

## “Been There, Done That!” (Genesis 20:1-18)

Some time ago, I read about a pastor that preaches a sermon series every year called “Summer Reruns.” Each summer, when the attendance plummets, he preaches his most popular sermons from the previous year. You could call this, “Pastor’s Greatest Hits.”

As we eyeball Genesis 20, you may feel that we are having our own summer reruns! If you have been studying with us, you are about to experience a strange sense of déjà vu. Previously, we looked at a very similar account in Genesis 12:10-20. In that passage, Abraham and Sarah devised a scheme to avoid problems with Pharaoh in Egypt. Abraham asked his wife to lie and tell the Pharaoh that she was his sister. Now, eight chapters later, the names and places are changed but the results are nearly identical. This has led some to say it really was the same account recorded twice. Yet, clearly these are two different accounts.<sup>1</sup> The reason we take up this second account is because it speaks to an issue that is relevant to all of us: recurring sin. Here, we see Abraham making the same mistake again.

These things should not surprise us. It parallels our own experience. Aren’t there things in your own life that dog you relentlessly? Are there sins that you have taken to the Lord and said, “Never again?” Only to find yourself returning to the Lord to confess the same sin again and again. It may have to do with substances (alcohol, drugs, food). It may have to do with interpersonal relationships (gossip, anger, slander). It may be physical (some habit you can’t shake). It may be mental (lust, anger, bitterness, resentment). It may have to do with money (debt, a lust for the material, a reluctance to give to the Lord). It may have to do with time management (wasting time, neglecting time for God). Whatever the sin, I suspect you don’t have to look very far to find one or two that you struggle with constantly. Today, in Genesis 20, we will look at how to move toward victory in the embarrassing reruns of life.<sup>2</sup>

Moses begins our account in 20:1: **“Now Abraham journeyed from there [Mamre] toward the land of the Negev (cf. 12:9-10), and settled between Kadesh and Shur; then he sojourned in Gerar.”** As we begin, we must ask the obvious question: Why did Abraham leave Mamre (cf. 18:1)? While no reason for Abraham’s move is given, it would seem that God pouring out burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah had some effect on Abraham’s ability to raise his great herds of cattle (cf. 21:22-34).<sup>3</sup> Despite the logic of Abraham’s move, there is no indication that God led this decision. Apparently, once again, he took matters into his own hands and moved ahead of God. I don’t know about you but when I’ve made decisions apart from the will of God, I have invariably suffered for it. Proverbs 16:25 says, “There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.” In his journeying, Abraham **“sojourned in Gerar.”** Gerar<sup>4</sup> is the capital city of the Philistines.<sup>5</sup> It is hostile, enemy territory. This would be comparable to an American going into Iraq. The stage is set for trouble.

In 20:2, **“Abraham said of Sarah his wife,<sup>6</sup> ‘She is my sister.’ So Abimelech<sup>7</sup> king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.”** Why did Abraham repeat the same mistake again (cf. 12:11-13)?<sup>8</sup> He was concerned about his own personal safety. He feared that because of Sarah’s beauty he would be killed, and she would be taken as a wife by violence. Quite simply, Abraham feared man more than he feared God. In Matthew 10:28 Jesus said, “Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” We can all find ourselves in situations where we are motivated by fear. Yet, God longs for us to exercise faith in Him. As the old adage says, “Those that fear God most are least afraid of men.”

Of course, the fear of man is merely a symptom of a core issue: unbelief. Abraham refused to trust God. If he had trusted God, he would have recognized that God was capable of protecting both he and Sarah. Abraham had a track record with God. Twenty-five years earlier, God saved him from the hand of

Pharaoh (12:17-20). In this situation, Abraham did not act out of ignorance, but rather out of unbelief. Abraham's response is all the more disheartening since he has just been told that Sarah will give birth to the miracle-child (17:16; 18:10).<sup>9</sup> Now he risks the birth of the child by letting Sarah be taken into the harem of another pagan king (cf. 12:15). Behind the staging of human history is Satan himself, attempting through Abraham's unbelief and fear to foil God's plan for a promised deliverer—Jesus Christ!

Interestingly, the information Abraham gave was totally factual. Sarah was his half-sister. But it wasn't the whole truth. Abram's intent was clearly to deceive (cf. Lev 19:11). He was trusting in his deception to protect him instead of trusting in the Lord (Prov 3:5-6).

The problems with lying:

- ***First, it makes it easier to do the next time.*** Abraham has already pulled the same stunt with Pharaoh of Egypt twenty-five years earlier (12:13). One would think that the disgrace Abraham experienced in Egypt would have cured him. But he has not faced his proneness to needless deceit and his inconsideration towards Sarah.<sup>10</sup> Abraham is compromising his character and integrity. This will make it tougher to trust his word in the future.
- ***Second, it affects and influences others around us.*** The sad reality is we can pass on our character flaws to our children. Abraham lied about his wife on two occasions in order to protect his own life. These events happened before his son Isaac was born. Yet, later in Genesis, Abraham's son, Isaac, pulls this exact same stunt with his wife Rebekah and Abimelech's grandson (26:1-3, 7). Furthermore, he undoubtedly damaged his relationship with Sarah. What message does Abraham send to Sarah as he willingly lets her go to the home of another man knowing full well what the man's intentions are? Sin brings negative consequences. Some are external, some are internal; some are public, some are private. God does not allow His children to sin without consequence.
- ***Third, it brings a reproach to the name of God.*** Abraham's lie and subsequent exposure is an embarrassment to the name of God. Abraham compromised his ability to testify and minister in Gerar. He was supposed to bring blessing to the world...but here he is bringing judgment on them. If you are going to claim to be a Christian, please don't dishonor that name by being a habitual liar. Honesty is not the best policy; it's the only policy. Always remember: You may be the only Bible your friends and family ever read...and they expect you to be a person of integrity. Remember these sobering words: Integrity takes years to establish and only a moment to destroy.

In 20:3, God begins a dialogue with Abimelech. Moses records these terrifying words: **“But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, ‘Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is married.’”** Now a dream like this will get your attention! Abimelech learns the truth about Sarah from God Himself! But what's funny is God sounds like Guido from Jersey or Vinny from Philly. He's going to knock Abimelech off! He's going to “wack” him. God doesn't play games (see Heb 10:31).

The reason God is so abrupt and dead serious (pardon the pun) is because He places a very high premium on marital fidelity (Lev 20:22; Deut 22:22). Hebrews 13:4 says, “Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge” (see also Prov 6:27-29). Do you hold your marriage in this same high regard? How are you protecting your marriage?

In 20:4a, Moses, offers a brief parenthetical comment: **“Now Abimelech had not come near her.”** Moses wants his readers to understand that Abimelech appears to be more righteous than Abraham.<sup>11</sup> How convicting! Don’t you just hate it when sinners are more righteous than saints? After this interlude, Abimelech says, **“Lord, will You slay a nation, even though blameless?<sup>12</sup> Did he not himself say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this”** (20:4b-5). I feel for Abimelech. Two believers deceived him. Nevertheless, he did sin even though he did so unknowingly. This lets us know that sin can be committed when there is no knowledge of it and no sinful intentions. Sin is an objective matter; it is not just a question of intention. This means, we can’t say, “I didn’t mean to” or “I wasn’t aware of what I did.”<sup>13</sup> This is why it is so important to practice 1 John 1:9: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” When we confess (lit., “say the same thing as God”) those sins that we are aware of, God cleanses us from all unrighteousness (i.e., those sins that we are unaware of—sins of omission).

Some have suggested that Sarah was not responsible for this sin since she was being submissive to Abraham. However, submission has its limits—we must always obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). In the biblical chain-of-command, God’s revealed will is supreme, and it overrules all other levels of authority if they are in direct conflict with God’s Word. So Sarah is guilty of disobeying God.<sup>14</sup> When we obey our spouse or employer in violation of God’s Word, we are guilty of disobedience.

In 20:6, God seems to understand Abimelech’s plight so He gives him a chance to get out of his sticky situation: **“Then God said to him in the dream, ‘Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this, and I also kept you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her.’** The Lord says literally, “I, even I, kept you from sinning against Me.” Moses records this for emphasis. The Lord Himself preserved Abimelech. He restrained his normal sexual impulses. In this, God demonstrates His sovereign ability to protect Sarah and Abraham. When God’s promise of a son is eventually fulfilled, it will be clear that it was God that did the work both morally and physically.<sup>15</sup> Truly, all of God’s purposes are achieved by the grace of God.<sup>16</sup>

In 20:7, God says, **“Now therefore, restore the man’s wife, for he is a prophet,<sup>17</sup> and he will pray for you and you will live.<sup>18</sup> But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours.”** Don’t you love how God gives options? Option #1: Give Sarah back and live (see Ezek 33:14-16). Option #2: Keep Sarah and die—you and everyone in your family! This is the character and nature of God. He extends grace and mercy but if we refuse to obediently respond, He offers another option. It’s as if God graciously says, “Okay, you can have it your way.”

Before moving on, notice God’s amazing grace: He instructed the deceiver to pray for the deceived!<sup>19</sup> This must have left Abimelech shaking his head. How could Abraham be a liar and at the same time a man of God to whom Abimelech must go to receive healing and salvation? Answer: God uses sinful people to accomplish His purposes. This can be seen in the fact that while Abraham was not eager to talk about his faith to Abimelech, God was not reluctant to own Abraham as a person and a prophet. Why didn’t God keep His relationship to Abraham quiet? Wouldn’t the poor testimony of Abraham drive Abimelech away from God? Apparently, God has such confidence in Himself and His grace that He can still use broken vessels like Abraham and you and me. God does not withdraw His grace because of our failure.<sup>20</sup>

It is so common to think that God will love us more if we perform some great work, some external achievement. But the Bible focuses on making a great heart. Here God was working with Abraham to create an unusual dependence upon Him.<sup>21</sup> He does the same with us today.

The question of the hour is: Will Abimelech take God's threat seriously? You better believe it! After God obliterated Sodom and Gomorrah, Abimelech knew not to mess with God. Moses writes, **“So Abimelech arose early in the morning and called all his servants and told all these things in their hearing;<sup>22</sup> and the men were greatly frightened”** (20:8). Abimelech must have called up his secretary and said, “Cancel all my appointments, God says, ‘I’m a dead man!’”<sup>23</sup> Like the sailors and the king of Nineveh in the book of Jonah (1:16; 3:6-9), the Philistines responded quickly and decisively to God's warning. Like Jonah, however, Abraham in this narrative was a reluctant prophet.

In 20:9-10, the pagan preaches to the prophet. These two verses are dripping with irony. Abimelech calls Abraham and says, **“What have you done to us? And how have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done to me things that ought not to be done.”** And Abimelech said to Abraham, **“What have you encountered, that you have done this thing?”** Abimelech asks Abraham three questions. The most important question is the final one. “Why?” As a parent I have frequently asked the same question in many different forms. “Why?” “What was your reason for doing this?” “What were you thinking?” “What was going through your brain?” Can you imagine what Abimelech is thinking at this moment? You've got to be kidding me? I almost lost my life because two believers pulled the wool over my eyes? Unbelievable!

This must have been a humiliating experience for Abraham—this man of faith, this great patriarch of the saints, this friend of God, to be confronted over his ungodly deception. Abraham had not only done what was wrong in the eyes of God, but even in the eyes of pagans. Abraham who was to be a source of blessing (12:2-3) had instead become a source of stumbling and suffering for the people of Gerar.

A grievous truth is: Often non-Christians are more moral than Christians. The Christian community has come up with Christian Yellow Pages in the hope that we can support fellow believers, yet often these believers are not ethical or hardworking. If you are a Christian business man or woman, please be a person of integrity for your sake, for our sake, and most importantly, for the sake of Christ.

One last tip: If an unbeliever ever rebukes you, you better listen! At least ask the question: Is what he or she is saying about me true? God does speak through unbelievers. And He usually does so as a means of humbling us. So don't assume that because your boss, neighbor, or relative is an unbeliever that God can't speak through him or her.

In 20:11-16, the dialogue shifts from God and Abimelech to Abraham and Abimelech. You would think that Abraham would be in a state of full-scale repentance. But there is no indication that he acknowledged or repented of his sin. In three verses Abraham justifies his deception with three rationalizations. First, he says, **“Because I thought, surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife”** (20:11). Abraham **“thought.”** He didn't talk with God. He didn't seek counsel. Rather, he excuses his sinful deception by saying there was no fear of God in Gerar. But the real problem was that the fear of God wasn't in Abraham! What bitter irony! We must be careful not to judge people on appearances. Often, the ungodly are not as ungodly as one might think and the godly are not as godly as one might think.<sup>24</sup>

Abraham jumped the gun and made a judgment error. He then tries to imply that it was an honest mistake—“no big deal.” We're good at this one, aren't we? We try to sidestep responsibility by pointing to our upbringing (that's just the way I am), or by blaming the media (they are always planting sinful thoughts in my head). The truth is that we are responsible for our own decisions. Abraham may have made his decision based on a faulty premise but he was responsible for the faulty premise!

Second, in 20:12, Abraham says, **“Besides, she actually is my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife.”** I can just picture Abraham stuttering and stammering to get these words out. Yet, this explanation is not even helpful and it is totally confusing. What Abraham is saying is, “Look, technically I didn’t lie.” He tries to defend himself by technicalities but not by truthfulness. But a half-truth, said with intent to deceive, is always a whole lie.

How often do you allow people to draw the wrong conclusions or impressions by withholding evidence? Do you want to give the impression you are spiritual when you are not? Do you try to appear happy when your heart is breaking? Do you try to look sophisticated when you are desperate and despondent? Faith is facing up to reality and dealing openly with others, even when the truth may appear to put you in jeopardy or may make you vulnerable.

Lastly, Abraham even blames God for his vulnerable condition. In 20:13a, he says, **“And it came about, when God caused me to wander from my father’s house.”** The implication is that if God had not told him to leave his father’s house, he would have never ended up in Abimelech’s kingdom. If he had never arrived in Abimelech’s kingdom, he would have never lied. “Therefore, it’s not my fault, it’s really God’s fault.”<sup>25</sup> Whether we are conscious of it or not, we often blame God for the sins we commit. Lord, if only You...

To make matters worse, in 20:13b we learn that Abraham coerced Sarah into his deception. He said to Sarah, **“This is the kindness which you will show to me: everywhere we go, say of me, ‘He is my brother.’”** Ladies, Abe used one of the oldest lines in the book—literally! “If you really love me...” We do this today. If you love me, you’ll sleep with me! If you love me, you’ll lie to the IRS when the auditor comes! If you love me, you’ll understand my need to play the field! If you love me, you’ll tell the boss I’m sick. If you love me, you’ll put me ahead of God!<sup>26</sup> Yet, this is in contradiction to the message of the Bible. God loves us with an unconditional and everlasting love and He expects us to love one another with His love (John 13:34-35; 15:12).

The irony continues in 20:14-16: **“Abimelech then took sheep and oxen and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham, and restored his wife Sarah to him. Abimelech said, ‘Behold, my land is before you; settle wherever you please.’ [cf. 13:8-9] To Sarah he said, ‘Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; behold, it is your vindication before all who are with you, and before all men you are cleared.”** Abimelech gave sheep, oxen, and servants to Abraham. In showing generosity to Abraham, Abimelech was heaping burning coals on Abraham’s head (Rom 12:20). Abraham should have been giving gifts to Abimelech, because he was in the wrong. Instead, it was Abimelech who was generous (cf. 12:16). By God’s grace, Abraham did not receive punishment but plunder. Wherever he went, whatever he did, Abraham stood under God’s protection and blessing.<sup>27</sup>

During this exchange, I wish I could have seen Sarah’s face and read her mind. She must have been thinking: a house, a car, and a few million bucks. I’m staying with Abimelech. He honors me. He respects me. He doesn’t call me his sister and try to give me away to other men. Husbands, even the greatest man of God can treat his wife poorly.

Our passage closes with these remarkable words: **“Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his maids, so that they bore children. For the LORD had closed fast all the wombs of the household<sup>28</sup> of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife”** (20:17-18). What a humbling experience it must have been for Abraham to intercede on behalf of Abimelech. A deep sense

of unworthiness must have come over him. It was surely not his righteousness, which was the basis for divine healing. Any time that we are used of God, it is solely because of the grace of God.

As we close, please notice one last thing. God reopens the wombs of the women of Gerar but He has not yet granted fertility to Abraham's own wife.<sup>29</sup> God is more concerned with the growth and development of individual believers than He is certain aspects of our lives moving forward. He wants to perfect our faith through the trials and tests of life (2 Cor 4:16-18; Jas 1:2-4; 1 Pet 1:6-9).

Sometimes when a horse is learning how to jump over fences, it comes to one that it refuses to jump. It sticks its ears back and its nose down; it digs its hooves in, and will not jump. What do you do in those circumstances? You walk the horse around for a while to calm it down, and then you take it right back to the same fence. If necessary you do it over and over again until finally the horse sails over the fence, as it should.

Abraham needed to learn that God can be trusted to take care of him. He needed to learn that lesson well, because there would be an exam, a test of his faith, coming up (see 22:1-19). God would take him back to the same hurdle over and over again, so that he would be prepared to jump over it with flying colors.<sup>30</sup>

This is also true for us. Today, you may feel like giving up. Repeated failures always tempt us to give up. But that is exactly what the devil wants us to do! Therefore, focus on the goal and not the obstacles. Remind yourself that growth takes time. If you have children, you remember when they first learned to walk. How often they would fall. Sometimes they banged their head. Other times they cut their lip. But one thing is certain...they kept getting up.

We need that same kind of focus as we learn to walk by faith. There will be falls. There will be times of frustration but keep getting up! When you have drifted, come back to the Lord. When you have sinned, confess it. When you have fallen, get back up and begin again. The holy life is worth pursuing with every ounce of strength we have. May the reruns of your life be days of faithfully seeking the Lord.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The following chart is from Robert Deffinbaugh, *Genesis: From Paradise to Patriarchs*. Lesson 21: Never Say Never! Genesis 20:1-18 ([www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1997), 2.

Chapter 12	Chapter 20
Place: Egypt	Place: Gerar
Time: Early in Christian Life	Time: Late in Christian Life
King: Pharaoh	King: Abimelech
Abraham's response to rebuke: Silence	Abraham's response to rebuke: Excuses
Result: Abraham left Egypt	Result: Abraham stayed in Gerar

<sup>2</sup> Rev Bruce Goettsche, "Embarrassing Reruns" (Genesis 20): May 30, 1999: <http://www.unionchurch.com/archive/053099.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Two other possible reasons for Abraham's relocation include: (1) He wanted to move away from the painful memories of God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah and on the gruesome death of Lot's extended family. (2) His life was in danger from the surviving villagers in Zoar.

<sup>4</sup> Interestingly, Gerar means "the halting place." It was probably so named because it was a popular rest stop along the caravan route. But for Abraham, it became a halting place in his walk with God. Elmer Towns, *History Makers of the Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1989), 128.

<sup>5</sup> Sailhamer writes, "Abraham left the 'great trees of Mamre' (18:1, 33) and traveled into 'the Negev' (*hannegeb* i.e., 'southward') to sojourn in Gerar. The fact that the author has reminded us in chapter 21 (vv. 23b, 34a) that Abraham was still sojourning in Gerar suggests that the events of these two chapters are intended to be understood as having taken place in the 'land of the Philistines' (v. 34; see Notes)." John H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*: EBC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), Electronic ed.

<sup>6</sup> The key words "his wife" and "my wife" emphasize the vital relationship of Abraham and Sarah that they jeopardize with their scheme (Gen 20:2, 3, 7, 11, 12, 14, 18). Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 284.

<sup>7</sup> "Abimelech" was a title rather than a proper name (cf. Gen 26:1; Judg 8:31; 1 Sam 21:10; Ps 34 title). It meant "royal father" or "the king is my father." Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, Vol. 2: WBC (Waco, TX: Word, 1994), 70.

<sup>8</sup> Waltke notes, "The stories about the jeopardy of the ancestress in pagan kings' harems form an inner frame around the Abraham cycle before the transition to the next cycle in 22:20-25:11. After Abraham's initial call to the Promised Land to become a great nation, he immediately jeopardizes Sarah in Pharaoh's harem. Now, immediately before the birth of the promised seed, he jeopardizes the matriarch in Abimelech's harem." Waltke, *Genesis*, 284.

<sup>9</sup> Bill T. Arnold, *Encountering the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 105.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Eaton, *Preaching Through the Bible: Genesis 12-23* (Kent, England: Sovereign World, 1999), 102.

<sup>11</sup> Shortly after the announcement of a birth one year hence, Sarah is again taken into another man's harem. The reader is to infer that if there is an heir, he is in danger of being reckoned as Abimelech's not Abraham's. But God intervenes once again and preserves Sarah (Gen 20:6b) and restores her to Abraham.

<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, this is the very question Abraham asked God regarding the people of Sodom in Gen 18:23: "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked?"

<sup>13</sup> Eaton, *Genesis 12-23*, 102.

<sup>14</sup> I like how Swindoll puts it: "The walk of faith is to be lived without man-made crutches. Abraham built a crutch when he concocted his sister story and stored it away for future use. Sarah slipped the crutch under his arm when she agreed to go along with the story. She should have said, 'Now, dear, supporting you is one thing, but lying for you is another. I won't be a part of your deceitful plans.' We often become accomplices to wrong because we are afraid to lovingly confront. In such a situation God calls us not only to throw away our own crutches but also to discourage others from using theirs." Swindoll, *Abraham*, 99.

<sup>15</sup> What a background Genesis 20 sets for Genesis 21. We would have expected Isaac to have been conceived at a high point in Abraham and Sarah's lives, but it was not so. We would at least have expected Abraham's unbelief to have been exposed and finally conquered in Genesis 20, but it did not happen. In fact, Abraham never even acknowledged the sinfulness of his actions.

<sup>16</sup> Derek Kidner, *Genesis*: Tyndale OT Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1967), 137.

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<sup>17</sup> This is the first explicit reference to a prophet in the OT. Prophets received direct revelations from God, spoke to others for God, and praised God (2 Chron 25:1). Here, the role of the prophet includes that of intercessor, as it does elsewhere in Scripture. Abraham's role of prophet in Genesis is revealed in the following ways: He was a spokesman for God (12:2-3), he was an intercessor for God (18:16-33), and he was privileged by God to know future events (15:4-5; 17:1-8; 18:17-18). While we may not be prophets like Abraham, we remain loved by God, called by God, and commissioned by God to be His servants and ambassadors.

<sup>18</sup> Sailhamer writes, "The focus of the narrative of chapters 20 and 21 is on the relationship between Abraham and the nations. Abraham's role is that of a prophetic intercessor, as in the promise 'all peoples on earth will be blessed through you' (12:3). He prayed for the Philistines (20:7), and God healed them (20:17)." Sailhamer, *Genesis*, Electronic ed.

<sup>19</sup> Ronald F. Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 179.

<sup>20</sup> Charles R. Swindoll, *Abraham: The Friend of God* (Fullerton, CA: Insight for Living, 1988), 98.

<sup>21</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 290.

<sup>22</sup> Heb. "And he spoke all these things in their ears."

<sup>23</sup> This account contrasts with righteous Lot who was hesitant to obey God (Gen 19:16).

<sup>24</sup> Eaton, *Genesis 12-23*, 102-103.

<sup>25</sup> Ed Dobson, *Abraham: The Lord Will Provide* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1993), 134.

<sup>26</sup> Pastor Bob Hallman, "Deja Vu" (Genesis 20:1-18): *Calvary Chapel Kauai*

[http://calvarychapel.com/kauai/teachings/genesis\\_pdf/gen\\_20\\_notes.pdf](http://calvarychapel.com/kauai/teachings/genesis_pdf/gen_20_notes.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> Kenneth O. Gangel, *Genesis: Holman Old Testament Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 183.

<sup>28</sup> This fact indicates that Sarah was in Abimelech's household for weeks or months before the dream revelation was given (Gen 20:6-7). No one in his household could have children after Sarah arrived on the scene. See NET Study Bible Notes.

<sup>29</sup> Arnold, *Encountering the Book of Genesis*, 105.

<sup>30</sup> Ian M. Duguid, *Living in the Gap Between Promise and Reality* (Phillipsburg: P & R, 1999), 109.