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The two stories in Genesis 12:10-13:2 and Genesis 20:1-18 both involve Abraham and Sarah encountering powerful rulers and deception playing a role. In both stories, Abraham lies about Sarah's true relationship to him, which causes complications and divine intervention. However, there are also differences between the stories, such as the source of the deception and the nature of the divine intervention.

In the first story, Abraham and Sarah travel to Egypt to escape a famine in the land of Canaan. When they arrive in Egypt, Abraham asks Sarah to pretend to be his sister instead of his wife, fearing that the Egyptians would kill him in order to take her. The Pharaoh takes Sarah into his palace, but he and his household are soon struck with severe plagues. Realizing the truth, Pharaoh angrily sends Abraham and Sarah away, along with many gifts.

In the second story, Abraham and Sarah are traveling through the land of Gerar, where Abimelech, the king of Gerar, takes Sarah into his harem, believing she is single. God appears to Abimelech in a dream, warning him not to touch Sarah because she is already married to Abraham. Abimelech returns Sarah to Abraham and gives him many gifts as a peace offering.

The similarities between the two stories are clear: both involve Abraham lying about Sarah's true relationship to him, and both involve the intervention of a powerful ruler who takes Sarah into his household. Additionally, in both stories, Abraham is blessed with great wealth and material possessions as a result of the encounter.

However, there are also significant differences between the two stories. In the first story, Abraham takes the initiative to lie about Sarah's relationship to him, whereas in the second story, Abimelech is ignorant of Sarah's true relationship to Abraham. Additionally, in the first story, Abraham receives no direct warning or intervention from God, while in the second story, God intervenes directly in Abimelech's dream.

The question of whether or not Abraham was right in his actions is a matter of interpretation. Some may view his actions as dishonest and cowardly, while others may see them as a necessary means of survival in a harsh world. However, it is worth noting that in both stories, Abraham is ultimately shown to be in the wrong, as the rulers who encounter him are punished for their actions.

The stories in Genesis resonate with other incidents in the book, particularly those involving deception and divine intervention. For example, the story of Jacob and Esau involves deception, as Jacob tricks his father into giving him the blessing meant for his brother. Additionally, the story of Joseph and his brothers involves jealousy and betrayal, as Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery out of jealousy over their father's favoritism.

The stories also teach us about God's character and his willingness to intervene on behalf of his people. In both stories, God intervenes to protect Sarah and preserve his covenant with Abraham.

They also teach us about the dangers of deception and the importance of honesty and transparency in our relationships with others.

One lesson that can be applied to our lives is the importance of trust in our relationships with others. Abraham's actions ultimately caused distrust and suspicion in his relationships with the rulers he encountered, and it was only through divine intervention that these relationships were restored. Another lesson is the importance of relying on God in difficult times, rather than resorting to deception and dishonesty. As we see in these stories, God is always faithful to his promises and will intervene on behalf of his people when they trust in him.

In conclusion, the stories in Genesis 12:10-13:2 and Genesis 20:1-18 offer valuable lessons that we can use.