

# Abraham's Deceit

(Genesis 20:1-18)

Yearly Theme: "Patience is..."

Series Title: "Divine Patience (Part 2)"

February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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## Something to think about:

Deceit can only last for so long. Truth always finds a way through the tangled web of deceitfulness.

We come to a passage today that explains the very damaging results of deceit.

Just before his son, Isaac's, birth, Abraham and Sarah find their way to a city known as Gerar, where a king by the name of Abimelech ruled. Fearing that Abimelech would kill him and take his wife Sarah, Abraham devised a cunning plan to protect himself from harm. Let's take a closer look...

## Genesis 20:1-18 (NLT),

**Abraham moved south to the Negev and lived for a while between Kadesh and Shur, and then he moved on to Gerar. While living there as a foreigner, <sup>2</sup>Abraham introduced his wife, Sarah, by saying, "She is my sister." So King Abimelech of Gerar sent for Sarah and had her brought to him at his palace.**

**<sup>3</sup>But that night God came to Abimelech in a dream and told him, "You are a dead man, for that woman you have taken is already married!"**

**<sup>4</sup>But Abimelech had not slept with her yet, so he said, "Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation? <sup>5</sup>Didn't Abraham tell me, 'She is my sister'? And she herself said, 'Yes, he is my brother.' I acted in complete innocence! My hands are clean."**

**<sup>6</sup>In the dream God responded, "Yes, I know you are innocent. That's why I kept you from sinning against me, and why I did not let you touch her. <sup>7</sup>Now return the woman to her husband, and he will pray for you, for he is a prophet. Then you will live. But if you don't return her to him, you can be sure that you and all your people will die."**

**<sup>8</sup>Abimelech got up early the next morning and quickly called all his servants together. When he told them what had happened, his men were terrified. <sup>9</sup>Then Abimelech called for Abraham. "What have you done to us?" he demanded. "What crime have I committed that deserves treatment like this, making me and my kingdom guilty of this great sin? No one should ever do what you have done! <sup>10</sup>Whatever possessed you to do such a thing?"**

**<sup>11</sup>Abraham replied, "I thought, 'This is a godless place. They will want my wife and will kill me to get her.' <sup>12</sup>And she really is my sister, for we both have the same father, but different mothers. And I married her. <sup>13</sup>When God called me to leave my father's home and to travel from place to place, I told her, 'Do me a favor. Wherever we go, tell the people that I am your brother.' "**

**<sup>14</sup>Then Abimelech took some of his sheep and goats, cattle, and male and female servants, and he presented them to Abraham. He also returned his wife, Sarah, to him. <sup>15</sup>Then Abimelech said, "Look over my land and choose any place where you would like to live." <sup>16</sup>And he said to Sarah, "Look, I am giving your 'brother' 1,000 pieces of silver in the presence of all these witnesses. This is to compensate you for any wrong I may have done to you. This will settle any claim against me, and your reputation is cleared."**

**<sup>17</sup>Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants, so they could have children. <sup>18</sup>For the LORD had caused all the women to be infertile because of what happened with Abraham's wife, Sarah. <sup>1</sup>**

Here's the takeaway this morning:

**Key Point: "When fear overtakes us, GOD's patience in the face of our lack of trust is incomprehensible."**

What can we learn about deceit from this passage today?...

- **Deceit is rooted in fear.**

*Genesis 20:11-13 (NLT), <sup>11</sup> Abraham replied, "I thought, 'This is a godless place. They will want my wife and will kill me to get her.' <sup>12</sup> And she really is my sister, for we both have the same father, but different mothers. And I married her. <sup>13</sup> When God called me to leave my father's home and to travel from place to place, I told her, 'Do me a favor. Wherever we go, tell the people that I am your brother.'"*

- **Deceit is destructive to relationships.**

*Genesis 20:2, 9-10 (NLT), <sup>2</sup> Abraham introduced his wife, Sarah, by saying, "She is my sister." So King Abimelech of Gerar sent for Sarah and had her brought to him at his palace...*

*...<sup>9</sup> Then Abimelech called for Abraham. "What have you done to us?" he demanded. "What crime have I committed that deserves treatment like this, making me and my kingdom guilty of this great sin? No one should ever do what you have done! <sup>10</sup> Whatever possessed you to do such a thing?"*

- **Deceit has a negative ripple effect on others.**

*Genesis 20:17-18 (NLT), <sup>17</sup> Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants, so they could have children. <sup>18</sup> For the LORD had caused all the women to be infertile because of what happened with Abraham's wife, Sarah.*

## Something to take home:

Abraham, through fear and desperation, deceitfully worked to save his own hide by claiming that his wife was his sister. And though this was somewhat true, the reality is, Sarah was his wife. The fear which led to deceit, also led to broken relationships, hardships, and significant fall-out for others connected with this story.

When we allow fear to overrule our trust in GOD, we have stepped precariously into a make-believe world constructed by tissue paper. One spark of truth will ultimately set ablaze the lies we make all the while complicating matters all the more. And where is GOD in all this mess? GOD is holding the reigns of righteousness, patiently contending for us while we make a mess of things. Oh that we would do the hard work of telling the truth all the time, and trusting GOD for the outcomes!

**Key Point: "When fear overtakes us, GOD's patience in the face of our lack of trust is incomprehensible."**