

Genesis 20

Pastor Matt Pierson

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SERMON NOTES

Genesis 20

A Shaky Faith, an Unshakeable God

“The episode is chiefly one of suspense: on the brink of Isaac’s birth-story here is the very Promise put in jeopardy, traded away for personal safety. If it is ever fulfilled, it will owe very little to man. Morally as well as physically, it will clearly have to be achieved by the grace of God.”

- Derek Kidner, *Genesis*

Genesis 20

1. Unhealthy fear leads to all sorts of dysfunctional behavior.
2. The sovereign hand of God governs all creation. (God works in all nations and all peoples...)
3. When our faith is fragile, God is steadfast and firm.

“You find no difficulty in trusting the Lord with the management of the universe, and all the outward creation, and can your case be any more complex or difficult than these, that you need to be anxious or troubled about His management of you?”

- Hannah Whithall Smith

“Without God as an ultimate standard of truth, all we have are ‘truths’ as interpreted by individuals...but the self is not the reliable authority it is cracked up to be. Our fickle hearts are unreliable guides, deceitful above all things. Our embrace of ‘being true to ourselves’ often leads to a closed loop of self-deception and chronic brokenness, where we erroneously believe we have all the resources for healing within ourselves.”

- Brett McCracken, *The Wisdom Pyramid*

“I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no savior.”

- *Isaiah 43:11*

“If there is one single molecule in this universe running around loose, totally free of God’s sovereignty, then we have no guarantee that a single promise of God will ever be fulfilled.”

- R.C. Sproul, *Chosen by God*

“Guidance, like all God’s acts of blessing under the covenant of grace, is a sovereign act. Not merely does God will to guide us in the sense of showing us his way, that we may tread it; he wills also to guide us in the more fundamental sense of ensuring that, whatever happens, whatever mistakes we may make, we shall come safely home. Slippings and strayings there will be, no doubt, but the everlasting arms are beneath us; we shall be caught, rescued, restored. This is God’s promise; this is how good he is.”

- J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*

“We cannot hold together human vulnerability and God’s trustworthiness at the same time unless there is some certain sign that God loves us, that he isn’t an absentee landlord or, worse, a monster... it takes the whole story of redemptive history to shape our questions about God’s presence in the darkness.”

- Tish Harrison Warren, *Prayer in the Night*

“Jesus was willing to come and live the life we could not live and die the death that we deserved. He willingly endured the Father’s rejection so that we would know his acceptance. Because he was willing to endure the terrible pain of the Father’s rejection, you and I will never, ever again see the back of God’s head.”

- Paul David Tripp, *New Morning Mercies*