

“Living with Kindness and Justice in the Land”

Genesis 21:22-34

This story is included to guide Israel in their dealings with others who live in the land of Israel.
→ **How are God’s people to treat and interact with those who are not followers of God?**

BELIEVERS ARE TO INTERACT WITH TRUTH AND KINDNESS. v.22-24

1. Abimelech came to Abraham. v.22

- Abimelech was king of the Philistines.
- Abimelech had prior history with Abraham (Genesis chapter 20: Abraham used deception before.)
- Abimelech approached Abraham—with Phicol his military commander.
- Abimelech acknowledged: God is with you in all you do.

2. Abimelech wanted assurance from Abraham. v.23

- Swear to me that you will not deal falsely with me or my descendants.
- Swear to me that you will deal kindly with me, as I have with you.
-Note language: Swear to me here... by God...

3. Abraham agreed: I will swear. v.24

BELIEVERS ARE TO SEEK TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS WITH FAIRNESS. v.25-27

1. Abraham addressed a dispute with Abimelech. v.25-26

- Some of Abimelech’s servants had seized a well dug by Abraham. v.25
- Abimelech claims to know nothing about it: He is innocent. v.26

→ Believers are bound to family traits of righteousness, truth, fairness and love.
-Ref. Psalm 15: Proverbs 11:1; 20:22-23; Matthew 5:38-42

2. Abraham entered into a covenant with Abimelech to seal the deal. v.27

- In chapter 20, Abimelech gave Abraham sheep and oxen for mistakenly taking his wife.
- Here Abraham returns sheep and oxen as part of a covenant ceremony.

BELIEVERS ARE TO PLAN FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS. v.28-32

1. Abraham gave Abimelech 7 ewe lambs as a witness that Abraham dug this well. v.28-30

- ‘By giving these to you—and you receiving them—we agree the well (and the land) is mine.’

2. They both swore an oath that the well and the land belonged to Abraham (& his descendants!). v.31

- They named the place “Beersheba” which means “well of the seven” or “well of the oath”.
- Beersheba is in the southernmost part of Israel’s territory. It exists even today.

BELIEVERS ARE TO ALWAYS CONDUCT OURSELVES BEFORE THE LORD. v.33-34

1. Abraham planted a tree and there called on the name of the LORD. v.33

- The text specifically named the place (Beersheba) and tree (tamarisk).
- A new name for God is introduced: the Everlasting God.

2. And Abraham sojourned for a long time in the land of the Philistines. v.34

Psalm 15: O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent?
Who shall dwell on your holy hill?
² He who walks blamelessly and does what is right
and speaks truth in his heart;
³ who does not slander with his tongue
and does no evil to his neighbor,
nor takes up a reproach against his friend;
⁴ in whose eyes a vile person is despised,
but who honors those who fear the Lord;
who swears to his own hurt and does not change;
⁵ who does not put out his money at interest
and does not take a bribe against the innocent.
He who does these things shall never be moved.

KJV: (v.4): He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.

Proverbs 11:1: A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight.

Proverbs 20:22-23: Do not say, "I will repay evil"; wait for the Lord, and he will deliver you. Unequal weights are an abomination to the Lord, and false scales are not good.

Jeremiah 29:4-7: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. ⁶ Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. ⁷ But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Matthew 5:33-37: Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.'³⁴ But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷ Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.

Matthew 5:38-42: "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'³⁹ But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. ⁴⁰ And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. ⁴¹ And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. ⁴² Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

Romans 12:14-21: Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. ¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

2 Corinthians 6:14-16: Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?¹⁵ What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God.