

Touch

“and I also kept you from sinning against Me, therefore I did not allow you to touch her”

Genesis 20:6

Touch—The Hebrew word here is *naga*. In this verse it means to touch sexually. This is the story of the second time that Abraham pretended his wife Sarah was really his sister. He did this to protect himself from harm. But he clearly did not have Sarah’s interests in mind. Even though Abraham had the promise from God that God would make a great nation from his descendants, Abraham was still willing to let another man have sex with Sarah if it meant that he could avoid harm to himself. Where was Abraham’s faith in God’s protection?

This word involves an interesting word play in Hebrew. The word for “plagues” that God sent upon Pharaoh during the first time that Abraham let Sarah be sexually abused is the word *nagaim*. In this case, no *nagaim* will be sent as punishment because the king did not *naga* Sarah.

The power behind this verse is found by answering two questions: 1 who was affronted with this sin and 2 who prevented the sin from occurring? In both cases, the answer is God. It is not Abraham who is affronted by the potential adultery. It is God. And God is the One who prevents it. King David knew the same truth when he used Bathsheba to satisfy his lust. His sin was a sin against God even though it involved many other people.

Too often we think of sin as an injury to other people. We focus our apologies toward those people with a quick aside to God acknowledging our disobedience. But sin is first and foremost an affront and insult to God. It is as though we slap the Creator of the world in the face and say, “I can live life my way, thank you very much.” No wonder we need forgiveness.

There is another thought in this verse that we pay little attention to. It is the thought that God often prevents our sin from becoming worse than it is. Isn’t it amazing that even while I am affronting him, he is saving me? How many of my sins could have become so much more terrible if God were not in the background, preventing me from fulfilling desires that would hurt me and other people even more. Have you ever thanked Him for stopping you from sinning?

God, forgive my insolence. May you be praised for rescuing me from my own self-destruction even when I disobeyed you. What an incredible Savior you are!