

Guardian Angel

The Hebrew Concept of Woman in the Bible

The Beginning

- Verses that set the stage
- Genesis 1:26-27
- Genesis 2:18
- Genesis 2:23
- Genesis 2:24
- One image, one purpose, one unit

Critical Vocabulary

- The Order-Maker
- Purpose - fruitful, flourish, reproduce
- Multiply - become many, be abundant, swarm
- Fill - to fill but also to complete, fulfill, finish - to make what was empty no longer so (spatial) and to complete a task or assignment (temporal)
- To keep a vow or promise (to fulfill it)

Why Does Adam Need Help?

- Understanding the story
- What is the prologue?
- The context
- A story without chapters and verses
- The structure of a covenant

Critical Vocabulary

- Subdue - *kavash* - to overcome, often in the sense of forceful exertion. WORK
- Rule over - *radah* - exercise domain, authority
- How do human beings complete the task assigned to them? By WORK and AUTHORITY
- Both are implicit in what it means to be human
- The command applies to BOTH men and women

Critical Vocabulary

- *'ezer kenegdo* - God's choice to describe the ROLE of the "helper" - not the ontological identity
- Military language
- Sustainer
- Provider
- Protector
- Stronger Party
- Hosea 13:9, Exodus 18:4, Psalm 20:2 and 33:20

'azar (verb)

- Help (Genesis 49:25)
- Give aid (2 Chronicles 14:10)
- Encourage
- Support
- Protect (noun *'azarah* - enclosure - Isaiah 31:2)
- Tied closely to salvation and deliverance (Ps. 79:9; Isaiah 41:10)

kenegdo

- Double preposition
- Only occurrence
- Facing two ways at the same time
- A covenant with a beneficiary

Woman: The Final Creation

- Rabbinic view - the last effort - completion
- Emphasis on creation of woman is unique
- She is the last step in being human because she originates from human being
- “Woman has an entitlement to humanity that man did not receive in creation.”
- She stands before God as the *fullness* of humanity

What She Was Made To Do

- Bless her man (with God as her model)
- Take ownership
- Not subordinate but complementary
- Necessary to achieve the dual purpose
- Ontological identity
- Functional difference
- One cannot work properly without the other

Recognition of Role

- “bone of my bone”
- Adam is *ish*
- The meaning of *adam* and *ish*
- Change in identity
- Acknowledged in the excuse of Genesis 3

Enter the Serpent

- Who are the actors?
- What do they really say?
- What clues provide the true drama?
- How does Hebrew communicate the sub-plot?

Genesis 3

- Sin disrupts the created order by establishing a false hierarchy based on self in control
- Measure for measure
- Trying to do what she is meant to do with someone who no longer accepts her efforts
- What is prescriptive? What is descriptive?
- What changes? What doesn't change?

Clues in the Text

- *El ha-ishsha amar harba arbe atzvonek* (Sheva under R)
- *El ha-ishsha amar harba 'arab atzvonek* (no Sheva)
- Ambiguity in the text
- The character of God

Role Reversal

- Genesis 3:16 “desire” - Pagnino - “lust”
- *teshuqah* - only 3 occurrences
- Genesis 3:16, 4:7 and Song 7:10
- Bushnell - “turning”
- The assertion of authority

The Theme in the Tanakh

- Proverbs 31:10 - *'eshet hayil* - warrior wife
- Song 8:6 - *hotham*
- Proverbs 31:11 *batach*
- Jeremiah 31:22 *hadash* and *savav*

The Apostolic Writings

- Every author comes from a Jewish perspective
- Nothing in these writings contradicts the teachings of the Tanakh
- God's purposes and intentions remain the same
- What we find in the apostles must be consistent with what we know from the Tanakh

Man is the Head

- 1 Corinthians 11:3 - *kephale* - Greek - overwhelmingly used as “source,” not “authority”, like *rosh*
- LXX uses a different word for “authority”
- Genesis 2 is an account of “source”
- Paul uses *kephale* as it is used in the LXX
- If we read this as “authority,” we are involved in an internal contradiction
- In the Kingdom, there is no distinction

Wives Submit

- Ephesians 5:22
- But there is no verb in the sentence - an *elipsis*
- The controlling verb comes from the previous verse - *hypotasso* - to put in proper relation, proper order
- No Scripture requires male to dominate female

A Matter of Authority

- *de jure* and *de facto*
- Which kind describes the relationship between the Father and the son?
- Which kind is implied in the role of the servant?
- Which kind is exhorted in the “new commandment”?
- Who has the power in a *de facto* relationship?

Silence

- 1 Corinthians 14:34 - Let your women be silent in the churches, for it is not allowed to them to speak, but let them be submissive, as also the law says
- An exegetical mistake?
- Inconsistent with exhortation in the same letter
- Greek “linguistic markers”

No Teachers

- Let a woman learn in silence, in all subjection. But I do not allow a woman to teach, nor to exercise authority over a man, but to be in silence. 1 Timothy 2:11-12
- Why change the word - plural to singular to plural?
- “Salvation” through child-bearing?
- Romans 16: 7 “Junias” - “Junia”
- Acts 21:8-9 the daughters of Philip

New Testament Summary

- Nothing here overturns the teaching of the Tanakh
- Paul is not a misogynist
- The fundamental theme is equality in the Kingdom
- Paul's practical concerns are assembly specific

Redeemed Marriage

- For the Husband: “as love for the assembly (church)”
- Self-sacrifice (no personal agenda)
- Compelling love
- Unwavering faithfulness
- Complete dedication
- Absolute fidelity
- Continuous forgiveness, mercy and grace

Redeemed Marriage

- For the Wife: “as to the Lord”
- Voluntary commitment (*de facto*)
- Ownership
- Active obedience
- Purity
- Honor and respect
- Thanksgiving and gratitude

Actions

The wife grants authority to the husband and voluntarily submits to him knowing that it is in her best interests to do so BECAUSE the husband sacrifices his own interest in order to offer all that he has for her.

Actions

The wife treats her husband as her exclusive property, taking ownership of his welfare BECAUSE he woos her with a compelling and unconditional love.

Actions

The wife responds to her husband with active obedience BECAUSE the husband honors her with unwavering faithfulness.

Actions

The wife maintains a life of purity BECAUSE the husband demonstrates complete dedication to their unity.

Actions

The wife honors and respects her husband
BECAUSE the husband maintains absolute fidelity
to her in behavior and purpose.

Actions

The wife expresses thanksgiving and gratitude
BECAUSE the husband demonstrates a life of
continuous forgiveness, mercy and grace.

Actions

And BOTH exhibit submission to each other as to the Lord.

Practice

Devotion – not service

Listening – not telling

Obedience – not compliance

Reversing cultural expectations – no “me” and “you”,
only “us”

Ownership and Stewardship

Intimacy without Distractions – at both levels

You Choose

