

## *Relying on the Promise*

Genesis 18: 1-15, 21: 1-7 (June 14, 2020)

### ***Genesis 18:1-15, 21:1-7***

18The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. 2He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. 3He said, “My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. 4Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. 5Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” 6And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.” 7Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. 8Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

9They said to him, “Where is your wife Sarah?” And he said, “There, in the tent.” 10Then one said, “I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. 11Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?” 13The Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ 14Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.” 15But Sarah denied, saying, “I did not laugh”; for she was afraid. He said, “Oh yes, you did laugh.”

21The Lord dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as he had promised. 2Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. 3Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. 4And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. 6Now Sarah said, “God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.” 7And she said, “Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

### ***Historical Context***

As a nomad, Abraham and his family lived in tents, as they traveled with their grazing herds in the desert. The few who lived in the harsh deserts of Judea depended upon each other for survival. Visitors were treated very well, for they brought companionship and help for the host.

### ***Theme: Relying on the Promise***

Faith is reliance, stickability, dependence, firmness.... in God's Word, his promises. Faith is a reliance on the notion that what God promises, he will do, because nothing "is too hard for the Lord." It is quite a false notion to believe that God will do what we want him to do as long as we can conjure up a form of doubt-free faith. Faith is a reliance, not on our own desires, but rather on the promises of God. Nor must our faith in the Lord's Word be doubt-free. Faith as small as a mustard seed can move the mountain. Our reliance on the promise may well be filled with doubt, but reliance is what is important, not doubts. Initially Abraham believed and finally Sarah believed. They relied on the promise, with all their many questions, doubts and fears.