

Origins- All in God's timing.

Sermon Notes

Nov. 26, 2023

Introduction

Review: Covenants are not forsaken by God. Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the New Covenant still show their effects to this day that God is faithful at His Word. Today, we will look to another Covenant that we see its impact increasingly in these past few weeks. Much to learn.

Context: Abram (75) has trusted God and traveled to Canaan, a land of promise he did not know. He believes God will bring about the Covenant He spoke. It will require God bringing about the improbable by making Abram the father of many nations and that all nations will be blessed through him. Making it more improbable it has been 10 years since they arrived in Canaan and no son has been born. I think I would be getting antsy about what I may have missed in God's instructions, or if God had bailed for whatever reason.

Read **Genesis 16:1-4a**

Sarai questions first God's instructions or timing. (2)

- Patience with the Lord is difficult when all tangible evidence says "time's up".
- Let's help God out.
- She trusted in a cultural norm of building a family for herself through a slave.
- Their failure was not their questioning but their lack of consulting the Lord whose instructions they were following.

Abram relents quickly. (2a)

- After all, is that not customary?
- *"Temptation is most dangerous when it is sent by a hand that is least expected."*
Matthew Henry
- This is a lesson in trusting the source to a fault at the cost of evaluating the words.
- All he needed to do was ask God.
- The failure to do so was likely multi-fold:
 - He too was growing impatient.
 - It was appealing to have his wife give him a much a younger woman.

Read **Genesis 16:4b-6**

Helping God out by taking matters into your own hands leads to foreseen and unforeseen consequences.

Foreseeable consequences

- This would create jealousy between Sarai and Hagar.
- Abram will now have to navigate a divided household.
 - Sarai now blames him for the mess which was at least in part a manipulation to move Abram to her side.
 - Abram relents and gives Sarai free reign in handling the situation. (6)
- One must go.

Read **Genesis 16:7-13**

Intervention By God

- Where have you come from and where are you going?
 - God addresses her “why” by asking her “Where?”—the start and intended finish.
- He sends Hagar back and instructs her to submit to Sarai.
- He makes a Covenant with her and her son.
 - Her descendants will be beyond counting.
 - She will have a son, that she is to name Ishmael—“*God hears.*”
 - Ishmael will be a hand full.
 - Others will be against him.
 - He will be hostile towards his brothers.
- Hagar is relieved that she and her child will not die prematurely.

Unforeseen Consequences of helping God out without his consent.

Constant conflict.

- Ishmael becomes the father of 12 sons. **Genesis 25:13-14** All of whom become enemies of Isaac’s offspring—Israel and his 12 sons.
- Ishmaelites settle and become the people that we know as Arabs the people of the Arabian Peninsula. Their northern most place of territory is Gaza—near the place God approached Hagar!
- When listing the biblical and current enemies of Israel we trace many of them back to one of Ishmael’s sons.
- The most significant enemy would be an offspring of Ishmael’s second son Kedar. That offspring’s name you would know as the Prophet Mohammed.

Peace does not last.

- At age 16 Ishmael mocked three-year-old Isaac and that began the need for separation. **Genesis 21:9**
- Ishmael was protected by God again but was relegated to the desert. **Genesis 21:8-21**
- Always desiring. Always in hostility. Always despised, even to this day.

Illustration: My experience in Israel.

*The Psalmist longed for the Peace of Jerusalem is **Psalm 122**. All these years later, we are watching two Covenants at play, and they won't be resolved until the Prince of Peace comes.*

Read Ephesians 2:11-18

Jesus Christ is the only answer to peace between Israel and the world.

1. We were without hope and without God. (12)
2. We are brought near to God by the blood of Jesus Christ. (13)
3. He becomes our peace, making the two warring groups one by destroying the wall of hostility. (16)
4. We now preach the message of peace found in Christ alone. (17)

Let's not, in the name of Jesus, use the strategies of the world to address the conflict in the world. Let's ask his for his guidance and promote his peace. Helping him out on your terms is a bad idea.