

Genesis 24 (NIV) – A bride for Isaac

Here was a very important marriage; the Holy Spirit has recorded it in detail for us. Isaac and Rebekah were the parents of Jacob, who was re-named “Israel”; the father of the Old Testament nation.

Abraham's servant is sent to find a bride (v1-9)

Abraham was now old (v1) – but still looking forward. He did not say “my time is nearly over; let me now just live for myself”. He was thinking still of God's promises and God's purposes for the world. He looked to the next generation – as must we all. He did not want a Canaanite woman for Isaac; he remembered that these were wicked people whom God had promised to destroy. So he sent his servant with a task to find a suitable wife. He lived *in* Canaan but he would not become “of” Canaan. The Bible tells us that we must marry only “in the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:39, 2 Cor 6:14). Abraham's servant promised to do what God enabled him to do. They didn't know what would happen; but were determined to honour God.

Abraham's servant is guided by God to Rebekah (v10-28)

The servant went, praying. Prayer is our way of remaining within the will of God – we ask him to lead and prepare in all things. We see too how much Isaac trusted his father; it is good when a father's care is so well known that a son can be like this. Isaac was 40 years old; they had been in no ungodly rush, but were looking carefully for God's will. Whilst they had been trusting, God had been raising up Rebekah during those years. When the servant discovered who she was, and that God had answered his prayers, he rejoiced – and he worshipped.

Abraham's servant gains Rebekah's hand for Isaac (v29-53)

We are introduced to Laban. It is interesting that the first thing we are told about him is that he saw the jewels – later on we find that he is was a covetous, greedy man. The love of money brings ruin (1 Timothy 6:10). The servant made his speech and showed them what had happened. He did not order them in the name of God, but trusted that God was still in control as he told his story. He did remind them of God's covenant and promises. They all together saw that it was God's will.

Abraham's servant brings Rebekah back to Isaac (v54-67)

The decision involved Rebekah too – they did not treat her like property to sell, but also sought her decision. How wonderful it is when all agree together in seeking and doing the will of the Lord! A blessing was prophetically given (v59). When she came back to Isaac, he was out praying; and she veiled herself. He was seeking God's guidance; she was seeking God's honour. They were a great match for each other. We are told that their marriage was a marriage of love. The best foundation for a loving marriage is that both partners should seriously seek the Lord and his kingdom first of all. Sarah's death had been 3 years earlier; but now Isaac found comfort. In Genesis 23 we had a death; here a marriage – in the next chapter, a birth. The plans of God in Jesus Christ were and are advancing still.