

## Sermon Discussion - 16 July 2023

Read Genesis 17:15-18:15

### **Getting Started** *Sharing from personal experience*

One commentator writes, "After 13 more years pass, Abram's body has become a dried up tree without sap, and Sarah's womb at 90 years of age has become a wilted flower. It would require a miracle from the Author of Life to bring about progeny from this senior couple."

Can you describe something that happened in your life that you would classify as a miraculous work from God?

### **Observation** *Discovering the context*

About 25 years earlier, God had promised Abram that he would have a son (Gen. 15) and at the beginning of chapter 17 changed his name from Abram to Abraham- from "exalted father" to "father of a multitude." Now Sarai's name is changed to Sarah. Both mean "princess," but may have slightly different connotations that include her in the covenant promises as the mother of the multitude.

- How have you seen God keep His promises recently? Have you shared that with others as a way to thank God for His work?
- What promise do you need to believe today? Do you have questions about how God might fulfill His promises?

### **Interpretation** *Discovering the meaning*

1. In Genesis 17:15-18:15, God makes a covenant with Abraham and Sarah, promising them a son in their old age. What does this story reveal about God's faithfulness and ability to fulfill His promises?
2. Abraham demonstrates hospitality by welcoming three strangers into his tent. How does his hospitality and willingness to serve others align with God's character? How can we practice hospitality in our own lives?
3. In v. 12, Sarah initially laughs at the idea of having a child in her old age. Why do you think she reacts this way? How does her response change throughout the story?
4. The promise of a son to Abraham and Sarah seems impossible due to their old age and infertility. How does this story challenge our understanding of God's ability to work beyond human limitations? What does it teach us about trusting in God's promises?

5. Throughout this story, we see a progression in Abraham and Sarah's faith journey. How does their faith evolve from doubt and skepticism to trust and obedience? What lessons can we draw from their story to strengthen our own faith?

**Application** *Putting knowledge into practice*

- Identify a time in your life when God fixed your broken plans. We can probably think of several times in life when we took matters related to jobs, relationships, and money into our own hands, knowing that we had not really prayed about it and hoping that we were getting it right. Even our worst decisions can be redeemed by God.

People need to hear that God has a plan, and they need to hear that God can “fix” things when they get life wrong. However, this should not be a license to do what we want and expect God to just bail us out. Pray that you may be able to surrender your plans to the Lord. Let us trust and obey!

- Try memorising Genesis 18:14...  
*“Is anything too hard[d] for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.”*
- How has God blessed you and answered prayer this week?