

Genesis – 20

From time to time Abraham moved from place to place in search of pasture for his herds; as he did in chapter 12.

Look back at Chapter 12: God calls Abram. Abram responds by moving his family. Journeys to the Promised Land and builds an altar to the Lord at Bethel. Famine drives him to Egypt. Gen 12:11-13. Pharaoh takes her. God intervenes with plagues.

20:1-2

How does this circumstance threaten God's plan of making a nation from Abraham and Sarah? This episode, in contrast to the one in Egypt, takes place in the promised land. Recall Gen 15:1 when God said "do not fear, I am a shield to you." Why did Abraham do this?

20:3-7

Notice how seriously God views adultery. Abimelech had unknowingly taken a married woman to be his wife and was about to commit adultery. In many ways, he already had because Sarah had been caused to be in the position of his wife (for example, recall the "sons-in-law" of Lot's daughters). But because of the "integrity of his heart and the innocence of his hands," God in His mercy gave Abimelech the opportunity to turn from sinning against Him and the consequences of that act. Consider how God works when our hands and hearts are pure. Read Psalm 24:3-4, Matthew 13:11-17

As Christians, trials often come our way regardless of how fervently we seek to please God in our lives. Read John 16:33

20:8-13

How does Abraham defend his actions? In the same breath Abraham acknowledges that it was God who sent him on this journey, and he also devised a scheme intended to deceive others. As Christians we often grant ourselves a "badge of impunity" for our self-serving actions. One such example is when we reveal or seek gossip under the guise of "*facilitating someone's prayer needs*". Read 1 Timothy 5:13

Abraham had assumed that Abimelech was a wicked man. What are some of the potentially harmful consequences (to us and others) of assuming another's intentions, motives, thoughts, etc.? Read Luke 6:37

20:14-18

Why did God punish Abimelech and his household even though his intentions were not evil? Sin has been described as a poison that hurts us and those around us regardless of our intentions. Explain how this is so.

What does verse 18 say about the position of leadership upon a household and the influence on those within? Read Acts 16:31-33, Proverbs 31:27-29