

## *Liar Liar Pants on Fire*

### I. Announce:

- A. Slide 1 9-11 Remembered: How many were *NOT* at our church 18 years ago? How many went to NY after 9-11 with 1 of our teams? [share my story]

### II. Slide 2 Intro: *Liar Liar Pants on Fire*

- A. Abraham repeats the mistake he made in **Egypt** (Gen.12). *Relapse*.
1. Finding himself in the foreign territory of **Gerar**, he again claims that *Sarah is his sister* out of **fear** of personal harm.
  2. In both instances *God intervenes and protects Abraham*. Here, God intervenes by appearing to Abimelech, *the foreign king*, in a **dream**.
  3. **Also**, this is on the brink of Isaac's birth-story. Here, the very Promise is put in jeopardy...traded away for **personal safety**. *Derek Kidner*
    - a) If it's ever to be fulfilled (it will be next chapter), **then we owe very little to man & very much to *the grace of God***.

### III. Slide 3a **DECEIVING (1-7)** xxxxxx

- A. **THE DECEPTION** (1,2)
- B. **Abi/melech** - my father is king (could be a *title* rather than a proper name).
- C. (2) **Took Sarah** - It is possible that the goal of Abimelech's *taking Sarah* in marriage would be to **form an alliance with Abraham**, a man of great wealth and reputation after the war described in ch.14. [In 21:22,23 Abimelech seeks *a friendly nonaggression agreement* with Abraham]
- D. Abraham, you already fell for this down in Egypt...again Abraham?
1. **Wait**, Have you ever done the same **sin** twice? Have you ever struggled with the same **fear** twice? Multiple sins...oh yah, *guilty!*
  2. Abraham was still learning who God is. This is **not** the end of his story.

- E. Slide 3b **THE DREAM** (3-7)

- F. (3) God came to Abimelech in a dream by night - Dreams are a common mode of *divine communication* in biblical and extrabiblical literature.
- G. (4) Lord - Not Yahweh, but *adonay* is used - the customary address to a divine being.
- H. (5) Integrity of my heart...innocence of my hands - in Hebrew, *Tom & Nic* (sorta) (nickIyon)
1. The Hebrew word **tom** (integrity) means *blameless or upright*.
  2. It's used when God commands Abraham to *walk before Him and be blameless* (17:1). But here it is *the foreign king, Abimelech*, who is *blameless rather than* Abraham.
- I. (6) Abimelech an example of when *grace* fell on the *unjust*.
1. Slide3c Mt.5:45 *He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*
- J. (7) He is a prophet - (*oh he is?*) Prophets were essentially spokespersons for and representatives of God. They exhorted people to be **loyal** and **obey** his commands lest judgment occur.
- K. He will pray for you - *God will accept Abraham's intercession since Abraham is His chosen representative.*
1. So Abimelech will need to *return Sarah and* treat Abraham well in order to receive any *prayer of blessing*.
- L. Do you think God ever stopped you from sinning? Thank Him for it.
- M. Think of sins you have done more than once... Thank Him for His forgiveness.

#### IV. Slide4a DEFENDING (8-13)

- A. PAINFUL QUESTION (8-10)
- B. (9,10) Abimelech *obedient to God but rightfully angry* with Abraham.
1. **Adultery** was even written about on the Code of Hammurabi 1754bc, this Babylonian code found in ancient Mesopotamia.
- C. (9c) The end of vs.9 could be rendered simply '*...things that are not done*'. He had *insulted the most elementary laws of hospitality*.
- D. (10) What did you see? - *The man of faith starts walking by sight*.

- E. God sometimes uses the *unsaved* to chasten the *saved*.
- F. Slide4b PITIFUL ANSWER (11-13) [a pattern of bad choices: *facts* (11), *values* (12), *motives* (13)]
- G. (11) I thought there is *no fear of God at all in this place* - Abraham views Abimelech and his people as *lacking any sense of morality* that would come from belief in the 1 true God.
1. Who comes to your mind thinking, "*there is definitely not a spiritual bone in their body, they definitely are not moral*"? [don't write anyone off]
  2. I Try to go the other way & think everyone is wired for "spiritual" things.
- H. (12) *She is indeed my sister* - Sarah was Abraham's half-sister. Such marriages seems to have been culturally acceptable at this point in time in the ancient Near East. Despite later prohibitions under the law (Lev.18).
1. Abraham might have been *the friend of God* but you don't see him teaching at any *Married Couples Retreats*.
- I. *Fear-based decisions...we all make them. Fear-based Christianity.*
1. He lets *fear of harm* determine his decision. *He's lead by fear.*
  2. I will protect myself. I will take this into my own hands. *I trust my cleverness over God's wisdom.*
  3. How do we move from *Fear* to *Courage*. *Not* though *bravado*. *When we look to Jesus for our strength.*
- J. Slide4c *Half-truths! Besides, she is indeed my sister.*
1. The *2nd enemy of honesty* is telling *half-truths*. [a half truth is a whole lie]
  2. We are even told in our court rooms to "*tell the whole truth, and nothing but the truth*".
  3. This is why we have the word *perjury*: human beings have trouble telling the *truth* even when they say they are telling the *truth*.
  4. Half-truths avoid what is actually meant and live in *technicalities and portions* of truth. [faithless scheming]
    - a) These are *an enemy of honesty* and God hates them.

- b) Think about it...Satan (*who deceives the whole world*, Rev.12:9) is *the father of 1/2 truths*. He often **mixes truth** in with his **lies**. [eg. to Eve, *you will not surely die*]
- c) Can you imagine it saying, *worshipping God in spirit and 1/2 truths?*

(1) *Worshipping God in spirit and truth* is hard to do with only *half the truth*.

5. **Wait**, so if the **2nd enemy of honesty** is telling *half-truths*...**what is the 1st enemy of Honesty?** Telling **whole-lies**..of course :)

K. (13) **Blame shift even to the gods causing him to wander** (see Heb.) - An early negotiation with Sarah regarding his fears. [and was successful getting **her to lie**, vs.5]

1. **When a marriage must be protected by a lie, the home is in danger.** Warren Wiersbe
2. Husbands ever encourage your wife to **lie** for you (taxes, earnings, *tell your family we're doing ok*) **And vice-versa?**

L. **Ever have to eat humble pie? Ever get rebuked by an unbeliever & they were fully right?**

M. **Have justified white-lies or half-truths lately?** confess them.

N. **Have you asked anyone to lie for you lately?** confess them before God, *later repent to them*.

O. **Meditate on** - Mt.16:25 *For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.*

## V. Slide5 **DELIVERING (14-18) returning Sarah**

A. (14) *Abimelech showed Abraham the kind of grace and generosity that Abraham, who knew God, should have showed to him.* David Jeremiah Bible Notes

1. **Abraham profited from his deception.** Oh I don't like when God blesses me when I know I shouldn't be. [Pharaoh had sent him away (ch.12), **Abimelech** said stay anywhere here that you want]

B. **Returned Sarah** - Sarah was placed in great jeopardy.

C. (18) Must have been there long enough to notice, *no babies*. [eg. weird plane movie]

D. **Have you noticed God's Protecting Care of you lately?**

E. **Wrap Up:**

F. **Slide6a** God's saving Grace.

1. Ps.94:17,18 *Unless the Lord had helped me, I would soon have settled in the silence of the grave. I cried out, "I am slipping!" but **your unfailing love, O Lord, supported me.***
2. **Slide6b** Matt Redman, Your Grace finds me - *Your great grace, oh, such grace.*
  - a) *It's there on a wedding day. There in the weeping by the graveside. There in the very breath we breathe. Your great grace.*
  - b) *The same for the rich and poor. **The same** for the **saint** and for the **sinner**. Enough for this whole wide world. Your great grace. Oh such grace.*