



International Bible Lesson
Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series
L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Fulfilled Promises Bring Laughter
October 21, 2018
Genesis 18:9-15; 21:1-7

“Sarah said, ‘God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me’”
(Genesis 21:6).

Laughter can be an important part of our growing faith in God. When Sarah, the wife of Abraham, sat in the door of her tent listening to the LORD talk with her husband, she heard God say that she would have a son. Almost immediately she could not suppress a laugh at God’s words. She laughed as much as to say, “Are You kidding me! ‘I am worn out and my Lord is old’” (Genesis 18:12). When God heard her laugh, the LORD asked Abraham why Sarah laughed; then, Sarah was afraid, and she lied to the LORD and she denied she had laughed. In reply, the LORD gently and kindly told her the truth, saying, “Yes, you did laugh” (Genesis 18:15). Without condemning her, but taking the opportunity to increase her faith, the LORD was gracious to Sarah and did what He had promised despite her initial incredulity. The next time Sarah laughed, she laughed full of faith because she was holding her and Abraham’s newborn son just as the LORD had promised. They named him Isaac, which means “to laugh.” And Sarah declared, “God has brought me laughter.” The Book of Proverbs says of a virtuous woman: “She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come”

(Proverbs 31:25). The ability to laugh, rejoice, and be happy are gracious gifts that God gives believers through faith and seeing God work through their faith to achieve God's purposes. Trials and afflictions may come our way, but Jesus has promised all who will believe in Him: "Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh" (Luke 6:21).

Thinking Further

1. In what ways did God show His love and concern for Sarah?
2. What is the difference between laughter that expresses joy and laughter that expresses doubt? What might have been the difference between Abraham's laughter and Sarah's laughter?

3. Read Genesis 18:1-10. In Genesis 18:9, who do you think “They” refers to?

4. Why do you think the LORD made Abraham and Sarah keep waiting for their child to be conceived by Sarah, after telling Abraham that he would have many descendants through the birth of her son?

5. What happens to people sometimes when God does not do what they want done when they want it done?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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