

Lesson 12 - A BRIDE FOR THE HEIR *Genesis 24*

(Gen. 24:1-4) - This is the historical record of Abraham choosing a bride for his son, Isaac. In this story Abraham sends his eldest servant to seek a bride for Isaac. Most agree that this servant is the same Eliezer mentioned in *Genesis 15:2* whom Abraham, being yet childless, thought might inherit his estate. As we know, this did not happen because it was in Isaac that God's promises to Abraham were to be fulfilled. This story is typical of God the Father sending His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to find His bride, chosen and given to Him before the foundation of the world. We must realize that there are limitations in any type. We cannot make every element to apply to spiritual matters. For example, Abraham represents God the Father. But, at this time, Abraham did not know who the identity of the bride who would marry Isaac. God the Father knew the exact identity of the bride He had chosen for His Son in divine, electing grace before the world began (*John 10:14,27-30; Rom. 11:2; Php. 4:3; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; 2 Tim. 1:8-10; 2:19*). So, as Abraham represents our heavenly Father, Isaac represents the Lord Jesus Christ, and the servant represents all ministers of the true Gospel. They are instruments of the Holy Spirit Who, in the new birth, empowers the Gospel Word to the salvation of God's chosen people (*John 6:44-45; 16:8-11; Rom. 1:16-17; 10:13-17*). Rebekah, the bride, represents every true believer, chosen by God in the election of grace and given to Christ as their Surety, bought by the blood Christ, and born again and called by the Holy Spirit. As we go through this passage, we will consider how the type is fulfilled in Christ finding and marrying His bride, the true church.

Abraham was very wealthy, and his son, Isaac, was the heir of all that Abraham possessed. He sent his trusted servant to find a bride for Isaac, a bride who would share with Isaac all the riches that Abraham possessed. The Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God's love, is the heir of all things (*Heb. 1:1-3*). The Father has given all things into His hands (*John 3:35; John 5:23; Col. 1:16-18*). The glory of God in the complete salvation of all His chosen people was (and is) conditioned on the Lord Jesus Christ. All the promises of God to His chosen people are made sure and certain in and by Him (*Rom. 8:31-34; 2 Cor. 1:20; Eph. 1:3*). Christ is Lord and King by design, by decree, and by His death (*Rom. 14:9; John 17:1-3*). God has chosen out of every tribe, kindred, and nation a people who collectively make up the bride of His Son and joint-heirs with Him of all that He purchased and owns (*Rom. 8:14-17; Rom. 8:29-31; Eph. 1:3-7*). The Father calls and sends His servants (preachers of the Gospel) out into the world to find this bride of Christ by preaching the Gospel to all who will listen. The Holy Spirit will single them out and give them spiritual life in the new birth, bring them to faith in Christ and true repentance. They are all to be married to Christ (*Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 7:4-6; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; 1 Cor. 1:17-18,26-31; 2 Cor. 11:2*).

"Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and I will make thee swear by the LORD ..." - This oath seems to be related to God's promise that Abraham would have a seed from his own body through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed. So, Abraham makes this oath with reference to the coming seed, which is Christ Himself as the Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of God's chosen people. Notice how Abraham specified that the chosen bride was not to be from *"the daughters of the Canaanites"* but from his own *"kindred."* The bride of Christ is made up of God's elect, chosen by God and given to Christ before the world began (*Eph. 1:3-7; 2 Tim. 1:9*). They are called His bride, His brethren (*Heb. 2:9-17*), His church (*Acts 20:28*), and His sheep (*John 10:11-29*). As sinners saved by God's grace, we do not make ourselves His bride. We were chosen by God to be His bride. We are His kindred people by election, redemption, and calling, all of God's grace in Christ.

(Gen. 24:5-9) - The servant expressed concern that the woman might be unwilling to leave her family and give herself to a man she does not know. Abraham assured him that he was

not going forth alone but that the Lord God, Who made Isaac the heir, would go with him and reward his efforts - *“He shall send His angel before thee.”* God's preachers do not go forth into the world alone to persuade men to believe in and come to Christ by their own logic or power of persuasion. The Spirit of God goes before them to quicken, awaken, and give sinners ears to hear the Gospel, eyes to see the beauties of Christ, and hearts to love Him (*Psalms 110:3; Eph. 2:1-10*). The bride had been chosen (*2 Thess. 2:13*), the servant will endure all things to tell the bride of her Beloved (*2 Tim. 2:9-10*), the bride will hear the voice of her Beloved through the message of the servant (*John 10:23-30*), and the bride will come willingly and believing the Word of God delivered by the servant (*John 6:37-45; 2 Cor. 2:14-16*).

(Gen. 24:10-14) - The servant went to the place where the women came to draw water and, knowing the impossibility of the task humanly, he sought divine help in prayer. The opening of the heart to Christ, the resurrection of the spiritually dead, conviction of sin, genuine repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus are *“impossible with men”* (*Matt. 19:24-26; 1 Cor. 2:9-12*). We preach, but the Spirit of God reveals Christ to the heart (*John 16:7-15*). God alone can give and teach the new heart (*John 6:44-45*). All who come to Christ and receive Him must be born of God (*John 1:10-13*), for true repentance and saving faith are the gifts of God (*Rom. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:24-25; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil. 1:29*).

The bride for Isaac must be both worthy and willing, and we will see that Rachel was both. But, by nature, Christ's bride is both unworthy and unwilling. She is a sinful and rebellious bride. God's grace makes her beautiful by justifying her and clothing her in the righteous robe of His Son, Christ's righteousness imputed (*Isa. 61:10*). She is washed clean from all her sins by the blood of Christ. She has no dowry, nothing to offer the Bridegroom. She has nothing but debt, but He has paid her debt to justice and secured her eternal life and well-being. He also makes her willing in the day of His power by giving her a new heart and drawing her to Himself with cords of love revealed in the Gospel.

(Gen. 24:32-51) - The servant was welcomed into Rebekah's home, but he would not partake of their comforts until he had accomplished his mission and declared his message. Even so, the servants of Christ are men on a mission – to make Christ known (*Acts 20:33*). The servant declared to Rebekah and her kindred the glories of Isaac and his master's house. The servants of Christ have one message – Christ and Him crucified (*1 Cor. 2:1-2*). The bride must not be attracted to the servant but to Christ (*John 3:30*). Our task is to set forth the beauties of God in the glorious Person and finished work of Christ (*Psalms 27:4; John 1:29,37; 3:36; 2 Cor. 4:6*).

(Gen. 24:56-58) - Finally, after the case had been fully stated, the question was put directly to Rebekah, *“Wilt thou go with this man?”* And she said, *“I will go.”* Faith in Christ, salvation in Christ, and a saving interest in the Lord Jesus is an individual, personal, and total commitment. Children cannot be sprinkled into the covenant and kingdom, young people are not saved because their parents know God, wives and husbands do not partake of grace because they are married to believers (remember Lot's wife), and salvation is not the result of group therapy. Knowing the true God and Jesus Christ is a personal experience as God is pleased to reveal himself to an individual (*Gal. 1:15-16; 2 Tim. 1:12*). The true bride of Christ is convinced by the Holy Spirit of the beauty and power of Christ as the Lord her righteousness (*Jer. 23:5-6; 33:15-16*).