

LIVING GODS WILL

Vessel of God

SARAH



Abraham and Sarah by Jan Provost

Born: 2157 BC – Ur of Chaldees

Died: 2030 BC – Hebron (127 years old)

Sarah was the **wife and half-sister of Abraham**.

Sarah was the **mother of Isaac**.

Sarah had her **name changed from Sarai** by God.

Sarah was blessed by God and she **bore Isaac at 100**.

Sarai began her life in the pagan world of **Ur**, in the land of the **Chaldees**, which was located in the area now known as Iraq.

She was the half-sister, as well as the wife, of Abram, who would be called Abraham. Sarai and Abram had the same father but different mothers, according to **Genesis 20:12**.

In those days, genetics were purer than they are today, and intermarriage was not detrimental to the offspring of unions between relatives. Also, since people tended to spend their lives clustered together in family units, it was the natural course to choose mates from within their own tribes and families.

When Abram encountered the living **God** for the first time, he believed Him (**Genesis 12:1–4; 15:6**) and followed after Him, obeying His command to leave his home to go to a place he had never heard about, much less seen. **Sarai** went with him.

Their journey brought them to the area called Harran (**Genesis 11:31**). Abram's father, **Terah**, passed away in this city, and Abram, **Sarai**, and their nephew **Lot** and their retinue continued their journey, allowing **God** to lead and guide them. With no housing and no modern conveniences, the journey must have been very difficult for all, especially for the women.

During their journey, there was a famine in the land, prompting Abram and **Sarai** to go to Egypt (**Genesis 12:10**). When they did, Abram feared that the Egyptians would kill him because **Sarai** was beautiful and they would want her as a wife. So he asked **Sarai** to tell everyone that she was Abram's sister—which was technically true but also meant to deceive.

Sarai was taken into Pharaoh's house, and Abram was treated well because of her. But **God** afflicted **Pharaoh's** house, and the couple's lie was revealed. Pharaoh returned **Sarai** to Abram and sent them on their way (**Genesis 12**). **Sarai** and Abram came back to the land now known as **Israel**.

They had acquired many possessions and a great deal of wealth in their travels, so Lot and Abram agreed to split up in order that the massive herds of cattle would have adequate ground for grazing (**Genesis 13:9**).

Sarai was barren, an issue of personal distress as well as cultural shame. Abram was worried that he would have no heir. But **God** gave Abram a vision in which He promised him a son and that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky (**Genesis 15**). **God** also promised Abraham's offspring the land of Canaan.

The problem was that **Sarai** remained childless. Ten years after **God** had made His promise to Abram, **Sarai**, following cultural norms, suggested that Abram have a child with her servant, **Hagar**. The child born of that union would be counted as **Sarai's**.

Abram agreed, and Hagar conceived a son—**Ishmael**. But Hagar began to look at **Sarai** with contempt, and **Sarai** began to treat Hagar harshly, so much so that Hagar ran away. **God** met Hagar in the desert and encouraged her to return to Abram and **Sarai**, which she did (**Genesis 16**).

Thirteen years after Ishmael was born, **God** reaffirmed His covenant with Abram, this time giving him the sign of circumcision as well as changing his name. Abram, meaning "**high father**," became Abraham, meaning "**father of a multitude**."

God also changed **Sarai's** name, meaning "**my princess**," to **Sarah**, meaning "**mother of nations**." **God** told Abraham that He would give him a son through **Sarah**. This son—Isaac—would be the one with whom **God** would establish His covenant.

God would bless Ishmael as well, but Isaac was the son of promise through whom the nations would be blessed (**Genesis 17**). Isaac means "**he laughs**." Abraham laughed that, at **100 years old**, he could have a son with **Sarah**, who was **90 years old** and had been barren her entire life. **Sarah**, too, laughed at the prospect (**Genesis 18:9–15**).

Shortly after **God** promised Abraham and **Sarah** a son, He destroyed **Sodom and Gomorrah**, but He rescued Abraham's nephew Lot (**Genesis 19**). Abraham and **Sarah** journeyed toward the Negeb and sojourned in Gerar (**Genesis 20:1**). Abraham again asked **Sarah** to lie about her identity, and the king of Gerar took **Sarah** to be his wife. But **God** protected **Sarah**, through whom Isaac would be born. **King Abimelech** had no relations with her. **God** warned Abimelech in a dream, and the king not only sacrificed to **God** in repentance, but he gave gifts to Abraham and **Sarah** and allowed them to dwell in the land (**Genesis 20**).

God remained faithful to His promise to give Abraham and **Sarah** a son. They named him Isaac, and "**Sarah said, '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**). Though she may have previously laughed in disbelief and secrecy, now **Sarah** laughed with joy and wanted her situation to be known. **God** had been faithful to His promise and blessed her.

Unfortunately, the tension between **Sarah** and Hagar remained. When Isaac was weaned, Abraham held a feast. But Ishmael, Hagar's son, was mocking Isaac. **Sarah** told Abraham to get rid of Hagar and Ishmael and that Ishmael should never share the inheritance with Isaac. Abraham was distressed at this, but **God** told him to do what **Sarah** said and that his descendants would be numbered through Isaac. Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael away, and **God** provided for their needs (**Genesis 21:8–21**). It was after this that **God** tested Abraham by asking him to sacrifice Isaac. Abraham was willing to give up his son, trusting that **God** would somehow still remain true to His promise (**Genesis 22; Hebrews 11:17–19**).

Sarah was a simple, beautiful (**Genesis 12:11**), and very human woman; she made mistakes, just like we all do. She stepped ahead of **God** and tried to handle His business on her own by foolishly sending her handmaid, Hagar, to Abraham to bring forth the child **God** had promised. In so doing, she ignited a feud that has lasted for 4,000 years (**Genesis 16:3**). She laughed in unbelief when, at 90 years old, she heard an **angel** tell Abraham that she would become pregnant (**Genesis 18:12**), but she gave birth to the promised child and lived another 30 years, **dying at the age of 127** (**Genesis 23:1**).

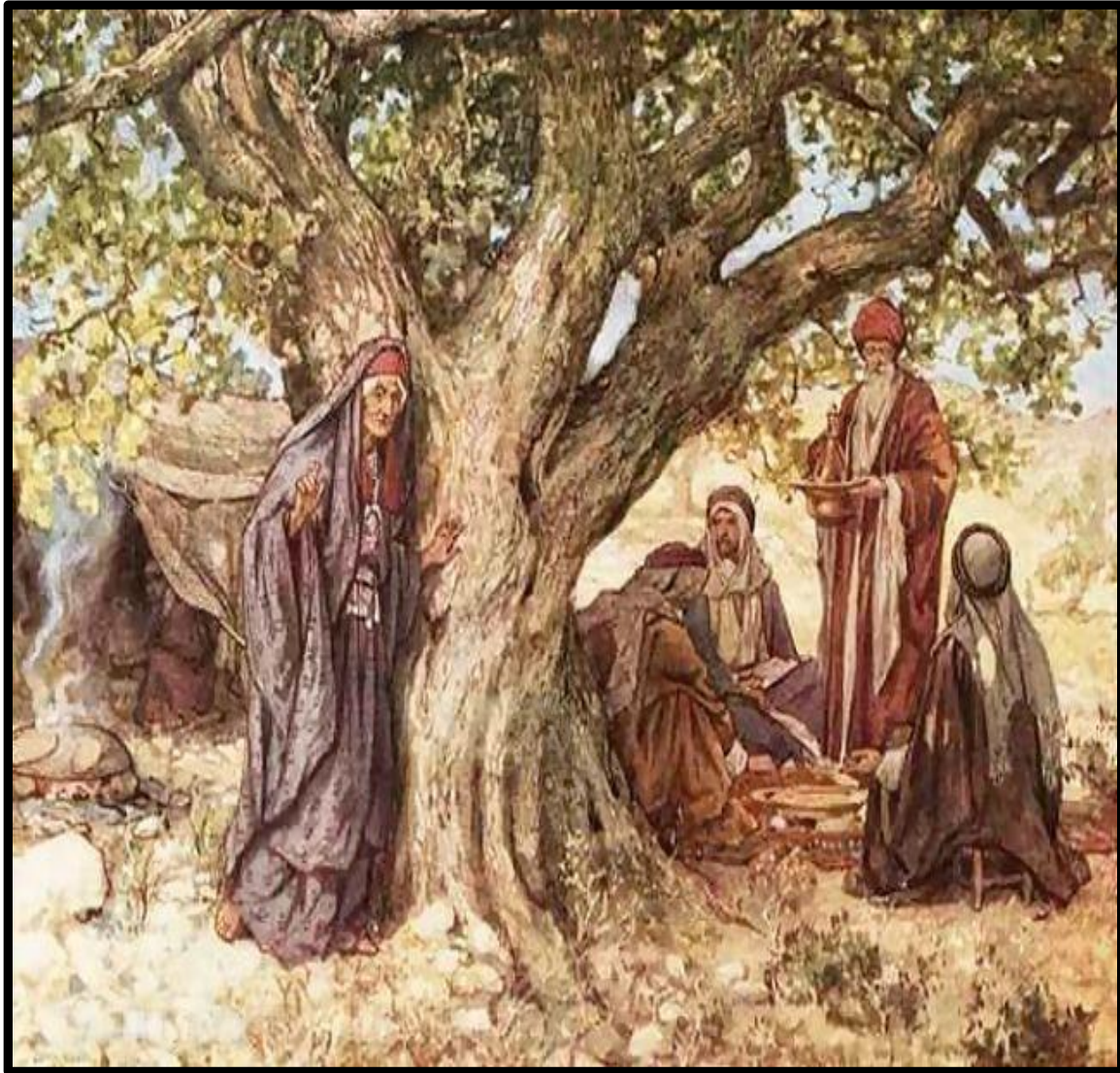
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

Genesis 17:15 Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. **16** And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her."

Genesis 18:10 And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.) **11** Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing.

Genesis 21:1 And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken. **2** For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. **3** And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him--whom Sarah bore to him--Isaac.

Genesis 23:1 Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. **2** So Sarah died in Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.



Sarah listens to Abraham and the Angels