

THE SELECTION OF THE BRIDE

BIBLE TEXT: Genesis 24:1-33.

LESSON 12 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "He knoweth the way that I take" (Job 23:10).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Genesis 24:1-33.

¹ And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

² And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:

³ And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

⁴ But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

⁵ And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?

⁶ And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.

⁷ The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

⁸ And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

⁹ And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his

NOTES:

Abraham and Isaac

Because of Abraham's obedience, God had promised him that through his family all the nations of the earth should be made happy. Abraham was now 140 years old; his wife, Sarah, was dead; and their son, Isaac, was about 40 years old. The Lord had blessed Abraham and given him flocks, herds, silver, gold, menservants, maidservants, camels, and asses. Isaac was heir to all this. Abraham had a faithful steward in his house, the eldest servant who ruled over all that he had and who is believed to be Eliezer of Damascus.

An Important Mission

One day Abraham called this tried and true servant and asked him to perform a very important duty. "Go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac." Marriage companions were usually selected by parents, as is done in some countries even today.

This was indeed a difficult task for the servant. Perhaps the young woman might be unwilling to break all ties of home and friends to make such a far journey. But his master assured him that the "LORD God of heaven . . . shall send his angel before thee." Abraham feared that if his son married into a Canaanitish family, he might be led away from the true worship of God.

Separation from the World

Those who are following Jesus and have left the world behind are one with God and with Christ. God has sent His Holy Spirit into the earth to go to His "kindred," and take a Bride unto His Son, Jesus Christ. Those who shall make up the Bride of Christ are they who are saved from their sins, and who have been sanctified wholly and have pressed in and received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The people of the world have very little in common with the true children of God. They are not interested in the same things; they do not go to the same places; they do not seek companions among one another. Read **II Corinthians 6:14-18**; ¹⁴ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? ¹⁶ And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ¹⁷ Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, ¹⁸ And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. and learn more about the separation of Christians from evil associations and unbelievers.

The Journey Begun

Without further delay Eliezer prepared for his trek across the desert sands. Ten camels laden with provisions comprised the caravan; expensive gifts were among the cargo. When all was in readiness, Eliezer and his men arose and went.

By the Well of Water

At last the Journey of about 500 miles was completed. Tired and thirsty, at evening time, the ten camels kneeled down by the well just outside the city of Nahor, in the land of Mesopotamia. Although it was evening, yet this loyal servant was bent on

master, and sware to him concerning that matter.

¹⁰ And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

¹¹ And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water.

¹² And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham.

¹³ Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:

¹⁴ And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.

¹⁵ And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder.

¹⁶ And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

¹⁷ And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.

¹⁸ And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.

accomplishing his mission before nightfall. The wells were the places where one would meet the young women who drew water at that time of day.

The Holy Spirit

How typical of today -- God the Father, who is represented by Abraham in this account, has sent the Holy Spirit to seek a Bride for His Son, Jesus Christ. Now, when it is evening for this old world, the Spirit is seeking a Bride just before nightfall. Soon the Spirit will cease to call and the Bride will enter in unto the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. (See Lesson 342, Junior Course, Book 27.)

The Prayer and the Answer

Can we not see Eliezer as he bows his head and prays aloud: "O LORD God of my master Abraham . . . Behold, I stand here by the well of water; . . . and let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master." He wanted a sign that he might know that God was directing him in his quest for a bride for his master's son.

Before the prayer was ended, a beautiful young woman came to the well with a pitcher upon her shoulder. It is said that in Mesopotamia water pitchers are carried upon the shoulder, while in some countries they are carried upon the head. Down to the well she went and filled her pitcher with water. The servant ran to meet her and asked for a drink from her pitcher. Quenching his thirst was not so important to him now as learning whether or not this young woman was the answer to his prayer. Hastily she let down her pitcher upon her hand and courteously gave him a drink. He did not ask for water for the camels, but she volunteered to draw water for them also. Pitcher after pitcher she drew for ten thirsty camels, until they had finished drinking. A camel has a capacity for enough water to last 10 to 15 days.

"Blessed of the LORD"

Amazed and happy, the servant took a golden earring and two golden bracelets for her hands, and said, "Whose daughter art thou? tell me I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?" She promptly replied that there was room for him and his men and also for the camels. Then she hurried home to tell her family the strange but wonderful story of all that had happened. Her brother, Laban, went at once to the well and told Eliezer that he had prepared the house, and made room for the camels. "Come in," he said, "thou blessed of the LORD."

Room in the Heart

The Spirit is seeking for you to prepare your heart for the soon return, of the Lord. He wants you to be made ready to be one of the Bride of Christ. Are you resisting the call? or can you say, "Come in; wherefore standest Thou without? I have prepared room in my heart for Thee"?

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Abraham wish Isaac to marry one of his own kindred?
2. Who had charge of all Abraham's possessions? Was he trustworthy?
3. How did the servant travel through the desert?
4. What prayer did the servant pray?
5. How did he know that his prayer was answered?
6. Tell of the characteristics of Rebekah.
7. Of whom is Eliezer a type? In what way?
8. Give some of the qualifications of the Bride of Christ.
9. Was the servant welcome at the home of Rebekah? What was done for him?

¹⁹ And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

²⁰ And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.

²¹ And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.

²² And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold;

²³ And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?

²⁴ And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.

²⁵ She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

²⁶ And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD.

²⁷ And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren.

²⁸ And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things.

²⁹ And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well.

³⁰ And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his

sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well.

³¹ And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.

³² And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him.

³³ And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on.