

Genesis Chapter 20 Commentary

1 And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar.

We shall see, in this chapter; Abraham and Sarah have not yet learned to completely trust in God's protection. They have agreed together to lie about their marital status again. This shows the weakness of Abraham's faith, who is not trusting God to protect and keep him alive, even after having been told several times that he would be a father of many nations. He is committing sin by lying about Sarah not being his wife, saying she is my sister.

2 And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. 3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife.

Abimelech took Sarah in complete innocence, but he didn't have a conjugal relationship with her; probably because of the purification process, which women went through before they were allowed to be in relationship with a king.

God intervenes in order to fulfill his promise to Abraham, and to keep the sanctity of Abraham's marriage. Notice; God told Abimelech that he was a dead man if he touched Sarah, even though Abimelech's action was in complete innocence. Also, God is going to use Abimelech to rebuke Abraham.

4 But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? 5 Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. 6 And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

Abimelech pleads with God that he has acted in innocency and God acknowledges that. God also told Abimelech; I have protected you by not letting him come near to Sarah. Notice; God said that if you had lain with Sarah it would be a sin against me? Thus we learn; a true marriage relationship which is defiled by adultery is a sin against God. This is one of the reasons we are told in: ***Ge 2:24-25; 24 "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."***

7 Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine. 8 Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid.

God tells Abimelech how to get out of trouble, and Abimelech reacts according to God's command. Abimelech also warns his servants of what is happening, and they also fear God's judicial wrath.

9 Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. 10 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

Abimelech rebukes Abraham for his deceitfulness.

11 And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake. 12 And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. 13 And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother.

Abraham discloses his weakness of faith in God, and how he went about lying to save his own life. Notice; Abraham didn't say anything about what might happen to Sarah. This is an admonition to all men who are married. You should love your wife as your own body; as seen in: ***Eph 5:28 "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself."***

14 And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and women servants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. 15 And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee.

Abimelech restores Sarah to Abraham, gives Abraham a bounty, and gives him license to live in the land, wheresoever he might choose.

16 And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver: behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and with all other: thus she was reprov'd.

Abimelech rebukes Sarah, for her participation in the scheme to lie about her marriage. This rebuke is both to Abraham and Sarah, sent by God through Abimelech.

"he is to thee a covering of the eyes" What does this expression mean? Quite simply it says to us, the husband, in making public knowledge that he is married to his wife, is protecting her from being looked upon as fair game for romance from another man, who may seek to take her in the lust of the flesh. The husband is to be a cloak of protection to his wife, never denying that she is his wife.

17 So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children. 18 For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.

Abraham prays to God for Abimelech and his family, as God had told Abimelech that he would, and God restores their reproductive health.

As we look at this chapter we see; there is a consequence for lying, not being completely truthful, and for not believing God. The consequence can, not only bring judicial judgment upon ourselves, but bring others into judicial judgments, who are innocent in their actions because of our lies.

How can we apply the lessons of this chapter to our own lives? If we are professing to be Christians, we need to be 24/7 Christians in all we do and say. Why? If we do not completely trust God and we tell lies, even what people call white lies, we lead others to take actions they would not have taken otherwise. The definition of lie is; *to be untrue, in word (to lie, feign, disown) or deed (to disappoint, fail, cringe), deceive, deny, dissemble, fail, deal falsely, be found liars*. In its very essence, a lie is something said with intent to deceive. It is not always a spoken word that is a lie, for a life lived under false pretenses, a hypocritical life, is a lie equally with a false word.

Being a Christian, indeed; we protect others from making decisions under false pretense, as Abimelech and his servants did. Thus, we keep ourselves and others in favor with God. Do you understand; without the intervention of God on behalf of their innocence, they will be led to destruction, and you will be guilty of causing a soul to be condemned, and shall have to bear that reproach before God to be judged.

How do we know that God will protect us? We have the testimony of God's Word. Just as Abraham and Sarah were chosen by God, and given the promise of God that He would give them a son; we too have been chosen by God, and have the promise of God that we will be blessed and protected by God himself. Doesn't scripture prove to us that God fulfilled his promise to Abraham and Sarah? Yes, it does.

In the life of Abraham and Sarah; these were truly natural events that happened to them. For us today, we get a natural morality lesson, but we also see the spiritual application for our Christian lives; as we see in scripture in: **2Co 10:1-6; 1 "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you: 2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; 6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled."** We understand; morality and Christianity go hand in hand. If we are indeed Christians then we will live moral lives in accordance to the teachings of God and Christ.

This doesn't mean that you are not going to have trials and troubles in life. It does mean that as a child of God; you will be in heaven and immortal glory one sweet day. This is the promise of God to all his people; Salvation by Grace, Life Eternal, and an eternal home in glory with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost.