

CBC's Women's Ministry Bible Study
TWELVE EXTRAORDINARY WOMEN by John MacArthur
CHAPTER 2 - *Sarah: Hoping Against Hope (Hebrews 11:11)*

After reading chapter two, please respond to each item in preparation for group discussion:

1. In what ways was Sarah a very unique woman?

2. Abraham and Sarah:
 - What was their genealogy and family relationship to one another? Why was this not incestuous?

 - How old were Abraham and Sarah at the time they left the pagan land, Ur of the Chaldeans? Why did they set out on a very long and difficult journey to Canaan? (Gen. 12)

 - How do we know that Abraham knew the true God when he left Ur? Would Sarah have also known God?

 - After a time in Canaan, they went down to Egypt. What act of Sarah pointed to her devotion to Abraham despite his lack of trust in God's protection? How did it turn out? (The same type of incident happened again when Sarah was 90 years old!)

3. The Lord chose and called Abraham to make him the father of a great nation that would be His witness to the whole world. Although Sarah was not named in the covenant until much later in time, she always believed she had a key role as the mother and waited faithfully for it. Discuss this.

4. At age 75, what scheme did Sarah concoct that was "immoral, unrighteous and utterly foolish"? Did Abraham sin with her? Explain.
 - If Sarah had understood the truth that God's promises WILL be fulfilled and His power WILL be displayed, she may have avoided stepping into the role of God. Polygamy was never God's design for marriage. Note evidence in the scriptures of the harm polygamy has caused.

- How did Hagar sin in this arrangement? (Proverbs 30:21-23) What was the consequence?
- God, Himself, showed Hagar mercy. What promise was made to her? How did she respond?

5. Sarah was 89 years old when the LORD appeared to Abraham again to extend the Abrahamic Covenant and establish circumcision. What promises were made specifically regarding Sarah?

6. Later in time, the LORD appeared to Abraham with two angels. Sarah's faithfulness was a part of the purpose of the visit.

- Peter used Sarah's elaborate entertainment of them on short notice as being a model for all women. What is specifically credited to her in 1 Peter 3:5-7?
- What was Sarah allowed to hear and how did she react? What does "Isaac" mean?

8. After the birth of the "promised child", Isaac, and at the time of his weaning, what did Sarah do with Hagar and Ishmael to set things right? Defend her actions.

9. How is the consequence of Sarah's scheme with Hagar affecting us this very day? What do we learn from this?

10. How is the perseverance of Sarah's faith affecting us this very day? What do we learn from this?

"For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening." 1 Peter 3:5-6 ESV