

Genesis 20

King James Version (KJV)

20 And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. (This is Gaza, today)

² And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. (Like he did in Egypt)

³ But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. (Abimelech - in the Philistines language means king. This was his title; not his name; like the Pharaohs of Egypt)

⁴ But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, LORD, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Chapter-19 (referring to Sodom) (Abimelech hadn't touched Sarah. He was innocent)

⁵ Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. (integrity = moral innocence)

⁶ And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. (touch = naga < in the Hebrew > = to lie with a woman; to have intercourse. This is the same word as in Genesis-3:3, concerning the serpent <Satan> and Eve)

(God interceded to keep Sarah safe from being molested by the king)

⁷ Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and 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. (This is the first use of the word prophet in the Bible. God Himself named Abraham a prophet)

⁸ Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid. (Although they were heathen they knew the God of Abraham)

(God had "shut off" all men in the camp. They didn't know how it had happened until they had this talk with the king)

⁹ Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. (They are worried that they will stay impotent; and rightfully so. God threatened the king and the people)

¹⁰ And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? (Why did you do this to us?) (A good question)

¹¹ And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake. (Obviously, Abraham was wrong. These people lived by a moral code. Abimelech did send for Sarah, but at the time, he thought she was Abraham's sister; not his wife)

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. (The law against incest only came forth much later, in the time of Moses)

¹³ And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother. (Abraham didn't lie, but he didn't tell the whole truth either. This is a lie of omission, caused by his fear of Abimelech)

¹⁴ And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. (It was a great disgrace for a woman to be taken, and then returned. Abimelech isn't taking any chances and wants to return Sarah in a very generous and respectful way)

¹⁵ And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee. (Abimelech knows that God has His hand on Abraham. Treat Abraham right, and God will appreciate it)

¹⁶ And unto Sarah 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, and with all other: thus she was reproved. (Compensation to restore her honor, for any shame he may have caused her by returning her to Abraham)

¹⁷ So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children. (God had made all males in the area impotent, to protect Sarah. Now He healed them because Abimelech returned Sarah to Abraham with honor)

¹⁸ For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife. (God was protecting the seed line that would later bring Jesus Christ into the world)