

# GENESIS 20: ABRAHAM AND ABIMELECH

## I. OVERVIEW

- A. Abraham leaves the oaks of Mamre and journeys to Gerar
  - i. Here a similar scenario plays out to chapter 12
    - a. Abraham tells Abimelech king of Gerar that Sarah is his sister
    - b. Abimelech takes her so God afflicts the people with barrenness
    - c. God appears to Abimelech in a dream and tells him to return Sarah to Abraham
    - d. Abimelech confronts Abraham
      - i. Gives him Sarah, sheep, oxen, male and female servants
      - ii. Gives him 1,000 pieces of silver and whatever land he wants
    - e. Abraham prays to God and Abimelech and his people are healed

## II. NEGEB – V.1

- A. South toward Egypt
  - i. South is symbolic of the grave
- B. Why?
  - i. He just witnessed Sodom and Gomorrah get destroyed

## III. SHE IS MY SISTER – V. 2

- A. Same as what he said to Pharaoh
- B. He falls back into same sin as last time he was near Egypt

## IV. ABIMELECH – V. 2

- A. Title, not a name
  - i. Like Pharaoh, Caesar<sup>1</sup>

## V. TOOK SARAH – V. 2

- A. There is a child that will be born in the next year
- B. If Abimelech takes Sarah as his wife, the father of that child will always be in question<sup>2</sup>

## VI. YOU ARE A DEAD MAN – V. 3

- A. In two ways:
  - i. God will kill him for taking Sarah unless he gives her back

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<sup>1</sup> Armstrong, S. (2012b, January 8). Genesis 2011 - Lesson 20. Verse By Verse Ministry International. [https://versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis\\_2011\\_lesson\\_20](https://versebyversemministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_20)

<sup>2</sup> Guzik, D. (2018b). Study Guide for Genesis 20. Blue Letter Bible. [https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik\\_david/study-guide/genesis/genesis-20.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/genesis/genesis-20.cfm)

ii. God has already made him and his household unable to produce any children<sup>3</sup>

**VII. WILL YOU KILL AN INNOCENT PEOPLE – V. 4**

- A. Power vacuum is created if the king has no offspring<sup>4</sup>
- B. Similar to what Abraham prayed in chapter 18

**VIII. I DID NOT LET YOU TOUCH HER – V. 6**

- A. God is protecting the integrity of the promised Seed

**IX. HE WILL PRAY FOR YOU – V. 7**

- A. Abraham proved himself an intercessor in chapter 18
- B. Now he is given the responsibility of prophet and intercessor for other nations

**X. ABIMELECH CALLED ABRAHAM – V. 9**

- A. He brought Abraham to his courts and confronted him with a strong rebuke
  - i. Righteous anger
  - ii. All his accusations were true
    - a. He didn't tone down his anger just to win Abraham's favor
    - b. Even though Abraham's prayers were the key to turning back God's judgment on his family<sup>5</sup>

**XI. THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD AT ALL IN THIS PLACE – V. 11**

- A. This may be true but it shouldn't be Abraham's concern
  - i. The main problem was there was no fear of God in Abraham's heart<sup>6</sup>

**XII. SHE IS INDEED MY SISTER – V. 12**

- A. This may be true
  - i. But a truth told with intent to deceive is still a lie

**XIII. WHEN GOD CAUSED ME TO WANDER FROM MY FATHER'S HOUSE – V. 13**

- A. This is true but Abraham is blaming his fear on God<sup>7</sup>
  - i. Instead of trusting God to protect him, he is taking his protection into his own hands

**XIV. WANDER – V. 13**

- A. Means to err, or go astray<sup>8</sup>

**XV. GAVE THEM TO ABRAHAM – V. 14**

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<sup>3</sup> Armstrong

<sup>4</sup> Armstrong

<sup>5</sup> Armstrong

<sup>6</sup> Guzik

<sup>7</sup> Guzik

<sup>8</sup> Guzik

- A. Abraham had previously rejected gifts from a pagan king
  - i. But he had no moral high ground to refuse the gifts here<sup>9</sup>

#### **XVI. MY LAND IS BEFORE YOU – V. 15**

- A. Just like Abraham said to Lot when they were quarrelling

#### **XVII. YOUR BROTHER – V. 16**

- A. Abimelech mocks Abraham
  - i. He is clearly doing this out of respect for Abraham's God, not Abraham himself<sup>10</sup>

#### **XVIII. VINDICATED – V. 16**

- A. Abimelech recognizes in front of everyone that Sarah is not at fault

#### **XIX. POINTS TO JESUS**

- A. Abraham, the first intercessor, is still found with sin
  - i. We still need a Great Intercessor who will fully trust in God

#### **XX. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION**

- A. In chapter 12 God sends a plague on Egypt when Pharaoh took Sarai as his wife. In chapter 20 God came to Abimelech in a dream and gave him a choice. Why did God give Abimelech a warning but not Pharaoh?

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- B. Why did God require Abraham to pray for Abimelech to remove the barrenness on his family?

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- C. What can we learn from Abimelech's response to God and to Abraham?

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<sup>9</sup> Guzik

<sup>10</sup> Armstrong

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D. How do we respond when we are confronted about our sin? Do we make excuses or do we humbly repent for what we've done?

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E. Does God use unbelievers to address sin in His people? How should we respond when God does this?

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#### **XXI. FURTHER STUDY**

A. How should we confront those in the Church who sin against us? (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Timothy 5:19-21)

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B. To what does verses 2-7 compare Sarah (Hint: See Genesis 3)? What could the author be trying to say through this comparison about Sarah and her coming child?

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C. Compare Genesis 20:14 to Genesis 13:9. How has Abraham's role changed? What can we learn from this?

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