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Preacher: Roger Phipps

- [ 0 : 00 ]     Genesis chapter 20, we've left Lot and his family, and other than references in the Scripture regarding examples, we don't hear any more of them.
- Now, we do hear about his grandchildren, or his descendants, but we don't hear about Lot again.
- And we have no record that Abraham ever went looking for him. Okay, Genesis chapter 20. And we're...
- Dave Campbell, would you ask God's blessing on our morning this morning, please? Amen.
- Okay, so, in the history, we've got Abraham now, we're coming back to Abraham. So let's look at chapter 20, and look especially at those first five verses for a moment, get a picture of it.
- [ 1 : 32 ]     But we're going to see something happening that we've seen something similar before, aren't we?
- From Abraham. So, set us up here. What... Where are... Where does Abraham go now? I'm sorry? He goes south, yes. To a certain area. What is it? In the Negev.
- That means the south. Okay. Gerar or Gerar, I don't know how to pronounce that correctly. So that's where he settles.
- Now, set us up. What happens there? Well, Abraham realizes that he's in a country that does not fear the world.
- [ 2 : 42 ]     He has no fear of God. And so he is a slave for his wife. It's from him or somebody that might want to see it in prison's life. So, he says it's his sister, which is true, actually.
- Kind of a half-proof. She is his sister. But she's also his wife. All right. That's his reasoning. Now, is he afraid that...
- What's the name? Let's get to a name here. Okay. Abimelech is not necessarily this king's name.
- That seems to be a throne name for Philistine kings, at least at this time. If you get in your time machine and run up to where...
- I think it's Isaac. Yeah. Isaac. This would be in chapter 26. You'll see that Isaac went to Abimelech.
- [ 3 : 48 ]     So, this seems to be like a generalized name where... Something like Pharaoh. Something like Pharaoh.
- Except for this isn't Egypt. This is... Okay. Gerar is a specific people group.
- It's Philistines. So, he's in Philistine country right now. Now... God...
- Interestingly enough... Speaks to this Philistine king. He speaks to Abimelech. What does God tell him? Well, that's nice.

He speaks to him in a dream, right? Okay. What does God say to him? You're a dead man. You took this man's wife.

[ 4 : 57 ] Now... Back to your... To your point about what Abraham feared. Did Abraham fear... Abimelech taking his wife?

Or did Abraham fear Abimelech killing him in order to take his wife? That's what he... He was... Now... It...

You... You... You go out in... You go out in the rut. Late September, early October.

And you hide in the bush there. And you watch the deer. And they come out of the cut corn. Now, what do they do? Doze first.

That buck's going to stand out. Why? Because he wants to see if there's any problem in the bush here. The girls are going to get it. Not me. That's kind of like Abraham, isn't it?

[ 5 : 54 ] So, Abraham wasn't as worried about maybe Sarah as he was about himself. It seems, too, that somehow all mankind at that time, all the different countries and nations, had this moral thing that she didn't take another man's wife.

It does seem that way. So, now, they didn't have... They didn't have a problem, though, with killing the other guy. Actually, let's think about human nature.

Let's think about David. David. So, that seems to be a falling of man, isn't it?

This is all part of that fall business. Aren't you thankful for God's grace? Because if I think a wrong thought, I'm guilty.

But I'm not guilty anymore. Why? Because I'm in Christ. That's what it means to be in Christ.

[ 7 : 15 ] Okay. Now. So, God warns Abimelech in a dream. I'm going to kill you, Abimelech, because you've done this.

What's Abimelech say? By the way, before we even get there, how did Abimelech know it was God and not just a bad sandwich at night?

That has nothing to do with... That's not scripturally answered. But somehow, Abimelech knew that this was a pretty important message, didn't he?

So, what does Abimelech answer to God in his dream? He lied to me. I have a right to be right.

I have a right to be right. He lied to me. I did this innocently. Now. Now. That does bring me to a dogmatic issue within church.

[ 8 : 30 ] You have heard somewhere along the line, well, God knew my heart. It wasn't wrong. I meant the right thing. You've heard something like that.

That doesn't necessarily hold true, does it? Remember, when God gave the law, and we know that the law is righteous and it is good when God gave it, right?

God gave the law to Israel at Sinai. Part of that was the sacrificial order and the priestly order. On the Day of Atonement, when they were to mortify their souls, incidentally, the Day of Atonement is the only fast that was ever called for by God for the children of Israel.

The rest were feast days. All of them were celebrations except one. That was the Day of Atonement. They were to mortify their souls before God to remember their sins.

And the first act of the priest, of the high priest, was to offer sacrifice. And part of the sacrifice that he had to offer was for the sins of the people and for himself that were committed in ignorance.

[ 9 : 57 ] They were still guilty. Whether I knew it or not. See, a faulty conscience doesn't absolve me. Just because it doesn't bother my conscience doesn't mean it's not wrong, does it?

Do we not now see many of the results of perhaps too much, oh, you're okay.

It's just a social construct after all. It's just what society says. You're all right if you think it's all right.

That's bunk. You know it. Everybody knows it, don't we? So, nevertheless, God acknowledges what Abimelech says.

Yes. Okay. Abraham told the truth. No, everybody. He told the truth. This is a lesson for us. He told a half truth. He didn't tell the truth.

[ 11 : 04 ] He didn't tell the truth. Yeah. We sometimes, you know. So, what God tells us there is that if you're going to tell a half truth, that's the same as a lie. That's just as simple as bad as a lie if you tell half of the truth.

If you tell only a portion in order to mislead or bring somebody to a wrong conclusion, it's the same as a lie.

My dad, my father, and he's in glory so I can say it freely. My father used to say to me when I said, I didn't mean to do it, his answer, you didn't mean not to do it.

You know, you get the gist. You may not. I don't care whether you meant it. You didn't intend not to do that.

And I'm going to, you're going to carry the consequence of that. And, yes, Abraham did tell a partial truth and he absolves himself of that.

[ 12 : 20 ] But the point of it is, he did that in order to mislead Abimelech so that Abimelech wouldn't kill him.

That was the point of it. Anyway, Abimelech says it was in the integrity of my heart and in innocence of my hands that I did this. So what's God say?

All right. That's important, isn't it? God says, I know.

It was I who kept you from touching her. I stopped you from doing that. Now, God doesn't always stop me from doing the wrong thing.

I can blame him all I want, but he won't do that. That's not scriptural. He says he did it here, but he doesn't say that that's a general application, does he? Oh, if I mean right, God's going to.

[ 13 : 35 ] Another personal story. In the early 70s, a friend of mine, he was certain that he was supposed to marry Carolyn.

Because God wouldn't give me these feelings if I wasn't supposed to marry her. Problem was, Dave, God didn't tell Carolyn that.

You know? When you start branching out and step away from the revelation, the further I go from the revelation, the muckier the ground.

Anyway. So Abimelech says, ask God a similar question to what Abraham asked him just before Sodom and Gomorrah.

What does Abimelech said? Ask. Would you do what? Would you slay? Yeah. What kind of nation?

[ 14 : 43 ] A righteous nation. Now, raise your hand if you ever associated the Philistines with a righteous nation. Neither did I.

Nevertheless, that's what Abimelech said. So, now, we can step on in order to answer the next.

We have to at least have read through verse 8. So, if you haven't read 6 through 8, at least do so. Pardon me now. God answers Abimelech.

And what does he say? Part of this has already been answered. I know that you, I know you did this in the integrity of your heart.

Therefore, what? Or, I kept you from sinning. Against whom? Me.

[ 15 : 47 ] All sin, ultimately, is against God. I didn't think of it before.

I just now brought to mind the psalm that David writes after Nathan had confronted him with his sin.

And he says, against thee and thee only have I sinned. Well, not exactly thee only.

You know, Uriah had a tough time of the result of your sin. But, ultimately, all sin is against God.

Okay. Let's keep going then. Then God gives him some instruction.

[ 16 : 48 ] What is it? Return her to Abraham. He will.

What? Right. And everything about you is going to die.

Yes. Right. I wonder if he had a, Abimelech had this idea, kind of like Abraham.

Now, I don't want to read into it what's not there. And I don't read, want to read out what is. Nevertheless, Abraham, when he approached God about Sodom and Gomorrah, he said, would you destroy everyone for the sake of a few righteous?

And Abimelech said, would you destroy a whole nation? Now, whether he saw himself as the nation or not, I can't answer that.

[ 18 : 06 ] It doesn't say. That's really not the main gist of it. The gist of it is, God tells him, Abraham is a what? He said, this man is a prophet, and if you restore, Abraham will pray for you, and you'll be healed.

You'll live. But if you don't, this is your choice. Okay? So. Well, he did call in the, it says his servants, but what that would amount to is his.

Inner circle. They would be in a feudal type system. These would be lords, if you will, of the land.

Big guys. Not in stature necessarily, but in importance. His cabinet. Yeah. Well, I don't want to go there, so.

Anyway. Anyway, he calls them in, and he tells them, and what was their response, by the way, since you brought it up? They were scared.

[ 19 : 43 ] Okay. Okay. What's this business about Abraham being a prophet? Is he usually numbered among the prophets? Not usually, but he is a prophet.

Because God called him a prophet. And what made him a prophet? One thing primarily. Does everyone who obeys God a prophet?

No. So it's not the carrying out of God's will, but it is God spoke to him immediately.

He didn't send another prophet. When God spoke to David, he spoke to him through Nathan the prophet. When God spoke to Israel out of Egypt, he spoke to them through Moses.

When God, and so it was. When God had a message for misbehaving Israel, he spoke to them through the prophets.

[ 21 : 04 ] He spoke, that's, so Abraham had immediate revelation from God. And God says, this guy's a prophet.

He'll pray for you. This is what's going to happen when he does. Okay. So what's Abimelech do? Right.

By the way, this business of prophecy. I know I mentioned this before. But. We have from the Apostle Paul.

Several. Well, it's not just from Paul. We also have it from Peter. We all. So these are later writings. That we have.

That talk about the sufficiency of God's word. What has God given us that pertain to life and godliness?

[ 22 : 10 ] This is a scripture. All things. He has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Yes. No.

Scripture. Is of any. Private. Interpretation. But holy men of God. Spoke as they were moved.

By the Holy Spirit. James Montgomery Boyce. Said something to this effect. And he was talking about the battle within the church.

Church. In general. He said the battle in our time isn't going to be so much. Over. Over.

The inerrancy. Of God's word. Or even. Or even that it is. God breathed. He said the big battle in our time is going to be over the sufficient.

[ 23 : 14 ] Of God's word. People looking for something more. Than what. God said here. I'm to rely.

And the church is to base. All doctrine. And all dogma. Upon what? The revealed. Word. Of God. Anytime I step out.

And I start basing it. Upon my. Interpretation. Or upon my. Inferences. I get on dangerous territory.

So. The church is to keep her doctrine. According. To the revealed word of God. That. That is why. This church chose the name.

It did. Right. Long before I got here. Grace. Bible church. Why? Because it's based. Upon. The revealed word of God.

[ 24 : 18 ] And needs to continue that way. So. Abim. Go ahead. It seems like. It seems like. Abimelech.

He did something. To Abraham. Originally. To make Abraham. Do this to him. Well he asked him that question. So what's Abimelech say to Abraham? Yeah.

Why did you do that? What have you seen. That caused you. To put. Put us in this situation. Well.

Then Abraham. Explains his position. Right. We're. We're up. By the way. We're. We're past. Verse nine.

We're jumping clear up. Toward. Verses. Thirteen. We're. Specifically. At verse eleven. Here. So. I think that's where we are.

[ 25 : 18 ] Yeah. Abraham. Explains. Well. I figured that. You people didn't fear God. You're a bunch of heathen.

And so. I was scared. So. And I said. And when God caused me to wonder. I said. This is the kindness that you'll show me. I.

This is what I said to Sarah. You will say. He is my. Brother. And. And. You'll be kind to me. Because. I want my life spared.

Yeah. He did that. He did that. Well. He made an assumption. It was a fair assumption.

Well. There was. God called Abraham from what? Abraham.

[ 26 : 21 ] Was Abraham at a tent meeting when God called him? No. He was worshiping idols. Right. He was worshiping idols.

God called him out. So. It was a pretty good assumption that there was no fear of God in that place.

That was a. That wasn't an unreasonable assumption. But he did make an assumption. That's true. Now. That's different than me.

Assuming that if I go down the road and visit. That congregation. You pick it. I'm not going to. But if I go down the road. It's different than me.

Assuming that I'm not going to hear the gospel. These people are all reprobates. That's. Not the same thing. That's not the same thing. If I. It.

[ 27 : 22 ] I'd better stop with that. Yes. Abraham. He didn't trust God. Here in other words. He took it in his own hands to save his own life.

He was saying. Well. If they know that he's my wife. They'll kill me. So. You know. I'm going to do something. He's killing me. So he. Therefore. He didn't really trust God.

That God. Would not allow that to happen. That God would not allow. Him. To kill him. I don't know. I don't know.

If I can go so far as to say. He didn't trust God. Because actually. The word of God always says. That Abraham. Did believe God. Did trust God. However.

Why? Why? Actually sinning is disbelief in God. Really. Back to the very original sin.

[ 28 : 18 ] Of Adam and Eve. They did it because they didn't believe God would bring on the repercussions. Of. Of. Their sin. Of their sin. See that's really what the sin was.

Was disbelief in God. Not the actual sin itself. The actual happening of it. They just believed God. They believed the devil back then, not God. Well, go ahead, John.

Right. Right. Right.

I think so. I think so. And when it comes to idolatry, I don't fear the God I've set up.

But I might fear the real God, you know, if I knew him or acknowledged him. Now, as to that, you know, I don't know how to go on that, Joe, because the Scripture says Abraham believed God and it was reckoned as righteousness.

[ 29 : 40 ] If in this instance he didn't believe God, that's something that I can't prove or disprove. Because the Scripture doesn't say that. He is human.

And he exhibits human weakness. Now, which is why we're thankful for this dispensation that we live under grace because now it is no more I that sin but sin that dwelleth in me.

Now, whether I can explain all that or not isn't the issue, but I know it's true and I rest on that. Now, as far as when Paul, just to color it a moment and it's not to prove anything, but it brought to mind when Paul stood accused, when he went to Jerusalem and he stood accused, it says that, see, Paul knew the gospel because it had been revealed to him specifically, right?

But he didn't say, I stand here accused of the gospel of grace by faith and that alone. That's not what he said.

He said, because the Word of God says, Paul perceived that there were Sadducees and there were Pharisees. Now, what did he know about the Sadducees?

[ 31 : 26 ] They do not believe in a resurrection. When you're dead, you're gone. What about the Pharisees? They believed in a resurrection from the dead. Now, they're united because they have a common enemy.

What did Paul do? It's because of my belief in the resurrection that I stand accused before you today and they erupted into a fight amongst themselves.

Now, I'll just drop it at that. Anyway, back to Abraham. Abraham. In fact, Abimelech says to Abraham, you've done what should not be done.

He's probably right. And what does Abraham answer him then? This would be, well, verse 11. I thought that there was no fear of God.

And then he explains the relationship. So, he excused himself by, yeah, you're right.

[ 32 : 38 ] Well, it's kind of right. She is kind of my sister. She's my half-sister. But, yeah, she's my wife.

You're right. Okay. Now, move on to all verses 14 through 18 at least.

So, what does Abimelech do now?

Now, what does Abimelech do now? Now, okay.

Okay. In 16, he says what? Yeah. Yeah.

[ 33 : 48 ] I like that. That's good. Yeah. Okay, Sarah. I gave your brother this. By the way, what is this? What did he say?

What did he give? What did he give to Abraham regarding Sarah? It says specifically. Yeah.

A whole bunch. 25 pound of silver. A thousand pieces. Okay. What? Nevertheless, as a vindication, this is basically a witness that he gives to Abraham, I have not touched her.

She's clean. And that's what he says to Sarah. He says, this is a witness. Right? It's a covering of the eyes is the literal thing.

You know? Nothing here. Yes. Like it says, he gave him ability to bury children.

[ 35 : 02 ] It's probably a stopping. I was thinking it's just a couple months or something. This is why I laughed. Well, he doesn't say, take her and go.

You know, remember Pharaoh said, take her and get out of here. Right. Right. Right.

Right. This took a while. Right. Right. Right. Right.

Yeah. Well, in my opinion, for what it, you know, for the penny it's worth, in my opinion, he had already established Abraham as the prophet.

And he had already told him, he will pray for you and you'll be healed. He does not, this is in no wise to say that Abimelech, that God has accepted Abimelech.

[ 36 : 33 ] The scripture does not say that. The scripture does not say that you're going to see Abimelech in heaven. We don't know that. So God's not, God's no longer talking to Abimelech, though, you notice.

Now, Abraham prays. Because that's what God said was going to happen. That's the best answer I have. And that also, now Abraham believes, too.

If he's going to pray to him, you know that Abraham believes. Is he kind of correcting himself by following God's notice here to pray?

If I say he corrected himself, then I assume that he was already faulty. And I'm not, I can't read that part far into it.

What I do know is that God said, he'll pray for you. And after this, Abraham prays, and all of Abimelech's household is healed.

[ 37 : 45 ] Abimelech spared. And Abimelech says what to him? This is at least through 18.

Right. Right. He said, behold, everything's in front of you.

You can settle wherever you please. Now, this land right now belongs to the Philistines.

But it is promised to Abraham. And it will be fulfilled. So, the Philistines are never going to be real great buds.

They are right now. I mean, they're okay now. But, you know, 400 persons is a lot different than a million. And the times are going to be different because God's going to set it up that way.

[ 38 : 57 ] Remember, he said, he said, he had told Abraham already that your descendants are going to be in Egypt for 400 years plus.

They're going to be in Egypt for 400 years. And then I'm going to bring them out. I'm going to show myself mighty. I'm going to bring them out and take them to the land.

The time isn't right. The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full is one of the phrases. Yeah. It will be later.

It will be later. I don't know. That is, Gaza will be a Philistine town later. I don't know.

There's no mention of Gaza as Gaza right now. But names change. Yeah. Okay. Well, we'll stop there and pick up then with chapter 21, God willing, next week.

[ 40 : 16 ] Have a great week. Have a great week.