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BIB 101 NA

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Assignment 1

In Gen. 12:10-13 and Gen 20:1-18, we see the account of Abraham and his wife going to a foreign land due to difficulties in their land of residence. While there may be some similarities in both accounts, there are also differences that make them distinct in their own right. In Gen 12:10-13:1, Abram sets out to the land of Egypt due to famine in the land of Canaan. Understanding he had a beautiful wife, Abram advised Sarai to say she was his sister so that the Egyptians would treat him well and not kill him. Sarai obliged Abram's counsel when they arrived in Egypt; for she was praised by the Pharaoh's officials and brought to his palace (v.15), just as Abram predicted. However, a disease fell upon Pharaoh's household because of Sarai. As a result, Abram was admonished by Pharaoh, for he realized that Sarai was Abram's wife and not his sister. Pharaoh then commanded them to leave the land of Egypt, along with everything they had come to possess.

In Gen 20:1-18, Abraham and his wife Sarah moved from Hebron to a country named Gerar. During their sojourn in this country, Abimelech, the King of Gerar sent for Sarah to be his wife because Abraham had stated again that Sarah was his sister. God appeared unto Abimelech in a dream to let him know that Sarah was a married woman and that he will die for taking her as his wife. Abimelech in his defense told God that he was unaware that Sarah was married and God confirmed that he was not and stopped him from being intimate with her.

God told Abimelech to return Sarah back to Abraham; which he obeyed. Abimelech's wife and all of his female slaves became barren as a result of Sarah's presence in the household. Abraham was summoned by Abimelech on his decision; for it brought grave consequences to the kingdom. Abraham confirmed that Sarah was also his sister through genealogy but his decision was made from a fear of being killed. All in all, Sarah returned back Abraham untouched, and payments were made to prove this to him. Abimelech also assured Abraham and Sarah that they can live wherever they want in the land.

Similarly, in both stories, we see that Abraham claimed Sarah to be his sister out of fear, as they entered foreign land. We also see that Sarah was taken in as a wife by both leaders of the countries they entered. Supernaturally, it was revealed to both Pharaoh and Abimelech that Sarah was the wife and Abraham and not his sister. They both also saw the hand of God at work against them as a result of this; as both of their households incurred sicknesses due to Sarah's presence.

While there are apparent similarities in both stories, there are significant differences between them as well. While God had spoken to Abraham in Gen 12, his name had not yet changed, alongside his wife. This is significant because Abram and Sarai's encounter in Gen 12 jeopardized the covenant of marital relationship between them. However, in Gen. 20:1-18, Abram and Sarai's names were changed to Abraham and Sarah after God established a covenant with Abraham. In Gen 17:5, God said, "No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations". It is important to note then, that had Sarah become one of Abimelech's wives, then God's covenant promise

for a nation and arguably the world would've been in question. God promised Abraham that through his seed, he will father many nations.

Abraham's actions appear to be selfish due to his readiness to deny the status of his wife in order to spare his own life. Abraham's faith was constantly tested in this regard and his actions proved that his belief that God was with him was very low. If God did not intervene in both encounters, Abraham could've possibly lost his family and impacted many generations.

Through both passages, I've come to the realization that God's providence remains constant in his promises. Even when Abraham appeared weak in difficult circumstances, God remained faithful and intervened on his children's behalf. The grace of God manifested in Abraham's and Sarah's life in spite of their shortcomings. God knows the plans he has for us, even when we don't see them.