

# **STRANGER THINGS IN THE BIBLE**

## **Sarah Laughed**

There are three words that are used from time to time to describe God: Omnipresent, Omniscient, and Omnipotent. Omnipotent can be defined as all powerful. Omniscient refers to being all knowing. God could also be described as Omnipresent: He is everywhere. Within all these terms is a flavor that some like to believe. It's that God is in everything. He is in our hearts as much as He is in a rock. The problem with that is attaching God to material creation. If God is outside of all things and the creator, then He is more than just a part of all things.

We; however, need God to be in all things. If that were true then the power of God is within us. We then have that power to use God as we want. In Christian circles they love to boast they have the spiritual power to change the world. Yet, it leads us down a slippery slope. Can we become as powerful as God, if we just believed it? We become little Gods? There are a few scriptures that lead down that road but they are always taken out of context. The word context means a small part of a greater whole. I believe that when we think we're more powerful than human, we are taking ourselves out of context. God is God and we are not Him.

So, what does this have to do with Sarah Laughing? In Genesis 18 we find Abraham's wife Sarah serving three strangers in their tent. This tent was big enough to have multiple rooms. It's not like she or they could not be heard. It's a tent! I'm sure she could hear them outside that tent too.

Genesis 18:6-8 *“So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. “Quick,” he said, “get three seahs of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread.” 7 Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. 8 He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.”*

God had promised Abraham that he would become a great nation by his descendance. To this point he and his wife were barren of children. To top this off, they were very old. That promise looked to be unfulfilled. I wonder if they felt a little disappointed in God. This is a stranger things tale because Abraham treats these men as if they are important. Many people talk about them as if they are angels but we just don't know. However, clearly, Abraham recognized them as important enough to bow before them. Then one of the men prophesizes that Sarah will bear a child.

Genesis 18:10-15 *“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.”*

Certainly, these men's stature changed a little within the dialogue. It goes from Abraham calling them lord with a small “L” to “The Lord” saying to Abraham. It seems slight but this chapter wants you to believe that God is right there with them. These Lords or The Lord says to Abraham (outside the tent) *why did Sarah laugh?* How did they hear that? It comes down to two

choices. They heard her or they were Omnipresent. If God is everywhere then they did hear Sarah laugh in the tent alone. It is possible that her laugh was loud enough to hear outside the tent. Either way this is a strange story.

The best part is the conversation after. Then the Lord told her that she laughed at the notion of baring a child in old age. It points out that she lied and said she did not. This is the stranger thing's part. Clearly, Sarah did not laugh out loud at the prophesy. No, she laughed on the inside. She mocked these Lords internally. Yet, they heard her. Check out John 1:48 *"Nathanael said to Him (Jesus), "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."* This Lord is displaying his omnipresent and omniscient attributes towards Sarah. He heard her heart. Jesus does the same thing with Nathanael "I saw you."

We think that we can lie and get past God or people. How often do people get exposed for the lies they tell? It happens a lot more than you think. You will never get away with anything before God. Yet, we should be happy that God can read our thoughts or heart. Maybe we need to be challenged by him as Sarah was. Like the verse says *"Is anything too hard for the Lord?"* Maybe God believes in us more than we do. Sarah looked at her age and her circumstances and said *"no" I can't!* Yet, maybe we need God to reach inside of us and say *"yes, you can!"* Nathanael, Thomas, Sarah, and others have doubted the Lord. We just might need an Omnipresent Lord to go inside our private lives and recuse us from our own prison of doubt. That just might be considered a stranger thing from the Bible.