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A Biographical Study of Sarah

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Sarah

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

- I. Sarai, her first name
 - A. Sarai and her husband
 1. The trip to Canaan
 - a. She was originally known as Sarai (Gen. 11:29).
 - b. She was, along with her husband Abraham, probably born and raised in the city of Ur of the Chaldees.
 - c. She was barren until God touched her womb (Gen. 11:30).
 - d. She was probably converted to God about the same time Abraham became a believer.
 - e. She followed her husband to Haran, and then to Canaan (Gen. 11:31; 12:5).
 - f. She was 65 at this time (Gen. 12:4-5; 17:17).
 2. The trip to Egypt
 - a. She was taken by Abraham to Egypt in time of a famine.
 - b. Because of her great beauty, Abraham required that she pretend to be his sister, and not his wife, fearing Pharaoh might kill him in order to marry her.
 - c. Believing this deception, Pharaoh did indeed consider marrying her, but was warned not to do this.
 - B. Sarai and her handmaid
 1. In her frustration, the barren Sarai presented Hagar, her handmaid, to Abraham, planning to adopt the first son born by her (Gen. 16:1-3).
 2. Upon becoming pregnant, however, Hagar's attitude angered Sarai, who mistreated Hagar until she fled into the desert (Gen. 16:4-6).
 3. At the command of God, Hagar returned to the camp and submitted herself to her mistress. Sarai was 76 at this time (Gen. 16:7-15).
- II. Sarah, her final name
 - A. Sarah and God
 1. Her name was changed by God from Sarai, meaning "contentious," to Sarah, meaning "princess." This occurred when she was 89 (Gen. 17:1, 15-17).
 2. God again told Abraham Sarah would bear him a child in his old age. Both the sex and name of the baby were predicted (Gen. 17:19).
 - a. It would be a boy.
 - b. He would be called Isaac.
 3. Sarah and Abraham were visited by God and two angels. Sarah baked bread for them (Gen. 18:6).
 4. As she sat in the tent, Sarah laughed in unbelief upon overhearing God tell Abraham that Isaac would be born the very next year (Gen. 18:9-15).

- B. Sarah and Abimelech—She was once again forced to assume the role of sister to her fearful husband when the couple visited in Gerar, a Philistine city (Gen. 20:1-2).
- C. Sarah and Isaac—At age 90, Sarah gave birth to Isaac (Gen. 21:1-7).
- D. Sarah and Ishmael
 - 1. On the day of Isaac’s weaning, old hostilities between Sarah and Hagar once again surfaced. “Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking” (Gen. 21:9).
 - 2. Sarah’s reaction was both swift and stern. “Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac) (Gen. 21:10).
 - 3. Sarah died at age 127 in the city of Hebron and was buried by Abraham in the cave of Machpelah (Gen. 23:1-2, 19).

THEOLOGICAL SUMMARY

- I. Sarah was looked upon by God as being the mother of the nation of Israel (Isa. 51:1-2).
- II. The New Testament writers referred to Sarah on several occasions.
 - A. To illustrate the power of God (Rom. 4:19)
 - B. To illustrate the sovereignty of God (Rom. 9:6-9)
 - C. To illustrate the faithfulness of God (Heb. 11:11)
 - D. Peter commended Sarah for her obedience to Abraham and her inward beauty (1 Peter 3:1-6).

STATISTICS

Father: Terah (Gen. 11:26; 20:12)

Spouse: Abraham (Gen. 11:29)

Son: Isaac (Gen. 21:1-7)

First mention: Genesis 11:29

Final mention: 1 Peter 3:6

Meaning of her name: “Princess”

Frequency of her name: Referred to 56 times

Biblical books mentioning her: Five books (Genesis, Isaiah, Romans, Hebrews, 1 Peter)

Place of death: Hebron (Gen. 23:1-2, 19)

Age at death: 127 (Gen. 23:1-2)

Important fact about her life: She was Abraham’s wife and Isaac’s mother (Gen. 11:29; 21:1-7).