

January 6, 2023

Here's Hope
By Rev. Jerry Rea

100 Years

He waited for 100 years. Abraham was promised by God that he would be the father of a great nation. That meant Abraham would have, and see, many, many children and grandchildren. The promise was clear and important. He understood what God said and more importantly what all this meant. Abraham relied on God. He waited. Then he waited some more. Then he waited. He did get a bit impatient and that's how we got Ishmael. That story did not have a good ending. Abraham's impatience was because this seemed like a good plan, while he waited. After all Hagar was his wife... sorta. Abraham was old, as was Sarah. Most of the time, old people don't have children. It had been a long time since God gave His word.

Perhaps Abraham thought "Well, maybe I understood God wrong." It happens all the time. People, being people, they misunderstand. Perhaps Abraham thought "Well, maybe I've not been worthy of this great promise being fulfilled. After all, I'm just a sinner." Perhaps Abraham thought "Well, perhaps God has changed His mind and wants to use someone else." That would've been okay. It would've been okay for Abraham to think that, and it would've been okay for God to do that. God can do anything that He desires.

Do you think that in the 100 years that it took to see the end of the promise that Abraham quit believing? Do you think there were days in which he felt he'd never see God's promise fulfilled? Do you think he wondered out loud and to anyone who would listen about his worthiness to get such a big thing? Maybe he even got mad at God. Most people get mad at God from time to time; they just don't tell anyone. Philip Yancey wrote a book I could recommend. The title is *Disappointment with God*. At great length, he explores our misgivings when we are frustrated with life, or we don't get what we want. If Abraham was a normal person, he had days when the disappointment of not having a son (yet) got to him.

He had to wait. You see, God has a will but God has a timing of that will. He patiently waits for us to "get it." We often don't. He gives us instructions and then helps choose just the right time to go forward. To plant a seed in December in Alabama might not be wise. To ask your wife about having a new baby one week after she just had one is not the right timing. As the writer of Ecclesiastes said, there is a time and a place for everything under the sun. A wise and dependable follower of Christ learns the timing of God. He does not rush ahead of God, nor lag far behind Him. He walks with God, even if it takes 100 years.

Perhaps right now you are in "God's waiting room." You know He is doing something special, but you just have to wait on His time. You've asked and are assured He is answering but right now you can't see His end. You know He will judge, (and He will) but you also know He is a very, very patient and "long-suffering" God. Timing is everything. Ask any comedian about the importance of timing. Ask the Saturday quarterbacks the importance of throwing the ball, not just to the right place, but also at just the right time.

You, too, may have to wait 100 years. Remember the facts. Abraham had Ishmael, then Isaac. Ole Abe did not live long enough to see Jacob's twelve sons, twelve tribes, and the great nation of Israel. You and I know that God was faithful... big time. He was faithful big time, *in His own time*.

God has a time for *your* life,
Jerry Rea