

January 20-Genesis 20

In chapter 20 the Bible details for us an incident that Abraham failed to live and walk in his faith. Many will read this account and believe that Abraham's mistake was in misjudging the situation or the people whom he is dealing with, but the truth is that Abraham's mistake was found in mistrusting his God.

The story goes that Abraham and Sarah were traveling and when they came upon a city, Abraham told Sarah to tell everyone that she was his sister rather than his wife because he feared that they would kill him because they wanted his wife. Immediately we should realize that this plan is going to fail. There are two reasons for this one temporal and the other eternal. First, it is quite obvious that Abraham's plan is foolish because it has no end in mind. Abraham asks Sarah to lie in stating that she was his sister. Abraham had to have known that lying in such a way would very probably lead to Sarah being taken as a wife as his main concern was that they would take Sarah from him even if they knew she was married! Abraham has no backup plan and no foresight at all in this instance. However, the second issue is much deeper than the first. Abraham's plan is to handle a situation by sinning. We've already seen in the first 20 chapters of the Bible that sin has enormous consequences. Not only are the consequences immense, they are also out of the hands of humans. Any plan that involves sin results in chaos and pain.

Understanding that being dishonest is never ok, we must also realize that Abraham made another terrible error as evidenced by his own words. Abraham tells Abimelech (the king) in verse 11 that he lied because "I thought 'There is no fear of God at all in this place.'" This judgment was more than likely valid. The issue with the statement however is that Abraham's own actions show that in this moment he has no fear of God either! A man who is truly operating in the fear of the Lord would not violate God's holy standards by being dishonest. Furthermore, Abraham of all people should have realized that God is able to protect and preserve in any circumstance. The irony of this entire passage is that Abraham is the one who has strayed.

The man or woman of God is called to obey and trust God even in difficult and trying circumstances. Of course, God has given us His Word to show us that He is faithful and that He is powerful enough to overcome any trying time. The greatest example of this is found in the Cross of Christ. To the surrounding world, Christ's death on the cross seemed to signal His ultimate demise. However, by God's power and in keeping with His Sovereign plan Christ was actually winning the greatest victory in the history of the world, namely the victory over sin and death. Remember we serve the God who says "I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades." God is the one who wins the victory, God is our protector, God is the one who told Moses "The Lord will fight for you, you need only to be still" (Exodus 14:14).