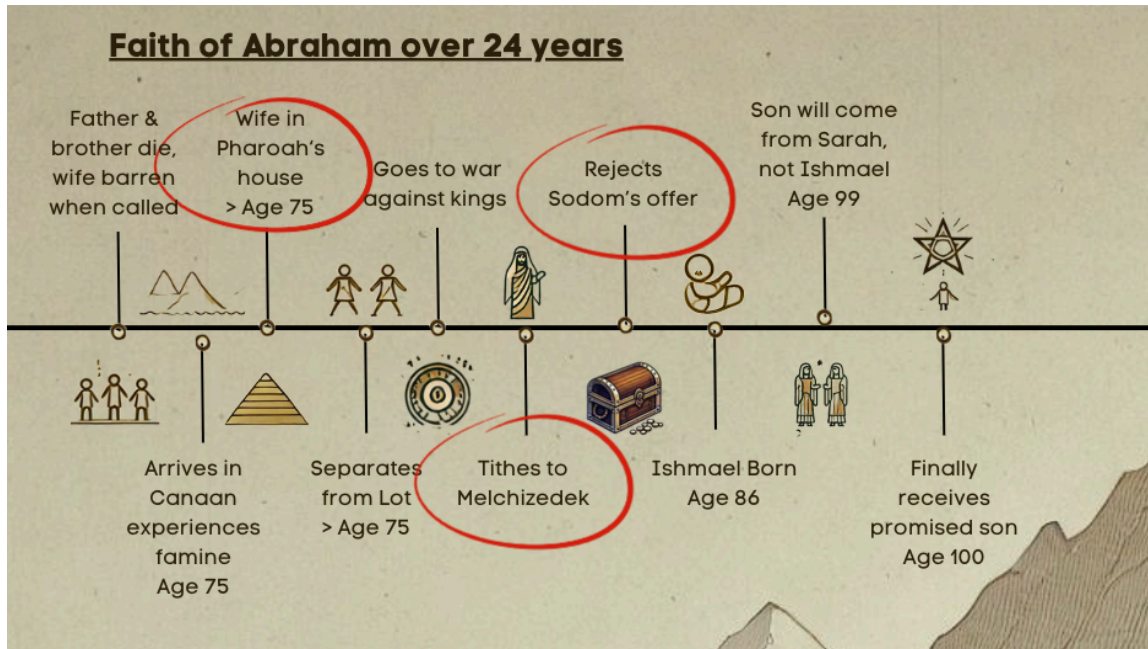


- **Good evening Arising Church!**
  - **What an honor and privilege it is for us to be here with you all!  
What a gift it is to open God's Word together tonight and dive deep into all that He has prepared for us!**
  - **We are so grateful for all that He is doing in our body and the way that He is developing and maturing us as we strengthen and solidify the foundation of our faith.**
  - **Tonight we will explore Genesis 20!**
- **Abraham will again find himself in a situation that seems impossible to navigate and God will once again intervene on his behalf and cause him to prosper.**

**(SLIDE)**



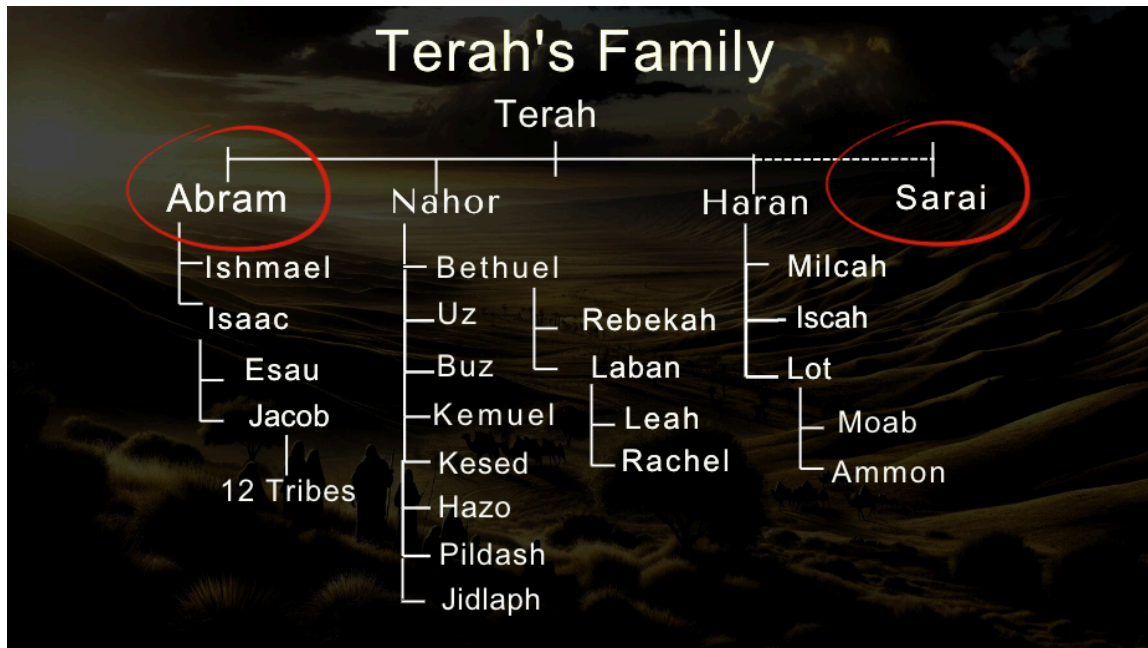
- As you will remember, the name of our current section in the book of Genesis is "forsaking all for the promise".
- (SLIDE)



- From the first introduction of Abraham he has been laying down that which was most precious to him in order to obtain the promises of God. He and Sarah have been on the move since leaving home and somehow have continued to grow and prosper in spite of their nomadic lifestyle.
- One of the first trials that Abraham and Sarah experience is the famine they face as they arrive in the promised land of Canaan. They turn around to seek provision in Egypt. While there, out of fear, Abraham and Sarah deceive Pharaoh into believing that they are only brother and sister.



- (SLIDE)



- While it's true that they are brother and sister on their father's side, they conceal the fact that they are married out of fear for their lives.
- Let's recall Genesis 12:14-20 to refresh ourselves on this story:
- Genesis 12:14-20 **14**When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was a very beautiful woman. **15**And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. **16**He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels. **17**But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram's wife Sarai. **18**So Pharaoh summoned Abram. "What have you done to

me?" he said. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife? [19](#)Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!" [20](#)Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.

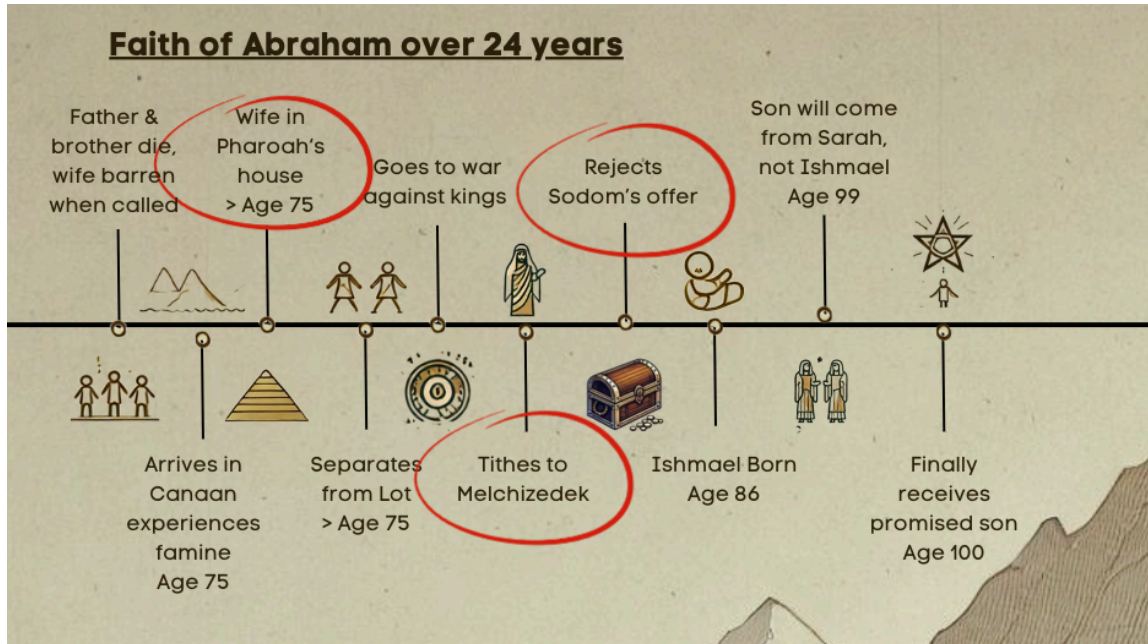
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- It's important to remember that Sarah was noticed by Pharaoh's officials and they praised her to him.
- In [12:11](#) Abraham says, "look you are very beautiful..." And it's possible to think, maybe that was just his opinion as an adoring husband.
- We find out that even at age 65 Sarah was beautiful enough to be praised by Pharaoh's officials and taken into Pharaoh's house.
- Pharaoh, thinking that Abraham was her brother gave him much livestock and servants, presumably even Hagar.
- However, God works on behalf of Abraham and Sarah and inflicts diseases on Pharaoh's whole household. When he realizes this is on account of Sarah, he corrects Abraham and sends them away along with all they have accumulated. From here, we see in the following chapter:

- 

- [Genesis 13:1-2](#) [1](#)So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. [2](#)Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold.

- (SLIDE)



- Notice that Abraham has the chance to acquire more and more but instead makes decisions that seem to limit or decrease his wealth all in an effort to be pleasing to God.
- In Genesis 14, he tithes a tenth of all he owns to Melchizedek which decreases his total wealth, and he rejects an offer from the wicked king of Sodom which would have increased his wealth.
- Abraham's focus is not on increasing his wealth but on pleasing God, but even when he deceived Pharaoh, God still brought him out of that situation with a blessing.
- This is because God gave Abraham promises of what He would do for Abraham and also how God Himself would treat people based on how they treated him.

**(READ THE SLIDE)**



## Seven I WILL'S....

1. I will make you into a great nation
2. I will bless you
3. I will make your name great
4. You will be blessed
5. I will bless those who bless you
6. Whoever curses you I will curse
7. all peoples on earth will be blessed through you

- Abraham is continually blessed because God is ensuring it according to the promise. This will continue throughout his life and the life of his descendants.
- But in fact, God's plan for the redemption of mankind did not originate here.
- God has had a plan from before the world began:



- 1 Peter 1:18-20 (NIV 1984) *"For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake."*



- The apostle Peter clarifies that Jesus Christ was the chosen plan from the beginning. This was how God would redeem the world. But he also says that this plan was revealed in these last times, meaning that the exact way that God would bring about this redemption was a mystery.

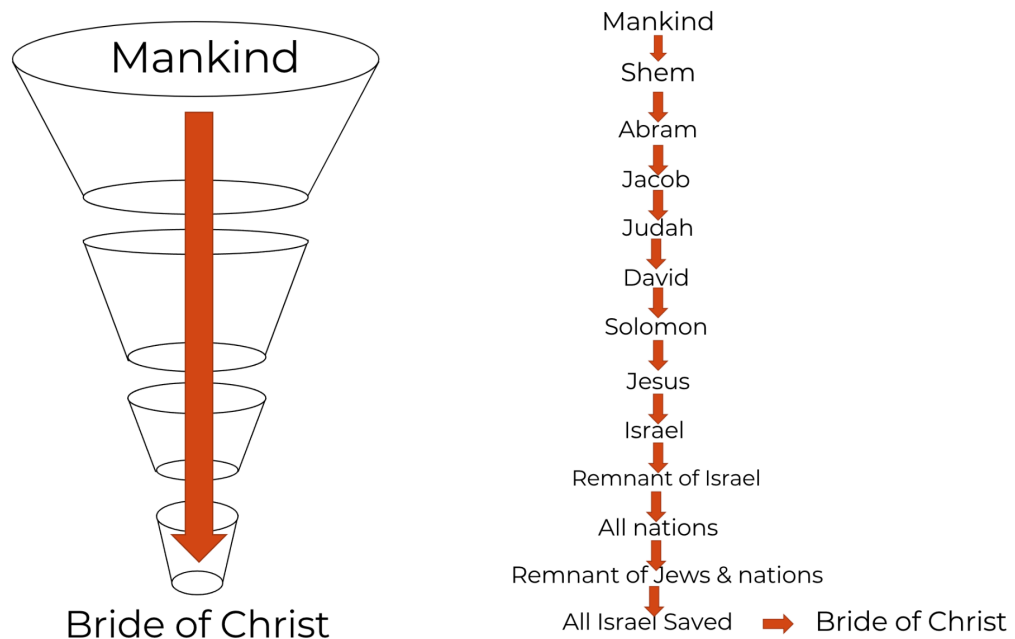
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- **2 Timothy 1:9:** *"He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time."*

●

- Here the apostle Paul also emphasizes that the grace afforded to all who believe was given before the beginning of time.
- Recall again this slide from our past teaching:

● **(SLIDE)**



- Truly this slide represents the strategy of God from beginning to end to redeem the whole earth. Let us walk you through it again as a refresher:



- **Mankind:** The plan begins with all of humanity, indicating God's initial creation and overarching concern for all people.
- **Shem:** Following the flood, God's plan narrows to focus on the lineage of Shem, that is blessed by Noah, through whom Abraham would eventually be born. From Noah's three sons come all the nations of the world.
- **Abram (Abraham):** After mankind falls at the tower of Babel, God's covenant with Abraham marks a pivotal point in His redemptive plan. Abraham is chosen to be the father of a great nation, Israel that He creates out of nothing through which all nations will be blessed.
- **Jacob:** Abraham's grandson Jacob, later named Israel, becomes the father of the twelve tribes, further narrowing the focus of God's covenant promises.
- **Judah:** From the tribe of Judah comes the royal lineage, leading to David and eventually to Jesus.
- **David and Solomon:** The covenant made with David and his son, establishes a royal line that God promises will have an everlasting throne, pointing forward to the Messiah.
- **Jesus:** The focus narrows even further to Jesus, the fulfillment of the messianic prophecies and divine covenants, who is the focal point of God's redemptive plan.
- **Israel:** Jesus' ministry initially focuses on the people of Israel, fulfilling the promises made to the patriarchs.



- **Remnant of Israel:** Not all of Israel accepts Jesus, but a remnant remains faithful, signifying the continuation of God's plan through a faithful subset of His chosen people.
- **All Nations:** The scope then broadens again as the gospel is taken to all nations, inviting people from every tribe and tongue to become part of God's redemptive plan.
- **Remnant of Jews & Nations:** A faithful remnant from both Israel and the Gentiles responds to the gospel, forming the foundation of His Church.
- **All Israel Saved:** In the end, there is a promise that all Israel will be saved, bringing together the Jewish and Gentile believers as one.
- **Bride of Christ:** The culmination of God's redemptive plan is the formation of the "Bride of Christ," symbolizing the Church, made up of all the redeemed from every nation, tribe, and tongue, united with Christ for eternity.

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- **What we cannot forget is that while God's plan to redeem the entire earth is unfolding, Satan has strategies of his own to ensure that doesn't happen.**
- **Let's rewind the clock back a few months once more, to some topics that you might have forgotten.**

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**(SLIDE)**

# Stratagems of Satan

- Corruption of Adam's line - **Genesis 6**
- Abrahams Seed - **Genesis 12 & 20**
- Famine - **Genesis 50**
- Destruction of male line - **Exodus 1**
- Pharaoh's Pursuit - **Exodus 14**
- The Population of Canaan - **Genesis 12:6**
- Against David's Line - **2 Samuel 7**

- Satan has attempted to thwart God's plan of redemption throughout biblical history. Each point references a specific biblical event aimed at preventing the fulfillment of God's promises:



- Corruption of Adam's Line (Genesis 6):
  - In Genesis 6, we see the attempt to corrupt the human gene pool through the Nephilim, to prevent the coming of the promised Seed who would crush the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15). This corruption threatened the purity of the line through which the Messiah would come.
- Abraham's Seed (Genesis 12 & 20):
  - As we have seen and will see tonight, Satan comes very close to corrupting the womb of Sarah when she is taken into Pharaoh's house in Egypt and the house of Abimelech in Gerar. Clearly he is attempting to thwart the promises given by corrupting the line once again.

- **Famine (Genesis 50):**
  - The famine in Genesis 50 threatened the survival of Jacob's family, the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. It seems clear that Satan's strategy was to eliminate the lineage through starvation, however, God's provision through Joseph preserved them.
- **Destruction of the Male Line (Exodus 1):**
  - In Exodus 1, Pharaoh's decree to kill all Hebrew male infants was a direct attempt to destroy the male line of Israel and Moses their deliverer, preventing the growth and survival of the nation through which the Messiah would come. This would occur once more during the time when Jesus was born.
- **Pharaoh's Pursuit (Exodus 14):**
  - After the Exodus, Pharaoh pursued the Israelites to the Red Sea, aiming to annihilate them. This attack sought to destroy the newly formed nation of Israel before they could reach the Promised Land.
- **The Population of Canaan (Genesis 12:6):**
  - The occupation of Canaan by numerous hostile tribes was an attempt to block the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that his descendants would inherit the land. The giants who filled the land sought to intimidate and destroy Israel from the beginning.
- **Against David's Line (2 Kings 11):**
  - Satan's attempts to cut off David's royal line were aimed at preventing the arrival of the Messiah, the massacre carried out by Athaliah nearly wiped out the household of David.
- 
- **Satan's plans to disrupt the redemptive plan of God always came up short. God was never outwitted by Satan and never will be. Satan's best attempts to stop God's plan only lead to greater glory as His sovereignty and faithfulness shine. His covenants down through**



**the ages can never be undone by Satanic stratagem, although the scriptures make clear, he will continue to try until he is ultimately cast in the lake of fire.**

- **Over the last few weeks we have witnessed some substantial moments in Abraham's life.**
- **He is 99 years old now, Sarah is 89. We watched Abraham actually be included in the Divine Counsel. This privilege was preceded by this profound statement**
  
- **Genesis 18:17 [17](#)Then the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?**
- 
- **He goes on to engage in a discourse with Abraham about the judgment that will fall on Sodom. As you ponder that, let's recall the passages that paint a picture for us of the Divine Council.**
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**(SLIDE)**

## God's Divine Council:

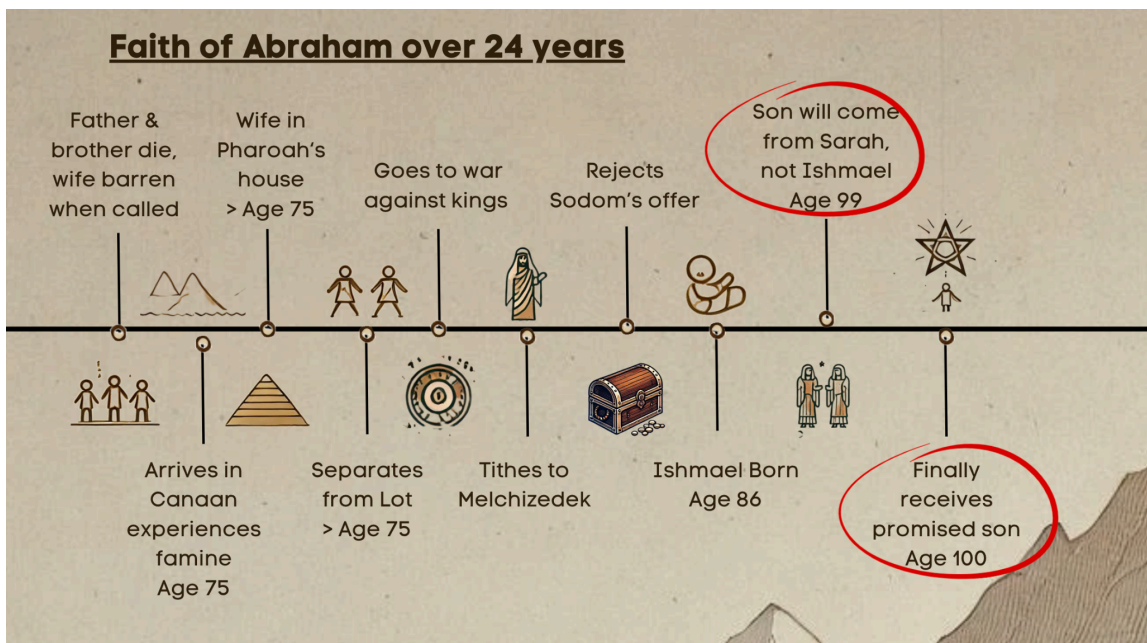
- Genesis 1:26: Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."
- Genesis 11:5-7: But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the Lord said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech."

(SLIDE)

## God's Divine Council (Continued):

- Jeremiah 23:22: But if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my words to my people, and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds.
- Psalm 82:1: God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment.

- These passages give us insight into the role that Abraham is beginning to occupy. That of one who converses with God, has insight into His plans, and intercedes on behalf of others. This information will prove helpful tonight in our study.
- There is one last thing we should remind you of before we jump into tonight.

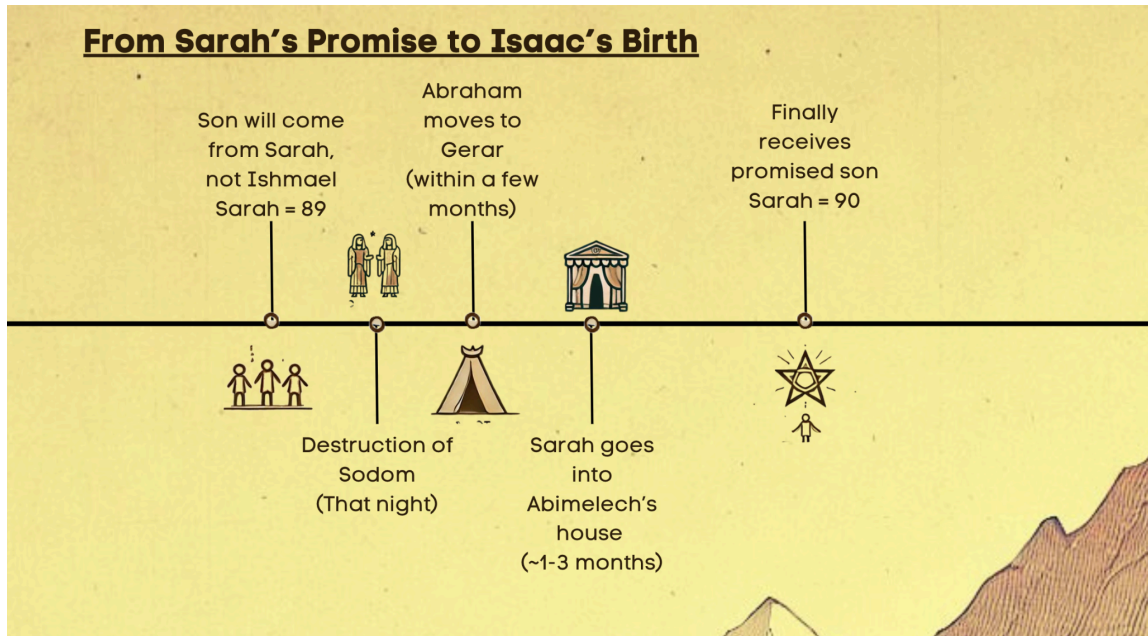


- Everything in Abraham's story has led up to right where we are tonight.
- The Lord has now given the promise that within a year a son will come from Sarah's body.



- Genesis 18:10 **10**Then one of them said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.”

**(SLIDE)**



- You can see from this timeline that the promise of a son through Sarah comes when she is 89 years old. She will have this son at the age of 90. Everything we will read about tonight takes place within a few months because Sarah has been given a promise in Genesis 18 right before Sodom's destruction, that she will bear a son by this time next year.

- **With all of this in mind we are ready to begin with chapter 20. As we get started remember that God has made promises to Abraham that He will keep no matter what...even if Abraham should falter.**
- **Let's have Luke come up and read Genesis 20 and pray for us.**



### **Genesis 20:1–21:34 (NIVUK84)**

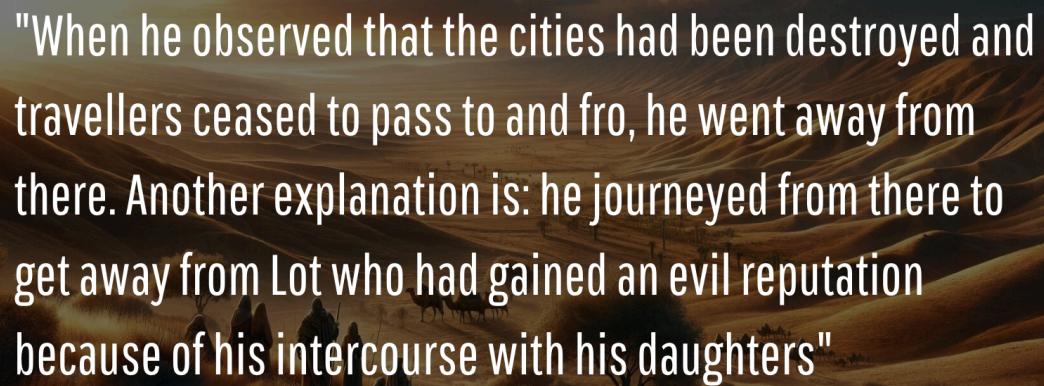
**20 Now Abraham moved on from there into the region of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. For a while he stayed in Gerar**

- **Tonight's chapter begins with a change of scenery. After the destruction of the cities of the plain, Abraham begins to move through other regions of the land God promised to him and his ancestors. As you can see from the first slide.**

- **(SLIDE)**



- The regions mentioned, Kadesh, Shur and Gerar, are all in the opposite direction of Sodom and the plain. He settles in the Negev, between Kadesh and Shur which you can see on this map. Our story today takes place while he is In Gerar during his journey into the Negev, which is approximately 50 miles from Hebron and Mamre, where he had been for many years.
- This begs the question: why? The text does not specify, but Rashi's comments on the topic are fascinating:
- **(READ THE SLIDE)**



"When he observed that the cities had been destroyed and travellers ceased to pass to and fro, he went away from there. Another explanation is: he journeyed from there to get away from Lot who had gained an evil reputation because of his intercourse with his daughters"

(Genesis Rabbah 52:3-4).

- **If you remember, Abraham looking down from his elevated position at Mamre could see the cities burning the morning after his visitation with the Angels. The cities of the plain were nearby and visible from his position! Look at this slide.**
- **(SLIDE)**



- **Considering the geography and the events that just happened. It is not unreasonable that because of the great agricultural impact that 4 cities being burned with Sulfur would create, that Abraham would decide to move in the opposite direction for awhile. After all the scripture even says in**
- 
- **Genesis 19:25 "Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, destroying all those living in the cities—and also the vegetation in the land."**
- 
- **As mentioned earlier, today's events take place in Gerar. Its worth mentioning that Gerar is 12 miles south of Gaza, a place that for obvious reasons is prevalent to the entire world even today in 2024. The war against the seed of Abraham is still waging in the same places it always has.**



- Keep this map in your mind, the descendants of Abraham will come back to this place in the years to come, most notably Isaac in Genesis 26.



2 and there Abraham said of his wife Sarah, "She is my sister." Then Abimelech king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her.

- Here we encounter the second instance where Abraham, out of fear for his safety, claims that Sarah is his sister rather than his wife. This incident mirrors the earlier event in Genesis 12 where Abraham uses the same tactic in Egypt.
- We will unpack this event later on in the chapter in more detail but for now we would like to recall what we said regarding how the Bible views Abraham's actions.
- Here is a quote from our Genesis 12 study:



- "This incident is something that Abram is widely panned for in preaching and teaching. Abram is usually presented as being a fearful man and a liar. This view may be correct but it is worth engaging another possibility. We should probably consider that Abram did not lie in the strictest sense of the word. Instead, Abram presented something that was true, and allowed the Egyptians to fall under misconception based on his statement. In other words, Abram did something that our politicians have been doing for centuries. **Look, we are not endorsing the practice** but the fact remains that the Bible never refers to Abram as a liar... in either the Older or Newer Testaments. The Bible never contains a repudiation of these actions or the similar actions in the following chapters.



*(this fact should cause us to consider that we have a limited understanding of the situational ethics)*

- Sarai was indeed his sister (actually a half-sister according to Gen 20:12), so Abram conveyed to the Egyptians only what he wanted them to know. His motive was undoubtedly based on society laws (see Genesis 24:29-61). Remember that Abram was in enemy territory and it was likely that a husband could be killed for his wife. However, if Abram were perceived as her brother, presumably, someone wanting her would have to make marriage arrangements with him. The point is not that Abram was open to such an arrangement but rather that it would alert him to the intentions of the other party and give him time to react in the manner of his choosing. *(This scenario is at least worth considering especially when speaking of saving a life)*
- Take note, that the Bible does not present Abram without flaws... it presents Adonai working through Abram and overcoming his flaws because the man trusted him and obeyed."

●

- While Abraham's actions are very questionable, the story ultimately points towards God's faithfulness and His ability to work through imperfect people to accomplish His divine plan.
- Who is this Abimelech? You should recognize this name not only from this chapter but from others in the Bible.
- This name shows up in Genesis 25 with Isaac, and also in Psalm 34 with David. Either Abimelech is very old, a very common name, or we are missing something. Luckily, a simple look into his name clears away any confusion, look at these three sources:

●

**(SLIDE)**

ABIM'ELECH (a-bim'e-lek; "my father is king," or "royal father"). **Probably a general title of royalty, as Pharaoh among the Egyptians.**

Unger, M. F., Harrison, R. K., Vos, H. F., Barber, C. J., & Unger, M. F. (1988). In *The new Unger's Bible dictionary* (Rev. and updated ed.). Moody Press.

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ABIMELECH ə-bim'ə-el [Heb. 'abîmelek—'father of a king' or 'my father is king'].

1. A king of Philistia and contemporary of Abraham. It is quite possible that **Abimelech was the royal title rather than the personal name**, since in the title of Ps. 34 we find it applied to the king of Gath, elsewhere known by his personal name Achish (1 S. 27:2f).

Mack, E. (1979–1988). Abimelech. In G. W. Bromiley (Ed.), *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Vol. 1, p. 9). Wm. B. Eerdmans.

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Abimelech. **Royal title for Philistine rulers, similar to the designation "pharaoh" among the Egyptians and "agag" among the Amalekites**

Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). Abimelech. In *Baker encyclopedia of the Bible* (Vol. 1, p. 8). Baker Book House.

- **We see here from Ungers, the ISB Encyclopedia and Baker that Abimelech was a title much like Pharaoh, and unlikely a personal name. That is why the King of Gerar is still called Abimelech 80 years later and a thousand years later in the days of David.**
- **We know from Genesis 14 that Abraham has quite the army and vast household. He is like a King in his own right. In fact in just a few chapters in Genesis 23, the people of the land will refer to him as an "elohim" among them. We do not know much about Abimelech, but he did have authority and power enough to simply take Sarah from Abraham!**
- **The fact that this is the second time this happens means that this practice was relatively common. It's a strange idea for us, but Abraham was not surprised by it, he expected it! Considering Abraham's vast household and army, it is not unreasonable that Abimelech saw this as an act of peace between two rulers of peoples. Tom Bradford in his study in Genesis writes,**



- *"the king was trying to make an alliance with Abraham in the customary way of that era: marry a family member [and thereby create an] ally. It's obvious from the story that there was mutual respect and peaceful intentions "*



- Let's keep reading:



**3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream one night and said to him, "You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman."**

- Immediately in verse three things intensify rapidly. God appears to Abimelech in a dream and tells him he is as good as dead for what he has done. Imagine the surprise from Abimelech. He did not know Sarah was a married woman! Yet, God still responds in such a stringent way.
- It is worth mentioning briefly that this is the first dream we have in the Bible
- Dreams occur many times throughout the Bible and can be a powerful tool used by the Lord. Look at this slide



**(SLIDE)**

# Dreams

## Old Testament:

1. Abimelech (Gen 20:3)
2. Jacob (Gen 28:12, Gen 31:10-11)
3. Laban (Gen 31:24)
4. Joseph (Gen 37:5, Gen 37:9)
5. Cupbearer & Baker (Gen 40:5-8)
6. Pharaoh (Gen 41)
7. Midianite Soldier (Jud 7:13)
8. Solomon (1 Kgs 3:5)
9. Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2)
10. Daniel (Daniel 7:1)

## New Testament:

1. Joseph (Matt 1-2)
2. Magi (Matt 2:12)
3. Pilate's Wife (Matt 27:19)

- **As an aside, it is also important to state that believers can fall into the trap of giving too much weight to their dreams. That is why Ecclesiastes says:**
  -
- **Ecclesiastes 5:7 (NASB 95) "For in many dreams and in many words there is emptiness. Rather, fear God."**
  -
- **The Lord utilizes dreams to give warnings, future revelation, and special insight. One thing becomes abundantly clear as dreams appear throughout the scriptures; God uses them in the lives of Gentiles and Jews to further his plan and covenant with the descendants of Abraham.**
  -

- Whether it is God warning Laban not to do anything good or bad to Jacob
- Or Joseph having dreams that not only foretell his future interaction with his brothers in Egypt, but also speak to the Prophecy given years prior to Abraham concerning the quality of his descendants.
- Or the cupbearer or baker having dreams that lead to Joseph being brought before Pharaoh
- Or the Midianite soldier whose dream gives confirmation and encouragement to Gideon before the battle.



- God is sovereign over the affairs of men but most specifically His divine plan for Israel, even in their weakness, just like in our story tonight, God is sovereign over the affairs of Abraham, even in his weakness.
- So we are going to take a minute and break down with this verse: the way in which God appears to Abimelech, and what he says to him.
- Notice, the first dream in scripture is given to a Gentile, and not just any Gentile, but a Gentile Ruler. This should be seen as another anticipatory parallel. This does not happen frequently, but when it does it shows God's urgency and seriousness towards the situation. Look at this slide

- (SLIDE)



# Dreams and Gentile Rulers

<u>Event</u>	<u>Passage</u>
1. Abimelech concerning the birth of Isaac	Genesis 20
2. Pharaoh concerning a worldwide famine that would affect Jacob's family	Genesis 41
3. Nebuchadnezzar concerning future world empires and the exiles from Judah	Daniel 2

- In Genesis 20 the King of Gerar has a dream and is warned of the judgment on him from taking Sarah as his wife, the one who will, or is currently carrying the promised child in utero.
- In Genesis 41, Pharaoh, King of Egypt receives a dream concerning a worldwide famine to come. This famine would send the descendants of Abraham, the family of Jacob from Canaan into Egypt for refuge.
- In Daniel 2, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon receives a dream concerning present and future world empires that would have an impact on the world stage throughout the ages and implications for the Messiah's future reign on the earth.
- All of these are matters which God treats with the utmost importance!
  - God intervenes to give prophetic insight into some of the most powerful nations in world history and their mistreatment of Israel.
  - God intervenes to give warning and provision to Egypt that brings salvation and preservation to the descendants of Abraham



- **And now, God intervenes when Abimelech takes Sarah as his own wife and becomes an immediate threat to the promised son!**
- **In God's eyes, these three instances were so severe and important that they demanded the same response - visiting a Gentile King in a dream. This should show us how serious God takes his Covenant and promises, He ensured the promised Son and line was not sabotaged and He uses a dream to intervene.**
- **Although it will be worth getting into Abraham's fear that led them to this situation, it is just another futile Satanic Stratagem to corrupt the line of Adam, Noah, Shem, and Abraham. We mentioned it in the intro but its worth going over here:**
  - **In Genesis 6 Satan intervened so that what was promised to Eve would not come about - he failed and Noah was preserved.**
  - **In Genesis 12 the mother of the promised son is taken by another man**
  - **Gen 47:4 a severe famine starved the people of Canaan (future Israel) out of their land, they had to run to Egypt where slavery and the possibility of extinction waited for them**
  - **Again in Ex 1:15-16 a Satanic massacre is carried out by Pharoah that puts all the males at risk of being extinct**
  - **Again in Ex 14:10-14 Israel faces military annihilation**
  - **In Gen 12:6; Deut 7:1-4 It was a Satanic stratagem for Canaan to be populated with nations and giants bigger and stronger than they were**
  - **2 Sam 6:23 Michael is made barren for despising David's faith**
  - **In Matthew 2:16 again Satan moves on Herod to destroy all male babies 2 years and under.**
- **Ever since the Garden, Satan has had his sights set on disrupting the plan, the people and the nation God has set apart, after all it ends with his head being crushed! This story is no different. It takes place**

after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and also before Sarah is pregnant or showing pregnant in an effort to pollute Sarah's womb if not impregnate her with another man's baby. So this at most is only a matter of weeks or months immediately following the events of Genesis 19.

- If Satan would have had his way, Abimelech would not have only taken Sarah, but would have slept with her.
  - If she was not yet pregnant she was at least beginning to be healed of barrenness and could have gotten pregnant, resulting in God's promise to have a child "by this time next year" untrue.
  - If she was pregnant, his sleeping with her would make the certainty of Abraham as the father unclear.
- Either way, this was a calculated attack from Satan to thwart God's plan, just as he has always done in the last 19 chapters and continues to do to this day.

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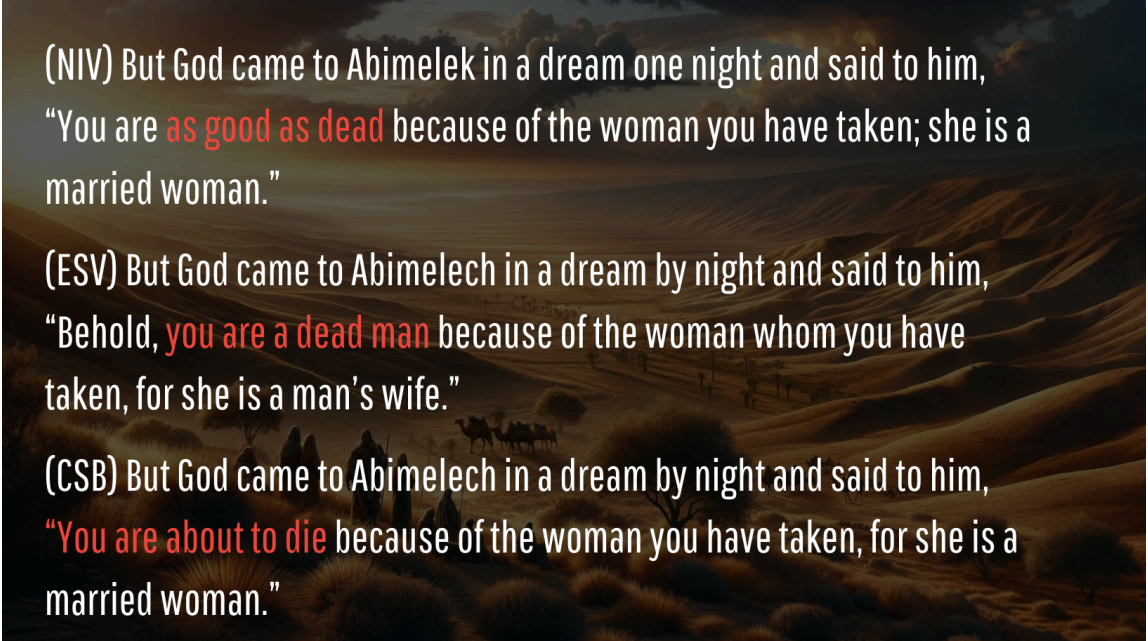
- 1 Peter 5:8 (ESV) "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

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- As we will cover in a minute, God comes to the miraculous rescue of Abraham's offspring in Sarah and even the Gentile King Abimelech.
- The second aspect of this verse we must consider is *what* God says to Abimelech. It says in v.3 " "You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken".
- This is but one of the consequences on the family of Abimelech for what he has done. Abimelech is "as good as dead". A truly terrifying statement to hear from the Lord. Look at a few more translations of this verse:

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**(READ THE RED IN SLIDE)**



(NIV) But God came to Abimelek in a dream one night and said to him, “You are **as good as dead** because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman.”

(ESV) But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, “Behold, **you are a dead man** because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man’s wife.”

(CSB) But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, “**You are about to die** because of the woman you have taken, for she is a married woman.”

- **Judgment has already fallen, Abimelech is going to die for dealing lightly with the Lord's chosen family. The Lord will repeatedly strike sickness or death into those who deal lightly with the family of Abraham, remember he promised Abraham that he would! Recall this slide**
- **(SLIDE)**

## Genesis 12:2-3

If they do this to Abraham:

Curse (H7043) - לָלַל (qalal):

Meaning: To curse, to treat with contempt, to despise.

Connotation: making light of, treating with contempt, or showing disrespect. It can imply a less severe form of cursing, such as belittling or dishonoring someone.

God will do to them:

Curse (H779) - אָרַר (a'ar):

Meaning: To curse, to bitterly curse.

Connotation: invoking harm, misfortune, or a curse upon someone in a strong and emphatic manner. It implies a pronounced and active curse.

\*Strong's Concordance, Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

- **God promised that if someone "makes light" of Abraham, He will "invoke harm" on them! This is exactly what is happening here in Chapter 20.**
- **This will not be the last time that harm will befall those who deal lightly with what is set apart for the Lord. Look at these examples:**
- **(SLIDE)**

## Cursed for Dealing Lightly

- Abimelech and Sarah (Gen 20)
- Miriam & Moses (Num 12)
- Uzzah and the Ark (2 Sam 6)
- King Uzziah & Temple Censer (2 Chron 26)
- Philistines & the Ark (1 Sam 5)

The Tanakh shows us the consequences for dealing lightly with what is set apart for God brings :

- Abimelech is "as good as dead" for taking Sarah as a wife.
- Miriam's opposition to Moses, God's chosen leader, also brought immediate divine discipline as she was struck with leprosy.
- While traveling with the Ark, Uzzah reaches out to touch it in an unauthorized way leading to his death.
- King Uzziah's presumption in entering the temple to perform priestly duties led to his immediate affliction with leprosy, a divine rebuke for overstepping his boundaries.
- Similarly, the Philistines' capture of the Ark of the Covenant resulted in divine judgment and tumors until they returned it.
- God will not be mocked, regardless of their weakness, God continually comes to the defense of Israel. Not because of their

righteousness but because He has attached HIS name to them and made a covenant He WILL NOT break.



○ Ps 105:6-15

- 6 O descendants of Abraham his servant, O sons of Jacob, his chosen ones.
- 7 He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth.
- 8 He remembers his covenant forever, the word he commanded, for a thousand generations,
- 9 the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac.
- 10 He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant:
- 11 "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit."
- 12 When they were but few in number, few indeed, and strangers in it,
- 13 they wandered from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another.
- 14 He allowed no one to oppress them; for their sake he rebuked kings: 15 "Do not touch my anointed ones; do my prophets no harm."



- Despite the judgment, God in his mercy still gives Abimelech the opportunity to be saved if he can humble himself before God's chosen servant. Let's keep reading.



4 Now Abimelech had not gone near her, so he said, "Lord, will you



destroy an innocent nation?

5 Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister,' and didn't she also say, 'He is my brother'? I have done this with a clear conscience and clean hands."

- The term "innocent" in vs 4 as the NIV translates the term is H6662 "Saddiq". The word is translated in the Youngs literal and the KJV as "righteous".

**(SLIDE)**

Righteous - H662 "Saddiq"

- Noah (Gen 6:9, 7:1) 2x
- Abraham (Gen 18:23-28) 7x
- Abimelech (Gen 20:4) 10th time
- The Lord is Righteous (Exodus 9:27). The next time it is used.

- This word has previously been used 10 times (Gen 6:9 Noah, Gen 7:1 Noah, Gen 18:23-28 used 7x in Abrahams conversation with the Lord). The Lord seems to affirm this statement but then still holds him accountable for what he now knows.

- The next time the Hebrew word will appear is Exodus 9:27, where Pharoah (Another gentile ruler) acknowledges that **he has sinned and the Lord is righteous!**
- The question Abimelech asks is reminiscent of Abrahams conversation with the Lord in Gen 18:23 (Will you sweep away the righteous?). Abraham now knows more about the Lord's character but the rest of the world still has the same question. In fact all men have concerns about the judgment of God stamped into their conscience already.
- How would Abimelech know to use this kind of language with God?
- Isn't it interesting how similar this language is and how the question is phrased almost identically to Abraham's?
  - While the text does not say explicitly, we would like to present the possibility of a sequence of events that led to this moment between Abimelech and God.
  - Abraham and his clan of people, practically a mobile city, arrive in Abimelech's territory. Most definitely this would not have gone unnoticed by the king and there would have been an exchange between these lords of the land. We know that they had a conversation because Abimelech asks about Sarah and Abraham responds with the ready answer of, "she is my sister".
  - So, since we know these men did have a conversation where Abraham presented Sarah as his sister it is not hard to imagine that news of the Sodom and Gomorrah event had traveled and Abraham recounted some of the details with him. We can't know for sure but we do know how similar the phrases are that Abimelech asked God and we do know that he talked to Abraham.
  - It would be very normal for people in trade caravans for one group of people talk to another group of people about the events that are going on around them.
  - We also know that Abraham's assessment of Abimelech and his people is that there was "no fear of God at all in this place." But

after this conversation with Abraham and then the subsequent encounter with the God of heaven in a dream, the fear of the LORD was definitely there in Abimelech and his first response out of his mouth is, "Lord, will you destroy an innocent (righteous) nation?"

■ We suggest that this may illustrate two things:

1. As we have stated before, this question is a universal question that all men have because inwardly all men are concerned with the judgment of God and what their fate will be.
2. Abraham's life already had an effect on Abimelech and the way he is responding to God is very similar to Abraham himself – in humility and inquiring of God.

●

- This story about Abimelech highlights an important biblical concept: ignorance does not remove guilt or consequences for wrongdoing.

●

- Numbers 15:27-30 “But if just one person sins unintentionally, he must bring a year-old female goat for a sin offering. 28 The priest is to make atonement before the LORD for the one who erred by sinning unintentionally, and when atonement has been made for him, he will be forgiven. 29 One and the same law applies to everyone who sins unintentionally, whether he is a native-born Israelite or an alien. 30 “But anyone who sins defiantly, whether native-born or foreigner, blasphemes the Lord and must be cut off from the people of Israel.

●

- Here, the Bible distinguishes between unintentional sins committed in ignorance and deliberate sins of defiance. While the punishment for unintentional sins is less severe, it still emphasizes that ignorance doesn't equate to innocence.

- 
- **1 Corinthians 4:4 My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.**

- 
- **Paul states that he has a clear conscience. This doesn't mean he's perfect or sinless, but rather that he's aware of his actions and intentions, and believes he's acting in accordance with God's will. He is counting on God making him aware when he is in the wrong.**

- 
- **Romans 1:18-20 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.**

- 
- **Even without explicit knowledge of God's law, people are still accountable because God's existence and attributes are evident in creation.**

- 
- **Romans 2:14-15 (ESV) "For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them."**

- 
- **Everyone is without excuse! What is known about God is plain to the world, and whenever someone does anything good and right, it is only because the requirements of the Law are written on the hearts of even Gentiles, but they must choose to obey them or reject them.**
- **Even though Abimelech was unaware that Sarah was Abraham's wife, he was still held accountable for taking her into his household. God intervened to protect Sarah and prevent Abimelech from committing a horrible sin. This illustrates that even though Abimelech was ignorant of the full situation, he was still responsible for his actions and their potential consequences.**
- **This is why we should always be pursuing the Lord and finding out what his will is. He holds us all responsible for seeking understanding of His will and moral standards.**
- **God is just and merciful, offering forgiveness and restoration even when we sin in ignorance, but we must take ownership when the Lord reveals our sin to us.**

6 Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you touch her. 7 Now return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all yours will die."

- **In Genesis 20:7,17 we see Abraham referred to and acting as a prophet. This is the first time that the word prophet is used in the scriptures. Most people may not think of Abraham as a prophet but**

he is the 1st to be mentioned as such and therefore becomes the prototype of a prophet.

- The word for prophet that is used here is:

**(READ THE SLIDE)**



נְבִיא nā·bî  
n.masc.; ≡ Str 5030

PROPHET. One who is divinely inspired to communicate God's will to His people and to disclose the future to them.

James Swanson, Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament) (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).  
Merrill Frederick Unger et al., *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988).

- Although this is the only time that this word is used in the book of Genesis we instantly see that being a prophet is first linked to the phrase "He will pray for you and you will live."
- Is that how you see a prophet? That was the first action connected with a prophet in the scriptures.
- While we know that Abraham has heard from God many times and spoken with him, we cannot help but see Genesis 18 as a pivotal moment for him as someone who God sees as His prophet:



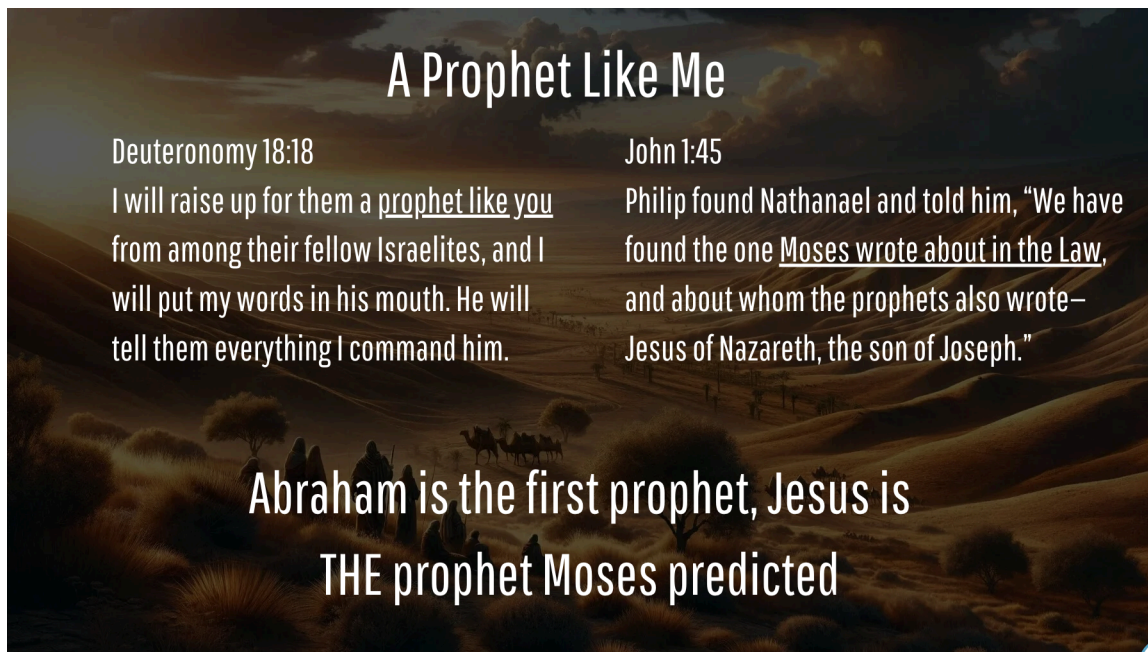
- 
- **Genesis 18:17: "Then the LORD said, 'Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?'"**

- 
- **As Abraham encounters God who reveals the future to him, surely this is a pivotal moment for him as a prophet.**
- **Hearing from God, receiving messages from God about the future, prophesying what he has heard as he has stood in God's counsel and interceding for the healing of others is now on this growing list of what the first audience would have understood a prophet to be.**
- **Let's consider what Moses, also called a prophet writes about this subject in**

- 
- **Deuteronomy 18:15-22 The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—<sup>16</sup> just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.'<sup>17</sup> And the Lord said to me, 'They are right in what they have spoken. **18** I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.<sup>19</sup> And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.<sup>20</sup> But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.'<sup>21</sup>**

And if you say in your heart, ‘How may we know the word that the Lord has not spoken?’ — <sup>22</sup> when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.

- 
- As a quick aside...this passage contains a messianic prophecy, the prophet spoken of IS JESUS!
- (READ THE SLIDE)



- We gather more information from what God speaks to Moses about prophets:
- 
- God puts His words in their mouth
- The people are supposed to listen to him

- God will demand an account for whoever does not listen to him
- If what they say does not come to pass, they are not from God
- Those who are false must die

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- God Himself also speaks in Number 12:6-8 about Moses and prophets:

●

- Number 12:6-8 "And he said, "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream.<sup>7</sup> Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house.<sup>8</sup> With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the Lord."

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- While we learn here that Moses was no ordinary prophet, we also learn that the normal occurrence for prophets was:
  - for the Lord to make Himself known to them in a vision and
  - speak with them in a dream

●

- In Psalm 105 we learn that not only was Abraham considered a prophet, so were his sons Isaac and Jacob. Psalm 105:9-15 says:

●

**(READ THE underlined verses)**

## Psalm 105 "My Prophets"

the covenant that he made with **Abraham**,  
his sworn promise to **Isaac**,  
10 which he confirmed to **Jacob** as a statute,  
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,  
11 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan  
as your portion for an inheritance."  
12 When they were few in number,  
of little account, and sojourners in it,  
13 wandering from nation to nation,  
from one kingdom to another people,  
14 he allowed no one to oppress them;  
he rebuked kings on their account,  
15 saying, "**Touch not my anointed ones,**  
**do my prophets no harm!**"

- We can rightly infer that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are all seen as prophets. This makes sense as each of them stood in the presence of the Lord, saw Him in a dream or vision and also received His words concerning the future that they passed down to their families.
- Let's take a look at a slide that shows us the 7 men in the Torah described or understood to be prophets:

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**(SLIDE)**

## What Makes a Prophet (Torah)

- Abraham - Stood in God's Counsel, God reveals plans, intercedes (Gen. 18, 12-25)
- Isaac - Sees God, God reveals plans (Gen. 26)
- Jacob - Sees God, God reveals plans, prophesies over sons (Gen.28,35,49)
- Joseph - Prophetic dreams/interpretations, accurate prophesies, intercedes (37,40,50)
- Moses - Speaks face to face w/ God, prophetic visions intercedes (Ex 3, Dt 18, Nu 12)
- Aaron - Speaks for Moses/God, carries out miracles, intercedes (Ex 4, 7)
- Balaam - Hears from God, ultimately tries to lead people away from God (Nu 22-24)

- **Abraham is called a prophet in Genesis 20:7**
- **Isaac and Jacob are inferred to be prophets in Psalm 105 and fit the God given description in Numbers 12:6-8**
- **Joseph has prophetic dreams in Genesis 37, interprets dreams in Genesis 40-41, and prophesies in Genesis 50, he is a prophet**
- **Moses is called a prophet in Deuteronomy 18**
- **Aaron is called Moses' prophet in Exodus 7:1**
- **Balaam is referred to as a prophet by Moses throughout Numbers 22-24, however what we learn about him is that he has been hired by Balaak to curse Israel and ultimately he works to draw the people away. He is an enemy of the people of Israel and is the first picture of a false prophet in the scriptures. While he is successful in leading some of the people away, God demonstrates His power over him.**
- **Let's pull all of this information together to get a clear picture of what the Torah teaches us about prophets and how the first audience would have most likely understood prophets:**



●  
**(READ THE SLIDE)**

## What Makes a Prophet (Torah)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stands in God's counsel</li><li>• God Reveals His Plans</li><li>• Sees God (in visions/dreams)</li><li>• Prophetic Dreams/Interpretations</li><li>• Hears from/Speaks for God</li><li>• Carries out Miracles</li><li>• Accurately Prophesies</li><li>• Intercedes on other's behalf</li></ul> | <p><u>FALSE PROPHET</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can accurately prophecy</li><li>• Hears from God</li><li>• Ultimately tries to lead people away</li></ul> |
|---|---|

- When considering this list on the left hand side, Abraham fits the description of every line item, he is the prototype for prophets that would come after him. And all of this occurs even amidst Abraham's flaws, God calls him a prophet in the middle of the deception with Abimelech. Although Abraham is largely the reason Abimelech is in this situation, it is God's design that Abraham is also the solution.

●  
**8** Early the next morning Abimelech summoned all his officials, and when he told them all that had happened, they were very much afraid. **9** Then Abimelech called Abraham in and said, "What have you done to us? How have I wronged you that you have brought such great guilt upon me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that should not be done."



- The text says, "Early the next morning" - Abimelech wastes no time sharing the revelation he has received from God with his officials. This shows an urgency that Abimelech has to clear his name.
- Not only was he immediate in his actions, but he also did not try to cover it up. He could have returned Sarah privately and tried to hide any embarrassment. He has a willingness to be open and transparent with the people that are closest to him in leadership with his faults.
- How often do you really want to admit that you have done wrong? Especially when you have done it innocently and you could blame someone else for a sin that you did?
- His officials response is that they are very much afraid. This shows that Abraham's assessment that there is "no fear of God in this place at all" was actually a misplaced fear inside of him.
- Both Pharaoh and Abimelech say, "What have you done?" Echoing back to Genesis 3:13 where God is asking Adam the same question.
- But after that one similarity the differences between Pharaoh and Abimelech are many:
- **(SLIDE)**

# Comparison: Pharaoh vs Abimelech

<u>Pharaoh</u>	<u>Abimelech</u>
Puts all blame on Abraham	Admits guilt
Gives Abraham no chance to reply	Converses with Abraham
Expelled Abraham from Egypt	Let's Abraham have the pick of the land and 1000 pieces of silver
Focus is on himself "What have you done to me?"	Focus is on his kingdom, "what have you done to us?"
Pharaoh asks why did he lie?	Abimelech says, "how have I wronged you?"

Pharaoh	Abimelech
Puts all blame on Abraham	Admits guilt
Gives Abraham no chance to reply	Converses with Abraham
Expelled Abraham from Egypt	Let's Abraham have the pick of the land and 1000 pieces of silver
Focus is on himself "What have you done to <u>me</u> ?"	Focus is on his kingdom, "what have you done to <u>us</u> ?"
Pharaoh asks why did he lie?	Abimelech says, "how have I wronged you?"



We should learn from this example to show a willingness to admit fault, be transparent, and quickly seek reconciliation. These actions show true

leadership requires humility and a willingness to learn and change from our mistakes. **AND DON'T TAKE EACH OTHERS WIVES!**

**10 And Abimelech asked Abraham, “What was your reason for doing this?”**

**11 Abraham replied, “I said to myself, ‘There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.’**

- Every chapter we are learning more about true saving faith from our example in Abraham. He is the father of faith, and we hope by now you all can see why he deserves such a title.
- We will not spend too much time here, but it is worth noting that Abraham's fear and presumption is a repeated problem and will be passed down to his son.
  - Abraham does this exact act twice, with Pharoah and Abimelech
  - Isaac also does this with another Abimelech (but as you will see, there is no truth in Isaac claiming Rebekah is his sister)
  - But, the family does see progress as Jacob does not repeat the same action.
- Remember from earlier, Abraham did not technically "lie" because Sarah was his sister, but he did intentionally deceive; this becomes clear in these verses as he explains himself.
- In this weakness in the father of the faith there is a valuable lesson we can glean as his sons and daughters: **If you act in fear you will never know how God could work through faith.** Fear has been a big discussion in this church the last month. If we look at the first three

instances of people being motivated by fear we can see what it produces in our lives.



- **First mention: Gen 3:10 "I was afraid because I was naked so I hid."**
  - **Fear drove man's sinful action to HIDE from God when he should have RUN TO God**
- **Second mention: Gen 18:15 "Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I did not laugh."**
  - **Sarah was afraid and lied and said that she did not laugh. Fear produces a lack of trust and honesty with the Lord**
- **Third mention: Gen 19:30 "Lot and his two daughters left Zoar and settled in the mountains—for he was afraid to stay in Zoar—where they lived in a cave."**
  - **fear drove Lot to live in a cave and fear led the daughters to have sex with their dad. Where do you think they got this fear? Their father!**



- **Fear causes us to hide, lie and do stupid things. Hide from our own actions, lie about the true soil of our heart, and behave foolishly and wickedly instead of trusting the plan God has laid out for us.**
- **When reading this chapter where our hero has a weak moment it is important to remember how God responded: He comes to his defense and aid!**
- **This is a descriptive event in Abrahams life that is not meritorious, but it does however serve to foreshadow the election of Israel!**
- **The events of chapter 20 do not have to be severely attacked or defended to make the larger point of God's sovereignty and defense of his covenant people, which is the central point of the chapter! Remember: Abraham is the forerunner of Israel and what he experiences, the nation that comes from him will also experience.**

- Even when Abraham (Israel) is not acting perfectly Adonai is still at work through all things to bring about His good purpose for Israel. Consider what Paul writes in Romans 8



- Romans 8:28–30 (NIVUK84) 28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.



- Despite Abraham's weakness and flaws, God's covenant with him is never renegotiated or annulled. God keeps his promises and acts on behalf of His nation He is building.
- Despite any bad theology any one of us grew up on, this is the consistent theme the entire Biblical Story hinges on. For one example, let's look briefly at Ezekiel 36.



- Ezekiel 36:22-23 (BSB) 22 Therefore tell the house of Israel that this is what the Lord GOD says: It is not for your sake that I will act, O house of Israel, but for My holy name, which you profaned among the nations to which you went. 23 I will show the holiness of My great name, which has been profaned among the nations—the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when I show My holiness in you before their eyes.



- Abraham as God's chosen man did not perfectly represent his name among the nations in this chapter. But regardless of his weakness, God stills acts, not because of who Abraham is, but because of WHO HE IS.
- And, through this act of weakness, the sovereign Lord of all is able to work in it regardless and show another nation (Abimelech) that HE IS LORD!
- This was true for Abraham, true in the wilderness, true in the days of the Kings, and true when they crucified Messiah. Despite the actions of His covenant people, God's call is irrevocable and He is still true to His word.

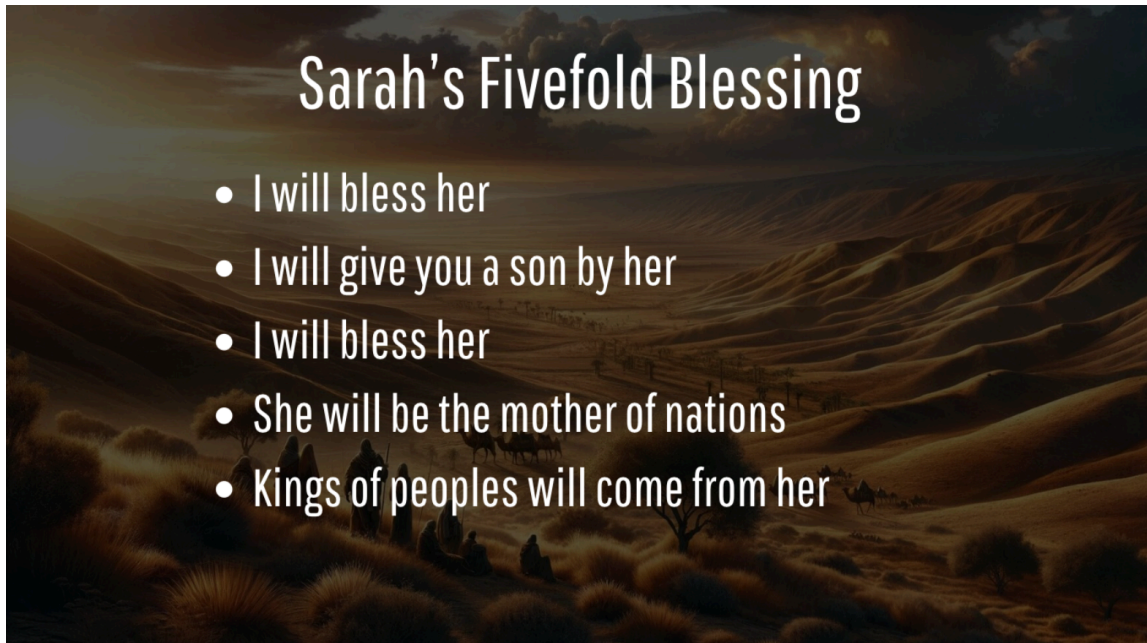


**12 Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother; and she became my wife. 13 And when God caused me to wander from my father's household, I said to her, 'This is how you can show your love to me: Everywhere we go, say of me, "He is my brother."'**

- Just like Abraham, Sarah has been on a journey of faith and trust. She too has had moments of great victory and weakness. Despite the unfavorable circumstances of this chapter, it is worth highlighting how Sarah continues to be a righteous example of trust in her Husband and Her God.
- Sarah's reverent submission is a theme throughout the last several stories, and that submission will be rewarded in the next chapter.
- Her own feelings about this arrangement are never recorded but her exact obedience to Abraham is recorded.
- Despite the situation she was in, she was still a woman with a promise from God who trusted in the man that same God gave her.



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**(SLIDE)**



- She is the example of a woman who does not give way to fear
- (Personally, in all of the recorded "frightening situations" in the text we cannot think of a more frightening situation than having your husband give you over to another man's home!)
- Through the most frightening circumstances, Sarah trusted in the Lord BY trusting in Abraham. And despite his mistakes, despite being sent into Pharaoh's home years earlier, she does it again willingly! That is trust worth modeling. With this story in mind, it's worth reading one more time the words of the Apostle Peter on Sarah's trust in the faithful man God gave her as husband

- - **1 Peter 3:5-6 (NIV) For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, 6 like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.**

**14 Then Abimelech brought sheep and cattle and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham, and he returned Sarah his wife to him. 15 And Abimelech said, “My land is before you; live wherever you like.”**

**16 To Sarah he said, “I am giving your brother a thousand shekels of silver. This is to cover the offence against you before all who are with you; you are completely vindicated.”**

- **This is now the second time that a gentile ruler blesses Abraham with material wealth.**
- **Which, on a side note, really highlights his rejection of the King of Sodom’s wealth.**

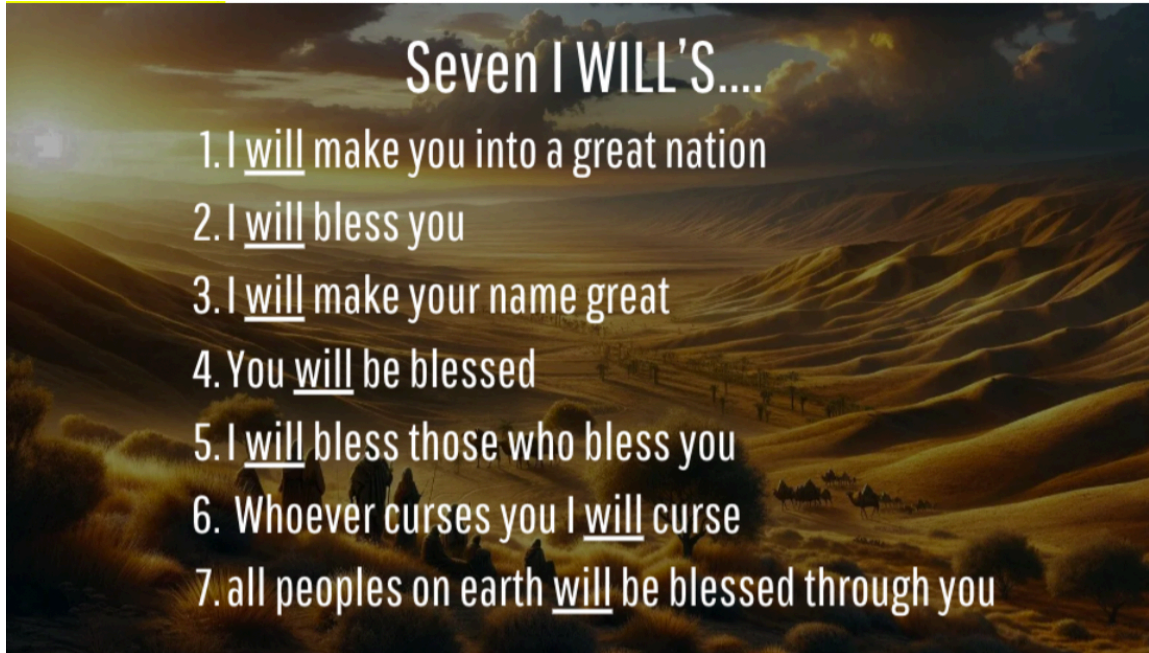
**(SLIDE)**



- In Genesis 12 Abraham receives sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels from Pharaoh.
- In Genesis 20 we now see Abraham receive sheep, cattle, male and female slaves, along with freedom to live anywhere in the land and 1000 shekels of silver.
- There is a consistent theme throughout the scriptures of gentiles bringing tribute to Abraham's family. Remember the heptadic blessing:

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**(SLIDE)**



- **God said I will bless you and He also said, “You will be blessed”.** Clearly God blesses Abraham and his household down through the ages with descendants and redemption, but God also specifies with promises 4 and 5 that others will bless him. Let’s take a look at some other phenomenal passages that show gentiles bringing tribute to Israel.
  - **Psalm 72:10-11 (NIV 1984):** "The kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to him; the kings of Sheba and Seba will present him gifts." "All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him."
- **Distant and diverse lands will bring tribute and gifts just like the queen of Sheba did for King Solomon.**
  - **1 Kings 10:10 (NIV 1984):** "And she gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. Never again were so many spices brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon."



- She traveled over 1000 miles to bring him 273 million dollars worth of gold. And also the spices 😊
- Solomon was the first spice drawer junkie...this must have been his kitchen



●

- Isaiah 60:4–5 (NIVUK84)
- 4 “Lift up your eyes and look about you:  
  
All assemble and come to you (Sarah);  
  
your sons come from afar,  
  
and your daughters are carried on the arm.
- 5 Then you will look and be radiant,  
  
your heart will throb and swell with joy;

the wealth on the seas will be brought to you,

to you the riches of the nations will come.

- We will continue to remind everyone that the sons Abraham will eventually send away down through the generations are obviously blessed by God, but in the end even they will return bringing their wealth to lay it down at the feet of Israel.

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- Isaiah 60:11 (NIVUK84)

- 11 Your gates will always stand open,

they will never be shut, day or night,

so that men may bring you the wealth of the nations—

their kings led in triumphal procession.

- The picture the scriptures paint is of a continual flow of riches from the nations into Jerusalem.

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**(READ THE SLIDE)**





*ALIENS WILL SHEPHERD  
YOUR FLOCKS;  
FOREIGNERS WILL WORK  
YOUR FIELDS AND  
VINEYARDS.  
6 AND YOU WILL BE CALLED  
PRIESTS OF THE LORD,  
YOU WILL BE NAMED  
MINISTERS OF OUR GOD.  
YOU WILL FEED ON THE  
WEALTH OF NATIONS,  
AND IN THEIR RICHES YOU  
WILL BOAST.*

**ISAIAH 61:5-6**

- Jokes aside, in addition to money being brought in, people from distant lands come to actually serve the people of Israel. The nations become willing servants, this is amazing when you think about the state of things today!
- 
- Isaiah 49:22 (NIVUK84) 22 This is what the Sovereign LORD says: “See, I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.
- 
- God Himself will direct Gentiles as servants to the people of Israel who will bring the sons and daughters of Israel back into their land. The picture of Gentiles as willing servants bringing tribute and gifts along with physically assisting the people of Israel as they return

home has had some partial fulfillment in the past, but will be completely fulfilled in the days to come.



- **Zechariah 14:14 (NIVUK84) 14** Judah too will fight at Jerusalem. The wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected—great quantities of gold and silver and clothing.



- **Zechariah 14:16–17 (NIVUK84) 16** Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. **17** If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain.



- **Even those who have been enemies to Israel will honor the King, the Lord Almighty who will rule from Jerusalem. They will bring physical, material, tangible blessings of gold, silver, and clothing from all over the world to bless Israel and her King.**



- **Revelation 21:24–26 (NIVUK84) 24** The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. **25** On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. **26** The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.



- **This means that from Israel's beginning in Genesis 12 to the fulfillment of the covenant with Abraham in Revelation 21, gentiles have and will continue to bring tribute to Abraham and his descendants into the millennial reign.**

- **Let's look at a few verses to help us understand why this is so important:**
  - **1 Corinthians 9:11 (NIV 1984): "If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?"**
- 
- **Here Paul is making the point that when you have benefitted spiritually from what someone has given you, it is right and good to bless in turn with physical blessings.**
- **In truth the land that Abimelech was on wasn't even his to give to Abraham, it actually belonged to Abraham, but Abimelech didn't know it yet.**
- **Romans 15:25-27 Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord's people there. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem. 27 They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.**
- 
- **Once again, the point is being made here that in response to the spiritual blessings that we have received from the Jews, we owe them material blessings.**
- **Perhaps it is worth comparing to the cost of shipping. We understand that to get a precious package to the other side of the world, the deliverer will have to go through some trouble and expense to ensure the package reaches its destination.**

- The Jews have been hated, tortured, and killed around the world for 1000's of years to help deliver to you the scriptures and bring the world the messiah. They are still hated and persecuted to this day...the idea that tribute would be brought to them not only to say thank you, but also to actually help them, to honor God, and to endeavor to repay the debt we owe is not only Godly, it is logical.
- In fact the scriptures do go beyond just the material repayment to the point of endeavoring to be servants to them for God, even rising to the occasion to give our lives.
- And here we see early on in Abraham's story, the wealth from the gentiles is already flowing into his household and so it will continue, Lord willing, even through us.



**17 Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife and his slave girls so they could have children again, 18 for the LORD had closed up every womb in Abimelech's household because of Abraham's wife Sarah.**

- Along with this being the first mention of prophet in the Bible. This is first mention of someone praying for another person and them being healed!
- Throughout the Bible, we witness the power of prayer in bringing healing and restoration, even to those who have acted against God's chosen ones. From the Older Testament to the Newer Testament, we find instances where the prayers of righteous individuals intercede on behalf of those who have wronged them or God's prophets. These stories reveal a consistent pattern: repentance, followed by the intervention of a righteous person's prayer, results in divine healing and forgiveness. This theme culminates in the book of Revelation, where the healing of the

nations is ultimately tied to the tree of life, symbolizing the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham - that through his descendants, all nations would be blessed.



- 1 Kings 13:4–6 (ESV) 4 And when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, “Seize him.” And his hand, which he stretched out against him, dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself. 5 The altar also was torn down, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. 6 And the king said to the man of God, “Entreat now the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.” And the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king’s hand was restored to him and became as it was before.



- In this instance we see God strikes King Jeroboam with an affliction to his hand when he went against prophet of the Lord.
- The only way that the king could be restored was to ask the man of God for prayer for grace and mercy from the Lord.
- Once again we see the Lord listening to the man of God on behalf of a king who had done wrong to bring healing.



- Job 42:8 (ESV) 7 After the LORD had spoken these words to Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite: “My anger burns against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. 8 Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will

accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly. For you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.”



- Even though God rebukes Job earlier in the book (40:2) for having his eyes solely focused on himself and not where they should be – on God himself. He is still called a servant of the Lord and is acceptable to the Lord and his prayers will be accepted.
- God directs these men to give bulls and rams to his servant just like Abimelech gave gifts to Abraham.



- Acts 9:17–18 (ESV) 17 So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized;



- In Acts 9:10 Ananias was called a disciple and in Acts 22:12 he is called a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there.
- Saul clearly was in opposition to Jesus and was actively and aggressively persecuting his church.
- The same thing that happened to Abimelech happened to Saul in that he had a divine encounter with God in a vision (v12) who told him he would be healed after he humbled himself and was prayed for.





- James 5:16 NIV 1984 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.



- Sinners always have the opportunity to confess and be prayed for by righteous men and women for healing.
- You can see the connection here back to Abraham as a righteous man that was praying for the sins of Abimelech who was humble and wanting to receive healing for himself and his nation.
- The responsibility is on the one that is needing the healing. You can see how if Abimelech was hard hearted and did not listen to God then he would not have been healed. He obeys God in humility and has righteous Abraham pray for him.
- It is amazing that Abraham wasn't perfect in his actions in this scenario and yet he is still recognized as the one who should pray for Abimelech to be healed.



- Revelation 21:12–14 (ESV) 12 It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— 13 on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.



- Revelation 22:2–3 (ESV) 2 through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be

anything accursed (curses), but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.



- In the center of the city that is the heart of the Jewish nation, Jerusalem, are twelve gates, one for each tribe is the tree of life where its leaves are for the healing of the nations.
- The final fulfillment of Abraham's descendants being a blessing to all nations by bringing healing to them.
- How many nations have hated Israel; and yet here their city houses the tree of life that is producing healing for the nations. This is the ministry of Israel, and the ministry that its father, Abraham began thousands of years ago.



#### **CLOSING:**

- It takes a special kind of faith for a man who doesn't have his promised Son yet to pray for others to be able to have children, and to see his prayers heal them!
- Barrenness and waiting on a promised son is far too common in our churches, and is no doubt another Satanic Stratagem on our own body.
- A way to demonstrate your contentment and faith for your own promised son is to have the faith to pray for other people's fertility first, like Abraham did.
  - When we think of this kind of faith, it is hard not to think of a couple like John and Joi Dang. They came to LCM after being unable to conceive children for years. They believed the Lord spoke to them about having children.
  - To demonstrate their faith, they spent the next seven years making baby clothes for every person who wanted to have children. They offered themselves as babysitters for everyone

who had children. They set out to teach the children already present at LCM and became youth instructors. This went on for more than 84 months—more than 84 cycles that produced no children.

- During this time, they demonstrated their faith that Adonai would give them children by blessing everyone who wanted to have children, as well as those who already had children. After a little over seven years, they were given children! This is what the faith of Abraham looks like and this is the faith that moves the heart of God.



- We are starting to come a close of tonight's teaching. Moses, the author of all we are reading has given us an honest look into the father of the faith. It's worth noting again, God never rebukes or corrects Abraham for his actions, he only defends him and acts on his behalf. Despite the Lord and Moses knowing his actions were wrong as Moses will write in his other books:



- Leviticus 19:11 (ESV) "You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; you shall not lie to one another."



- The reason being: Abraham's righteousness or his sins was never the point of the story. His salvation is not based upon the mistakes he made, but the actions he attempted in faith despite his mistakes. This is Abraham's story, and it is Israel's story:



- Deuteronomy 9:4-5 "Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is

driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."



- No great hero of our faith was chosen on the basis of merit or accomplishment. But on the basis of sovereign choice and design. What makes Abraham unique to all the other heroes is he was the first. He had no Torah to incline his heart, or writings to direct his steps, no prophets to warn his soul. He had no commentaries or sermons to implement weekly in his life.
- And yet, he possessed a faith that most Christians can only dream of replicating. The life Abraham lived will be reflected all throughout Israel's history. His life serves as a stencil in God's hand, through which He will craft the stories of Israel and all his descendants. Look at these final slides that show the prophetic pattern Genesis 20 lays out for Israel's future:



**(READ SLIDE)**

## Abraham & Israel: Prophetic Pattern

1. Both elected to produce the promised son and bring salvation to the world
2. Both stumble along the way but God keeps them from falling
3. Both delivered by the mighty hand of God
4. Both pray for the healing of the nations
5. Both receive offerings from the kings of the earth

- 
- **Tonight's chapter brought us these powerful parallels and next week they will continue with more:**



**(READ # 6&7 on SLIDE)**

## Abraham & Israel: Prophetic Pattern

1. Both elected to produce the promised son and bring salvation to the world
2. Both stumble along the way but God keeps them from falling
3. Both delivered by the mighty hand of God
4. Both pray for the healing of the nations
5. Both receive offerings from the kings of the earth
6. Both receive the promised son
7. Both receive nations seeking to be in covenant with the God of Israel

- **The same stencil that wrote Israel's life is writing yours as well. We now are privileged to inherit the blessings, the covenants, and all scripture. But also, along with these blessings are also hardships.**
- **It is not your nation surrounded by enemies on every side with thousands desiring your genocide.**
- **It is not your nation who has thousands of violent protestors shouting against them a mere 40 miles away.**
- **It is not our nation, but it is our family. The family we were adopted into by the grace of God.**
- **Just as Israel has a unique privilege and responsibility, we too as Gentiles have a privilege and responsibility to pay tribute to the ones who dug the well we get to drink from, the ones who carried along the words of life we love, and the ones whom produced the ONE we call Lord.**



- **Romans 9:4-5 (NIV) Theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. 5 Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.**