

Genesis Chapter 20

Ge 20:1-2 And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. **2** And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She *is* my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.

Abraham resorted to his old ways again. Just as in [Gen.12:13](#), Abraham lies about Sarah for fear of his own life rather than trust God for the outcome (see [vs.11](#)). And sure enough, Abimelech takes Sarah. Either Sarah was unusually attractive, or she was a target of the devil, or both. The devil hates the propagation of mankind and is at enmity with the line of Christ ([Gen.3:15](#)). The Jew has always been hated. This will culminate at the time of the Great Tribulation.

Ge 20:3-7 But **God came to Abimelech in a dream** by night, and said to him, Behold, **thou art but a dead man**, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she *is* a man's wife. **4** But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also **a righteous nation?** **5** Said he not unto me, She *is* my sister? and she, even she herself said, He *is* my brother: **in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands** have I done this. **6** And God said unto him in a dream, **Yea, I know** that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for **I also withheld thee from sinning against me**: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. **7** Now therefore restore the man *his* wife; **for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live**: and if thou restore *her* not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that *are* thine.

Although Abimelech was a Philistine, he had a knowledge of God and God had a knowledge of him (and his nation, [vs.4](#)). Abimelech fits the description given in [Romans 2:7-16](#) which declares that every man is accountable to God through his conscience. God sees the heart ([1 Sam. 16:7](#)). He knows what man is seeking for and why. Those who sincerely seek God by “[patient continuance in well doing](#)” (*the heathen in the jungles, etc.*) are granted eternal life ([Rom.2:7](#)). But “[unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth](#)”, eternal damnation ([Rom.2:8](#)). The contentious would include the evolutionist, the atheist, the agnostic, the pantheist, etc. (basically, anyone who denies the existence of the Godhead and the deity of Jesus Christ). But Abimelech acknowledged God, so God spoke to him.

The first way God spoke to Abimelech was through a dream. We don't trust in dreams, but we know this was God because of the message. He said, “You're a dead man”! (*As we've seen in chapter 19, God and his angels aren't very tactful*). The devil would have come with flattering words, encouraging sinful behavior ([Gen.3:4-5](#)).

Abimelech defends himself in [vs.5](#) by saying, “[...in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this.](#)” We know this is true by God's response, “[Yea, I know](#)”. God even provided a way of escape ([1Cor.10:13](#)) by withholding him from sin. If God has ever done this for you, Praise the Lord! If not, you might pray for this!

We thus conclude that God is merciful when he boldly shines the light on our sin.

The second way God spoke to Abimelech was through a man – the man of God, the prophet, Abraham. God has always had a spokesman throughout history, and this is still his primary method. Since 1611, we have had the benefit of God's completed word - a more sure word of prophecy than any dream, vision, or man ([2Pet.1:19](#)).

Today, any man who genuinely follows his conscience will find himself confessing Jesus as Lord.

Ge 20:8-10 Therefore **Abimelech rose early in the morning**, and called all his servants, **and told all these things** in their ears: and the men were sore afraid. **9** Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that **thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin?** thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. **10** And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? **11** And Abraham said, **Because I thought**, Surely the fear of God *is* not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake.

Abimelech didn't waste any time following God's orders. He assembled his servants, admitted his guilt, and preached the fear of God. He then called Abraham...but not for prayer. Instead, he chides him for allowing this evil to happen (and he was right). Abraham had a besetting sin that far too many preachers suffer from - the fear of man. Because of this, Abraham's judgment was clouded, and his imaginations ran wild ([vs.11](#)). **First**, he is worried of **what man might do** unto him. This is contrary to the words of Jesus in [Mt 10:28](#) “[And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul...](#)” **Second**, he was worried of **what man thinks** of him. This causes compromise and backsliding. God says, “[the fear of man bringeth a snare...](#)” [Pro.29:25](#). See the following verses.

Ge 20:12-13 And **yet indeed she is my sister**; she *is* the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and **she became my wife**. **13** And it came to pass, when **God caused me to wander** from my father's house, that I said unto her, This *is* thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He *is* my brother.

When confronted with his sin, Abraham sought to justify his actions rather than take the reproach for doing wrong. He even passed the buck to Sarah and to God. He's just a victim of circumstance. “[the fear of man bringeth a snare...](#)”

Ge 20:14-15 And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave *them* unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. **15** And Abimelech said, Behold, my land *is* before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee.

So why did Abimelech end up submitting himself to this compromising, hypocritical prophet of God? Can God actually use a sinful man to be his prophet? That's all he's ever used! Not to mention, Abimelech was just as guilty. At least Abimelech followed the teaching of Matthew 7 before getting on Abraham's case.

But the answer is even simpler than that, he submitted because God told him to ([vs.7](#)). The nation of Gerar needed to recognize that, in Abraham, all nations of the earth would be blessed ([Gen.18:18](#)).

Ge 20:17-18 So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare *children*. **18** For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.

Evidently this situation lasted a while. At least long enough for Abimelech's household to realize they couldn't have children. This helps to explain Abimelech's statements to Abraham in [vs.9-10](#).