

Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church
We're glad you're here!



An open book with text overlaid on it. The background is a bright blue sky with white clouds. The book is open, showing two pages of text. The text is in a serif font, and the book is slightly out of focus.

Here Come the Bride!

The will of the father

Scripture text: Genesis Ch 24:1-9

It seems strange that the longest chapter in Genesis tells the story of how a man got his wife. While that is an important topic, and this is certainly a beautiful story, does it deserve that much space?

Only thirty-one verses are devoted to the Creation account in Genesis 1; sixty-seven verses are allowed to relate how Rebekah became Isaac's wife. Why?

For one thing, the chapter emphasizes **separation**. Abraham made it clear that his son was not to marry a Canaanite woman (24:3). The Law of Moses did not permit the Jewish men to marry heathen women (Deut. 7:1–11). Nor are believers today to marry unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14–18; 1 Cor. 7:39–40). Genesis 24 is a great encouragement for those who want **God's will in the selection** of a mate. Today, while we do not use the same manner as Abraham's servant, the principles still apply: **We must want God's will**, we must pray and seek His guidance, we must be willing to obey, and we must be alert to what God is doing.

Deuteronomy 7:3-6 You shall not intermarry with **them**, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, for **they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods**. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly. But thus shall you deal with them: you shall break down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and chop down their Asherim and burn their carved images with fire. "**For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession**, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 Do not be **unequally yoked with unbelievers**. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore go out from their midst, and **be separate from them**, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty."

Of course, when the husband in the story is Isaac, the beloved son of Abraham, then the narrative takes on greater significance. After all, Isaac was the next “living link” in the chain of blessing that culminated in the birth of the Savior, Jesus Christ; so whatever happens to Isaac is of utmost importance in God’s great plan of salvation.

But the chapter goes beyond history into theology. It gives us a picture of the Heavenly Father getting a bride for His Son (Matt. 22:1–14). The church is compared to a bride (2 Cor. 11:2–3; Eph. 5:22–33); and during this present age, the Holy Spirit is calling people to trust Christ and be “married to ... Him” (Rom. 7:4).

The elements involved in the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah are also involved in the marriage of Christ and His church.

There are four of them.

- 1. The will of the father (Gen. 24:1–9);**
- 2. The witness of the servant (Gen. 24:10–49);**
- 3. The willingness of the bride (Gen. 24:50–60);**
- 4. The welcome of the bridegroom (Gen. 24:61–67)**

Matthew 22:2-6 "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. **Come to the wedding feast.**' But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them.

Matthew 22:8-14 Then he said to his servants, '**The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy.** Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, **both bad and good.** So the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to look at the guests, **he saw there a man who had no wedding garment.** And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' **For many are called, but few are chosen.**"

2 Corinthians 11:2-3 For I feel a divine jealousy for you, **since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.** But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray **from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.**

Romans 7:4 Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, **so that you may belong to another,** to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.

Ephesians 5:22-27 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife **even as Christ is the head of the church**, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, **that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word**, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

1. The will of the father (Gen. 24:1–9)

Abraham was now 140 years old (Gen. 21:5; 25:20) and would live another 35 years (25:7). His great concern was that, before he died, he would find a wife for his only son Isaac. Only then could God fulfill His covenant promises to bless Abraham with many descendants and give them Canaan for their inheritance (12:1–3; 13:14–17; 15:18; 21:12). **In those days, the parents made the marriage arrangements.** A man and woman got married and then **learned to love each other** (24:67). In much of the world today, the pattern is different.

We do not know who this “eldest servant” was. If it was Eliezer (15:2), then he must have been very old; the events recorded in Genesis 15 occurred more than fifty years earlier. Abraham made him swear to three things:

- (1) he would not select a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanite women;
- (2) he would choose her from Abraham’s relatives; and
- (3) he would not take Isaac back to Abraham’s former home.

Knowing that he had assigned his servant a difficult task, Abraham also gave him some words of encouragement (24:7, 39–41). God had guided and blessed Abraham for sixty-five years and would not forsake him now.

Furthermore, God had given Abraham a specific promise that his seed would inherit the land; so this meant that his son had to have a wife who would bear him a child. Finally, God's angel would go before the servant and guide him to the right woman.

Abraham was a man of faith who believed God's word and knew how to apply it to specific situations and decisions. **He sought to obey God's word because true faith always results in obedience.**

The more you meditate on God's Word, the more truth you will see in it and the more direction you will get from it.

This applies to decisions about marriage, vocation, ministry, or any other area in life.

Unless we trust God's Word and obey it, He will not direct us (Prov. 3:5–6).

Proverb 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. **In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.**

This is not a part time deal! In all your way, in all your dealings, in effect, in everything *acknowledge the Lord, and He will make straight your path!*

Just as Abraham wanted a bride for his son, so God the Father elected to provide a bride for His beloved Son.

Why? Not because Jesus needed anything, for the eternal Son of God is self-existent and self-sufficient and needs nothing.

The bride is the Father's love gift to His Son.

We usually emphasize that the Son is the Father's love gift to the world (John 3:16) and **forget that the church is the Father's love gift to His Son** (Gen 17:2, 6, 9, 11–12, 24).