

Knowing Your Place

Written by Lillian Chebosi
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Inspired by the story of Sarah (Genesis 16-18, 21)

Sarah and Abraham had no children and were looking forward to having one as a fulfillment of God's promise to them.

But the promise took quite a while to come to pass. Sarah gets discouraged and tries to help God, move things a little bit faster. She gives her maidservant, Hagar, to Abraham, hoping to build a family through her.

However, this arrangement did not work as Sarah had imagined it. When Hagar conceived, she began to despise her.

What are you perceiving as your deficiency as a wife in your home? For some like Sarah, it's barrenness, for others, it is joblessness, or lack of a good education, or a lousy family background, or maybe a not-so-rosy past.

These conditions have the potential to affect how we view ourselves, the value we deem of ourselves as wives. They have the capacity to make you feel that you have let your husband down, that you are not worth your position in the home. They can lower your self-worth as a wife.

But this wasn't the case for Sarah. She may have felt she let her husband down, thus offered a trial solution through Hagar, but she did not feel less valuable to Abraham for not having borne him children.

Sarah knew Hagar was her mistress with or without a child, and she did not allow Hagar room to despise her. She talked to her husband about it and Abraham reminded her of her place – to deal with her servant.

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Sarah knew her place and rights and could make demands accordingly. Just because Hagar had borne Abraham a son did not make her feel she was less of a wife. She knew she was still the lady of the home, her husband's beloved. God was in agreement, and Hagar had to submit to Sarah, just like before the pregnancy.

Later on, Sarah gets a son with Abraham, for God wasn't going to settle for fleshly solutions to fulfill his promise. As Isaac was growing up, Sarah noticed Hagar's son, Ishmael mocking. Knowing her place, Sarah spoke with finality that Ishmael would never share the inheritance with her son Isaac.

Sarah knew that Isaac was the child of the promise. She boldly asked her husband to send Hagar and her son away. This is to put it kindly. In essence, she demanded that Abraham get rid of them. This was right in God's sight, and so Abraham complied. He enquired of the Lord and agreed to listen to and do as Sarah desired.

Unlike Abraham, who reminded and reassured Sarah of her position in his life, your husband may not know your place and rights as a wife in his home, but you must know it and require it accorded to you. This does not in any way purport being bossy and dishonouring your husband.

God expects submission of wives. Sarah obeyed Abraham and even referred to him as "my lord," and treated him as such. Through her submission to her husband, Sarah established that her mission in life was to help her husband fulfill God's purpose for him.

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