

Israel's Patriarch

A Study in Genesis 12-24

Redux: Abraham the Liar
Genesis 20:1-18
November 1, 2020

Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children. For the LORD had closed all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.
-Genesis 20:17-18

I. HERE WE GO AGAIN

- If this sounds like a story you've heard before, it's because you have. Sin, even in righteous people, can become habitual (Gen. 12:10-20; Psalm 18:32, 19:12-13, 119:132).
- For some unknown reason, Abraham is on the move again—this time south to the Negeb (Vs. 1, cf. Gen. 12:10-20).
- God intervenes on Abraham, Sarah, and Abimelech's behalf, keeping them from altering his plan and from their own sin (Vss. 3-7; 1 Sam. 25:32-35).
- Abraham proves again to be a liar, fearful of men, and a husband who lacks chivalry. He is also wrong about Abimelech—he does fear God (Vs. 11).
- Abraham employs a half-truth. A half-truth is just an un-truth disguised as the whole-truth. In reality, it is a lie.
- Abraham, for the first time, is revealed as a prophet, and his prayer will be heard on behalf of Abimelech (Vs. 7).

II. AN ALIEN RIGHTEOUSNESS

- It is a sad day when those who are not God's people prove to be more honorable than those who are (2 Sam. 11:6-13; 2 Peter 2:1-3).
- Abraham's righteousness was not his own, it was given to him by God. He failed often as a human, but stands high in the annals of faith (Rom. 4:1-8; Heb. 11:8-12).
- Our righteousness is also not our own. It is "imputed" to us as a gift from Jesus. True believers have all the righteousness they will ever have right now (1 Cor. 1:26-31; 2 Cor. 5:21).
- If you know Christ, God was sovereign in your salvation, and is active in your sanctification (Phil. 2:12-13).

KNOW: We may not be very holy. But God is. We need him not only for our salvation, but for our sanctification as well.

DO: Trust God to work righteousness in you.

Suggested Reading:

**Christ our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification* by Mark Seifrid (LifePoint Library #234 SEI)

**God is Always Fair: Bible Verses About the Word Righteousness* by Catherine MacKenzie (Single use Bible art for children).

**The Hole in our Holiness* by Kevin DeYoung (LifePoint Library #248.4 DEY).

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please Read Genesis 20:1-18

1. Why do you think Moses shares yet another story with us of Abraham lying about his wife Sarah?
2. What rationale does Abraham use to justify his ruse? Is it acceptable?
3. What kind of man was King Abimelech?
4. Talk about Abimelech's response to God when confronted by him in a dream. Is it reasonable? Does God think so?
5. What does God do for Abimelech to heal him and his family? Does this seem ironic to you?
6. What lessons did you learn from this passage/message?