Genesis Chapter 20 Verses 1 – 2

* After Sodom and Gomorrah were *essentially* turned into an ash heap, **Abraham makes the decision to move.** It’s possible that he didn’t want to be ***reminded daily*** of the great loss that happened there and interestingly enough, we really have *no indication* that he knew **Lot made it out**…at any rate, he moves…and when he comes into Gerar we see him ***repeat the same fearful white-lie that we saw decades before in Egypt*** (all the way back in Chapter 12).
* Now, I’m calling it a *“white lie”* because ***technically*** (and we’ll read this in just a moment) she was his sister but that’s only a half truth…*which is a full lie*…but we like to soften it up a bit and call it a *white lie*…not sure why…but here are a couple of other thoughts/points I’d like to make. **Sarah was 90 years old**…and he is worried about being killed because another man wants to make her his wife…? She must have been a *very special* lady…!
* It also could be that Abraham is very rich and here he comes into Abimelech’s region, (his kingdom per se), and he could be fearful that Abimelech would take Sarah to ***make a point***…a statement of superiority and rule. The point is though, Abraham is again found fearful…he again is found to be in some way not trusting in the Lord and again ***he has slipped back into almost a life-long sinful habit.*** Shows us 2 things. One, ***it is so easy to fall back into sin***…we each need a **fresh-fill** from the Lord and **fresh-walk** with Him constantly because man ***the flesh is so weak.*** And two, ***age does not automatically imply additional strength of sanctification.*** Unless you are **constantly** giving your life to the Lord, **constantly** submitting to Him and walking with Him, ***you’ll just repeat in your old age the sinful mistakes of your youth!*** Here’s the outcome though, Abraham’s plan will fail…just like it did before. *(grasshopper story)*

Genesis Chapter 20 Verses 3 - 6

* It **may** seem like God *intervened miraculously* and in a very *out-of-the-ordinary way*…and true, yes He did…but before our flesh cries ***foul and unfair***, which one of us has not experienced God do something for us that is not *“abnormal?”* *Atypical, amazing and awesome!?* ***Even bizarre!!*** If you’re thinking right now, *“not me,”* then tell your story to someone else…see if they agree with you (which they won’t).
* And I love this principle introduced in verse 6. Abimelech is a mess, he is a pagan, he is *just* a man…set all of that aside for a minute and look at what God said. *“I know that you did this in integrity of your heart,”* in other words, ***not knowing that it was wrong in any way***…, and because of it, ***God withheld him from greater sin.***
* A great rule. A profitable message. ***Integrity protects you from greater sin***…living in integrity. Doing what you know to be right***. Looking for and seeking out what is right***…will ultimately *bend* you away from sin. And you say, *“Well sin is fun,”* look ***sin always brings about sadness.*** Sadness of heart. Sadness of character and countenance! Sin will always find you out and have a ***heart affect***…when you walk outside of integrity and into what you know…you got that feeling that you shouldn’t go forward, you shouldn’t be there…that has a hardening affect on your heart!
* You ever meet a young person…perhaps 15 or 16 or even 14 and just a few years ago they were **so happy**…so smiley and now they are ***dark and reclusive***…well that’s just about the age where they start choosing integrity or not…I’ve met young people that chose to walk in integrity and at ***15 the light is still in their eyes that was there when they were 10!*** You ever meet an older person that is just ***critical and dark and reclusive***…many times hearts are sick with regret…regret of what? **Missing out on integrity!**
* God has a protection available to you and your heart…walk in integrity…*(the shield of faith and the breastplate of righteousness)…*and look, ***even if you don’t know everything***…Abimelech doesn’t know everything, but here he stands in front of God bearing his heart in truth and God agrees with him…protects him…

Genesis Chapter 20 Verse 7

* Principle of first mentions (first time we find the word *“pray”* and it’s in context of intercession)…this is the first mention of the title *“prophet”* in the Bible and the title is ascribed to Abraham and **that blows me away.** The title literally means, *“Speaker for God,”* and its sometimes ***concerning*** how that title is misused and misunderstood today. But here is the first time we see this title…God speaks it and He speaks it about Abraham…**the liar.** Abraham **the fearful.** Abraham the one who has **abandoned his wife**…***again.*** There are plenty of **great** things to say about him as well but this is his present persona in this scene in which God calls him His prophet…
* ***You cannot outrun or overestimate the mercy of God***, can you? Just like a true friend. Proverbs 17:17 says, *“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.”* Jesus said in John 15:15*, “I call you friends.*” And Romans 8:17 says that He has made us co-heirs with Christ…**brothers and sisters**…***God loves you at all times equally***…He came to this earth, born into this world to prove to us that ***adversity is no match for His power***…even if you are in a current state of failure towards God…He’s a true friend.

Genesis Chapter 20 Verses 8 – 13

* Interesting. It could be that they had done this *charade* many times before…and also interesting, Abraham’s excuse was, *“surely the fear of God is not in the place,”* but ***the real problem was that the fear of God was not in Abraham!*** In all, Abraham’s response is so lacking…and many times mine is too when I’ve messed up...why not **just come clean completely?** There is such an opportunity in humility.
* *“Abimelech…I was afraid, and I brought dishonor upon you and upon God. I should have done right but I was overwhelmed with fear and figured God couldn’t take care of me. He is not like other gods though…He created heaven and earth. He told me He would be by shield, my exceeding great reward…but the truth is, I am a coward…and so I lied. My lie was against God and against you…Please forgive me.”* Can you imagine what our relationships would be like if we were just ***back-boned*** enough to tell the truth when we mess up?

Genesis Chapter 20 Verses 14 – 18

* It’s odd to me to see Abraham not reject these gifts. Remember back in chapter 14? He ***refused*** the gifts of the pagan king…wanting no man to think that he had made Abraham rich…***what’s going on now?*** Well, ***it sure is hard to walk on high moral ground when you’ve been traveling outside of integrity***…solidifies the earlier point, doesn’t it?
* And finally we see yet again that *no matter the person, the circumstance, the situation nor the unfaithfulness of man*, **God’s Word comes to pass**…God said that Abraham would pray for Abimelech and that he would be healed. Even in Abraham’s *worst day, God’s Word is still true*…Ima hold to that…