GOD OPENS OR CLOSES THE WOMB

Compiled by Thomas W. Jacobson (2017)

"And Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, she said, 'God has appointed me another offspring'" (Genesis 4:25).

"And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. … And Sarai was barren; she had no child. … Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, 'I am God Almighty … your name shall be Abraham; for I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. … As for Sarai, your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.' … Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac" (Genesis 11:29-30; 17:1-2, 5, 15-16; 21:1-3).

"Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah … to be his wife. Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived. But the children struggled together within her; and she said, 'If it is so, why then am I *this way?*' So she went to inquire of the LORD. The LORD said to her, 'Two nations are in your womb; and two peoples will be separated from your body; and one people shall be stronger than the other; and the older shall serve the younger.' When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau. Afterward his brother came forth with his hand holding on to Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob; and Isaac was sixty years old when she gave birth to them" (Genesis 25:20-26).

"In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years. Now it happened *that* while he was performing his priestly service before God in the *appointed* order of his division … an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. Zacharias was troubled when he saw *the angel,* and fear gripped him. But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John.' … After these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant … saying, 'This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked *with favor* upon *me,* to take away my disgrace among men.' … Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great mercy toward her; and they were rejoicing with her" (Luke 1:5-13, 24-25, 57-58).

See also: Genesis 20:17-18 (wives of Abimelech); 29:31-35; 30:17-21 (Leah); 30:1-2, 22-24 (Rachel); Ruth 4:13,17 (Ruth); I Samuel 1:1-28; 2:21 (Hannah); II Kings 4:14-17 (Shunammite).