

Genesis 24:59–67

God of All Comfort—Small and Great

Main idea: As the Lord carries out an eternal plan to give His adopted children infinite and eternal comfort, He exercises the same love and wisdom and power to fill each of their lives with a multitude of other comforts.

⁵⁹ So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. ⁶⁰ And they blessed Rebekah and said to her:

"Our sister, may you become
The mother of thousands of ten thousands;
And may your descendants possess
The gates of those who hate them."

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.

Introduction

It has been a long time in getting to the end of Genesis 24. The eternal, perfect, Triune God glorified Himself in His Son by creating all things through Him.

In a supreme act of generosity He created man, Adam, in His own image—although man would fall from the perfection of that image by sinning against God and bringing upon Himself not only the death that was threatened in the first covenant, but the eternal Hell that God's perfect wrath must pour out upon each one who despises and rebels against His infinite glory.

But God had ordained this not only so that His glory and holiness might be vindicated, when sinful men are cast, with the devil and his angels, into the lake of fire that has been prepared for them.

No, the Lord had ordained this also—and more prominently—so that He Himself might be the Savior of man and the destroyer of the devil... once again, in this redemption just as in the creation, glorifying Himself in His Son by the redemption that He brings through Him.

Ever since God promised that an offspring of the woman would do this, in Genesis 3:15, we have been hoping for the Savior. Eve thought it might be Cain, but how dreadfully wrong she was. Noah's father thought it might be Noah—how dreadful was the judgment through which the Lord carried this one through whom He would eventually bring the Savior. Even when Noah's family was fruitful and multiplied, the greatness of their earthly accomplishments was exceeded by the greatness of their wickedness.

But eventually God called an idolater named Abram, out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to be the one through whom all of the families of the earth shall be blessed. God promised Abram a great inheritance that would be meaningful because one of Abram's descendants would solve even the problem of death itself—a resurrection hope that we will be hearing about again if the Lord spares us and helps us to consider chapter 25 next week.

And not only did God promise Abram an inheritance and a death-conquering descendant, but God bound Himself to Abram by a covenant of blood, the greatest blessing of which is that God would be Abraham's own covenant God, and Abraham would be God's own covenant people—giving Abraham this new covenant name to signify that the hope of bodily resurrection in Christ is matched by God's re-creating believing Abraham and his believing children from all the nations as new, spiritually resurrected, people in Christ.

But Abraham has continued to be a sinner, and the promises and the covenant have been in continual danger. Drought, famine, Philistines, and Abraham's own wickedness of the lies that he thought to himself righteous, and the passivity that he showed in leading his household, and the polygamy that came out of that passivity—all of these have threatened the carrying out of God's salvation through Abraham, not to mention the son of that sin, Ishmael, whom though he would persecute Isaac, God would promise to save, even through Isaac whom he had persecuted.

The child of the promise, Isaac, had to come by way of extraordinary birth in old age. And though the Christ must come through Isaac, there was not to be found a suitable wife for him in all the promised land.

And even in Genesis 24, which has been entirely concerned with securing a wife for Isaac, it has been a long time in getting to this point. From the oath that Abraham made his servant swear, to the preparations and logistics of the journey. From the prayers for a sign, and the careful observations, to Rebekah's character shining through, and the servant's prayers that matched his praises. All the way to the negotiations by which we arrive at departure in v59—it has been a long time in getting to this point.

So as we come to this passage this morning, we see the God of all comfort providing a husband and a calling for Rebekah, fulfillment for Abraham's servant of God's granting successful fruit to a job faithfully carried out, and a wife for Isaac whose blessedness to him would include comfort in his grief.

But, especially, we see that all of this has meaning and purpose because God is carrying out His plan to bring His Son into the world as His Christ, our Savior, to destroy death and the devil, and to give resurrection—both spiritual and physical—to whomever believes in Jesus Christ.

We see God carrying out His eternal adoption plan, that those who are descended from Abraham by the faith of Abraham would be not just Abraham's children, but God's own adopted children in Jesus Christ, perfectly happy and perfectly holy, in that perfect glory in which Jesus will forever be among them, the Firstborn among many brethren.

1. **Comfort small and earthly: Rebekah's comfort**

- a. A godly husband instead of Laban—a hard man, knew how to get things out of people, whose own daughters one day would be happy to get out of his house. **Perhaps you**, too, seek the blessing of a godly husband.
- b. Great material provision. 10 camels of treasures were but a small portion. Next chapter, we will hear that the entire estate is left to Isaac. **Perhaps—particularly in these days—you lack provision.** God feeds the birds and clothes the flowers; He knows what you need before you ask. He has numbered all your hairs, and if you are His in Christ, He works all things together for your good. Nothing can separate you from His love. He describes His love for you as driving everything that He does. Just as He commands His people to have His law as frontlets between their eyes, so He also tells believers that they are the apple of His eye. Just as He commands His people to bind His law to their hands, so He also tells believers that He has engraved their names upon His hands... carrying you in His everlasting arms, and tattooing your name to the Almighty hand by which He continuously works all things according to the counsel of His will.
- c. A high earthly position (the tent of Sarah). This tent, through the door of which Sarah once argued with Yahweh Himself, has been unoccupied now for three years. Rebekah is becoming clan mother over a great household tribe. This was a high position, but even better, it was the position that Yahweh had chosen for her. **Do you seek a position?** Seek the one that the God of comfort assigns to you. Whether head over a great house, or a door-keeper, or a foot-washing servant, or a still-born child whom God uses her life to glorify Himself in the lives of those who never got to know her in this life.
- d. An extraordinary calling (the blessing of v60 in light of 22:17–18). Christ's victory. Christ's gates-of-hell-defying church-building. Christ's salvation. Rebekah's duties in this? Wife and mother (cf. 1Tim 2:15 Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control; Titus 2:4–5 that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed; 1Tim 5:9–10 she has been the wife of one man, well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work). **Perhaps you**, too, seek a high calling. This is something that every woman now has, in a sense, in the family where there are no eunuchs, and God makes godliness, character, good works, and prayer high callings that are especially attached to women in that family.

2. **Comfort small and earthly: the Servant's comfort**

- a. Presenting Isaac to Rebekah. Abraham has been busy too. Isaac now dwells in Beer Lahai Roi, and is now the master. He is a man of greatness and godliness, everything that the servant had promised.
- b. Presenting Rebekah to Isaac. Telling Isaac all the things that he had done. **When loving the Lord** with your whole being in the first commandment produces loving others as yourself in the second great commandment, it is a comfort and pleasure to see those whom you serve blessed. Like John the baptizer rejoicing, as the bridegroom, to present believers unto Christ. So too we rejoice both to please Christ and to see our brethren and neighbors blessed.
- c. Seeing God's blessing upon his labor. The final piece in the family transition. The wedding in the tent of Sarah. The love that Rebekah enjoys from Isaac. The comfort that Isaac enjoys from Rebekah. The next step in God's saving plan. And God gave him the privilege of participating through prayer and diligence. We don't even know if he is married, but we know that he is greatly privileged!

3. **Comfort small and earthly: Isaac's comfort.** Three years bereaved, and a great man on the earth, but the final piece of God's comforting him is a godly wife—what a great blessing is a godly wife! And how dreadful for those husbands who do not treasure their wives, who take no comfort from them. "Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, But a prudent wife is from the LORD."—Prov 19:14. Blessed is the man who fears Yahweh... his wife is like a fruitful vine in his home (Ps 128). What great ingratitude belongs to the man who fails to treasure his wife, to blessed in the wife of his youth, to live with her in an understanding manner, to love her and give himself up for her that she might be presented holy and blameless to the Lord Jesus. To take pleasure in her as more valuable than rubies, to treasure her as his own self. She became his wife, *and he loved her.*

Conclusion: Comfort great and eternal

- a. None of this means anything, if they will all perish at their death. And this is exactly what they and each of us deserve. The effectiveness of each little comfort (whether husband, earthly provision, earthly position, calling, effectiveness in our work, wife, consolation in bereavement) depends upon whether we have the comfort of Christ.
- b. But if you have the comfort of Christ, then every small comfort on earth becomes part of that great and eternal comfort. The same love has desired it for you. The same wisdom has planned it for you. The same power is carrying out for you. And it all comes to you in the same Person, our Lord Jesus Christ! How great a thing it is to participate in His work by our actions: as a husband, or as a wife; as a parent or a head of household; even as a servant who may be none of these; as a church member in the household of God; even simply (and greatly) by prayer and the other means of grace. How great a thing it is to participate in His work! But not because of our greatness in participation. But because of His greatness in His work, His greatness in every comfort, His greatness in the gospel of Christ.