

## Do Not Give Up

Sarah was born into a culture where having a child is important. She went into marriage with the expectation of having children. This was a perfectly normal desire for her to have. After so many years of barrenness, she came up with the idea of having a family through her maid servant [**Genesis 16:1-4**]. She was willing to do practically anything to fulfill this desire. It was definitely not God's perfect plan for her. The amazing thing was that God had his best for her – a child from her own womb. **God also said to Abraham, "...I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her... Genesis 17:15-16.** By the time God voiced his will for her, she had more or less given up. She had adjusted to Ishmael. Physically, she was old and definitely past the child bearing age [**Genesis 18:11**]. All she had longed for all her life and even schemed to achieve in her own way, was offered to her on a platter of gold; yet all she could do was to laugh in unbelief [**Genesis 18:12**]. God is gracious. He confronted her and reassured her at the same time. **Then the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son." Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I did not laugh." But he said, "Yes, you did laugh." Genesis 18:13-15.** Sarah and Abraham kept faith [**Romans 4:18-21**]. As God promised, at that same time the following year, Sarah gave birth to Isaac. **Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised. Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. Gen 21:1-7.**

My brother, my sister, what is it you are believing God for? Is it a life partner, a child, a job, a weight loss, etc? What ever, if it is important to you, then it is important to God. It is perfectly ok for you to desire it. Do not let the devil or other people lay the guilt on you that it is not a spiritual need; therefore, it is canal for you to want such. Sarah's deep desire for a child is rooted in the culture she came from. In a lot of African cultures, having a child after marriage is paramount, while in western society, the choice to have a child is personal. Conversely, weight loss in the western society is of great importance to many

over weight women; while in the African culture, such is not a big deal. Many times in the process of spiritualizing our lives, we feel condemned for having these desires.

After years of believing God to fulfill our expectation, with seemingly no result; we take matters into our own hands. Sarah offered her maid servant to her husband to have a child through her. Just like Sarah, we have plotted and schemed to actualize our desires. For a couple expecting an issue, adoption has been done out of frustration (listen, adoption is ok if you know it is the will of God for you). A sister desperate to get married has falling into the sin of fornication just to make the man propose. A woman desiring to loose weight has grown content with shopping for clothes which complement her present figure. Sometimes helping ourselves has been 'successful' and sometime a complete disaster. No matter the result, it is still not God's best for you. The good news is that God is gracious. Ishmael was not God's best for Abraham and Sarah, but God still blessed the child. Not only that, God went ahead to promise them Isaac. No matter what the outcome of your maneuvering has produced, God's plans for you have not changed. ***For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future Jeremiah 29:11.***

Right from the beginning, God had spoken to Abraham about his seed (a child). God's promise had been with him from the start. Initially, it was not so specific that this seed/child will come through Sarah. After Ishmael, the next time God spoke to Abraham he confirmed that this promised child will come through Sarah [***Genesis 17***]. Later on God was specific about the timing [***Genesis 18***]. Concerning your situation, God may have spoken many time through personal revelation of His word, dreams, visions or/and prophecies. You may be at that point that Abraham was when God gave him the promise about his offspring; or years later when God told him that his offspring will come through Sarah; or when God told Sarah that by this time next year she will have a child. The fulfillment of God's promise to you may be years away or a few days or just around the corner. No matter the stage you are in, God is faithful. Continue to believe; continue to hold on to God's word. Are you in unbelief right now? You

say to yourself: after all these years when I have grown old; how can I have a child; or how appealing am I to attract the opposite sex into marriage, or after all those diets with no results. Sarah laughed in unbelief. God did not take back his promise as a result. Instead, God confronted her. God is confronting you now, "Is anything too hard for me to do?" Repent and start afresh to hold on to God's word for you. God is good. Sooner or later, you will say like Sarah, ***"God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me." And she added, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age." Genesis 21:6-7***

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