

Genesis Chapter 20 & 21: Playing the Ace Card *and* Our Merciful Faithful LORD

Genesis Chapter 19 Review

- God's swift judgment/Lot's close attachment to wicked Sodom
- Mercy toward Lot; Judgment toward Sodom and Mrs. Lot
- Picture of the Rapture: Taken before Judgment

Genesis Chapter 20: Playing the Ace Card *"What have you encountered, that you have done this thing?"* [Genesis 20:10]

God's Protects His People and His Plan

1Now Abraham **journeyed from there** toward the land of the Negev, and settled between Kadesh and Shur; then he sojourned in **Gerar**.

- **"...journeyed from there":** I.e. from Sodom, Devastation, Sadness
- **Gerar:** Capital Philistine city near Egyptian Border; **Prosperous City:** Abraham powerful tribal chief doing business on caravan rout

2Abraham said of Sarah his wife, **"She is my sister"** So Abimelech king of Gerar sent and **took Sarah**.

- **Abraham Lies again:** "She is my sister" as Genesis 12:10 to Pharaoh
- Repeated by Isaac in Genesis 26
- **Abimelech's** summons Sarah:
 1. **Sarah physically rejuvenated** to conceive and nurse and/or
 2. **Political reasons** as Abraham was a prosperous businessman

3But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, "Behold, **you are a dead man** because of the woman whom you have taken, for **she is married**."

- "She is married" or "she is a man's wife" lit. **" she is a noble wife of a noble man"**
- **"Behold, you are a dead man..."**

Proverbs 7:22 Suddenly he follows [the adulteress] As an ox goes to the slaughter, Or as one in fetters to the discipline of a fool, 23 Until an arrow pierces through his liver; As a bird hastens to the snare, So he does not know that it will **cost him his life**.

4Now Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, **will You slay a nation, even though blameless?** 5"Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she herself said, 'He is my brother ' In the **integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands** I have done this." 6Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you

have done this, and **I also kept you from sinning against Me**; therefore I did not let you touch her.

- **"Will you slay a blameless nation?"** Reminiscent of Abraham's earlier plea
- **Integrity of my Heart:** Not really:
 1. Abimelech **"took" her for his harem**
 2. God had struck him with an infirmity [v.17]
 3. God supernaturally kept Abimelech from sinning against...**God**

6b I also kept you from sinning against Me

- **Civil War:** General Sherman; arguably a racist; freed the slaves to hurt the south. Meanwhile slaves prayed for freedom and saw him as an answer to prayer!

Proverbs 16:9 The mind of man plans his way, But **the LORD directs his steps**.

Proverbs 19:21 Many plans are in a man's heart, But the counsel of the LORD **will stand**.

- Integrity of my heart?

Romans 7:18 For I know that **nothing good dwells in me**, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? ... 25 Thanks be to **God through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for **apart from Me you can do nothing**."

7 "Now therefore, restore the man's wife, **for he is a prophet**, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

- **He is a Prophet:** First mention; here more *relation to God* than speaking for Him

Psalms 105:14 He permitted no man to oppress them [I.e. the Patriarchs; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob], And He reproved kings for their sakes: "Do not touch My anointed ones, And **do My prophets no harm**." [C.f. Psalm 18 for God's protection on His people]

Walking "Worthy of Our Calling" ...walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility... [Ephesians 4:1]

- Humble enough to admit we are wrong; **confessing, not excusing our sin:**
- **Abraham sinned** against Abimelech, his people, Sarah, and God
- Our Walk is all about **Motive and Response**; Abraham responds incorrectly as his sin found out:[contrast David]

8 So Abimelech arose early in the morning and called all his servants and told

all these things in their hearing; and the men were greatly frightened. 9Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, "**What have you done to us? And how have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done to me things** that ought not to be done." 10And Abimelech said to Abraham, "**What have you encountered, that you have done this thing?**"

- **Abimelech hands Abraham the "Ace Card":** What *EXCUSE* do you have?
- **The Ace Card:** What happened in your life to make you do this? [Freud] ;Abraham plays the card *instead of repenting*:

11Abraham said, "**Because I thought**, surely there is **no fear of God** in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife. 12"Besides, **she actually is my sister**, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife; 13and it came about, when **God caused me to wander** from my father's house, **that I said** to her, 'This is the kindness which you will show to me: everywhere we go, say of me, "He is my brother."'"

Colossians2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through **philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men**, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

Example: Nature vs. Nurture- Man trying to explain why we are who we are; act how we act. I.e. EXCUSE for sin

- **Nature:** Innate qualities. "God made me this way" or "It's just the way I am" vs...
- **Nurture:** "*My parents made me like this*" or "*Because this bad thing happened, now I do this bad thing*" [ex. Iraq and anger issues] or "*I forgive you but I'll never forget*"

Continually drudging up a person's "forgiven" sin to excuse yourself for not treating them as God would have you , is an Ace Card... an illegitimate excuse... and sin

- Nature or Nurture? NO...though more nature than nurture:

Jeremiah 17:9 "The **heart is more deceitful than all else** And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?

- **A believer's excuse for sin may seem justified to him/her and to the world...** but we're held to a **greater standard** as we are indwelt/empowered by a Great God

Romans 8:37...in all these things we are **more than conquerors through him who loved us**.

1 Corinthians 3:3 You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? **Are you not acting like mere men?** [NIV]

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creature**; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

- Abraham not only **misses out on the beauty and freedom of confession**, but is also **responsible for causing Sara to sin**; I.e. "Say he is my brother"

Matthew 18:7 "Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but **woe to the man through whom they come!**

14Abimelech then took sheep and oxen and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham, and restored his wife Sarah to him. 15Abimelech said, "Behold, my land is before you; settle wherever you please." 16To Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your **brother** a thousand pieces of silver; behold, it is your **vindication** before all who are with you, and before all men you are cleared."

- **You're brother:** Sarcastic tones from a pagan...ouch!
- **Vindicate** 1. show somebody or something is blameless: to clear somebody or something of blame, guilt, suspicion, or doubt

17Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his maids, so that they bore children. 18For the LORD had closed fast all the wombs of the household of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

Genesis Chapter 21: Our Merciful Faithful LORD *If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself. [2 Timothy 2:13]*

1Then the LORD took note of Sarah **as He had said**, and the LORD did **for Sarah as He had promised**.

- **After 25 years** in Canaan Sarah is **90**, Abraham **100**
- Conceived in Gerar [As the women of Abimelech's territory had been prevented]
- Abrahams faith now manifests into the **reality of what always was:**

Romans 4:19 (Read) 19 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; 20yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.

- The extent Sarah became unable to conceive... the extent Abraham's faith grew
- **Promise fulfilled:** "As He had said"... "as He had promised" v.1

2So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, **at the**

appointed time of which God had spoken to him. 3 Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac. 4Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, **as God had commanded him.**

- **Set time...**God's time for Isaac: Isaac means: He [God] is laughing
- Circumcision sign of the covenant for future generations: Genesis 17:12
- **As God commanded:** Abraham's practice

5Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. 6Sarah said, "God has made **laughter** for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me." 7And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

- **Reminiscent Laughter:** Doubt from Sarah; amazement from Abraham; now joy

Psalms 127:3 Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward.

8The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. 9Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, **mocking**. 10Therefore she said to Abraham, "Drive out this maid and her son, for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with **my son Isaac**." 11The matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son.

- **Great feast** for the day of weaning: 2-3 years old; attention given to Isaac
- Ishmael now 16 years old vs. "...my son Isaac." [*mocking* play on words for Isaac]

12But **God said to Abraham**, "Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, **listen to her**, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named. 13"And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant."

- 6th Visit: Listen to your wife to fulfill My plan for both Isaac and Ishmael
- Is separation sometimes necessary to fulfill God's purpose?

Acts 15:39 And there occurred such a **sharp disagreement** that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. 40But Paul chose Silas and left, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

- **Sarah and Hagar:** Spirit and Flesh allegory in Galatians 4:22-31
- Waiting on God's **promise w/Sarah** vs. Their **own plan with Hagar**

- **True religion** of faith in the work of God **vs. False Religion** of self-achievement/faith in our own work

Galatians 4:31 So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman.

- **Only 2 Religions:** Christianity and everything else

14 So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy, and sent her away. And she departed and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba. 15 When the water in the skin was used up, she left the boy under one of the bushes. 16 Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away, for she said, "**Do not let me see the boy die.**" **And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept.**

- Wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba: Later a city
- She wept; God heard the boy but questions Hagar:

17 **God heard the lad crying;** and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "**What is the matter with you, Hagar?** Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. 18 "Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand, for I will make a great nation of him." 19 Then God opened her eyes and she saw a **well of water;** and she went and filled the skin with water and gave the lad a drink.

- "What is the matter with you Hagar...?" Hagar not trusting in God's earlier promise
- **Opened her eyes;** vision clouded with grief now clear after God's encouragement

Romans 15:5 Now may the God who gives **perseverance and encouragement** grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:18 I pray that the **eyes of your heart may be enlightened**, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints...

- **Ishmael:** "God hears"
- God heard, God called, God consoled, God revealed, **God satisfied**

John 4:13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him **shall never thirst;** but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

20 **God was with the lad,** and he grew; and he lived in the wilderness and became an archer. 21 He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother

took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

- God was with the lad: Emanuel I.e. **God with us**

22 Now it came about at that time that Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, "**God is with you in all that you do**"; 23 now therefore, swear to me here by God that you will not **deal falsely with me** or with my offspring or with my posterity, but according to the **kindness that I have shown** to you, you shall show to me and to the land in which you have sojourned." 24Abraham said, "I swear it." 25 **But Abraham complained** to Abimelech because of the well of water which the servants of Abimelech had seized. 26And Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, nor did I hear of it until today."

- Abraham still in land of Philistines as Abimelech sadly questions Abraham's honesty as the character of God is skewed: [parents influence?]

"God is with you in all that you do; 23 now therefore, swear to me here by God that you will not **deal falsely with me**

- Pagans asking Believers not to deal falsely [Businesses using fish symbol?]
- Reminds Abraham of **his** [Abimelech's] kindness as he asks for a agreement:

27Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a **covenant**. 28Then Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. 29 Abimelech said to Abraham, "What do these seven ewe lambs mean, which you have set by themselves?" 30He said, "You shall take these seven ewe lambs from my hand so that it may be a witness to me, that I dug this well."

- **Covenant:** Agreement between both sides
- **Witness:** The 7 lambs would be a reminder of the treaty

31Therefore he called that place **Beersheba**, because there the two of them took an oath. 32So they made a covenant at Beersheba; and Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, arose and returned to the land of the Philistines.

- Beersheba : "Well of the Oath" or "Well of the Seven"

33Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and there he **called on the name of the LORD**, the Everlasting God. 34And Abraham sojourned in

the land of the Philistines for many days.

- Abraham in Philistine territory many days and called on the Name of the LORD
- Jehovah El-Olam I.e. **Jehovah is the Eternal God**

SUMMARY: Genesis 20 and 21

- God protects His people and His plan as Abimelech is stopped from molesting Sarah
- Abraham does not fess up to his sin; rebuked by a pagan king
- God is Merciful and Faithful to Abraham
- Isaac is born; Promise fulfilled; Great joy!
- Abraham calls on the Name of the LORD...as was his custom
- **We are also trust in the Blessed Promise and Hope...Jesus Christ:**

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, **13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,** **14**who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.