**Genesis 20**

***The Flesh Never Dies***

Introduction

1. Perhaps you know of cases in which the person had a radiant, glorying testimony of what God had done, but no more. Maybe that someone is you.

2. How could it happen? The flesh never dies!

3. In Genesis 20, it happened to Abraham. We left ch.19 with Abraham meeting with God every day. Something happened! We see self-life acting in its own strength.

How could it happen? **The flesh never dies!**

**I. THE FLESH EXERCISED 20:1, 2**

 ***A. The Place 1***

**1.** *Down to Negev (south) Negev* means, ‘to be dry’. Abraham was moving away from

 the altar (the place where man meets God). He is walking away from God’s will, and

 away from God’s placement.

 **2.** *To Gerar between Kadesh and Shur…*Abraham was a nomad. *Kadesh* means, ‘holy’.

 *Shur* means, ‘wander, to go’. *Gerar* means, ‘circle’. Between holiness and wandering

 we find ourselves going in circles. We get into a rut and we just go through the

 motions. **There is religion, but no reality.** We are like a light bulb with no electric

 current…**we have no power supply!**

 ***B. The Path 2***

*There is nothing inherently good in man, no matter how far he may have advanced with the*

 *Lord*.

1. Sarah was a 90 year old beauty! She was rejuvenated by God. She would conceive within that year. Abraham lived to be 175, so there must have been a slower aging process. Abimelech was a Philistine. The name may have been like the name Pharaoh in Egypt. Isaac meets one named Abimelech in ch.26. Since Abraham was an important chieftain, the union may have been for political reasons.
2. Satan is trying to corrupt the line of the Messiah.

\*Abraham and Sarah have been on this path before, and once again they deal with half truths. v. 12 *She is indeed my sister…*

*\****It was the stress of circumstances which revealed Abraham’s heart.** Be awake to those sins that so easily beset you. It’s easy to trust when everything goes our way, but at times of disappointment, loss, persecution, testing, when God fails to act as you think He should...it’s easy to fall back into old patterns of sin.

*\**Satan is always behind it, trying to corrupt God’s testimony in the world.

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**II. THE FLESH EXPOSED 20:3-10**

God cannot allow the flesh to remain unchallenged.

1. ***The Intervention 3-7***
2. **The Dream 3a** God came to Abimelech in a dream... *“You are a dead man…”*
3. **The Denial 4** Abimelech may have been a godly man. He considered himself *righteous,* a man of *integrity, innocent.*
4. **The Deception 5** *He said…she said...she is my sister…he is my brother.*
5. **The Dealing 6** *I also withheld you from sinning against Me…therefore I did not allow you to touch her.*
6. **The Directions 7**

\*It shows what God thought of taking another man’s wife. Fornication was a great sin! Your very breath is in the hand of God. You live by His permission (not by your heart beat).

\*Does God care for His own only when they perfectly do His will? NO…He permits the flesh to show His grace.

\*v. 7 Abimelech did not see what God saw. *Prophet…*the word is not foretelling, but telling forth God’s Word. *He shall pray for thee…thou shall live…* Failure isn’t final!

Abraham represented God to man.

\*We need to realize who we are as God sees us! I am in Christ and Christ is in me!

 ***B. The Interrogation 8-10***

These are very searching questions when the world sees us walking in the flesh.

 Abimelech knew that to take another man’s wife was wrong. *Men are very much afraid*

 *v. 8.* Sodom and Gomorrah was still smoldering!!

 **1.** *What have you done to us?* He has deceived…compromised…and led astray…he has

 misrepresented who he was.

 \*Business man…you lived as to give the impression that money was more important

 than your family, your testimony, sharing your faith.

 \*House wife…you keep house, accumulate things, live for yourself and care little about

 others. Looking good, living good is what life is all about.

 \*Teen...you live to be popular and accepted even if you have to compromise your

 convictions. ***What have you done to us?***

1. *What have I done to you?*
2. *What did you hope to accomplish?* Abraham’s answer: a safe life…easy life, things,

 money, fame, acceptance, security, love, worth. What is your answer??? *What did you*

 *hope to accomplish?* **Is it worth it?**

How could it happen? **The flesh never dies!**

**III. THE FLESH EXPLAINED 20:11-13**

Abraham had no answer. Watch when you try to explain or excuse sin. Watch excusing and

 blaming others. **It’s never your fault!** Abraham was wrong in his evaluation.

1. ***His Assumptions*** *The fear of God is not in this place…no reverence for man.* He was

wrong. We can have the wrong assumption…jump to the wrong conclusions and make the wrong choice.

1. ***His Answer*** *Sarah is his sister…*He has the explanation all thought out. This was their plan to help God out. Again, half truths to justify his wrong doing.
2. ***His Authority*** *God caused me to wander from my father’s house.* Now bring God into his scheme. *Wander* is used 50 times in the Old Testament, but never in a good sense: animals going astray, drunken men reeling, the path of a lying heart. Abraham could have used any of 6 words, he chose the worst available. **He casts blame back to God.**

**It’s our own selfish interests which cause us to depart from God!!**

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**IV. THE FLESH EXPELLED 20:14-18**

Blessing follows expulsion!

1. ***The Restitution 14-16***
2. **God’s Grace 14** Abimelech gave to Abraham. Abimelech is God’s representative, as Melchizedec. Abraham deserved nothing. He was God’s man for the hour.
3. **God’s Goodness 15, 16** *The land…dwell where you please. To Sarah…you are vindicated…I gave Abraham 1000 pieces of silver.* Abraham is your protector. Make things right!
4. ***The Restoration 17, 18***
5. **The Prayer 17a** *Abraham prayed*
6. **The Provision 17b** *Abimelech was healed and his household blessed.*
7. **The Providence 18** *God had closed the womb of all because of Abraham and Sarah*

*Abraham prayed…God healed…*Had Abraham prayed before going, he wouldn’t have had to ask God to undo the sin he had committed. Before going we do not see a word from God.

***It’s all of grace!***

*Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh!*

**Failure Is Not Final…God still has a work for you to do!**