The Son of the Bondwoman

Genesis 12-50: Part IX

Stuart W. Bryan

I. Orpheus in the Underworld

II. The Son of the Bondwoman

A. Compromise and Consequences

1. Cycle #1 – The best laid plans (vv. 1-4)

In the ANE, a barren woman could give one of her slaves to her husband so that that slave could bear a child in the wife’s name. Though this practice was common enough in the ANE, it was a clear violation of the Word of God. Moses paints this scheme in a negative light by casting Abram as a new Adam –

- Abram “_____________ the voice of Sarai” – cf. 3:17
- Sarai “__________” and “__________” – as Eve did with the fruit (3:6)

2. Cycle #2 – Complaint and Consequences (vv. 5-6)

“Neither Sarah nor Hagar acquit themselves well here: the mistress is harsh and overbearing; the maidservant is unrepentant and insubordinate” (Bruce Waltke, 253).

B. God Restores the Household (vv. 7-12)

1. God Interviews Hagar

2. God Instructs Hagar

   a. Command - Return to your mistress & submit to her (9)

   b. Promise – I will multiply your descendants (10-12)

3. Hagar and Abram Respond in Faith
III. Application

A. A Word to Wives

1. Beware tempting your husband to sin / compromise (cf. Gal 6:7,8)

The story of Sarai and Hagar is a cautionary tale. It reminds us that patiently obeying God’s ________ will and waiting upon Him is better than sinfully grasping at his promises. Sarai is trying to get something good; but she tries to get it by disobeying God’s ________ will regarding marriage. Through this moment of unbelief, Sarai brings years of sorrow and pain upon her household.

*Though Sarah’s motive was good, genuine, and involved self-sacrifice, the proposal was wrong in itself, and, at the same time, wrong in its method of obtaining the end sought. It was wrong against God, whose word had been given and whose time should have been waited. It was wrong against Abraham, leading him out of the pathway of patient waiting for God’s will. It was wrong against Hagar, and did not recognize her individuality and rights in the matter. It was wrong against Sarah herself, robbing her of a high privilege as well as leading to disobedience.*

(Hughes, Genesis, 239)

2. Beware blaming him when things don’t turn out as you expected.

B. A Word to Husbands (cf. Pr 18:9; 1 Pet 3:6-7)

The story of Abram’s compromise is a cautionary tale for husbands: beware listening to your wife if what she is counseling goes against the Word of God or your conscience. A husband is not simply a male attached to any given female for a period of time. A husband is one who practices “__________.” A husband is one who leads and cultivates the garden that has been entrusted to him; the one responsible to make sure that good fruit is growing in the home.

C. A Word from God

IV. Conclusion