

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. 4) Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5) Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. 6) And Sarah said, "God has made me laugh, so that all who hear will laugh with me." 7) She also said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have borne him a son in his old age."

INTRO: In these three Wednesday Advent services this year, we will study three 'miracle babies' of the Bible, and How They Tell of Christmas. In this day and age of people twisting words and inventing words, the expression 'miracle baby' can mean whatever you want it to mean. For example, the gospel according to St. Wikipedia says a miracle baby is a baby born before 37 weeks of gestation, who survives to adulthood. Not only that, but a baby born in the U.S.A. today at two pounds birth weight has a 98% probability of survival. Now **my** definition of a miracle baby is one that would never have been born had it not been for the direct intervention of God. So with that, our first case of a miracle baby birth is Isaac, son of Abraham.

I. SOME DETAILS ABOUT SOME PEOPLE OF OLD (background)

A. Isaac's father was rich and famous and powerful

1. but not so in the beginning; born 290 years after Noah's Flood
2. father Terah had moved to Haran
3. at age 75 is told by God to emigrate
4. Gen.12: I will... a) make you a great nation; b) bless you; c) make your name great; d) you shall be a blessing; e) bless those who bless you; f) curse him who curses you; g) in you all families of earth be blessed
5. clarified (12:7) to your **descendants** I will give this land (age 75)
6. 13:2 - Abram was very rich in livestock, AG, and AU (liquid assets)
7. powerful, too; (ch.14) 5 kings (Sodom) lost to 4 kings; Abram rescued Lot w/318 trained servants; no son yet
8. at age 85 is persuaded by Sarah to conceive Ishmael by maid Hagar
9. 18:11 - Sarah had passed the age of childbearing (she's 89, he's 99)
10. w/God, promises made, promises always delivered

- B. So, what did this miracle baby Isaac accomplish with his life
1. meek personality; as teen, allowed father to bind/offer him
 - 2, age 40 when dad arranged marriage to Rebekah
 3. initially barren; Isaac prayed; twins Jacob and Esau (ch.25)
 4. lived to see Jacob's 12 sons; died at age 180

II. WHO IS THE MAIN CHARACTER IT THIS ACCOUNT

A. Who it is **not**

1. not Abraham; God chose **him**, blessed **him**
2. 15:6 Abraham believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness
3. needed forgiveness; twice passed wife off as sister to save his own hide (ch.12 Pharaoh; ch.20 Ahimalech) if Sarah impregnated, what happens to 'Seed' and 'descendants' promise!
4. nor Sarah; originated the Hagar/Ishmael fiasco
5. nor Isaac, sinner like the rest; accomplished little in life

B. It is **God's** story

1. God chooses to bless sinful human beings
- 2 God promised to bless **world** through a descendant of Abraham
3. Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and 50 more generations later....
4. keep the story line going until a miracle baby born at Christmas

III. SOME WARNING SIGNS

A. The problem with impatience

1. 25 years is a long time to wait for a baby
2. Pastor and Maggie only had half that wait
3. people can be impatient toward God; demanding
4. who is worse, a 2-year-old or an 82-year-old

B. And a problem of improperly taking control

1. as Abraham with his wife in Egypt and Canaan
2. BTW, Isaac did the same thing w/Rebekah! (GEn.26:7)
3. and Sarah, helping out God by Hagar idea (started Hamas war)
4. rationalizing away God's word to justify our wants, conduct

IV. AREN'T WE EVER GOING TO GET TO CHRISTMAS

A. Isaac is a promised child, like Jesus was

1. specifically, to Abraham
2. clarified after the Hagar incident
3. Jesus promised to Adam/Eve, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, et alii
4. what God promises, God delivers

B. Isaac had a miraculous birth

1. God could have made Sarah pregnant at age 19 or ~~29~~
2. God has a way of getting our attention
3. the miracle authenticates the messenger; you can believe this guy
4. also, you're not getting into heaven w/o a miracle or two

C. Isaac's life foreshadows Jesus' life

1. both meek, low profile
2. both allow themselves to be sacrificed; Jesus for real
3. Isaac's only symbolic; Jesus for sins of the world; truly died!
4. Isaac had a sinful father; Jesus is holy as is His Father; this is the value of His atoning sacrifice: holy Son of God for world's sins
5. so, Jesus life and death redeems the world

CONCLUSION: A baby born to a 90-year-old woman qualifies as a miracle baby by my definition. And because God said in advance that it would happen, really further seals the deal. One more time I say, God always keeps His word. Ah, the lengths to which God will go to guarantee to us the forgiveness of sins! You all come back next Wednesday and we will look in the Bible for another miracle baby that will again tell us of Christmas. Amen.