

Devotional

Trusting God's Faithful Promises - Hebrews 11:8-12, 17-19

⁸ By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. ⁹ By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she^[a] considered him faithful who had made the promise. ¹² And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had embraced the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, ¹⁸ even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."^[a] ¹⁹ Abraham reasoned that God could even raise the dead, and so in a manner of speaking he did receive Isaac back from death.

Their story in Hebrews is a powerful picture of Abraham and Sarah's obedience, trust and perseverance—and throughout it we see the confident faithfulness of God.

In Abraham's story, he left his homeland without knowing his destination (v8), lived as a stranger in the promised land (v.9), and believed in something too impossible to comprehend—that he and Sarah could have a child in their old age (v.11). Later, he was even willing to offer up that very child, Isaac, trusting that God could raise him from the dead, should Abraham have to go through with his sacrifice. (v.17–19).

Sarah believed, even when she knew she was beyond child-bearing age. But she trusted God's promises to her, even when days turned to years. In the end, she gave birth to Isaac, the one through whom a new covenant would be established.

I have never been asked by God to make such an unimaginable sacrifice, such as Abraham's, nor am I confident that I would have been able to follow through with such a difficult task. I can attest to Sarah's waiting and perseverance, as my husband and I desperately longed for a baby. So, we prayed and waited. In our anticipation, we lost two pregnancies, and at times felt discouraged. In the waiting, we still felt God's peace and presence. After continually seeking God's blessing through prayer, and after eight long years, we were blessed with our first of two. A son, Nathan Samuel. Nathan – *gift of God*, Samuel – *God has heard*.

Reflection: As women of faith, our journey may not leave us feeling abandoned, or require us to make unimaginable sacrifices, but we do face different types of uncertainty. Maybe you are waiting on a promise for healing or have been praying for years about something you hoped that God would provide long ago. The faith of Sarah and Abraham remind us that God honors obedience, trust and perseverance, especially when waiting for His promises to be fulfilled.

Prayer: Father, help me to have the same obedient faith as Abraham and have the hope of Sarah as she waited for your promises to come. Lord, thank you for the reminder that when I am in doubt, I just need to look back to the many blessings you have already given, the many times you have provided when I was in need. You are the God who brings life from emptiness, and you bring joy even in the waiting. Thank you, Lord, for your confident promises. Amen.