

DEVELOPING A LIFE OF PRAYER

EDGEMONT BIBLE CHURCH

2021-2022 (December 10, 2021)

“THE MAN WHOM GOD HEARS ”

GENESIS 20:1-18 (7); PSALM 4:1-3; SELECTED PSALMS

- I. *Ge 20:7 "Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours." (NKJV)*
 - A. *To protect his own life, Abraham has deceived Abimelech by having his wife, Sarah, agree to be known as his sister, rather than his wife. (How many violations are in this singular act?)*
 - B. *Based on this false narrative, Abimelech takes Sarah in to his house as a potential wife or concubine.*
 - C. *Before Abimelech can touch Sarah, God comes to him in a dream and threatens him with death unless he returns to Abraham*
 - D. *Abimelech prays and God hears him!*
 1. *We do not know the god-allegiance of Abimelech but we can see that God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked so in His mercy He warns Abimelech of his impending judgment;*
 - a. *God took the first step*
 - b. *Without there being a written, recorded law, God makes an appeal to Abimelech that adultery is wrong and Abimelech seems to be on board with that line of thinking.*
 - c. *Abraham must have been apprised of some kind of law regarding adultery, the remarriage of widows being permissible, and the fear of being murdered for Sarah's sake. It was the reason for his creating the part true/part lie narrative*
 2. *Abimelech believes it is someone greater than him who is speaking to Him in his dream (he calls Him "Lord", Adonai) and appeals to God's righteous judgment just reason why God would be wrong to kill the righteous. NOTE: he addresses himself as a nation not simply an individual!*
 3. *He explains that the one at fault was Abraham for lying to him.*

4. *God does not disagree with Abimelech regarding the initiation of wrong coming from Abraham and even acknowledges His own awareness that Abimelech was acting with integrity and innocence. But then God tells him that He, God, had prevented him from taking Sarah.*
5. *Then comes God's surprising solution to this difficult problem. Abimelech is to restore Sarah to her husband right away. Her husband is a prophet. We will assume here that God means that Abraham is God's prophet.*
6. *Abraham WILL pray for Abimelech and Abimelech will live as a result of this prayer. Failure to comply fully with this command of God will result in Abimelech's death for certain*
7. *Abimelech is totally convinced that he has spoken with God and tells all of his household what God had told him. This is a witness and testimony of God. Since it is not technically "good news" it cannot be called evangelism, but it is a witness that brought the fear of God into the lives of these who had be complacent before it. They are at least going to fear God and that is the beginning of wisdom.*
8. *Abimelech fully complies with God's command to return Sarah but also makes certain he gets his jab in on Abraham's deceit and Sarah's participation.*
9. ***God hears the prayer of the repentant who are under his judgment for wrong doing.***

II. *Ge 20:17 So Abraham **prayed to God**; and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore children; 18 for the LORD had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife. (NKJV)*

- A. *Abraham, the prophet of God, declares his fear-generated reason for deceit, as Abimelech confronts his sin against him. This is **his accountability test** that he missed the first time he did this when in Egypt. But it also looks to be the only rebuke he gets for this action. God does not address it.*
- B. *Abimelech's response is quite extraordinary! He not only brings Sarah back to Abraham but gives him sheep, oxen and male and female servants plus 1000 pieces of silver for Sarah staying with him. He gives Abraham permission to travel all*

over his land, any place he wishes. His desire to please God and clear his conscience is amazing!

- C. Abraham prays and God responds to it! We already had a heads up that God was going to answer this prayer since before it happens God has already declared that Abraham, His prophet WILL pray for Abimelech and give him his life back. We are not told the content of his prayer for Abimelech but we are told that God “healed” Abimelech. This healing is associated with cleansing and purification. It is used only one other time in the OT for the people who celebrated Passover without first of all going through a ceremonial purification in 2 Chron. 30:20. Hezekiah prayed for them. God heard his prayer and healed all of them.*
- D. But God also opened the wombs of all the women in Abimelech’s household and they bore children. This is obviously an observation made over a lengthy period of time*
- E. Abraham had learned to pray through the various encounters he had with the living God, the Most High God, Yahweh, who had called him, by grace for His own purposes, out of his home to wonder in this region that is going to be the home for his heirs until time no longer exists. With each encounter you can see him get bolder with his requests of God. You can see that he learns he is actually living “under friendly skies” as God answers his personal and intercessory prayers. With this encounter, he is able to pray for someone NOT related to him, whom he has actually offended himself, and see the gracious, merciful, holy God cleanse a man and his household. They will now be fruitful because of their relationship to this prophet of God. **CONCLUSION: God hears the prayers of those to whom He has shown grace and called to be His people.** This is God’s progressive revelation and the maturity of God’s chosen people. God WANTS to answer prayer. It is our co-laboring with God; partaking in the divine nature!*

Keep praying until you can see that God WANTS you to pray and be bold about it! It is His team work with us!

CHECK OUT THESE PSALMS FOR OUR NEXT OUTING ON THIS

JOURNEY: Psalms 4:3; Psalms 10:17; Psalms 38:15; Psalms 55:17; Psalms 66:18; Psalms 69:16-17; Psalms 86:1; Psalms 102:18-20; **Psalms 107**; Psalms 3:4; Psalms 10:17; Psalms 18:6; Psalms 22:24; Psalms 31:22; Psalms 34:4,6; Psalms 40:1; Psalms 78:21,59; Psalms 106:44; Psalms 120:1