



## Lesson 11 | God's Grace for Our Repeated Failures

Genesis 20:1-18

Have you ever made a foolish, sinful decision from which God rescued you, only to turn around and make the same sinful choice later? It can be easy in such situations to think that we've blown it for the last time and God must be done with us. The story we are looking at today gives us hope because it shows us that God gives grace to repeat offenders.

### Abraham's Sinful Decision (20:1-8)

Abimelech \_\_\_\_\_ Sarah (20:1-2)

Abraham sins again by lying about his relationship with Sarah to Abimelech king of Gerar, whom we will later learn is king of the Philistines (cf Genesis 26:1). This lie leads to the expected result – his wife is taken away from him by a foreign ruler.

God \_\_\_\_\_ Abimelech (20:3-7)

God warns Abimelech – "You're a dead man for taking another man's wife." Abimelech responds with the panic you would expect from someone told they were about to die – "I had no idea!" God acknowledges that what Abimelech did he did in innocence. He tells Abimelech that He had prevented him from touching Sarah and instructs Abimelech to ask Abraham to pray for him.

Abimelech and His Servants \_\_\_\_\_ (20:8)

Later Abraham will tell Abimelech that he lied about Sarah because he didn't think that the nation feared God. This verse shows us how greatly mistaken Abraham was in making that assessment.



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## Abimelech Confronts Abraham (20:9-13)

### Abimelech Asks Abraham What He Has Done (20:9-10)

Abimelech calls Abraham and immediately starts firing off questions. Such questions show the frustration that Abimelech had and highlight the guilt of Abraham in this whole mess.

### Abraham \_\_\_\_\_ Himself (20:11-13)

Abraham gives a defense for why he has done what he did, but all his reasons are weak. Rather than take responsibility, Abraham makes excuses and in so doing shows how fearful and selfish he had been in this decision.

## A Grace-Filled Ending

### Abimelech Makes \_\_\_\_\_ (29:14-16)

Abimelech knows he has a death sentence hanging over his head, so he goes above and beyond to make things right. He gives flocks and herds to Abraham, tells Abraham to settle in whatever part of the land looked the best to him, and finally pays a large sum of silver to Abraham to vindicate Sarah. God once again blesses Abraham, not because of his disobedience, but in spite of it.

### Abraham \_\_\_\_\_ for Abimelech (29:17-18)

Finally we see Abraham be a blessing to the people. Abraham prays for Abimelech and his people, and in so doing makes them able to have children once again. Through a bizarre set of circumstances, God uses Abraham's deception to bring him around to the point where he is doing what he should have been doing from the beginning – blessing the nations. God has called us as sons of Abraham to be His agents of grace in the world. Sadly we, like our spiritual father, can become so focused on our own affairs that we fail to be the blessing God desires us to be.

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