

GENESIS –Lesson 38

Learn: For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Hebrews 4:12, 13

Read: Genesis 20:1-18

In many respects, Genesis 20 is one of the most difficult chapters in the Bible to understand. The narrative is simple enough, of course; but how could Abraham and Sarah, at this time, repeat the very same sin they had committed many years ago in Egypt? It might be understandable that, in those days when their faith had not yet really been tested and God's faithfulness fully confirmed, that they could have fallen into such a trap; but how could they do it again? They had, over and over again, seen many wonderful answers to prayer, many miraculous proofs of God's care and protection. Their faith had stood many tests, and God had never failed them. And now, finally, they were about to have their long-promised son! Sarah may even have been pregnant with Isaac, and it would only be a few months more. This is what the Bible records, however, so it must have happened, just this way.

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1. What happened in verses 1, 2?

Abraham took a trip through the Negev and into Gerar, the capital city at that time of the land of the Philistines, near the Egyptian border. This was a prosperous city, as revealed by archeological excavations there, and it may be that Abraham had some kind of business dealings in mind. The city controlled a lucrative caravan route and Abraham by this time was a wealthy and powerful chieftain.

The Philistines were Hamitic peoples (Genesis 10:14) who apparently settled at various times along the seacoast, coming probably from Crete. The name Palestine was derived from their name. Though most of them did not arrive until many centuries later, apparently early contingents of them had settled there by the time of Abraham. There was considerable intermixing of these peoples with the descendants of Japheth. They did not worship the true God THE GENESIS RECORD P 360 Dr. Henry Morris

2. Returning to Genesis 17:17, 18; how old was Sarah when this event took place?

It is perhaps surprising that Sarah would still be physically attractive to a heathen king. However, she had in some measure been physically rejuvenated, in order to conceive, bear, and nurse Isaac, and possibly this manifested itself in renewed beauty as well. Or possibly Abimelech (evidently a standard name for Philistine kings, like Pharaoh in Egypt) viewed union with her as of political value, since Abraham was a powerful and rich chieftain. Abimelech already had a harem and, as considered customary in those days, kings had a right to take any woman they might choose into their harems, whether for personal or political motives.

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3. Here we see again, that the Lord's plan will not be thwarted. How did the Lord intervene in this situation? vv 3,6,17

4. What else had the Lord done to make his power evident to Abimelech? v 18

5. God showed great mercy to Abimelech, for rather than just judging him, what did the Lord do? v 3

6. What answer did Abimelech give to the Lord for what he had done in taking Abraham's wife? vv 4, 5

7. Was Abimelech being honest in his answer to the Lord? How do you know?
v 6

8. Does God know the inward thoughts and motives of all men's hearts, or was this occurrence with Abimelech an unusual event? Explain.
Psalm 94:11; Hebrews 4:12, 13

9. What did the Lord tell Abimelech about Abraham? v 7

10. What did the Lord require from Abimelech in order for him to be healed? v 7

What would happen if Abimelech refused to obey God?

11. What did the Lord require from Abraham for Abimelech's healing? v 7

12. What happened when Abraham prayed for Abimelech? v 17

13. What does James 5:16 tell us?

14. Since God is the healer and does not need our prayers to heal someone, why should we pray for healing? Ephesians 6:18

15. Will God heal everyone that we pray for? Explain.
James 5:16; I John 5:14; II Corinthians 12: 8-10

16. What response did Abimelech make to God's command because he already understood the power of God from what had happened to him and his harem? v 8

How did this revelation affect Abimelech's men?

17. What stinging rebuke did Abimelech give to Abraham and Sarah before he restored Sarah to Abraham and asked for his prayer? vv 9, 10, 16

18. What was Abraham's excuse for lying to Abimelech? vv 11-13

19. How do we know that no matter what our situation, God does not want us to lie?

Exodus 20:16

Psalm 51:6

Colossians 3:9

Revelation 21:8

20. What is our basis for always telling the truth?

Psalm 119:160

Matthew 5:48

I Peter 1:14-16

I Peter 1:18, 19

I Peter 1:22

Romans 14:21

Abimelech was told that Abraham was a prophet not that Abraham might predict the future, but that he might pray for him. This is the first occurrence of the word in the Bible, and shows that “prophecy” is not primarily prediction, but rather speaking the words of God, as inspired by Him.