

Welcome To

Malvern Bible Chapel



A Bride For Isaac

Part of the Christ in Genesis Series

Genesis 24:1-67 (selected)

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A Bride For Isaac

Introduction:

Abraham's journey of faith is just getting started late in life!

- At 75 he is promised descendants through Sarah (Gen. 12)
- At 86 he has a child, Ishmael, but through Hagar (Gen. 16)
- At 100 he and Sarah have Isaac ("Laughter"); ~3 years later at 103 he sends Ishmael and Hagar away (Gen. 21)—lesson 2 weeks ago
- At ~115 he passes the test to be willing to sacrifice Isaac; God reconfirms his covenant to Abraham through Isaac (Gen. 22)—lesson last week by Frank
- At 137 he loses Sarah, his wife for 67 years; she is buried in his cave at Hebron; Isaac is now the very eligible heir (Gen. 23)
- At 140 he seeks a bride for Isaac (Gen. 24)—our lesson today

One of the most beautiful chapters in the Bible; full of great analogies about God the Father seeking a bride for His Son!

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Genesis 24:1-9 (NKJV)

24 Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. ² So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, “Please, put your hand under my thigh, ³ and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; ⁴ but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac.”

⁵ And the servant said to him, “Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?”

⁶ But Abraham said to him, “Beware that you do not take my son back there.

⁷ The LORD God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, ‘To your descendants I give this land,’ He will send His angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. ⁸ And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be released from this oath; only do not take my son back there.”

⁹ So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.

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Body of Lesson:

Our lesson revolves around a number of symbolic people.

1. Abraham (24:1-9)—The Father

- Abraham was already well advanced in years (140).
- God blessed him abundantly in all things as promised (v.1).
- God had given him the Promised Land (only owned 2 holes—a well and a burial cave), and a single descendant (Isaac), but that would not qualify for having descendants as numerous as the stars (v.7).
- He needed to find a bride for Isaac, but not from among the pagan people all around him in Canaan. She must be from his own family, but Isaac must never go there himself and stay.
- He made his servant go, after swearing a solemn oath (v.2,9).

Application: Fathers (all parents), are you as concerned as Abraham was for finding the right mate for your son (or daughter), and for having your spiritual heritage continue and even multiply?

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Genesis 24:10-14 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, for all his master's goods *were in* his hand. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. ¹¹ And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw *water*.

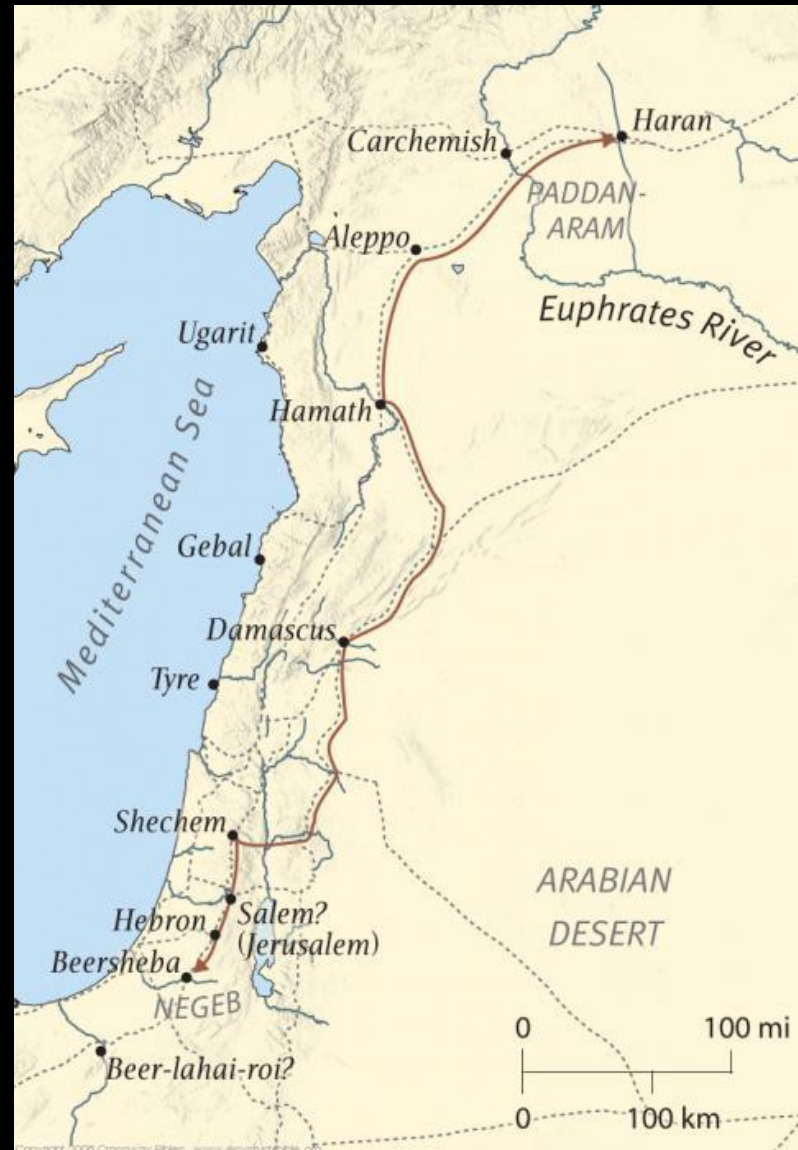
¹² Then he said, "O LORD God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham. ¹³ Behold, *here* I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. ¹⁴ Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please 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."

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2. Abraham's Servant (24:10-14)—The Spirit

- The servant is unnamed—it is all about his master and his will.
- There were 318 servants; probably Eliezer of Damascus (15:2).
- Given clear instructions, and he obeys completely. He loads 10 camels with the dowry and supplies for long journey (520 miles) to NW Mesopotamia, the city of Nahor in the district of Haran. The caravan journey would have taken 21 days (25 miles/day).

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- The servant was a man of faith and prayer. Talk about finding a needle in a haystack—how would he find a bride? God would send his angel before him to guide him (v.7)—this is His work! Before doing anything else he prays and asks God for success!
- He goes to a well where he was most likely to find the right bride.
- He devises a “fleece” to know God’s will (v.13-14; [Jud. 6:36-40](#)).

Application: Parents, where are you encouraging your children to find like-minded Christian potential mates (also for young people)?

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Genesis 24:15-28 (NKJV)

¹⁵ And it happened, before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder. ¹⁶ Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. ¹⁷ And the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher."

¹⁸ So she said, "Drink, my lord." Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink. ¹⁹ And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." ²⁰ Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels. ²¹ And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.

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Genesis 24:15-28 (NKJV) (cont.)

²² So it was, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels of gold, ²³ and said, “Whose daughter are you? Tell me, please, is there room in your father’s house for us to lodge?”

²⁴ So she said to him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah’s son, whom she bore to Nahor.” ²⁵ Moreover she said to him, “We have both straw and feed enough, and room to lodge.”

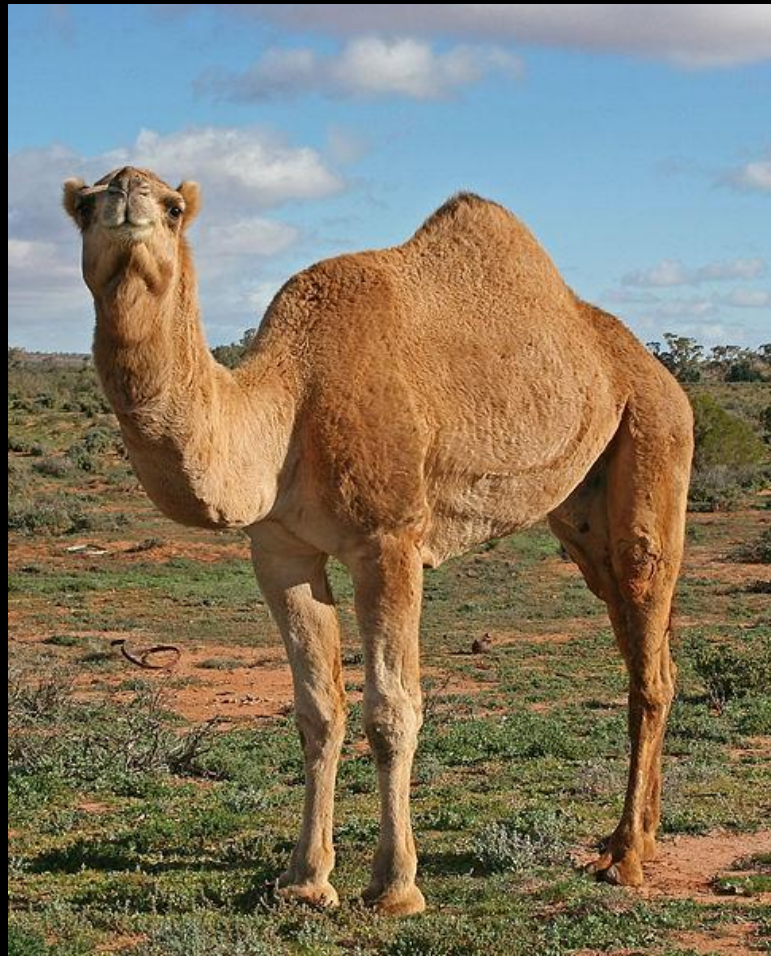
²⁶ Then the man bowed down his head and worshiped the Lord. ²⁷ And he said, “Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master’s brethren.” ²⁸ So the young woman ran and told her mother’s household these things.

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3. Rebekah (24:15-28)—The Bride To Be

- Before the servant finished praying the answer came! Rebekah arrived with her water pitcher on her shoulder (v.15). Her genealogy is given immediately (cf. [Gen. 22:20-23](#)) so we know she could be the bride for Isaac (she is Abraham's grand-niece)!
- Beautiful Rebekah kept herself pure for her future husband (v.16)! She faithfully did her work each day, but on this day something special happened! She was ready (like Mary, [Lk. 1:26-33](#)).
- Rebekah was polite, considerate, and eager to help (v.17-18). She responds exactly as the servant had prayed, but then goes far beyond that minimum requirement in offering to give water to the camels until they are finished drinking (v.19-20)!
- A thirsty dromedary camel can drink 30 gallons or 5 big pitchers full of water in 15 minutes (50 trips to the well for all 10 camels)!

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3. Rebekah (24:15-28)—The Bride (cont.)

- While Rebekah is working she is being observed (v.21). We never know when what we do is a sign or answer to someone's prayer!
- She is humble, graciously receiving the gifts offered to her (v.22).
- She is also generous and hospitable, offering the servant and his camels (and other men, v.32) a place to lodge and eat (v.23-25). No doubt she was surprised to hear the servant praise God for the answer to prayer (v.26-27), but responded enthusiastically (v.28).

Application: Are you keeping yourself pure for your future mate? Are you waiting for God's perfect timing and will to be accomplished? Faithfully and enthusiastically carry out your normal daily activities, but be alert and sensitive for answers to prayer that are happening around you! Maybe you will be part of the answer to someone's prayer—perhaps even your own!

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4. Rebekah's family (24:29-61)

- Introduced to Rebekah's brother Laban, mother, father Bethuel.
- Warmly welcomed (especially because of riches?) (v.29-33a).
- Servant not sidetracked by food until purpose of trip explained.
- He recounts his mission (v.33b-41). He speaks only of his master and his riches, just as we should share the unsearchable riches of Christ (**Eph. 3:8**)! He enthusiastically woos Rebekah with the riches and glories of his lord and his son that could become hers!
- He tells of the special answer to prayer, confirming to him that Rebekah was God's choice to be the bride for Isaac (v.42-48).
- Will the family accept his proposal? They do! Worship (v.49-52)!
- Dowry given (v.53); finally feast; spent the night; refused to stay longer and Rebekah agreed; sent away with blessing (v.54-61).

Application: When convinced then act decisively! Leave...cleave (**Gen. 2:24**). See Ravi Zacharias' book *I, Isaac, Take Thee, Rebekah*.

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Genesis 24:61-67 (NKJV)

⁶¹ Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.

⁶² Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South. ⁶³ And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels *were* coming. ⁶⁴ Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel; ⁶⁵ for she had said to the servant, “Who *is* this man walking in the field to meet us?”

The servant said, “It *is* my master.” So she took a veil and covered herself.

⁶⁶ And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. ⁶⁷ Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother’s *death*.

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5. Isaac (24:62-67)—The Bridegroom (Christ in Genesis)

- To complete the analogy, Isaac would be a picture of Christ.
- He lived in Beer Lahai Roi (“the well of the God who lives and sees me”), where Hagar fled from Sarah when pregnant with Ishmael, and where God appeared to her, blessed her, and instructed her to go back and submit to Sarah (16:7-14). Isaac dwelled there with God (v.62); his father was at Beersheba.
- He was a man of prayer, spending long hours in the quiet twilight meditating alone with God, especially during the past 6 weeks.
- He sees the caravan of camels coming and he ran to meet them. Rebekah sees him coming, dismounts and veils herself (v.63-65).
- The servant recounts all to Isaac (v.66). He is accountable!
- Isaac takes Rebekah to be his wife, and then he loves her (v.67)!

Application: Christ loves His church! Have you ever responded to the wooing of the Holy Spirit and become part of the bride of Christ?