

Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 20: January 31 – February 7

Genesis 20

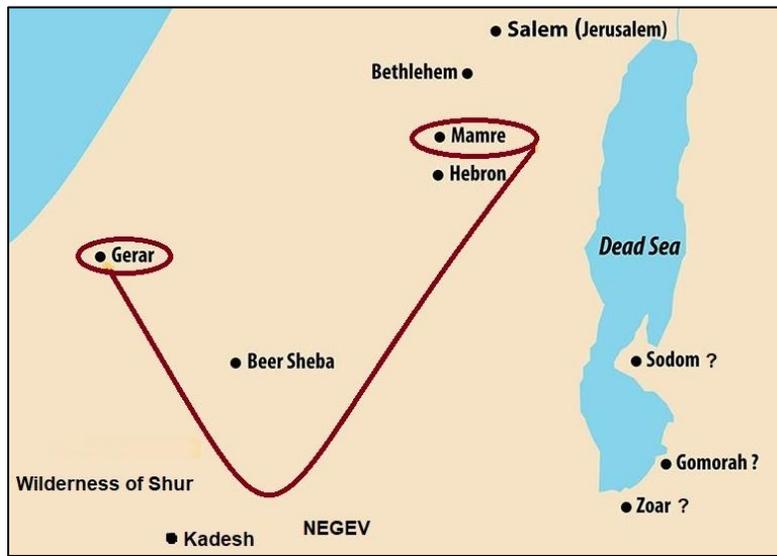
In Genesis 20, we see Abraham again choosing to act on his fear of man rather than his faith in God. As he did back in chapter 12, Abraham again lies about his wife Sarah, thinking that his life would be in danger if he told the truth. Again, Abraham learns the hard way that sin is always more dangerous than trusting God. This passage contains important and practical principles that will help us to live by faith rather than fear.

Read Genesis 20:1-7

1. What regions did Abraham move to in verse 1? Where was he living before he moved? (See Gen. 18:1)

Paul Kissling notes,

...Abraham tends to get himself into trouble when he moves of his own accord without divine direction. He lives as a sojourner in Gerar, a city south of Gaza in what later came to be the Philistine coastal strip.¹



¹ Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 166.

2. What deception did Abraham repeat from chapter 12? (20:2)

James Smith observes,

In the previous chapter Lot offered his daughters to the men of Sodom. In the present chapter under far less dangerous circumstances Abraham in effect offered his wife to a pagan king. God would have the reader know that his choice of Abraham had nothing to do with merit!²

3. What did Abimelech king of Gerar do in verse 2?

4. What did God tell Abimelech in verse 3?

5. What question did Abimelech ask God in verse 4?

6. Why did Abimelech claim to have a clear conscience and clean hands? (20:5)

7. How and why did God prevent Abimelech from sinning? (20:5-6, see also verse 17)

8. What did God command Abimelech to do in verse 7?

9. How did God describe Abraham in verse 7?

Kent Hughes writes,

This is the first use of the word prophet in the Bible. Abraham's intercession for Sodom and Lot installed him as the forerunner of the great prophetic intercessors like Moses and Samuel and Jeremiah. The return of Sarah to her husband and her husband's prayers were Abimelech's only hope.³

Read Genesis 20:8-18

10. What did Abimelech do early the next morning? (20:8)

11. How did the king's officials respond to the news about the king's dream? (20:8)

² James Smith, *The Pentateuch* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1996), 154.

³ R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 287.

12. What questions did Abimelech ask Abraham in verses 9-10?

13. What excuse did Abraham give for his sin in verse 11?

Hughes explains how Abraham's self-righteousness and prejudice revealed that he was the one who was lacking a reverential fear of God.

Abraham had completely misread Abimelech and Gerar. There was fear of God among these pagans. The irony lay in his heart—because Abraham's fears were grounded in his own momentary lack of respect and reverential awe of God. Had he exhibited a proper fear of God, he would never have lied!⁴

14. How did Abraham try to rationalize his sin in verse 12?

15. How did Abraham try to rationalize his sin in verse 13?

16. What did Abimelech give to Abraham in verse 14?

17. What did Abimelech offer to Abraham in verse 15?

18. What did Abimelech say to Sarah in verse 16?

19. What did God do in verse 17 when Abraham prayed for Abimelech?

20. What did God do to all the women in Abimelech's household when Sarah was taken into the king's harem? (20:18)

Intercessory prayer is a powerful responsibility that God has entrusted to us. However, it is not a magic spell that forces God to do whatever we want. For many years, Abraham prayed for God to give Sarah a child, but he still had to be patient and trust God's timing.

21. Why is it easier to fall into sins that we have already committed?

22. What are some ways we try to rationalize our sin?

23. What can you do to strengthen your faith in God when you are struggling with fear?

Sermon Notes 1/31/21

“Faith or Fear”

How should we respond to Genesis chapter 20?

1. Repent of _____ sins.

Genesis 20:2

Genesis 20:13

2 Peter 2:19-22

Hebrews 12:1-2

2. Repent of _____ sins.

Genesis 20:11

Luke 18:9-14

James 4:8-10

3. Repent of _____ sins.

Genesis 20:12

Luke 16:14-15

Romans 6:1-4



“Abimelech then took sheep and oxen and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham, and restored his wife Sarah to him.”

Genesis 20:14 (NASB)

⁴ Hughes, 288.