

KISS HAGAR GOOD-BYE

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Text: Genesis 21:8-14

Do you believe that God has a plan for your life? I do. I believe that God has a plan for each and everyone who will listen to His voice and follow His direction. Whether you know it or not God is trying to lead you and I to untold blessings that He has prepared for us, both here and now and in eternity as well. But we must keep our faith on track. Any deviation from the plan of God can lead to disaster.

— George O. Wood writes that on October 31, 1983, Korean Airlines flight 007 departed from Anchorage, Alaska, for a direct flight to Seoul, Korea. Unknown to the crew, however, the computer engaging the flight navigation system contained a one-and-a-half-degree routing error. At the point of departure, the mistake was unnoticeable. But as the giant 747 continued through the Aleutians and out over the Pacific, the plane strayed increasingly from its proper course. Eventually it was flying over Soviet air space.

Soviet radar picked up the error, and fighter jets scrambled into the air to intercept. Over mainland Russia the jets shot flight 007 out of the sky, and all aboard lost their lives. "Life's Alternatives," Pentecostal Evangel (26 March 1995), 6.

Choose your direction well. Although poor choices may hurt you only in minor ways for a while, the longer you go, the more harm they bring. (Larson, 50)

Abraham's life was in danger of going completely off course when he came to this crossroads of decision in his life. Our text centers around Abraham's decision to ignore God's plan and listen his wife Sarah's plan to provide him with a child. Sarah might have been wrong for suggesting he have a child by Hagar, but once she saw the incompatibility of the son of promise and the son of the bondwoman she was right in telling Abraham to cast Hagar and her son out. But by this time Abraham was emotionally attached to Hagar and Ishmael.

What seems harsh can sometimes be lifesaving. God would take care of Hagar and her child as you will see later in the chapter; yet for the time being there had to be a parting of ways. Although Abraham couldn't see it now, later he would understand the reasons why he had to kiss Hagar good-bye.

I would like to point out a few of the *reasons* why Abraham had to tell Hagar good-bye.

I. HE HAD TO KISS HAGAR GOOD-BYE BECAUSE THEIR RELATIONSHIP WAS A MISTAKE.

A. Hagar was not necessarily evil, however she was a detour from God's plan.

She helped Abraham to feel comfortable in his unbelief. Sometimes we build relationships with persons or attachment to things, though they may not be a source of evil, they are unprofitable just the same.

— The apostle Paul said it this way, "All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify."

(I Corinthians 10:23)

The point: It takes maturity to know the difference between things that are helpful and things that are detrimental to our walk with God. Although there might not be a commandment against something or against associating with a particular person, ask yourself, will this thing or this person lead me off track.

A. Hagar represents that which we are trusting in and holding onto instead of God.

When the plan of God becomes difficult to follow we often insert our own directions and ideas to "help God out." We feel that we must understand before we can obey and yet our minds are only on the natural. Therefore, we look for the tangible in the intangible, the visible from the invisible and the temporal in the eternal. We'll do anything to understand, but wait and obey.

— Oswald Chambers writes, "All God's revelations are sealed until they are opened to us by obedience.... The tiniest fragment of obedience, and heaven opens and the profoundest truths of God are yours right away. God will never reveal more about himself until you have obeyed what you know already."

(Chambers, 210)

I. HE HAD TO KISS HAGAR GOOD-BYE BECAUSE OF WHAT THE RELATIONSHIP HAD PRODUCED.

A. Ishmael was a product of unbelief.

Sarah may have initiated the relationship between the two, but it was Abraham who cultivated the relationship. This was not the way God had planned to fulfill His promise. Yet, the decision was made to go ahead with the plan "before it was too late."

_ T. D. Jakes comments on Abraham's choice, "But those are the kind of decisions we make when we think God's not going to bless us. When we start making arrangements for God because He didn't do what you thought He was going to do, when you thought He was going to do it." (Jakes, audio)

B. Ishmael represents the work of man to fulfill the promise of God.

Why couldn't God have fulfilled His promise to Abraham through Ishmael? Because Ishmael was not the son of promise—the son of faith. Ishmael was Abraham's attempt to do what only God could do. _ Romans 14:23 tells us that "Whatever is not from faith is sin." We cannot altar the plan of God for our lives and still end up at the same destination.

A. Ishmael represents what Abraham loved as well as a reflection of himself.

It was easy for Sarah to tell Abraham to "cast out" Hagar. There was no emotional conflict. There was no attachment. There was no longing in her heart with which to struggle.

_ Stewart Briscoe offers this bit of insight, "Ishmael was Abraham's son, but he was not Sarah's son and even though she had made the arrangement by which he was born there would never beat in Sarah's heart the same love that throbbed in Abraham's veins." (Briscoe, 185)

I. HE HAD TO KISS HAGAR GOOD-BYE BECAUSE GOD WAS

CALLING HIM ONWARD.

A. Abraham could not find the blessings of God in the failures of yesterday.

Abraham would have liked for God to have blessed what he had done. He wanted things to stay the way they were. After all, what harm could there be in the son of promise and the son of the bondwoman growing up together? Abraham could have kept things the way they were. But there comes a point in our lives when we must deal with the failures of yesterday. We cannot continue as if nothing has happened, as if no wrong has been done, as if we have not erred from God's plan.

— "If you don't deal with your mistakes, after a while, your mistakes will mock your miracles." (Jakes, audio)

A. Abraham could not walk into the future shackled to the failures of yesterday.

He was bound to the bondwoman; but he was about to learn that we must be willing to walk away from the failures of yesterday. We must do whatever it takes to be free from the bondwoman. It may appear that others are being blessed without having to do what God has asked you to do. Don't concern yourself with what appears to be the case. God has a plan for you. Kiss Hagar good-bye because God is calling you onward!

CONCLUSION

Does God have a plan for your life? Yes, He does! It's time to leave behind the mistakes of yesterday, the unfruitful relationships with this world and decide

follow God. You know the *reasons* why you must kiss Hagar good-bye.

You have gone as far as you can go with bondwoman.

You have gone as far as you can go with the mistakes of yesterday hanging over your head. You have gone as far as you can go with those sins that are dragging you down and wearing you out.

You have gone as far as you can go trying to pretend that everything is all right.

You have gone as far as you can go holding onto your own way of doing things. Kiss it all good-bye! Let God do something wonderful in your life!

References

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