

LAUGHING AT GOD

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The Lord and two angels had just made a surprise visit to Abraham and Sarah's tent. Abraham instructed Sarah to quickly make cakes while he went to prepare a calf to feed his guests. While they ate, the Lord asked where Sarah was. When Abraham responded that she was in the tent, the Lord said, "*I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son*" (Genesis 18:10a). The scripture goes on to state that "*Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well-advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, 'After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?'*" (vv. 10b-12). The Lord sharply rebuked Sarah for laughing, saying, "*Is anything too hard for the Lord?*" (v. 14). Sarah was so afraid that she tried to deny that she had laughed, only to be rebuked again (v. 15). Laughing at what the Lord has said does not please Him in the least.

There are different types of laughter. We can laugh *with* someone, or *at* someone. We can laugh in appreciation of an intended funny, or seemingly absurd, situation. We can also laugh derisively or incredulously, which is what Sarah did, mocking the idea that she and Abraham could ever have children at their age. Abraham was not totally faultless in this matter, for he laughed and tried to change God's plan when first told of it (17:17-19). As Abraham and Sarah's faith grew, they became fully convinced that God could do whatever He said He would do (Romans 4:17-22; Hebrews 11:11). At the birth of Isaac, Sarah exclaimed, "*God has made me laugh, so that all who hear will laugh with me*" (21:6). Her laughter now was *with* God, not at Him.

Many laugh at God and His will today. It is not because God is trying to be funny, but because irreverent people refuse to believe in His precious promises and divine will. God's judgments are no laughing matter. God will accomplish His word; let us strengthen our faith and obey Him.