

# Genesis 20 - Abraham, Sarah and Abimelech

Intellectual Property of [John Marsing](http://www.MyHebrewBible.Com) - [www.MyHebrewBible.Com](http://www.MyHebrewBible.Com)

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Gen 20 <sup>verses 1-20</sup> .....	1
Comments .....	3
Haftora and Brit .....	6
Isa 61:1-10 KJV .....	6
Gal 3:15-29 .....	7

## Introduction

ToDo: give an outline and things you would want to bring up if you were doing a teaching on this chapter.

My notes for Living Messiah Ministries Sabbath Study 1/30/2016<sup>a</sup>

## Gen 20 <sup>verses 1-20</sup>

<sup>1</sup> And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. <sup>2</sup> And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She *is* my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>b</sup> <sup>4</sup> But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, <sup>c</sup> wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?

<sup>5</sup> Said he not unto me, She *is* my sister? and she, even she herself said, He *is* my brother: in the integrity (*tome* <sup>H8537</sup> e.g. Psa 26:1) <sup>d</sup> of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. <sup>6</sup> And God <sup>e</sup> said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity integrity (*tome* <sup>H8537</sup>) of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

---

<sup>a</sup> See <http://livingmessiah.com/bboard.html#sched> in addition there is also Gen 20:1-18, Isaiah 61:1-10, Galatians 3:15-29

<sup>b</sup> The first time Elohim appears to a non-Hebrew in a dream. Is this connected to the emendation found in the next verse.

<sup>c</sup> Emendation: The Hebrew text has *adonai* אֲדֹנָי (translated as Lord), but should be YHVH

<sup>d</sup> See Word-Study-H656-aphes-Fail-and-H8552-tamam-consumed-ended, Article #[359](#), an article that was pulled from the “Gen-47-13-25-Joseph-and-the-Famine”, Article #[361](#) which **discusses the failing money**.

<sup>e</sup> It's the Elohim (**ha**·'E·lo·Him ) not just “And God...”

<sup>7</sup> Now therefore restore the man *his* wife; for he *is* a **prophet** (*navi* <sup>H5030</sup>) <sup>f</sup>, and he shall **pray** (*palal* <sup>H6419</sup>) <sup>g</sup> 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. <sup>h</sup>

Gen 20:7 HSB5

ha·'Ish **the man** הָאִישׁ e·shet- [his] wife' אִשְׁתּוֹ ha·Shev **Now therefore restore** הָשֵׁב ve·'at: Tah, **Now** וְעַתָּה  
 ve·yit·pal·Lel **and he shall pray** וְיִתְפַּלֵּל Hu, **and he** הוּא na·Vi **for he [is] a prophet** נָבִיא ki- **is a** כִּי-  
 me·Shiv, **מְשִׁיב** ei·ne·Cha **not** אֵינְךָ ve·'im- **if** וְאִם- vech·Yeh; **and thou shalt live** וְחָיָה ba·'ad·Cha **for thee**  
 ta·Mut, **die** תָּמוּת Mot **thou that thou shalt surely** מוֹת ki- **that** כִּי- da' [her] **not know** דַּע **and if thou restore**  
 .Lach : לָךְ a·Sher- **who** אֲשֶׁר- ve·chol **and all** וְכָל- at: Tah **you** אַתָּה

<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander (*hit'U* <sup>H8582</sup>) 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.

<sup>14</sup> And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave *them* unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife.

Gen 20:14 HSB5

u·va·Kar, **and oxen** וּבָקָר tzon **sheep** צֹאן a·vi·Me·lech **And Abimelech** אַבְיִמֶלֶךְ vai·yik·Kach **took** וַיִּקַּח  
 vai·yit·Ten **and gave** וַיִּתֵּן u·she·fa·Chot, **and womenservants** וְשִׁפְחֹת va·'a·va·Dim **and menservants** וְעֲבָדִים  
 et' **את** לוֹ vai·Ya·shev **and restored** וַיָּשֵׁב le·'av·ra·Ham; [them] **unto Abraham** לְאַבְרָהָם  
 ish·To. **his wife** אִשְׁתּוֹ : sa·Rah **him Sarah** שָׂרָה

<sup>15</sup> And Abimelech said, Behold, my land *is* before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee. <sup>16</sup> 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 reprov'd (*VeNoKaChaT* <sup>H3198 YaKaCh</sup>). <sup>17</sup> So Abraham prayed (*palal* <sup>H6419</sup>) unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare *children*.

<sup>f</sup> First use of the word prophet *navi*.

<sup>g</sup> Gen 20:7 is the first time used in scripture, see also Gen 20:17, Gen 48:11; see Word-Study-H6416-palal-pray, Article ???

<sup>h</sup> Q. So how then is Abraham a prophet? A. he was being prophetic about the future of Abimelech's life i.e. whether or not he is going to keep it!

Abimelech is "righteous" because YHVH forced him to make a choice because you have to give everyone the opportunity to correct the mistake. By making the right choice, he is "righteous".

<sup>18</sup> For YHVH had fast closed up all the wombs (*rechem*<sup>H7358</sup>)<sup>i</sup> of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.

## Comments

### 1

Why are they moving? Before (Gen 12) it was because of the famine of the land but no reason is give in this chapter. GM (Glenn McWilliams) gives many suggestion, but the one he likes is the idea that Abraham was as traveling merchant. As a result of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah there was not one to trade with, so he moved.

### 2

Difference between the story in Gen 12, in [Gen 12:16](#), Pharaoh compensated Abram for Sarai. It makes no mention of anything like that in Gen 20. The compensation found in [Gen 20:14](#) was after the fact when YHVH informed him of his sin. Ahavta says that according to the sages [Sarah was kidnapped](#). I tend to agree with this, Abraham for his actions in this chapter was not rebuked but Abimelech was told to go to Abraham for the sin he had committed and make restitution. Also in the next verse a quick response from YHVH is given to the actions of Abimelech worthy of death, and kidnapping is a capital offense. If Abimelech had requested Sarah to be his wife and was offered Abraham compensation and further Abraham would have accepted it, then that would have been a different story. But that's not the story were told.

### 3

It's not known what motives Abimelech had for Sarah, but it's clearly in contrast to that of YHVH's and, more precisely, YHVH's covenant with Abraham and his promised son through Sarah. It is YHVH who knows the hearts of men and the heart of Abimelech is deserving of death, therefore the commentary that Abimelech kidnapped Sarah seems reasonable.

### 4

Abimelech in response doesn't argue with YHVH but asks a question, which is good, but in the question he makes a claim that his nation is righteous. My question to Abimelech is “says who?”. If the commentary in Gen 21:2 is accurate that Sarah was kidnapped, then it's hard to justify that he is righteous. After all, isn't this the land of the Gaza strip occupied by the Philistines?

Maybe his asking because he is concerned that his nation will be judged for the same reasons that Sodom and Gomorrah was judged (which just happened, see the previous chapter<sup>Gen 19</sup>). You could also argue (“by putting the best construction on everything”) that maybe his actually concerned for his people and wants to do the right thing.

Emendation, see footnote.

### 5

---

<sup>i</sup> See Word-Study-H7358-rechem-Matrix, Article [#433](#)

If the kidnapping claim is accurate (see previous comment <sup>Gen 20:3</sup>), and I believe it is, then Abimelech is coming off as being a blowhard spouting unsubstantiated righteous claims.

A previous comment from before, which I don't hold to.

From a perspective of law, hasn't King Abimelech given Abraham due process. He has two witness that Sarah is fair game. The two witnesses are none other than Abraham and Sarah.

**Psa 26:1 KJV A Psalm of David.** Judge me, O YHVH; for I have walked (*halaka*<sup>H1980</sup>) in mine integrity (*tome*<sup>H8537</sup>); I have trusted also in YHVH; *therefore* I shall not slide.

## 6

[Gen 20:5](#) "in the integrity [H8537](#) of my heart and *innocency of my hands*" the italics is not quoted here in this verse.

The weakest argument against Abimelech as being a kidnapper and unrighteous person are found in this verse because YHVH says of him he has integrity. Maybe when YHVH sends out compliments he does it "grading on a curve". Abimelech did not resist YHVH holding him back from sinning (knowing Sarah intimately), so for that YHVH gives him credit. But Abimelech should not boast because he put himself in that situation by abducting Sarah to begin with (assuming this is what actually happened).

### Q. Is he more righteous than Abraham?

A. That I have a hard time believing. YHVH only gives us that which we can handle, to judge Abimelech to harshly will cause him to rebel which would lead to his death (and possible judgment of his nation like S &G). YHVH is the Elohim of life, so when he praises him he does so like he is a spiritual babe. This is a good thing because in the end Abimelech listens to his remedy [Gen 20:7](#) and follows it [Gen 20:14-16](#) through for which he deserves credit.

## 7

See footnotes

## 8

Abimelech has to have an audience before doing what YHVH requires of him which is to reverse his decision to abduct Sarah and not only return her but give restitution. This causes a problem for him "in the is public<sup>j</sup>" as they might lose faith by seeing their "god" Abimelech reverse a prior decision. Therefore the public needs to be entertained i.e. voluntarily distracted from the truth else chaos would ensue.

In a prior life I would have been cynical of this kind of explanation about Abimelech. But I've come to appreciate the words of Jack Nicholson when he said "[you can't handle the truth](#)".

## 9

---

<sup>j</sup> **public.** "Adjective: Belonging to the entire community. Unrestricted in participation. Noun: The people. The populace; the community. "That vast multitude, which includes the ignorant, the unthinking, and the credulous, who, in making purchases, do not stop to analyze, but are governed by appearance and general impressions." J.W. Collins Co. v. F.M. Paist Co. (DC Pa) 14 F2d 614

Abimelech is putting on a really good show for his entourage as he gets on his high horse ... the public must be entertained (see previous note <sup>Gen 20:8</sup>). Abimelech isn't exactly being honest, because Elohim told him what was going to happen, but that's ok because we need to keep in mind who is audience is ... the public

## 11

Abraham throws the attitude of Abimelech right back in his face by accusing him as the king of a land that doesn't fear Elohim.

## 13

Compare "wander" (tawaw) with "Get thee out of thy country (Halack)".

[Gen 12:1 RKJV](#) Now YHVH had said unto Abram, **Get thee out of thy country**, and from thy kindred, and from thy fathers house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

Apparently this was pre-planned before they left Ur.

## 14

Torah Equity. So the claim by Abraham was that he thought "...Surely the fear of God *is* not in this place..." ([Gen 20:11](#)) goes unanswered. A claim which is in clear contrast to the one made by Abimelech in [Gen 20:4](#) (where he claims is a righteous nation). One could ask, so who wins this argument. If I would have to pick I would say Abraham

- because he is Abraham and has more credibility with me than Abimelech, and
- because Abimelech stand's mute to the charge of his land being unrighteous (i.e. not a place that fears God) and thereby being in dishonor.

But in Torah Equity, all of this is irrelevant as the "facts are on the moon". The question is whose the creditor and whose the debtor.

So the practice in Torah Equity is to not argue and, initially just pay the amount you (i.e. your straw man) was charged with. I would argue that that is what Abimelech did despite the prior posturing. Does this mean that Abraham is the debtor? I would say no, as he is playing the role of the mediator between the physical world and the spiritual world.

As a result of the covenant with Abraham, YHVH takes up the office of Elohim and becomes the Elohim of Abraham. From a legal perspective, YHVH therefore is the master and Abraham is the servant. What you do to the servant you do to the master. As Abimelech found out, his problem really wasn't with Abraham but with YHVH because he committed *tortious interference* between YHVH and Abraham. By this I mean 1) he kidnapped his wife and 2) he is interfering with the promised child Isaac. The penalty for this *tortious interference* is death if there is no immediate cease and desist by Abimelech.

**tortious interference:** occurs when a person intentionally damages the plaintiff's contractual or other business relationships

## 15

My land? How does Abimelech claim that it's his land.

## 16

**VeNoKaChaT**<sup>H3198 YaKaCh</sup>. First time this word is used, here are some more.

reproves [Gen 21:25](#). in the next chapter, Abraham reproves Abimelech

rebuke [Lev 19:17](#) (2)

reason, [Isa 1:18](#).

judge, 1 [Gen 31:37](#)

rebuked, 1 [Gen 31:42](#)

Gen 31: Jacob Flees Leban.

[Lev 19:17](#) ... thou shalt in any wise

[Lev 19:17 KJV](#) Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke (*YaKaCh YaKaCh*<sup>H3198 H3198</sup>) thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

## 17

Gen 20:7 says his a prophet / *navi*, but here his acting like a priest.

Abraham prays for his enemy, see [Mat 5:44](#) .

## Haftora and Brit

### Isa 61:1-10 KJV

<sup>1</sup> The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because YHVH hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty<sup>k</sup> to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound; <sup>2</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of YHVH, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

Isa 61:1-2 HSB5

Ya· 'an	יען	a· Lai; and'	עלי	Yah· weh	GOD	יהוה	a· do· Nai	of the Lord'	אֲדָנִי	Ru· ach	The Spirit	רוּחַ	<sup>1</sup>
o· Ti'	אֲתִי	Yah· weh	[is] upon me	because the LORD	יהוה	ma· Shach	hath anointed	מָשַׁח	Because				
she· la· Cha· ni	he hath sent	שְׁלַחְנִי	a· na· Vim,	unto the meek'	עֲנֻיִם	le· vas· Ser	me to preach good tidings						
lik· Ro	to	לְקַרְא	Lev, care for	לב	le· nish· be· rei-	break down	לְנַשְׁבְּרֵי-	la· cha· Vosh	me to bind up	לְחַבֵּשׁ			
ve· la· 'a· su· Rim	to [them	וְלְאֲסוּרִים	de· Ror,	liberty	דְּרוֹר	lish· vu· Yim	to the captives	לְשִׁבוּיִם	proclaim				
			Ko· ach.	and the opening of the prison	קוֹחַ:	-pe· kach	פְּקַח-	that are] bound					

<sup>k</sup> See Word-Study-DeRaR-H1865-Liberty, Article [#289](#) and see Isaiah-61-1-2-and-Luke-4-14-30-proclaim-liberty-and-the-acceptable-year-of-YHVH, Article [#287](#).

Yah· weh, of the LORD לַיהוָה ra· tzOn the acceptable רָצוֹן she· nat· year שְׁנַת־ lik· Ro To proclaim לְקַרְאֵ 2  
 לְנַחֵם le· lo· Hei· nu; of our God לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ na· Kam of vengeance נְקָם ve· Yom and the day יוֹם  
 a· ve· Lim. all that mourn' : אֲבֵלִים kol· all כָּל־ le· na· Chem to comfort

<sup>3</sup> To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of YHVH, that he might be glorified. <sup>4</sup> And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. <sup>5</sup> And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien *shall be* your plowmen and your vinedressers. <sup>6</sup> But ye shall be named the Priests of YHVH: *men* shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. <sup>7</sup> For your shame *ye shall have* double; and *for* confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them. <sup>8</sup> For I YHVH love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. <sup>9</sup> And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they *are* the seed *which* YHVH hath blessed. <sup>10</sup> I will greatly rejoice in YHVH, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels.

### Gal 3:15-29

<sup>15</sup> Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. <sup>16</sup> Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. <sup>17</sup> And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. <sup>18</sup> For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. <sup>19</sup> Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. <sup>20</sup> Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one. <sup>21</sup> *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. <sup>22</sup> But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. <sup>23</sup> But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. <sup>24</sup> Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. <sup>26</sup> For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27</sup> For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.