

**I. Introduction and review.**

**II. By faith, Abraham, through Sarah, fathered Isaac. v. 11-12**

- A. The long trial of barrenness was an even greater test than living as an alien in a tent.
1. When God called Abraham he was 75 and childless. Gen. 12:4
  2. Abraham had to have children if God's promise was to be fulfilled. Gen. 12:2-3
  3. Abraham believed God's promise. Gen. 15:1-6
  4. When Abraham was 86, he fathered Ishmael through Hagar. Genesis 16
  5. God promises Abraham will have a son through Sarah. Gen. 17:4-5,16-19,20
  6. By the time Isaac was conceived, Abraham and Sarah were beyond the years of producing children (99 and 90). v. 11b Rom. 4:19 Ge. 17:17 18:1-14
- B. Why did God make Abraham wait so long for the child of promise?
1. God waited until the promise could only be fulfilled by divine power. Gen. 21:1-8
  2. God waited so that Abraham might have a child by faith. Rom. 4:16-22
  3. God waited so that this birth might picture the birth of Jesus. Gal. 3:16
- C. Of whose faith is the author of Hebrews speaking? v. 11a 6:13-15 Rom. 4:19-22
1. The primary reference is to Abraham's faith: *By faith Abraham - even though he was past age and Sarah herself was barren - was enabled to become a father.* (NIV)
  2. Sarah also played her part, by faith. I Pe. 3:6 Gal. 4:22-23 Isa. 51:2
- D. Abraham endured in faith trusting that God is faithful to His promise. v. 11b
1. What sustained his faith?
  2. He had faith in God's character that He would keep His Word. 6:18 Rom. 4:19-20
  3. *If you would trust God you must learn to crucify the question how* (Luther). Is. 59:1
  4. They acted upon their faith.
- E. Through Isaac, Abraham became a father of a multitude. v. 12
1. Israel became a great and numerous people. Gen. 15:5 22:17 26:4 Deut. 1:10  
10:22 Num. 23:10 Neh. 9:23
  2. Thousands of years later Abraham's physical descendants are still a people.

**III. The birth of Isaac is a spiritual picture.**

- A. The birth of Isaac is like the birth of Jesus, Who is the true seed of Abraham.  
Gal. 3:16 Ro. 4:20 Is. 7:14 9:7-8 Lu. 1:37,54-55
1. Prophesied beforehand. Gen. 3:15 12:2-3 15:4-5 17:6,16-19 Isa. 7:14 Mt. 1:22-23  
Luke 1:31-33,54-55
  2. Born, after a very long wait, at God's appointed time. Ge. 21:2,5 Mt. 1:1ff Gal. 4:4
  3. A miraculous birth by God's Almighty power. Gen. 21:5,7 17:17 18:11-14  
Ro. 4:18-19 Luke 1:34,37
  4. A significant name given by God before the child was born. Gen. 17:19 Mt. 1:21
  5. A celebrated birth. Gen. 21:6-8 Luke 1:46-55 2:10-14 Mt. 2:1ff
- B. Jesus is the one through whom all of God's promises to Abraham are fulfilled.  
Gal. 3:16 Luke 1:54-55 II Cor. 1:20
- C. We also are miracle babies, born again by God's power. John 1:12-13 3:3-8 6:44,37  
Eph. 2:1-10 I Pe. 1:23 Js. 1:18 Mt. 19:24-26

**D. By faith, all true Christians (*as many as the stars and the sand*) are spiritual children of Abraham and heirs of the promises. Gal. 3:7-9,17,29 Ro. 9:6-8 4:16 Rev. 7:9**

#### **IV. Concluding applications.**

**A. Nothing is impossible with God. Eph. 3:20 Mt. 19:26 Phil. 4:13**

- 1. You can't do anything without God's power. John 15:5**
- 2. The glory in your salvation (the new birth) goes to God alone. I Co. 1:30f Ro. 4:17**
- 3. Faith hopes and believes that God can do great things through us!**

**B. We must learn to fully trust God.**

- 1. God is worthy of our trust.**
- 2. How can we build our faith?**

**C. In what ways should we exercise faith?**

- 1. We are not being given license to expect that which God has not promised.**
- 2. We should fully trust God for what He has promised. 4:15-16 13:5-6 I Cor. 10:13**
- 3. Continue to trust God in spite of appearances to the contrary. Ro. 4:19**
- 4. Faith waits for God's perfect timing. Gal. 4:4 Isa. 55:8-9 II Pe. 3:8ff**
- 5. Faith trusts that God's way is the best. Pr. 3:5-6**

**D. Faith is centered upon the gospel.**

- 1. Faith looks to Jesus, the son of Abraham and the Son of God for justification (salvation). 10:38,10,14 Gen. 15:6 Rom. 4:22- 5:1 3:20ff**
- 2. By faith we evangelize so that there might be more children of Abraham. Js. 1:18 Rom. 10:17**
- 3. Faith believes what really matters is not the here and now, but the glorious world to come when Christ returns. Heb. 11:1,6 9:28**
- 4. Faith patiently awaits His return.**

**E. Our faith glorifies God. Ro. 4:20b**

#### **Discussion questions**

- 1. How long did Abraham have to wait before God fulfilled His promise of a son?**
- 2. Why did God make Abraham wait?**
- 3. How was Abraham able to believe God's promise, in spite of his and Sarah's advanced age?**
- 4. How is the birth of Isaac a picture of the birth of Christ?**
- 5. How is God's promise that Abraham would have multitude of descendants fulfilled today?**
- 6. In what sense is our spiritual birth like Isaac's physical birth?**
- 7. How can we build our faith?**
- 8. Why can't we just claim certain answers (i.e. health, money, a spouse, a child) by faith?**
- 9. How can we exercise faith in God in the crucial areas of our lives?**
- 10. In what areas of your life are you having to trust God to provide His answer in His time?**