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Paper Proposal
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While the world of the Bible is not feminist, a mother in an ancient near eastern household held significant power and authority. This is seen through both Sarah and Hagar in the book of Genesis. In the ancient near east, the mother of a household was involved in decision-making and problem-solving for both land and children. The Bible does not suggest the exploitation of women, but rather on the efforts of both men and women in its household to survive.

Although men and women in the ancient near east worked together to uphold their household, there were also primary and gender specific responsibilities for women such as childbearing. “The mother of the household was authorized not only to bear sons and daughters for her household, but also to see that all the other women in her household regularly bore sons and daughters as well.”¹

I would like to go more in-depth with the roles and responsibilities of a mother in the ancient near east household. Also, arguing that a women’s role was not inferior to the father’s role in the home but that they worked together to keep the household afloat. I will use Sarah and Hagar’s story in Genesis 16:1-16; 17:18-26; 21:1-21 as the biblical text to connect with the ANE culture of mothers. Some resources that will be useful in this research are *Social World of Ancient Israel* (Matthew/Benjamin), *Women in the Ancient Near East* (Marten Stol), *Motherhood in the Ancient Near East* (Kristine Garroway).

¹ Don, Benjamin C., *Social World of Ancient Israel 1250-587 BCE*. Henderson Publishers., 25.