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### When We Judge God Faithful

W. O. Vaught

*Ouachita Baptist University*

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## WHEN WE JUDGE GOD FAITHFUL

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS  
NUMBER 97  
HEBREWS 11:11

Dr. W. O. Vaught  
Immanuel Baptist Church  
Little Rock, Arkansas

HEBREWS 11:11 "Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised."

Thus far in the study of this great verse, we have gotten this far-- "By means of doctrine resident in the soul even Sarah herself had received inherent ability (power) for the deposit of a seed." The next phrase is not in the original "and was delivered of a child." It is not needed for the clarity of the passage. The next phrase we have is "when she was past age." There is no verb here. We have Kai and it should be translated "even." Next the preposition para plus kairos plus the genitive of helikia which means "even beyond the proper time of life." So thus far in this verse, we have, "By doctrine resident in the soul even Sarah herself had received ability for the deposit of a seed, even beyond the proper time of life."

### A Woman Changed At Ninety

At ninety Sarah reverted to the youthfulness of a thirty year old woman. She didn't achieve this by use of oils or cosmetics or surgery or anything external. The change came within her mind and then within her body. She was given the power to suddenly become young again and this is the meaning of dunamis in this passage.

### The Problems That Faced Sarah As She Came To Super Grace

Sarah was a woman of great courage. Her original name was Sarai, which means contentious or nag. She was a highly unstable and highly subjective woman with great brains and great beauty. Her barren condition was her greatest problem. Being far past the childbearing age, she found herself under a double hopelessness. She had been barren even at the time when she normally should have been able to have children, but now added to that, she is past the childbearing age. This is her double hopelessness.

### Some Help From Abraham

All through these years Abraham had been gradually inching up and had finally achieved the high ground. His experience kept spilling out over Sarah. The force of his experience was one of the factors that brought new courage and hope for her.

### Look At 'The Problems She Faced

She was always looking back toward her home in Ur. All those years she had been dragging her feet and she didn't want to go into the land in the first place. The vision of leaving the land and going into Canaan was never as clear to her as it had been to her husband. Once she got in the land, she was always ready to hop up and go somewhere else. She was all in for going to Egypt when the famine came. She was in for going to Gerar. In both of these countries the king tried to take Sarah and make her his wife because of her great beauty. By miracles from God, she was saved from both of these experiences. It seems that Sarah was always pulling in the wrong direction. When Abraham had choices to make, he would often follow Sarah's decision and almost always the decision was wrong. During these years, Sarah not only reacted negatively toward her husband, but also toward God and doctrine as well.

Her Greatest Blunder

One day Sarah decided she would solve the problem of her barren condition by having a child from Abraham through her servant girl they had brought from Egypt. Under the pressure from Sarah, Abraham went to Hagar's tent and the child that was born, whom we know as Ishmael, was a distortion of the will of God. This is something that happened under the permissive will of God and not under the direct will of God. Though Isaac was not yet born, Isaac was the child in the line of the direct will of God, and therefore, Ishmael was born under what we call the permissive will of God. Abraham should have exerted his manhood and should have stood up to Sarah at this point. He should as we say, "Have put his foot down" but he didn't. It may be that God had to permit this to happen in order to bring Abraham and Sarah to see that no plan of man can ever be substituted for the will of God.

Sexual Prosperity From God

When God revived the sexual power of Abraham and Sarah, this made possible the birth of Isaac. But it did vastly more than that. It gave them sexual prosperity for their own enjoyment. That idea that sexual prosperity is for the propagation of children only is the world's worst monster of asceticism. The idea that parents are doing something morally wrong by enjoying sex apart from the production of children is not taught in Scripture. This idea is the creation of the imagination of some warped mind. Sex in its proper place, between right man and right woman is one of God's gifts to man and the production of children is a by-product of marriage so the race can survive and so people can have the chance to grow up and believe in Jesus Christ.

The next word in Hebrews 11:11 is "because" from the conjunction epei and this is a very strong "because." On this one word the whole career of Sarah turned. There came a time when doctrine came to be the major force in her life and some of that same doctrine that had taken Abraham to the high ground will also take her there. The next word we have is "judged" from the greek word hegeomai. This word does not really mean judged but rather it means concluded. She got all the facts and added them up and came to the right conclusion. This word also means a guide. Someone who knew all the facts about a place and acts as a guide to show people around and explains what is being seen. Look at this word hegeomai in several other passages.

1. Luke 22:26 "He that is chief."
2. Acts 26:2 "I think myself happy, King Agrippa."
3. 2 Corinthians 9:5 "Therefore, I thought it necessary."
4. Hebrews 11:26 "Esteeming the reproach of Christ."
5. James 1:2 "Count it all joy."

This is a mental word and it means to take all the facts and add them up and come to the proper conclusion. This statement actually says this: "Sarah added up all the facts of doctrinal evidence and came out with faith and trust." Hegeomai does not mean to judge, but rather to think, to conclude, to add up the doctrinal truth and come up with the facts. Hegeomai originally means a guide. (A guide at Gettysburg will show you around and explain all the facts to you about that great battle. That is hegeomai.) Therefore, this is a summary verse and it tells us that though she had failed many times, she finally added up all the facts and came up with the right conclusion.

Some Hurdles She Overcame

Sarah had been a woman of jealousy and was an explosive type of an individual. She would make snap judgment decisions and the reason was she didn't have all the facts. But every time she got in a jam, God always got her out and little by little she began to add up the facts and began to conclude that God was always right. Doctrine in her soul brought her around and finally doctrine became her dictator. That is the meaning of this word hegeomai.

Because a woman is a responder, it is much harder for her to reach the high ground than for a man. But once she breaks through and reaches the high ground, she finds the same reality.

The next word "him" is not in the text, but it comes out as a part of the word pistos and means that she discovered the "one who is always faithful." The thing every woman wants to discover in life more than anything else is faithfulness, both in her right man and in God. God had been faithful in every circumstance and it was this unchanging faithfulness of God that finally pulled Sarah up to the high ground. Quite often Abraham had made mistakes and in these instances, he had not inspired faithfulness from Sarah. But God was different. Every time God had inspired faithfulness and Sarah finally came to realize that this was because of the perfect character of God. Sarah told Abraham to go to Hagar's tent and he obeyed her. He went huffing and puffing into that tent of "Little Egypt" and it was not the will of God that he do so. It is against this contrast of unfaithfulness that God presents himself to Sarah as the one who is perfectly faithful. The greatest discovery of Sarah's life was when she discovered God to be A FAITHFUL, PERFECT, FLAWLESS GOD. Once she saw it, she wrapped her faith around this idea and it pulled her up to super grace living. This is the thing that made Sarah one of the greatest women that ever lived.

"Who had promised" is the aorist, active, participle of epaggellomai. This is a nomic aorist and it means that this is an axiomatic fact. God has always been faithful and always will be. So, Sarah finally discovered what she knew was true. God didn't start being faithful just for her sake. God has always been this way with every person in the world. This aorist tense tells us that God was this way millions of years ago and still is this way today. The active voice means that God himself made these promises in eternity past and he will keep them forever. The participle means that this is a law and God always lives by this law.

So this whole verse says, "By means of doctrine resident in the soul even Sarah herself received sexual ability for the deposit of a seed, though she was beyond the proper time of life for conception; because she concluded faithful the one who had promised."

Look at these principles

1. Sarah's conclusion did not occur when Abraham reached super grace, but shortly thereafter. Abraham reached the high ground first.
2. At first, Abraham laughed a God after Sarah's conception. (Genesis 17:15-19) Then Sarah laughed. (Genesis 18:9-15) Both laughed and both got up and moved on. Their son was born and they named him "laughter."

3. By the time Abraham and Sarah had both reached super grace, their revived sexual power resulted in the birth of Isaac, meaning laughter. (Genesis 21:1-3)
4. When you have doctrine resident in the soul, you always come to the conclusion that God is faithful.

### THE DOCTRINE OF FAITHFULNESS

1. DEFINITION.

There is only one person in the universe who is totally faithful to you and that one is God the Father. Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are also totally faithful to you, but we mention God because he is the author of the plan. He is totally faithful to you because of his perfect character. Divine faithfulness is the grace expression of God's character to the believer. Divine faithfulness is the divine manifestation of his perfect character. The fact that we are here and alive is an evidence of God's faithfulness to us. We would have nothing without the faithfulness of God. That's why we have just studied the amazing experience of Sarah as told in Hebrews 11:11. The zig zag of Abraham's life didn't impress her, but the total faithfulness of God did impress her and she finally responded to it. Therefore, don't put your eyes on people but put your eyes on the faithfulness of God.

2. THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD TO FORGIVE SIN (1 John 1:9)

"He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." He forgives us not on the basis of what we deserve but on the basis of his grace, on the basis of his perfect character. God's faithfulness is always related to his character.

3. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IS RELATED TO HIS PERFECT PLAN.

(1 Cor. 1:9) In eternity past, God was conscious of all of our failures but still he designated us--he called us--a Royal Family forever. God found a way to take us all the way from living grace to surpassing grace without compromising his character.

4. GOD IS FAITHFUL IN PROVISION AND BLESSING.

(1 Thess. 5:24) God's perfect faithfulness in eternity past leads to God's perfect faithfulness in time. Never was a time and never will be a time when God is not perfectly faithful to us. He always has been faithful and will always be faithful.

5. GOD IS FAITHFUL IN TIMES OF TESTING. (1 Cor. 10:13)

To live means to be tested. We will be tempted in the realm of temporal things and we will be tempted in the realm of human viewpoint. No one can advance apart from spiritual and physical testing. But God will never test you beyond your ability to bear it. The way of escape mentioned here is not some overt way but rather the way of doctrine. The way of escape is to have doctrine in the soul.

6. GOD IS FAITHFUL TO THE ROYAL FAMILY OF GOD. GOD KEEPS EVERY PROMISE.

Hebrews 10:23 "Let us keep holding fast the confession of our confidence unbending, because the one having promised is faithful."

7. GOD IS ALSO FAITHFUL TO THE CARNAL BELIEVER.  
The carnal and the reversionist believer is not less attractive to God.  
2 Timothy 2:13. God cannot deny his character. God will take the disobedience of the carnal believer and use it to discipline him and thereby bring him in line. But even if the believer is unfaithful, God will still be faithful to him.
8. GOD IS FAITHFUL TO THE BELIEVER IN THE ANGELIC CONFLICT.  
This is an invisible conflict and we need protection.  
(2 Thess. 3:3) God protects us from our invisible enemy Satan.
9. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IS THE FORCE THAT LEADS US TO SUPER GRACE LIVING. The passage we have just studied in Hebrews 11:11.
10. THE CONCLUSION.
  - a. Faithfulness is the stability and consistence of God.
  - b. Faithfulness is the perfection of God's essence.
  - c. Furthermore, God cannot change his essence or be unfair to anyone.
  - d. God has total self respect and therefore cannot change his character and be unjust or unfair.
  - e. God has made thousands of promises since eternity past and has kept every promise he has ever made.
  - f. Our future hope depends on God's faithfulness. God is never unprepared.

HEBREWS 11:12 "Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable." This verse begins with an inferential conjunction διο plus και and should be translated "And therefore."

The word "sprang" is the aorist, passive, indicative of gennao. It really doesn't mean "sprang" but rather means "was born." Isaac wasn't exactly the springing type, in fact, even when he was 40, his father had to help him find a wife. Isaac had a father who was 100 and a mother who was 90. (I suppose it was a little embarrassing when Isaac went out to play little league ball and they said to him, "How old is your mother?" He said she's 97.)

The indicative mood here documents the reality of his birth. Then we have και απο heis and it means "and of one hopeless couple." Then we have houtos and it means "and them" not "and him." Next we have the perfect, passive participle of nekroo. "Having become sexually dead."

So this verse says this--"And therefore from the source of one hopeless couple was born Isaac, and these same ones having become sexually dead (In contrast to the promises made in Genesis 15:5) just as the stars of the heavens in number and the sand which is by the lip of the sea innumerable."

1. This verse quotes the promise of Genesis 15:5 which was requoted in Genesis 22:17 and requoted in Genesis 32:12.
2. This promise is based on Abraham's super grace paragraph.
3. This promise was given to encourage Abraham to move on to super grace.
4. This promise is quoted to illustrate God's ability to keep every promise and overcome every obstacle.