



READ: Genesis 18:1, 9-15; 21:1-7 (NIV)

The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. . . "Where is your wife Sarah?" they asked him. "There, in the tent," he said. Then one of them said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son." Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?" Then the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son." Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I did not laugh." But he said, "Yes, you did laugh." (Genesis 18:1, 9-15)

Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised. Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him. When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God commanded him. Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me." And she added, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age." (Genesis 21:1-7)

ENTER THE STORY:

Did you notice that Abram is now referred to as Abraham, and Sarai is now Sarah? In Genesis 17, Abram and Sarai *STILL* don't have any children, so God ups the ante on his promise yet again and reveals a subtle change with some new names. God changes Abram, which means "exalted father" to Abraham, which means "father of a multitude", and God assures Abraham that nations and kings would come from him. God also changes Sarai's name, which means "princess" to Sarah, which means "noblewoman" or "mother of kings", because she will produce nations and kings too.

Being given a new name with a powerful meaning was great, but Sarah wasn't worried about nations and kings. She just wanted one baby, and with each month that passed and still no baby, she was reminded that her body was failing to do its job.

Naturally, this caused Sarah to question God's plan. It seemed like it was too late. Too much time has passed... 24 years to be exact. Abraham was 99 years old, and she was 90!! They were OLD and GRAY! And so she wondered why did God wait so long? As old as she was, her body was as good as dead.

But what have we been learning about our 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 believe this statement in the deepest part of your being? Have you ever questioned God's ability to accomplish the impossible?

Sarah did, and God reminded her of this truth. *NOTHING is too hard for him!* God, who made the promise to give them offspring as numerous as the stars, is the same God who made those stars and called them by their name! He is more than capable of opening Sarah's womb and blessing her with a child.

- *In fact, wasn't that the whole point all along?* God's promise would not be accomplished by man. It would be an
- incredible feat that only God could bring about.
- Sure enough, nine months later, Abraham, who was 100 years old, and Sarah, whose womb was as good as dead, gave
- birth to a bouncing baby boy. They named their son "Isaac," which means "son of laughter," and Sarah did laugh, but
- this time it was full of joy, because God had restored her laughter and knew everyone would laugh along with her.
- *This baby boy was well worth the 25 years it took for him to arrive.*
- Many years later, God would again accomplish another impossible feat with a young girl who was not yet married. And
- God would take his Son, fashion him into a tiny, baby boy, and by the power of the Holy Spirit place him in this young
- woman's belly. *"Jesus – The Word made into flesh."*
- What a remarkable way for Jesus to enter our world! Praise God that our ways are not his ways and our thoughts are not
- his thoughts. May we never forget that *nothing is too hard for the LORD!!*
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■ **PRAY:** *Heavenly Father, you did the impossible when you gave Abraham and Sarah a baby in their old age, 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 worth the wait! Now that he has come, we can finally rejoice and laugh because having you with us brings us true joy. Amen.*

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