

Sarah

Memory Verse: *“Is anything too hard for the LORD?”* (Genesis 18:14a NIV)

Background Helps:

Sarah is one of the most important women in the Bible. As the wife of Abraham, she became not only the mother of Isaac and of the Jewish nation but also the mother of many nations (Gen. 17:16). Since Abraham is called “the father of all who believe” (Rom. 4:11)—Jew as well as Gentile—Sarah is the spiritual mother of all believers. In addition to the references to Sarah in the daily readings, notice the allegory found in Galatians 4:21-31, where Sarah is referred to as “the free woman,” representing the *new* covenant and “the Jerusalem that is above” (that is, the heavenly Jerusalem). Paul explicitly calls Sarah “*our* mother” (referring to all believers in Christ) and says that we Christians are children “of the free woman,” Sarah. In other words, we are the children of God.

Sarah’s faith is celebrated in Hebrews 11:11 (check several translations), and she is held up as a model wife in 1 Peter 3:6. Women today who follow her example are “daughters of Sarah.”

Sarah was a beautiful woman (Gen. 12:11, 14) and hospitable (18:1-8). The Bible covers the story of her death and burial, at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven, in more detail than for any other woman in Scripture (Gen. 23).

Lesson Helps:

An obvious focus for this week’s lesson is the faith of Sarah. A possible aim: My aim is to teach my students about Sarah’s faith, so that they will trust the promises of God in their own lives.

Trace the ups and downs of Sarah’s faith through the stories of her life in Genesis. Notice the promises that God made to Abraham concerning his descendants (which naturally involved his wife), for example: Genesis 12:2-3, 7; 13:14-17; 15:2-5, 18-20; 17:1-8. Several promises were also made specifically to Sarah about her own offspring: Genesis 17:15-16, 19, 21; 18:10, 14. But Sarah was faced with a seemingly impossible obstacle to childbirth: many years of barrenness and old age (see Gen. 11:30; 15:2; 16:1; 17:17; 18:11). See the weakness of Sarah’s faith in Genesis 16 and 18:1-15. See the strength of Sarah’s faith (and God’s faithful protection) in her loyalty to her husband, even though he practiced deceit and left Sarah in a vulnerable position (Gen. 12:10-20; 20:1-18). See the triumph of Sarah’s faith in Genesis 21:1-7 and Hebrews 11:11. God kept his promise to Sarah when she was ninety years old!

Methods: Cover the story of Sarah through story-telling, or by an interview of “Sarah,” or by “Sarah” giving her testimony (dressed appropriately). If you choose the story-telling method, repeat the memory verse over and over again (“Is anything too hard for the LORD?”) as you narrate the various episodes and emphasize the difficulty of Sarah’s barrenness and old age.

Application: What difficulties are you facing that test your faith? What promises of God could you claim at this time? Use the memory verse and other Bible promises in a closing time of prayer. Sarah's story of faith could also be used in a gospel emphasis, encouraging your students to put their faith in the promises of God concerning salvation through Jesus Christ.

Assignment:

-  Read about Rebekah (Prominent Women of the Bible)
-  Memorize Proverbs 18:22.