

HEBREWS 11:11-12

	G. Sarah's Faith: An Impossible Faith, 11:11-12
1. Her faith: A faith that believed the impossible	11 Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.
2. Her reward: The promised son & a nation of believing descendants	12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

DIVISION IV

THE SUPREME AUTHOR OF FAITH: JESUS CHRIST, GOD'S SON, 10:19–11:40

G. Sarah's Faith: An Impossible Faith, 11:11-12

(11:11-12) **Introduction:** Sarah is a dynamic example of what it is to believe the impossible. She believed the impossible; therefore, she saw God do the impossible.

1. Her faith: a faith that believed the impossible (v.11).
2. Her reward: the promised son and a nation of believing descendants (v.12).

1 (11:11) **Sarah—Faith:** Sarah's faith was a faith that believed the impossible.

“And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh” (Ge.18:9-15; see Ge.17:15-22).

“And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. And Abraham was a hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him” (Ge.21:1-5).

“Who against hope believed in hope, that he [Abraham] might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised he was able also to perform” (Ro.4:18-21).

“Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age [90 years old], because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable” (He.11:11-12).

Note two significant facts.

a. Sarah had difficulty believing God at first. When she first heard the promise of God she doubted the promise. In the Genesis account the Lord appeared and talked with Abraham right outside the door of Abraham's tent. Sarah hid in the tent with her ear up close so she could hear the conversation. When she overheard the Lord promise a child to Abraham, Sarah laughed, for she and Abraham were well past child-bearing age (see Ge.18:12). They were both humanly sterile.

Thought 1. The promises of God do sound unbelievable. Just think how corrupt, sinful, evil, savage, violent, and doomed to death the human race is. Any daily news media is filled with illustrations of man's corruption. Yet God loves the world, loves it so much that He has promised “the seed” of the Savior to the world. Just think how unbelievable this sounds.

⇒ God has promised a Savior who will bear the sins of man for him and present him to God as righteous.

⇒ God has promised a Savior who will save man from the corruption and death of the world, a Savior who can give man life—eternal life in a new heavens and earth.

b. Sarah considered the matter: who it was that was making the promise, God Himself, the Sovereign Majesty of the universe. When Sarah considered this, the change in her was dramatic: if it was God who was making the promise, then God

HEBREWS 11:11-12

could be *counted (judged)* faithful. God always fulfills His promises. God could do it no matter how difficult the situation was...

- despite the human impossibility.
- despite the fact that all reason spoke against it.
- despite the fact that nature had to be overridden.

Sarah believed God. She switched from unbelief to belief. She trusted the promise of God. Therefore, she bore a child at the age of ninety. It was a miraculous birth, but God had promised and He fulfilled His promise.

Thought 1. God cannot lie; He cannot deceive people. Therefore, the promises of God—every single one of them—shall be fulfilled. But note: the promise of the *seed*, that is, of the Savior, applies only to those who believe.

“But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible” (Mt.19:26).

“Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth” (Mk.9:23).

“And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt” (Mk.14:36).

“For with God nothing shall be impossible” (Lu.1:37).

“I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee” (Jb.42:2).

“Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!” (Ps.31:19).

“Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass” (Ps.37:5).

“God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God” (Ps.62:11).

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding” (Pr.3:5).

“Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength” (Is.26:4).

2 (11:12) **Sarah—Faith:** Sarah’s faith was rewarded. She received the promised son and a nation of believing descendants through her seed. This refers to two rewards:

⇒ the gift of *the seed Isaac* and of the nation of Israel.

⇒ the gift of *the seed Christ* and of the nation of believers, of the new creation of *born again* men and women, those who shall be citizens of God’s new heavens and earth (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ga.3:8, notes—Ga.3:16; Ep.2:11-18; 2:14-15; 3:16; 4:17-19. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25.)

Sarah believed the impossible, and God rewarded her faith: she *received* the impossible. Look at Israel. Israel exists today because Sarah believed the impossible promise of God. Look at the believers around the world, those who profess to be born again by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for their sins. They exist today because Sarah believed the impossible promise of God.

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God....Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again” (Jn.3:3, 5-7).

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Co.5:17).

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Pe.1:23).

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten [born again] of him” (1 Jn.5:1).

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (He.11:6).

“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God” (Ro.2:28-29).

“And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Ga.3:29).