

## **A BRIDE FOR ISAAC!**

*Gen 24:12 Then he said, "O LORD God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham.*

*Gen 24:13 Behold, here I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water.*

*Gen 24:14 Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink'—let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master.'"*

### The Setting Here:

- The true story of Rebekah and Isaac. A picture of Pentecost. Here is Abraham standing for God the Father sending his unnamed servant into the far country to take a bride for his son -- to invite her to come, to call, to woo, and to win her -- to bring her back to the Father's house where the son is waiting to claim his bride for himself.
- How beautifully that portrays how God, at the Day of Pentecost, sent his Spirit into the world! It is the Spirit's job to call out a people for God's name, to win a bride for Christ; He has been at this task for almost 2,000 years now, and the Son is waiting to receive that bride. We read in the book of Revelation of the wedding supper of the Lamb, and of the Lord coming to claim his bride for Himself
- If you are a Christian, where are you in this story of Abraham sending his servant to get a bride for his son Isaac? Obviously we are the bride, we are the ones who are called by the Spirit of God. This is true. Every Christian remembers how he sensed at one time the calling of the Spirit of God. We remember how he wooed and won us by the loveliness and beauties which are in Jesus Christ, and by a consciousness of our utter need for him. We were called to love someone we had never seen, and we felt an answering response in our hearts as Christ was painted in vivid colors by the Spirit in our minds. We felt the urge to leave friends and family behind, in the sense of shifting their central place in our affections, and to go after this one who called us. Now we are journeying to meet him at last in that country in the Father's house. We can see ourselves simply here, but this does not exhaust the application of this story, nor does it really disclose the major emphasis.
- The central character is not the bride, Rebekah. The spotlight of the story really follows Abraham's servant. He is the central character.
- This is a picture, we have already recognized, of the Holy Spirit's work. But remember, the Spirit of God chooses to do his work largely through men and women, through the believers, through the church, through those of us who are his.
- Especially true in the work of calling out a people for God's name. God has given us the responsibility and the privilege of being his instruments to call his bride out of the world. So this story becomes a beautiful picture of the whole process of personal evangelism.

### The Process of bringing others to Christ begins with the command of God the Father:

*(Genesis. 24:1-9)*

**There are five stages pictured** here in what happens when we go out to reach someone for Christ:

**1 The Expectation through prayer.** *(Genesis 24:10-14)*

**2 The Confirmation:** *(Genesis. 24:15-21)*

**3 The Preparation:** *(Genesis. 24:22-27)*

**4 The Presentation Itself.** *(Genesis 24:28-53)*

**5 The Actual invitation:** *(Genesis. 24:54-58)*

Finally, in the last scene, **we see the communion with the son.** *(Genesis 24:62-67)*

**The process of bringing others to Christ begins with the command of God the Father:**

### (Genesis. 24:1-9)

- The initiative here **begins with Abraham**. He sends his servant to do this work and binds him to the task with an oath.
- As we apply this to our own situation and see **God the Father standing in the place of Abraham here**, he is asking every servant (here unnamed) to give himself to this task.
- We are called by the Father, commanded to go and take a wife for his son.
- Not an option with a believer in Jesus Christ.
- God has said, "Take a wife for My Son."
- To this end the Spirit of God has come into our hearts to dwell. His whole purpose of coming into your life and mine is that he might be what he is, and do what he came to do. Our Lord Jesus is the one dwelling within, and we are told what he came to do.
- He said, "For the son of man came to seek and to save the lost," (Luke 19:10). If this is what he came to do, we will find him doing it in our lives if we give him the opportunity!
- Notice the responsibility here is emphasized by the restriction, "You must not take my son back there."
- It illustrates the fact that God's Son is now in his glory and the work of evangelism must go forward in his absence. God does not send Jesus visibly back to earth in order to win the church.
- But the Lord said, "No." He sent the Spirit of God to do the work, and, in some remarkable way that we will never fully understand, the Spirit of God can make Jesus Christ more real to a human heart than if he stood before him in human form and flesh.
- The major emphasis of this passage is centered on "the cooperation of the Spirit." - missing note in personal evangelism.
- God commanded us to do this, but he has also provided the Spirit by which to do it.

There are five stages pictured here in what happens when you or I go out to reach someone for Christ:

#### **First of all, there is expectation through prayer.**

Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, taking all sorts of choice gifts from his master; and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. And he said, "*O Lord, God of my master Abraham, grant me success today, I pray thee, and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. Behold, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. Let the maiden to whom I shall say, 'Pray let down your jar that I may drink,' and who shall say, 'Drink, and I will water your camels' -- let her be the one whom thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac. By this I shall know that thou hast shown steadfast love to my master.*" (Genesis 24:10-14)

- Now here is a man expecting God to work. He does not say to himself, "The whole job is up to me. I've got to find this girl, and how am I going to find the right one? And after that, I must persuade her to come. How am I going to do that?"
- It is very simple for this man because he knows he is not left alone to do this task. An invisible partner is at work, preparing the way for him. I wish we would learn this lesson about our own witness. God has not left it to us to do alone. The work of reaching men and women for Christ is **not a matter of human persuasion, but is a divine call**. God is at work to move, shape, and develop the lives and hearts of all. Our job is simply to recognize this.
- Do you notice how Abraham's servant does it? **First of all, he prays, revealing his expectation that God is at work.** In his simple prayer he asks God to make the way clear, to indicate the one to whom God would have him speak. As he prays about his problem, he expects God to answer.
- This is a wonderful concept to remember when witnessing. When I get aboard a plane or train or go someplace where I may be in contact with someone who doesn't know the Lord, **I ask God to indicate who is the one he wants me to talk with**. Maybe there is no one; maybe the Lord wants me to spend my time reading or studying. But very likely he does have someone. I don't know **who God is working with**, but **I know that he will direct me through ways of which I am hardly conscious**.
- When I get on the plane and go to my seat. Then **I trust that the person who sits down beside me may be that person, or the one in front of me, or the one behind me**. But I don't know. It may be the fellow who is to get on at a station down the line, or the **one that I will meet in the washroom, or the flight attendant**. I don't know. Well, how do I find out? Let's look at the next step.

The first step was expectation; **Secondly, there is confirmation:**

- **Before he had done speaking**, behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, **came out with her water jar upon her shoulder**.

- The man **gazed at her in silence to learn whether the Lord had prospered his journey or not.** (Genesis. 24:15-21)
- Now **here is the confirmation.**
- The man gazed at her in silence, to learn whether the Lord had prospered his journey or not. **"Is this the one, Lord?"** As he watched her **he knew that this was the one, because she did what he had asked the Lord as a sign that she should do.**
- **I don't think it is wise to ask for particular signs in every case.** If we are expecting God to show us someone to talk with, **he will indicate to us whom he has prepared.**
- Now this is the confirmation, **some little thing by which God says "Here is the one with whom I've been working, and here you are beside him."**
- **The Lord brought the two together. You can expect wonderful experiences to happen if you begin to watch for God to work through you like this, alert for the indication of the Spirit at work.**

#### **After the confirmation comes the third stage, the preparation:**

- When the camels had done drinking... **"Tell me whose daughter you are. Is there room in your father's house for us to lodge in?"** She said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah,...She added, "We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in." **The man bowed his head and worshipped the Lord,** (Genesis. 24:22-27)
- Abraham's servant **knows that this is the right girl.** He **has had the sign confirmed.** But he doesn't immediately open up the Scriptures to Romans 3:23 and begin to blast her with her status as a sinner. He doesn't brashly chasten her with the Lord's wrath and scare her away, as we sometimes do. **Nor does he immediately start talking about Isaac.**
- Instead, he wisely **arranges for private conversation allowing sufficient time to make a proper contact.** He **bathes the whole matter again in prayer and thanksgiving** and waits for a suitable time to talk.
- **I think this is a very important step. Sometimes in our zeal we jump down people's throats and frighten them.** We must remember to take time to lay ample groundwork and to prepare for a proper presentation.

#### **The fourth step is the presentation itself.**

- The whole story spelled out plainly and frankly.
- So he said, **"I am Abraham's servant. The Lord has greatly blessed my master, and he has become great; he has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, menservants and maidservants, camels and asses. And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and to him he has given all that he has.**
- **The servant leaves nothing out, but is forthright and candid.**
- He **begins with the glories of Abraham,** telling about all his wealth flocks, herds, silver and gold, servants, camels and asses. Why? Because **this is the inheritance of the son.**
- Then he recounts **how God led him along the way, i.e., he gives his own personal testimony** about it. He ends **by presenting to her the gifts Isaac had sent along, the sample of the riches he was offering to her.**
- **What a picture of how we should talk to those who are interested and whom the Lord is seeking to reach by focusing it all on Christ! Our job, you see, is not to change people's habits.** That isn't our concern, **our job is to win them to Christ, not to make church members out of them.**
- This servant did not go into the far country and try to start a "Fans for Isaac Club." **His job was to win her heart and bring her out of the far country to the son, and that is our job, also.**

#### **The fifth and last stage is the actual invitation:**

- **"We will call the maiden, and ask her."** And they called Rebekah, and said to her, **"Will you go with this man?"** She said, **"I will go."** (Genesis. 24:54-58)
- **There is the invitation, the altar call if you please. It climaxes the assault on the will of this girl.**
- It is **not an easy choice** that she is asked to make. It is **revolutionary, disturbing, upsetting.** All of her life she has been **the protected jewel** of that household. Now she is asked to go with a man whom she has just met a day or two before, **to meet another man who is an utter stranger to her.**
- Yet something about **the winsomeness of his appeal, his forthrightness, the glory and attractiveness of what she has heard, has won her heart. She is ready to go.**

- We need to recognize that the invitation we give to men and women to become Christians **is not an easy choice. It is a revolutionary one.**
- We must clarify the matter, and **lay it before them:** "Will you go?" And she said, "**I will go.**"

Finally, in the last scene, **we see the communion with the son.**

- The work of the Trinity is evident throughout this story. It **begins with the command of the Father, proceeds with the cooperation of the Spirit, and ends with the communion with the Son. This is a delightful scene at the end where heart meets heart:**
- And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she alighted from the camel, and said to the servant, "Who is the man yonder, walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It is my master." So she took her veil and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. Then Isaac brought her into the tent, and took Rebekah, and **she became his wife; and he loved her.** So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death. (Genesis 24:62-67)
- The last words of the servant are here. When Rebekah sees Isaac walking in the field, she says, "Who is this man!" And the servant's words are, "**It is my master.**" **This is the place to which we are to bring men and women.** The time comes in our dealing with them when we **must stop talking about our own personal testimony. We must turn them to look at the one who is winning their hearts,** and say, "**There he is, it's the Master. You deal with him now, just talk directly with him.**"
- But look at the servant standing by. Can't you imagine **him grinning from ear to ear, registering the joy in his heart at the fulfillment of his mission in bringing a bride for Isaac.** Doesn't it remind you of those words of John the Baptist when he introduced the Lord Jesus to Israel and his disciples left him and went to follow the Lord? Someone asked him how he felt, and he said, "**He who has the bride is the bridegroom; the friend of the bridegroom who stands and hears him rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice; therefore, this joy of mine is now full. He must increase, but I must decrease,**" (John 3:29-30 ). We are like that servant.
- **We can expect the same brimming of joy in our own hearts as we watch someone join together with his Lord in new life.**
- Do you see now **that the story of Abraham's servant is your story as well?**

### ***Holy, Holy, Holy- London Orchestra Festival***

*1. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.  
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty,  
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!*

*2. Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,  
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;  
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,  
which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.*

*4. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth and sky and sea.  
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty,  
God in three persons, blessed Trinity.  
AMEN!*

### ***Sweet Hour of Prayer – Sandy Patti***

*Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!  
That calls me from a world of care,  
And bids me at my Father's throne  
Make all my wants and wishes known.  
In seasons of distress and grief,  
My soul has often found relief,  
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,  
By Thy return, sweet hour of prayer!*

### ***I Need Thee Every Hour***

*I need Thee every hour, most gracious Lord;  
no tender voice like Thine can peace afford.  
Refrain:  
I need Thee, O I need Thee; every hour I need Thee;  
O bless me now, my Savior, I come to Thee.*

### ***Just as I am, Without one Plea***

*Just as I am, without one plea,  
Just as I am, without one plea,  
but that Thy blood was shed for me,  
and that thou bidst me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

### ***Turn Your Eyes on Jesus***

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace. (3X)*

