

GENESIS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Genesis chapter 24 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our last study we saw Abraham go to Mount Moriah to sacrifice his only son as the Lord instructed him and Abraham obeyed by faith. Now Abraham did not offer Isaac as a sacrifice, the Lord stopped him before the knife came down. You see, the Lord was showing Abraham how his faith has grown.

Also, out of that story we saw how Abraham was a picture of God the Father who gave His only begotten Son to save man from his sin as He was sacrificed. We saw Isaac as a picture of God the Son and just as Isaac was willing to freely give his life as a sacrifice as he laid down his body on the wood, Jesus laid His body on that wooden cross freely giving His life for us.

And I believe the exact spot that Abraham was going to offer Isaac up is the exact place that Jesus was crucified, in the mountains of Moriah, Calvary! Tonight in our study we will see the third person of the Holy Trinity pictured for us, the Holy Spirit. As our study concluded last time, Sarah had died and Abraham bought a burial plot from Ephron. It is there, in the cave of Machpelah, in the Promise Land, that Abraham buried Sarah his wife. That is where we will pick up our study this evening, in Genesis chapter 24, starting in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study God's Word.

GENESIS 24**VERSES 1-4**

1. We don't know the age of Abraham here but he is at least 137 years old for he was 10 years older than his wife Sarah, who died when she was 127 years old. And, according to Genesis 25:20 he was 140 years old when a wife was found for Isaac. Here's the problem, Isaac is not married yet so Abraham sends his oldest servant out to find a bride for Isaac and Abraham is very specific about where he is to go. He is not to go to the Canaanites for a wife, but to his country. Eliezer, the oldest servant as we are told in Genesis chapter 15, is to go to Mesopotamia for a wife for Isaac, which is some 500 miles away and it would take him months to get there. And Abraham will make Eliezer take an oath that he would do this and he will place his hand under the thigh of Abraham to seal the deal in a few verses here.

2. Now I will cover this more on Sunday, but keep in mind that Eliezer is a type of the Holy Spirit who is working to gather a bride for Isaac just as the Holy Spirit is drawing out a bride for Jesus.

VERSES 5-9

1. This servant is concerned that she might not come back with him but if he brought Isaac with him, it may make it easier. But Abraham said that Isaac must remain in the land of promise and that Eliezer must go and get a bride for Isaac. And here we see the oath take place between Abraham and his servant.

2. Now here's the thing. If Eliezer is representing the Holy Spirit, drawing out a bride for Isaac, can he fail? Absolutely not! He will get a bride for Isaac. Now, can the Holy Spirit fail? Absolutely not, He will gather together a bride, but in saying that, there are those that will reject the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. They will commit that unpardonable sin that is called blasphemy of the Holy Spirit or the rejection of Jesus as their Lord and Savior. But the Holy Spirit will draw out a bride for Christ and He will complete the work!

VERSES 10-14

1. So the servant heads out on this long journey, arriving at the city of Nahor and he remains outside the city by a watering hole and he begins to pray. In his prayer he asks God to show him the right woman and by providential circumstances he could discern God's will. In other words, if this woman would not only give him a drink of water but also water his camels, she will be the one! Notice that he was not looking for outward beauty but inward character. You see, one camel can drink up to 20 gallons of water, so 10 camels; you are talking about some 200 gallons of water. Thus, if she worked hard enough it may take her an hour or more. Thus, this woman would be a remarkable woman, one of great character and strength! These wells are not like we think of today where you lower a bucket down and pull out the water, but many times they were cisterns that collect water and you would have to travel down 50 maybe 100 steps to get to the water. Thus, this was not easy for her to do.

2. Now, let me also say this about providential circumstances; we can manipulate them to get what we want and we can ignore what we don't want. Case-in-point. There was this gentleman who was trying to lose weight and loved doughnuts and he made this deal with God. He said, "Lord, I am going to be driving by this doughnut shop in a few minutes and you know my weakness. Lord, if you want me to stop there and have a doughnut then you provide a parking place right in front of the doughnut shop." You know what, the Lord did provide a parking spot for him and he explained this to his friend. He told him, "You know, God wanted me to stop there, he provided a parking space right in front of that doughnut shop, it only took 10 times driving around the building for the spot to open up!" Be careful!

VERSE 15

1. Yes, sometimes God does answer our prayers very quickly, here the servant was still praying and God answered! It is as Isaiah 65:24 tells us, "**It shall come to pass That before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear.**" The Living Bible puts this verse like this, "**I will answer them before they even call to me. While they are still talking to me about their needs, I will go ahead and answer their prayers!**" But, that is not always the case; Abraham waited 25 years for God to answer his prayer! Now the servant was not sure at this point if this was the one, but he is going to watch and wait and see what the Lord is going to do, if she really is the one! But I am sure he was excited, seeing the hand of God working here and yet, wanting to be sure.

VERSE 16-21

1. Notice that the servant didn't rush into this or jump to the wrong conclusion, but waited to see if this was the one that God wanted for Isaac. So this woman gave him a drink and said she would water the camels. It seems like she is the one, right? Then why do we read in verse 21, "**And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.**" You see, he was still waiting because she said that she would water the camels, but she had not completed the work yet. He wanted to see if she truly had a servant's heart. Yes, she was beautiful outwardly but the servant was waiting to see her inward character, which was more important.

2. God still looks for people who have servant's hearts that He might work through. He is not looking for beautiful people, but people of character, people who are willing to serve Him faithfully and not half-heartedly or just when they have the time or it is easy to do. In regards to this point, Jesus tells us in Mark 10:45, "**For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.**" If our Lord was willing to serve, then shouldn't we? Of course we should and it is as we are told in back in II Chronicles 16:9, "**For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. . . .**" He is looking!

VERSES 22-28

1. The servant is convinced that she is the one, a descendant of Abraham's brother and a woman of character and thus, he asks her if he could lodge at their families house, and she said they have plenty of room. You see, she completed the task she said she would do and the servant blessed her with gifts! Now, as this all comes to pass, as the servant sees all these things taking place, what does he do? He does not take any credit but he praises the Lord! Notice, “. . . **'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.'**” Genesis 24:27.

2. Now, how do we know the way to go? It really is simple, Jesus said, “. . . **'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'**” John 14:6. In other words, follow the Lord, our Great Shepherd, and He will lead you to the place you need to be. It truly is harder to steer a parked car than one that is moving. Thus, if we want to be moved by the Lord we need to be moving so He can guide us and direct us to the place He wants us to go as He did with Eliezer!

VERSES 29-33

1. Now Laban, the brother of this young girl named Rebekah focuses on the riches he sees – the nose ring, the bracelet's that were on Rebekah, given to her by this servant, Eliezer. He is looking at this as a good deal for him, a moneymaker and isn't that how the world looks at things? Even Christianity today has many unbelievers profiting off the merchandise that is being sold and the only reason these unbelievers are in the business is to make money! How sad that truly is. Back in Mark 8:36-37 Jesus said, "**For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?**" You see, you can have everything this world has to offer and still lose because you are dead in your trespasses and sins apart from Christ! Yes, Laban was hospitable, but I wonder if it was in response to gain some resources?

2. Now before this servant eats, he wants to complete his mission, the one he was sent to do. What a great lesson for us, that we complete the work that God has sent us to do!

VERSES 34-49

1. Here the servant is telling Laban and the rest of the family his mission, to find a wife for his master's son and how God brought him to the spot where Rebekah would be, and as he was praying, she showed up! It truly was a witness of God's power and God's direction for this family to see and believe, but I don't believe that they did, except for Rebekah!

VERSES 50-53

1. As Laban hears the story and he does believe it was from God but will not say if this was a good deal or not, he does give Rebekah, his sister, to Isaac. And then, "Show me the money! Show me the money!" I tend to think that was where Laban was at and the servant gives to Laban and her mother precious things and he gave to Rebekah jewelry and clothing, silver and gold showing that Isaac was more than capable in providing for her, in caring for her!

VERSES 54 –60

1. Isn't this interesting. They said she could go and yet they want her to stay, to delay her departure for 10 days, some say it was a longer period of time, but whatever the case, it was a delay! That is the world folk's, isn't it? Of course it is! To the sinner, "Don't hurry, you have plenty of time to decide!" To the believer, "Don't hurry, you don't have to go to church, you don't have to get involved, go out with us tonight instead of your Christian friends!" The reality is, the world keeps us from obeying the Lord. Warren Wiersbe puts it like this. He wrote:

The application is obvious for unsaved people today: They must not delay in making their decisions for Christ. It is a decision of faith, based on the evidence provided by the Holy Spirit through the Word and the witness of the church. The sinner who delays is in danger of losing the opportunity to belong to God's family and live in heaven (John 14:1-6). "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Heb 3:7,15, NKJV). "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2).

At the closing service of a great evangelistic crusade he conducted in Fort Worth, Texas, Dr. George W. Truett, then pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, said to a vast congregation: "Satan does not care if men and women come to the house of God, and to public services such as these, and are attentive and serious and deeply moved, if only they will let the religious opportunity pass, and be unimproved. Oh, dreadful possibility, that religious opportunity may come and pass by, and the highest things of the soul be lost and forfeited forever" (A Quest for Souls, 362). Dreadful possibility indeed!

A century and a half before, Charles Spurgeon said to his London congregation: "Ten days did not seem too long; but they might have been ten days too late. One day does not seem much; but one day more may be one day too late, and one day too late is to be too late forever; yea, one minute too late is an eternity too late!" (Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, vol. 13, 533)

- Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament

2. But look at the faith of Rebekah, never seeing Isaac before but she was willing to go immediately to be with Him. Remember what Jesus said in John 20:29 to Thomas after His death and resurrection, **“Jesus said to him, ‘Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’”**

And in I Peter 1:6-9 Peter tells us, **“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith — the salvation of your souls.”** That is faith and that is what we see here with Rebekah, nothing was going to get in her way, not even family of coming to her bridegroom!

VERSES 61-67

1. And so the long journey back and after months of traveling the bridegroom meets his bride. Folks, this is the first time we read of Isaac since he went up on Mount Moriah to be sacrificed by his father. I find that interesting because the next time we will see the Lord is when we meet Him in the air, the Rapture, as Jesus comes for His bride, the church, not to the earth, but in the air. You see, the next time He comes to the earth is in judgment and He comes with His bride, the church!

2. What a beautiful picture the Holy Spirit has painted for us here and we will deal more with this on Sunday, as I have said. But let me close this chapter by looking at what Paul said in Romans 5:6-11, **“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”** Thus, Christ has saved you, you were reconciled to God through Jesus and since God has given you this reconciliation, go and tell others of the Good News, of the marriage and coming wedding feast so that they may partake!

GENESIS 25

VERSES 1-4

1. Sometime after Sarah’s death Abraham remarries or really, Keturah is his concubine according to I Chronicles 1:32. And he had 6 sons and grandsons and even great grandsons through this lineage. Now how is this all going to play out, I thought Isaac was the son of promise and would inherit the land? He is and listen to what Abraham does.

VERSES 5-6

1. You see, Isaac is still the son of promise so he received the land; the riches from his father and the others were sent to the east, away from this land that would be given to the decedents of Isaac.

VERSES 7-11

1. So Abraham lived 175 years and he died. This man of faith died “full of years.” You see, I believe that we as Christians can live a life full of years. Now you may argue that good Christians have died young, and that is true. That is not what I was talking about when I said full of years. I am talking about a full life, one that was used to serve the Lord and when that is done, at whatever age that is, the Lord will call you home. But it will be full, one that has been filled and used by the Lord. Abraham was a man who died satisfied and he passed those spiritual blessings on to his son Isaac! What a great lesson for us, to pass those spiritual blessings on to our children!

2. Of this man Abraham, Clarke tells us, “above all as a man of God, he stands unrivaled; so that under the most exalted and perfect of all dispensations, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he is proposed and recommended as the model and pattern according to which the faith, obedience, and perseverance of the followers of the Messiah are to be formed. Reader, while you admire the man, do not forget the God that made him so great, so good, and so useful. Even Abraham had nothing but what he had received; from the free unmerited mercy of God proceeded all his excellences; but he was a worker together with God, and therefore did not receive the grace of God in vain. Go thou, believe, love, obey, and persevere in like manner.”

3. As Isaac and Ishmael bury their father, Abraham in the cave of Machpelah, where Sarah was buried, they go their separate ways and God blesses Isaac. And notice where Isaac dwelt, by the well in Beer Lahai Roi or “the well of Him that liveth and seeth me.” In other words, it is the well of living water. Folks, we need to dwell by the well of living water, Jesus Christ, who pours out His Spirit upon our lives giving us those times of refreshment, comfort, direction and-so-on!

VERSES 12-18

1. Now we are given the genealogy of Ishmael before the Holy Spirit brings us back to the chosen line through Isaac. Remember back in Genesis 17:20 we were told, “**And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.**” We now see that come to pass, 12 sons that will occupy the land from Havilah or the area in north-central Arabia to Shur, between Beersheba and Egypt. Also, keep in mind that the Lord said to Hagar regarding the descendants of Ishmael in Genesis 16:12, “**He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.**” And that is exactly what we see, the Ishmaelites will live in hostility not only to each other but to the children of Israel. You see, they were all brothers and they could not even get along just as God said!

2. At the age of 137, Ishmael dies and passes off the scene, but as I have said, their hostility not only toward each other but the children of Isaac continues to this day!

VERSES 19-26

1. If Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah his wife, that would mean that Abraham was 140 years old at the close of Genesis chapter 24 and maybe 140 years old when he married Keturah!

2. For 20 years Rebekah could not conceive a child, she had no children and Isaac pleaded with the Lord and the Lord answered his hearts cry, Rebekah was pregnant, but not for 20 years after he started praying! But there was a problem with the pregnancy, turmoil in the womb you might say, and Rebekah sought the Lord regarding what was happening. In fact, Jewish legend, not the Scriptures, tell us that Jacob and Esau tried to kill each other in the womb. Also, every time Rebekah went near an idol's altar, Esau would get excited in the womb, and when she would go near a place where the LORD was worshipped, Jacob would get excited. Obviously we don't know if that was true or not, but something to think about.

Now the Lord does explain to Rebekah what is going on in her womb, she has twins and they will become two nations and yet, the younger will be served by the older. That is God's Word to her, a promise. You see, it was usually the first born that received the blessing, the double portion of the inheritance, but now God turns the tables and says that the older will serve the younger! Folks, this is the sovereign will of God here and we need to understand that God does not have favorites, but this is His plan!

Paul, in Romans 9:10-14 tells us regarding these two boys and the sovereign will of God, **“And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), it was said to her, ‘The older shall serve the younger.’ As it is written, ‘Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.’ What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not!”**

Now why did God chose Jacob over Esau. The logical conclusion would be that Jacob was better than Esau, but that truly was not the case. In fact Paul tells us it was not of works or the things they did. Then what was it based upon? God's sovereign election, it was made before they were born. Think of it like this, why did God choose the nation of Israel, the Jews, to be His representative to the world? In Exodus 32:9 we are told, **“And the LORD said to Moses, ‘I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people!’”** You see, it was not because of how good they were, but God's sovereign election.

I am not the pastor of this church because I am a great guy, I am so special that God needed me but because of His sovereign election and I am always humbled by the fact that God used a donkey in the Old Testament to speak forth His Words! And please understand that God has a purpose, He has a plan, He does not choose arbitrarily, He knows the beginning from the end!

Paul also quotes out of Genesis 25:23 where we are told in regards to the twins who were to be born, Esau who was the oldest and Jacob, and that **“the older shall serve the younger.”** When did Esau serve Jacob? Not in their lifetime but in their descendants and thus, when Paul quotes out of Malachi 1:2-3 as he says **“Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.”** he is speaking of the nations and not the individuals. And in Obadiah God declares His hatred over the Edomites for their idolatry, their violence against Israel, their rejoicing when Israel was defeated in battle and-so-on.

Also, God's love of Jacob was also speaking of the nation, looking upon those who received Him as opposed to those in Israel that rejected Him for as Paul said, "**... For they are not all Israel who are of Israel.**" Romans 9:6. God's sovereign will – we must accept it by faith because when we try to understand it with our finite minds, we will short-circuit the system! It is as one seminary professor said: "Try to explain election, and you may lose your mind; but explain it away and you will lose your soul." God is fair, He is righteous and all His judgments are perfect, that is the basis you must approach election.

3. So as the first child is born and they see him, they call him hairy and not Harry the name. He was full of hair and thus, Esau is born. The second child, as he comes out, he is grabbing the heel of his brother and thus, they call him heel-catcher or Jacob. Now that is not a great name for it means, "trickster" or "con-man" or "scoundrel" or "rascal." How would you like that name, "Hey, can scoundrel come out to play?"

VERSES 27-28

1. Notice how different they were. Esau was a man's man and Isaac loved him. Jacob on the other hand was more of a mamma's boy, stayed at home and thus, Rebekah loved him. Let me say this and we will see this played out as we go through this story, it is never a good idea to have favorites, love your children the same, make them all special or it will cause problems in your home!

VERSES 29-34

1. As Esau returned from his hunting trip, he came up empty and he was starving. And as he gets closer and closer to home, that homemade lentil soup smells great and he asks Jacob for some. But Jacob is going to make a deal with Esau before he will give it to him, he wants the birthright that was due the firstborn and then he could have the stew.

The birthright spoke both of a physical and spiritual blessing. The person would receive a double portion of the inheritance and would be the spiritual leader in the family when the father passed on. (See Deuteronomy 21:17 and I Chronicles 5:1-2 regarding the birthright). Also, he would receive the covenant that God made with Abraham and thus, Jacob is wheeling and dealing to get what God promised him in the first place. Folks, if God has made a promise to you, you don't have to wheel and deal to obtain it. And Jacob, many years down the road, will learn that lesson.

2. Esau at this point can care less about the birthright, he wanted to eat, he was starving and thus, Jacob takes advantage of the situation. Now, was this a valid transaction? I don't believe so and I will tell you why. Jacob was buying what was already his and Esau was giving away what did not belong to him!

3. We will read more of this dysfunctional family as we continue with our study through Genesis next time. But as I begin to close tonight, listen to how Barnhouse makes this application for us today. He wrote: “History shows that men prefer illusions to realities, choose time rather than eternity, and the pleasures of sin for a season rather than the joys of God forever. Men will read trash rather than the Word of God, and adhere to a system of priorities that leaves God out of their lives. Multitudes of men spend more time shaving than on their souls; and multitudes of women give more minutes to their makeup than to the life of the eternal spirit. Men still sell their birthright for a mess of pottage.”

Paul tells us of those blessings because of our birthright that we have in Jesus back in Ephesians 1:3-14, where we are told, **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth — in Him. . . .**

. . . In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.”

You can read through these verses on your own and see the many blessings we have in Christ. Here’s the thing. May you not despise them as Esau did!