# Abraham and Abimelech

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Date: 09 September 2026

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[0:00] Welcome to Built on God's Word, the preaching and teaching ministry of Highland Park Baptist Church in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.! Willard Lyons teaches on the life of Abraham.

Last week we left off with Abraham after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and after God's dealings with Lot, we saw Abraham then leaving where he was and sojourning into the wilderness or the area of Gerar.
There Gerar was under the rule and reign of Abimelech, the Philistine king. Remember what took place there as they saw Abraham and Sarah enter.
It ended up that Abimelech took Sarah into his harem, if you will, make her a concubine, another wife.
And the same thing that happened when they entered into Egypt. Remember what took place. Now, remember here now.
[1:13] He takes Sarah into his household. Alright, this Philistine king. And then all of a sudden here. Now, remember, there was a difference in the reasoning between why Pharaoh did that and why Abimelech did that.

Pharaoh did it because she was a good-looking woman. He just wanted her as a wife. Abimelech was more wanting to make an alliance with Abraham.
And that's the way they usually did it traditionally. They would bring, in this case, supposedly his sister into being a concubine. Alright? Now, the amazing thing about this is, same thing happens. Just parallel scenarios here. Remember what happened in verse number 3. God came to Abimelech in a dream by night. Remember what he told him.
He said, Behold, thou art a dead man for the woman which thou hast taken, for she is a man's wife. So, God shows him, hey, you've got a problem here. The woman you've taken in is a man's wife.
[2:25] Now, verses 4 and 5 said that he had not yet come in or near to Sarah. And he said to the Lord, he said, Adonai, wilt thou also slay a righteous nation?

You know, that he said, you're a dead man. Earlier, God said, you're a dead man if you don't return this man's wife to him. You'll die. So, Abimelech says, Will you also slay a righteous nation?
Said he not unto me, she is my sister. And she, even she herself, said he is my brother. It's in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hand that I have done this.
Now, remember what happened here. This was the hand of God working here, not only with Abraham, but with Abimelech as well. To this point, God had hindered Abimelech from taking Sarah.
Now, that happened because God put upon him a sudden illness. He and all those in his household. The women could not birth the children, and he was not able to produce children as well.
[3:39] All right? So, that's the way God intervened in this. But nonetheless, as God speaks to Abimelech in this, Abimelech has a good answer, an honest answer here.

It's with the integrity and the innocency of my hands, integrity of my heart, innocency of my hands that I have done this. All right? Now, in verses 6 through 7, this is where we left off last week.
God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld thee from sinning against me.
Therefore, suffered I thee not to touch her. Now, interesting point that he makes here. Notice that he did not say, I have stopped you from committing sin against Abraham or against Sarah.
He said, I have stopped you from sinning against me. God said that to Abimelech. Therefore, suffered I thee not to touch her.

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[4:46] Now, therefore, restore the man his wife, for he is a prophet. He shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live. And if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou and all that are thine.

Now, so not only, once again, did God deliver Abraham and Sarah from the consequence of their sin, but he kept Abimelech from this particular sin as well by divine deliverance in the matter of the disease.
All right? Now, God commands him, restore immediately the man's wife to him because, in essence, he's my man. He's my prophet.
All right? And he will pray for you and that will save your life from death. Abimelech's plea here is a plea of innocence and it's understandable in the light of the customs of the day.
Lord, I did this out of the integrity of my heart. Integrity, by definition, a moral innocence. An unimpaired condition, soundness.
[6:01] All right? Speaks high moral value here. I did that out of the innocency of my heart. Yeah. Think about the idea of integrity here, just for a moment.

When you compare Abimelech to Abraham and vice versa, what do you get? You get a man of integrity. But with Abraham, you've got a man of...
It's not integrity. It seems to be one that's working in the flesh upon his own wisdom. We've seen the reality of what they did before.
All right? And we'll look at that again here in just a moment. All right? But notice and remember, in Psalm 26, verses 1 through 3, David spoke of the matter of walking in integrity.
All right? Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity. I have trusted also in the Lord. Therefore, I shall not slide.
[7:03] Examine me. Now, notice this. I love this part with David. Examine me, O Lord. Examine me. Prove me. In other words, put me to the test. And that idea is the idea of putting me to the test for the purpose of finding me able to stand that test.

All right? The standard for that test is the holiness of God. What an honesty in the heart of David here at this point, at this juncture. God, I want you to look at my life.
Look at my heart. You know me. And I want you to try. Put it to the test. All right? Now, examine me.
Prove me. Try my reins and my heart. For thy loving kindness is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth. And then Proverbs 20, verse 7 said, The just man walketh in his integrity.
His children are blessed after him. Walking in integrity, in the integrity of our heart. Now, think about it just a moment.
[8:17] Is there anybody here that's never had difficulties at some point in their life? Raise your hand. If you're one.

I didn't think so. You were looking around the sea, weren't you? Were you going to call him a liar? No, no, no, no. No. No.
Yeah. We've all, you know, life is filled with difficulties, uncertainties, problems. But the important thing for us is, how do we walk through those circumstances of life?
Those trials in hard times. Scripture tells us how to do that. In Galatians chapter 5, verse 16, the Apostle Paul says to us, This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.
Then he goes on down and talks about the fruit of each other, the flesh and the Spirit. Somebody tell me, what does it mean to walk in the Spirit? You know, we use these terms quite often.
[9:29] But are we really understanding what it means? Can we explain that to ourselves, much less to anybody else? What does it mean to walk in the Spirit? To walk in the flesh is just being who you are in the natural man.

Right? No hard work for that. But walking in the Spirit is simply being yielded to the Spirit of God, being sensitive to Him throughout the day, and doing what He instructs you to do, what He directs you to do, what He impresses you to do.
All right? So, Ephesians chapter 4, verses 1 through 3, and then verse 17, verses 1 through 3 say, I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, remember, that's beg you, that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, and this is how you do it, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

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Now, when He says, walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, or literally, walk worthy of the calling by which you are called, or with which you are called. All right?
The word worthy means for something to be of equal value of something else. All right? To walk as if the salvation that God has given you.
[10:58] All right? That your walk is seen as being, if you will, as valuable as the salvation itself. Now, consider it just a moment.

We easily, I think, use that thought of being saved and having God's salvation to be kind of a generic thing to us.
But when you stop and consider what that is, all right? It's freedom. Freedom from the guilt and the penalty of sin, which we rightly deserve from the day we were born because of the nature of sin within us.
All right? That was what we were. That's what we deserved. But God, in His mercy, and because of the great love wherewith He loved us, Paul says, we have been freed from that guilt and from that penalty of sin and justified.
All right? Justification is freedom from the penalty and guilt of sin and being made righteous with the righteousness of Christ. So not only are we free from the guilt and penalty of sin, we're made righteous.
[12:21] All right? So when God sees us as being righteous, He sees us, now catch this, He sees us the same as He would if He was looking at Jesus.

You got that? Anybody have a problem with that? Good. Because we're dressed in the righteousness of Christ. And that's what God sees.
All right? So that's what we are. So, why should we not conduct our life and our living in accordance to what we are in all of that?
Amen? Yeah. Our lives should emulate that. And that's what Paul is saying here. Walk worthy of the vocation, the calling, wherewith you are called, called into the salvation that God's given.
But you do that with all lowliness. You do it with meekness. But long-suffering, forbearing one another in love. Then endeavoring to keep or maintain the unity that the Spirit of God has already produced.
[13:38] Endeavor, labor, to maintain that and do that in the bond of peace. Then verse 17 of Ephesians 4 says, This I say therefore and testify in the Lord that you henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind.

All right? Then he tells us how to do that. Verses 23 and 24, Be renewed in the spirit of your mind that you might put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.
All right? Take off the old man, put on the new man, having your mind and your spirit renewed. All right? Now, Colossians 2, verses 6 through 7.
As ye have therefore received Christ, even, this is out of the Amplified, even Jesus, the Lord, so walk in union with and conformity to Him, having the roots of your being firmly and deeply planted in Him, fixed and founded in Him, being continually built up in Him, becoming increasingly more confirmed and established in the faith just as you were taught and abounding and overflowing in it with thanksgiving.
Boy, you know what that tells me? Yeah. Our hearts and minds are so bombarded with influence from all directions, from all sorts of things.
[15:10] But the walk of the believer must be conditioned by our constant influence of the things of God.

Scripture, praying, as He said, all those various things that God has given us that we can at our fingertips have to saturate our lives in the things of God.
So, He is the one that influences our life more than anyone else or anything else. All right? Yeah. That's the walk of the believer.
Now, and then, of course, in Ephesians chapter 6, He gives us the picture of what the armor of God is that He's given to us. And we'll look at it at a different time.
Now, that's how we're to walk. That's how we're to confront these situations of life. All right? Now, back to Genesis 20 and verse number 8.
[16:14] Therefore, Abimelech rose early in the morning and called all his servants and told all these things in their ears. And the men were so afraid.

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So, Abimelech is a smart man here. He really is. Wise man. He gets all of his servants together, all of his attendants, told them what God has said to him and who this woman Sarah is.
She's a wife of this man Abraham. And so, they were, you know, amazed at what took place here. And, but recognized also the hand of God in this.
So, what happens? Verse 9. Abimelech is about to have a come to Jesus meeting with Abraham. All right?
Notice. Then Abimelech called Abraham and said unto him, Why hast thou done this unto us? [17:16] What have you done? And what have I offended thee? That thou hast brought on me in my kingdom a great sin. Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not be done.

Wow. Calls him on the carpet. He wants an account here of why he did what he did. Now, verse 10 and 11.
Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou that thou hast done this thing? Now, here's Abraham's excuse.
Two-fold excuse. Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place. I mean, after all, it's a Philistine territory.
Surely the fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my wife's sake. So, kind of a weak answer there, but his answer nonetheless.
[18:18] Now, now, secondly, he says in verse 12, well, realize something else he said here. He supposed that there was no fear of God in the place here.

But also, the idea here is that when he left his father's house, all right, he had arranged with his wife to say that she's his sister, just like he did with Pharaoh, when actually she was her half-sister.
Now, verse 12, And yet, indeed, she is my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife.
If the song went on, he would probably say, and I'm my own grandpa. Amen. You remember that song? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. What a reasoning here.
Yeah. Yeah. She really is my half-sister, and I married her because she's not the daughter of my mother, but she's the daughter of my dad. All right?
[19:34] Now, look at verse 13. It came to pass, when God calls me to wander from my father's house, what an interesting statement here.

When God calls me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, this is thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me. At every place whether we shall come, say of me, he is my brother.
Now, interesting here. Time for that honest account here. It's God that, you know, when God calls me to wander from my father's house, it's God that did this.
All right? Now, it's interesting that when we see the word God here, when God, it's the word Elohim, but it's the plural form of the word Elohim, just as these Philistines would use.
So, he's lowering himself to the thought of how the Philistines look at this. All right? Along with that, notice something else. Is there anything else apparent to you in that?
[20:49] When he simply says, when God calls me to wander from my father's house, this is what I said with my sister. Does anything else stick out to you there? Who is it that called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees?

What name of God did he use? Jehovah. Here he uses the plural form Elohim. He says nothing about the fact of what God's purpose was in everything he's been doing in his life.
He simply leaves that out. Why? Why would he do that? Rightfully, he would say, well, it's Jehovah who they really, well, no, that is the God of Abraham.
Jehovah called me out of my father's house and told me to go to a land that he will show me and then he promised to give me that land.
He says nothing about that. he's trying to get himself off the hook as easily as he can. Yeah. Nothing like half-truth, right?
[22:15] Nothing like half-truth. God did tell him to wander, to go to a place he'll show him, tells him to wander to Canaan. All right? But that's not all the truth.

You and I need to realize and recognize here the value of being honest. I'm not talking about honest per se with other people, but honest with ourselves and honest with God.
Amen? That's part of walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. Go over to Romans chapter 14 and remember something here.

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Romans chapter 14. Now, the context of this deals with, you know, offending fellow brothers and sisters with, in this case, eating and so forth.
But he says in verse 7 and following, I'm going to read this out of the Amplified. For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself.
[23:43] For if we live, we live for the Lord. If we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end, Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and of the living.

But as for you, why do you judge your brother or sister, or you as well, why do you regard your brother or sister with contempt? For we will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.
For it is written, so then each one of us will give an account of himself to God. Alright? Yeah. recognize that. We'll all give an account. We're going to stand before the judgment seat of God.
Now, therefore, let's not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this, not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother or sister's way.
I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but to the one who thinks something is unclean, to that person it's unclean. And on goes about the context of what's taking place there.
[24:59] To be honest with God, we first need to be honest with ourselves. Amen? Recognizing who we are, and when sin comes, hopefully comes very seldom, into our lives, we first got to be honest with ourselves about that sin, so we can confess that sin before God.

Alright? But if we go half baked with that idea, well, it's not quite that big, but I'm supposed to pray about it anyway, so I'll pray. Amen?
You think God approves of that and accepts that? I don't think so. Got to be honest with Him and honest with ourselves in order for that to happen. Honesty is, as they say, the best medicine.
Time to be honest. Time, because we all will give an account, and that account, I believe, for the believer, is an account that will give as to what we have done in satisfying the will of God for our lives.
Yeah. Because the judicial account's already been paid for through the blood of Christ. But for what we've done, and knowing the will of God, and satisfying the will of God for our lives, I think is what we will give an account for.
[26:23] Now, part of that account will be anything that's hindered that, anything in our life that's hindered that happening. Alright? But I think that's the basis of what we're going to be seeing.

Alright? Now, verses 14 and 15. What happens here? Abimelech took sheep and oxen and men servants and women servants, gave them unto Abraham and restored him Sarah his wife.
And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee, dwell where it pleases thee. Now, it's interesting, if you remember over in chapter 12, early on in the study in verse 16, when all this began to happen with Pharaoh, Pharaoh, when Pharaoh saw Sarah, you know, they told him about her, he said, bring her in here, let me see.
And when he took her into his household, he gave Abraham the same thing. Sheep and oxen and all kinds of things for Sarah.
Alright? Abimelech does this for a different reason. Alright? He gives the same thing here. But look at verse 16 and we see the reasoning for it.
[27:41] Unto Sarah, this is what Abimelech says to Sarah, unto Sarah he said. So, you get the picture here, Abraham's in here, Abimelech has called him in, his servants, Abimelech's servants are around here, been told what's going on.

He calls Abraham to account, he gives his account, so they're all standing there and they bring in Sarah to him, untouched. Alright? Gives him these cattle and goods and servants and he speaks to Sarah now and he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver.
Behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes unto all that are with thee with all other. Thus she was reproved. Now, out of the Amplified it says, To Sarah he said, Behold, I have given this brother of yours a thousand pieces of silver.
See, it is to compensate you for all that has occurred and to vindicate your honor as a sign of innocence, I think ESV says, before all who are with you, before all men you are cleared and compensated.
Alright? The idea is this, the covering of the eyes is the idea that when a woman becomes a mistress and that is a disgrace not only to her but to the entire family.

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[29:12] So, the entire family has her to look at as a disgrace for all the rest of her life. But now with this, with what Abimelech does here, she is now vindicated for what she has done.

Alright? So, the covering of the eyes is a figurative expression for an atoning gift. It's the idea of to cover anyone's face so that he may forget a wrong done.
So that with this done then, with this gift given, everybody else will recognize that she's been vindicated and she'll not have a problem with that anymore.
It's the idea here. Alright? Now, there's no indication that actual money has been given here, this thousand pieces of silver. Some believe that's probably the value of all the cattle and servants and so forth that he was given by Abimelech.
Alright? So, verses 17 and 18. So, Abraham prayed unto God and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his maidservants and they bear children for the Lord had fast closed up all the wounds of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.
[30:33] Alright? So, once again, Abraham turns into intercession here. Intercedes on behalf of Abimelech and all of his family and God heals them from that infirmity.

Alright? Now, what has God done? God has spared Sarah's womb, protected her womb, guarded it, so, because, simply because she's the one through which the Messiah will eventually come.
Now, get the idea here that this all probably happened in pretty quick succession here. and it might have all taken place just as soon as she was taken into Abimelech's harem.
Alright? So, there's no real indication of any lengthy stay there in Abimelech's household. Alright? Or, with Abimelech at all, as far as Abraham and Sarah are concerned.
So, that's said and done. Alright? Sarah and Abraham, go their way.
[31:47] And guess what happens next? Okay? Isaac comes on the scene. We'll see that next week.

Let's pray. We'll dismiss. Father, again, thank you for your loving kindness today. Thank you for your goodness and grace and love to us and for time again in your word tonight.
And I pray, Father, you will just continue to impress upon our hearts the reality of who you are and who you are to us and in us even as you conduct our lives the way you want it conducted, directed, and lead it.
and I pray, Father, that you will give us sensitivity to the reality of you doing that so that we can specifically yield to your spirit and follow him as he directs our lives to secure and produce your will through us.
Thank you again for these men and women that love you, love your word, and I pray, Father, that you will bless what we've seen tonight and continue to speak to our heart through it and bring us back again next week and we'll thank you for it.
[32:58] In Jesus' name, Amen. To learn more, visit us in person or see the website

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