and now everyone could laugh with her. *This baby boy took 25 years to arrive...but he was WORTH IT!*

Many years later, God would do something impossible again, but this time it would be with a young girl who wasn't even married yet. God would take his Son, and fashion him into a tiny, little baby and by the power of the Holy Spirit place him inside this young woman's belly. What an amazing way for Jesus to enter our world!

May we never forget that nothing is too hard for the LORD!!

PRAY: *Heavenly Father, you did the impossible when you gave Abraham and Sarah a baby, and you did it again when you sent your Son to be born of a young virgin girl. Even though people had to wait a very long time for his arrival, he was SO worth the wait! Now that he has come, we can finally rejoice and laugh because having you with us brings us true joy. Amen.*