



Sarah

Genesis 17:15 “God also said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. 16 I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.”

I don't believe there is any other woman in the Bible that God changed her name. I just think that is a great honor among women. Yet, I wonder if anyone in the Bible (male or female) learned more lessons the hard way than Sarah. Yes, Paul was bitten and ship wrecked. David was on the run most of his life. However, Sarah was given twice to a king who was not her husband. She had to endure war, the nomad life, and miraculous destruction. Don't even add the (close) sacrifice of her son. Did she object, complain, or refuse? No, but she did laugh at God!

Right from the beginning Sarai learned faith the hard way. “By Faith” is mentioned by Paul to describe the Saints of old. How many women did Paul mention? Just two: Sarah and Rahab. One laughed at God and the other was a prostitute. I would contend that neither were Jewish. Yes, Abraham is the father of a nation, yet they came from pagan heritage. Sarah left her homeland. A place that knew many Gods. Yet, by faith in the process, she left it all to follow her husband. I would even say that “by faith” she trusted her husband when Egypt tried to take her. She is considered Abraham's half sister. She was beautiful and Egyptians were known to kill

husbands and take their wives. Whether Abraham inadvertently gave her up or she was taken, Sarah endured.

Right before her eyes God saved and blessed them both. What was Abraham's plan to get his wife back from Egypt? Yet, God found a way. Stunningly, Abraham did this to her twice! Again, God came to the rescue and returned her. Did Sarah pray? We don't get to see into Sarah's personal life. Yet, we know she was tossed around for years enduring travels and capture. Still, God left her barren. The one thing a woman (at that time) considered a purpose. To have children to keep the heritage alive. She may have known that God promised her husband lineage. Yet, she remained barren. I think God took a special interest in Sarah. He tested her. Pushed her. God changed her name to take her faith to another level. Then she made a mistake.

Sarai makes a mess that will haunt humanity forever. In the Bible, most of the saints are at a successful height before God blesses them. In the case of Sarai, it was the other way around. It's the making of the mother of all nations. The Muslim and Jewish nations! I suspect there was an argument in her own heart. The God of miracles had helped her. Yet, circumstances just might be fate. The fate of the poor old woman. Barren and disgraced. Then she made the mistake. She asked her husband to sleep with her hand maid. I suspect Hagar had been with them since Egypt. A child is born that is not Sarah's. God had promised Sarah a child but she did not believe it anymore. Eventually, sadness, anger, and jealousy drove Sarah over the edge. That is when God stepped into her life once again. Interestingly, Abraham is the father of two nations. Numerous as the stars. She could have been in that place too as the mother of nations. Yet, her faith was not there.

Genesis 18:9-15 *"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. 11 Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. 12 So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, “After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?” 13 Then the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ 14 Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.” 15 Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, “I did not laugh.” But he said, “Yes, you did laugh.”

The pivot of Sarah. God names her and then blesses her. Even in her lack of faith (as she laughs) God blesses her. *Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.” 7 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.”* As she conceives could she conceive what God had done. It seemed impossible yet, she was with child. The laughing barren woman became the laughing mother. I bet her faith grew that day. The impossible happened to her.

I'd like to end our discussion of Sarah by saying that God honored this woman. The name change happened to very few people in the bible. All of them are great saints. Many of the well-known characters of the Bible have short deaths. It never even says that Eve died. Moses walks off into the wilderness to die. Yet, God devotes a whole chapter on the death of Sarah. Mary got nothing. Neither did Peter or Paul. Her faith is played out for all of us to see, in a tent, the desert, and in her private thoughts. God, however; choses to highlight the life of this lady. To give her honor.

So often we think our lives don't matter much. We are not written about in books. How many of us will be reduced to an urn of ashes. No stone to roll or marker to mourn. Yet, Sarah lives on as a great woman of the Bible. A story that has survived for thousands of years. She is the mother of a nation. A line to Jesus. Her faith is of endurance. Her faith is grown because God cared. I would say that her loyalty to her husband is outstanding. Yet, we loved her laugh and candor. By Faith we know about Sarah because Paul was impressed. We should be impressed with her faith too.