

THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS

"When men and women allow their faith to break down, they resort to human contrivance. The Egyptian slave was brought to Abram's tent that the family might be built. But discord and heartache followed as tragic consequences." —Kyle M. Yates, "Genesis" The Wycliffe Bible Commentary

"God, Sarah, & Hagar"

Sarai & Hagar: Genesis 16:1-15

- Women feature as prominent figures in the Abrahamic Narrative, not merely as peripheral characters, but as those who interact with the Lord and are the beneficiaries of His Word and His promises.

⇒ The chapter focuses on the decision of Sarai and Abram to engage in an ancient form of surrogacy. Notice that she identifies the reason she feels she has been unable to conceive: *"the Lord has prevented me from bearing children."*

"Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her."

⇒ The term "obtain" is architectural terminology. The idea is that through this surrogacy she and Abram will _____ a family.

Sarai:

'ishshah →

Hagar:

shiphah →

- The success of Abram and Hagar's union had the opposite effect that Sarai had intended for her family (16:4-6)

⇒ Sarah was over come with _____. ➔ Probably resulting from her own _____!

⇒ Having been taken advantage of, Hagar was now left _____.

The Love of God for Hagar: Genesis 16:7-15

The angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur.

- Hagar's situation was desperate and it seems as though she was attempting to return to her homeland.

"The Angel of the Lord" –

- God's care for her demonstrates that He both hears and sees those who are in need.

You shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has listened to your affliction.

Ishmael–

So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, "You are a God of seeing," for she said, "Truly here I have seen him who looks after me."

"El Roi" → "The God who sees _____"

The Love of God for Sarah: Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7

- When God changed Abram's name to Abraham in Gen. 17 he also changed Sara's name to Sarah. As Abraham's wife, Sarah was the beneficiary of God's covenant promises and love along with her husband.

⇒ 10 years passed between the first promises of God and the events of Gen. 16 and a further 14 years passed between Gen. 16 and Gen. 18.

And the Lord appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth and said, "O Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant."

"...the Lord..." Yahweh



They said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "She is in the tent." The Lord said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son."

⇒ The similarities here between the method of the message's delivery as well as its content lead us to conclude that the Messenger who has come to Abraham and Sarah is the same Messenger who visited Hagar.

And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have this pleasure?"

⇒ Sarah recognized the biological impossibility of having a child and laughed at the very thought that this could happen.

The Fulfillment of God's Promise:

The Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as he had promised. And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him...And Sarah said, "God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh over me." And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

⇒ Sarah's response to God's sovereign work in her life was worshipful joy!

Some Concluding Observations

1. God sees and hears those in _____ circumstances as well as those who are suffering _____.

Is. 49:15-16a—"Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands;

Lk. 12:6-7—"Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.

2. God works in different people's lives in distinct _____ and at different _____.

Jer. 29:11-13—"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

Rom. 8:28-30—"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.