

The Blessing: A Study in Genesis 12-36

Lesson 6 — Isaac is Married

Genesis 24:1-25:18

As we pick up the narrative in Genesis 24, Sarah has died about three years before at the age of 127 years old. After miraculously giving birth at the age of 90, she was able to see Isaac grow into a man. Abraham, now 140 years old, must broker a marriage for their son. Isaac, the son of promise, is poised to continue the legacy of the Abrahamic blessing that will culminate in the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. So obviously, whatever happens to Isaac is of utmost importance in God's great plan of salvation.

This storyline goes far beyond history into theology. Abraham is a figure, a type, a prophecy, an illustration of God the Father. Isaac is a picture of our beloved Jesus. Rebekah, the bride of Isaac, is a lovely portrayal of the New Testament church, often referred to as the Bride of Christ (see 2 Corinthians 11:2-3; Ephesians 5:22-33). The servant, the oldest of Abraham's household, is considered to be an Old Testament picture of the blessed Holy Spirit. His name is not given in our text. Perhaps that is because the ministry of the Spirit is to point to Christ and glorify Him. Most commentators believe that the elder servant is Eliezer who was introduced to us in Genesis 15:2.

Dr. Rogers said, "His name is Eliezer—Eliezer—an interesting name, because it's a compound of the Hebrew word for God, El. El is the Hebrew name for God. And the name Eliezer means 'the helper of God'—'the helper of God'" (Dr. Adrian Rogers, *Bringing Back the Bride*, In Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive).

So, as we find Abraham seeking a bride for his son, Isaac, we have a picture of God the Father seeking a bride for His Son, Jesus Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible is about Jesus. When Jesus spoke to the disciples on the road to Emmaus He said, "Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures" (Luke 24:27). The only Bible they had at that time was the Old Testament. His story of redemption is woven throughout, long before His incarnation and earthly ministry is detailed in the gospels.

In the Old Testament our Lord is pictured in type or shadow. A cursory read might cause us to overlook His presence in the pages of the Old Testament, but He is there, moving behind the scenes to draw people to repentance and faith. As we move into the story of a bride for Isaac, we will look for ways Jesus is represented in type, but I have a caution. When we do see a picture of Christ in the Old Testament, we must be careful not to take the snapshot too far or it will collapse. Moses is a picture of Christ, Joshua is a picture of Christ, and Isaac is a

picture of Christ. While these and others foreshadow Jesus, these men had an indwelling sin nature. So, beware, but be **blessed!**

I. The Commission (Genesis 24:1-9)

Abraham tasked Eliezer with going back to his homeland to find a bride of Isaac. He asked his servant to swear a threefold oath that he would not select a wife from among the Canaanite women, he would choose a wife from Abraham's relatives, and he would not take Isaac back to Abraham's ancestral home. Eliezer "placed his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter" (Genesis 24:9).

II. The Campaign (Genesis 24:10-28)

Eliezer began his journey with ten camels, male servants (see Genesis 24:32) and "a variety of good things of his master's in his hand" (Genesis 24:10). "He arose and went to Mesopotamia" (Genesis 24:10), a trek of some 500 miles. The roundtrip excursion would have taken several months.

Eliezer and his entourage arrived in the city of Nahor after weeks of riding on the backs of smelly camels. They arrive road-weary and worn. They bring the camels to the well at evening time, "the time the women go out to draw water" (Genesis 24:11). In God's Providence, He brought Rebekah to the well just as Eliezer was praying for God's direction and confirmation. When the servant asked for a drink of water, she complied quickly and said, "I will draw also for your camels until they have finished drinking" (Genesis 24:19). Considering 10 thirsty camels were lined up for some refreshment, the task was a daunting one.

"After a long trek, a thirsty camel might drink as much as forty gallons of water; and Rebekah had to draw all that water by hand" (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Obedient*, p. 121).

Rebekah's spirit of hospitality towards Eliezer and her willingness to draw water for the hot and dusty camels, gives evidence that she is indeed a woman of value, valor, and virtue. Rebekah invited Eliezer and his men to stay at her home where her family had "plenty of both straw and feed, and room to lodge in" (Genesis 24:25). This caused Eliezer to praise the Lord for answered prayer.

III. The Con Artist (Genesis 24:29-32)

Rebekah had a brother named Laban. We get just a hint of Laban's natural bent as a swindler in this passage, although if we did not know the story of his later dealings with Jacob and Rachel and Leah (see Genesis 29:13-31:55) we might overlook it. Laban "saw the ring and the bracelets on his sister's wrists" (Genesis 24:30). He made note of the number of camels, a symbol of great wealth, that Abraham had sent. Abraham was obviously very wealthy. Laban even "unloaded the camels" (Genesis 24:32). Perhaps I am reading too much into this, but I can't help but wonder if Laban did that in order to take inventory of what riches had accompanied Eliezer on his master's quest for a bride for his son.

IV. The Culmination (Genesis 24:33-61)

Eliezer would not eat until he had fulfilled his mission. He told the family about Abraham and his beloved son, Isaac. He described how the Lord has greatly blessed Abraham and prospered him (Genesis 24:35). He told them of the miraculous birth of Isaac (v. 36), coming to Abraham and Sarah in their old age.

As Eliezer recaps the recent events and purpose of his travels, he does not speak of himself. The servant's job was not to force Rebekah to return with him. He was to simply bear witness to the greatness of his master, to give her the facts and the opportunity to make a decision. And this is indicative of the blessed Holy Spirit. In John 15:26 Jesus said, "When the Helper comes, who I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me." In addition, Eliezer gave tokens of the master's wealth (see Genesis 24:53) just as the Spirit gives us nuggets of God's goodness and glory, reminding us that the best is yet to come! Finally, he invites Rebekah to become the bride of Isaac. No coercion. No bribery. No pressure. Nothing but a gentle and genuine invitation to come. This so clearly speaks of the methodology of the Holy Spirit who reveals Christ to us and then invites us to receive Him, all without violating our free will. Romans 10:13 says, "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Eliezer presented Rebekah's mother and brother with a dowry (see Genesis 24:53). "Then they called Rebekah and said to her, 'Will you go with this man?' And she said, 'I will go'" (Genesis 24:58). Genesis 24:61 says, "Then Rebekah arose with her maids, and they mounted the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed."

V. The Consummation (Genesis 24:62-67)

When the caravan returns, Isaac is in the field, meditating and spending time with the Lord when he sees the caravan of camels on the horizon. We can assume he was praying for his bride, as he could think of nothing else. Rebekah dismounted so she could meet her bridegroom on foot. In that day it was considered a breach of etiquette if women rode in the presence of strange men. She also put on a long veil which was a mark of her modesty and submission. We can imagine that her knees were knocking, and her legs were shaking as she approached Isaac and met him for the first time. “Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her” (Genesis 24:67). What a love story!

When Jesus comes for His church, we will be face-to-face with the One whom we have loved and served without seeing. Peter writes, “Though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory” (1 Peter 1:8). 1 Corinthians 13:12 says, “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.” Faith will become sight. We will see Jesus! And we will share the Marriage Supper of the Lamb!

VI. The Conclusion (Genesis 25:1-18)

In this chapter we read that Abraham took another wife. She bore him six more sons and at least seven grandsons and three great-grandsons. Note that these additional sons of Abraham do not have the status of Isaac.

“These are all the years of Abraham’s life that he lived, one hundred and seventy-five years. Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people” (Genesis 25:7-8). Abraham, a man who had walked with God for nearly 100 years, stepped into His presence after living a life of faith.

While this brings us to the end of Abraham’s life, it is not the end of the story of redemption. **The Blessing** of Abraham’s life is found in God’s promise of a Savior who would be in his lineage, “And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed” (Genesis 12:3). By faith in Jesus Christ, we have become sons and daughters of Abraham. “Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham...So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer” (Galatians 3:7; 9). Beloved, we are **Blessed** to be a **Blessing**!