

Shadows of Christ & His Bride

Lesson #6

The Bride Must Be Willing

Feb. 21, 2024

Ray Steadman: The love story of Isaac & Rebekah is a picture of Pentecost. Here is Abraham standing for God the Father sending his unnamed servant into the far country to take a bride for his son -- to invite her to come, to call, to woo, and to win her -- to bring her back at last to the Father's house where the son is waiting to claim his bride for himself.

How beautifully that portrays how God, at the Day of Pentecost, sent his Spirit into the world! It is the Spirit's job to call out a people for God's name, to win a bride for Christ. He has been at this task for about 2,000 years now, and the Son is waiting to receive that bride.

The Holy Spirit is sent by the Father on the Son's behalf.

The Holy Spirit goes into the world to seek and retrieve a Bride for the Son.

The Holy Spirit works to fulfill God's covenant with Abraham.

Gen. 24:2-4 Abraham said to his servant [type of Holy Spirit], the oldest of his household who was in charge of all that he owned, "Please place your hand under my thigh, ³ and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live; ⁴ but you will go to my country and to my relatives [father's family] & take a wife for my son Isaac."

Abraham's adamant refusal: do not seek Isaac's bride anywhere but in his former country, and from among his own kin.

1. There is a strong indication that God had instructed him.

The outworking of faith is never based on mere human judgment, but on God's Word. Abraham was confident as to where the bride would be found.

Abraham trusted the Lord had given Canaan to his offspring. [Gen. 12, 15, 17]

It can be observed the action was not according to Abram's will, but his trust in God.

Gen. 24:5a And the servant [type of Holy Spirit] said unto him [father],

Peradventure, suppose, the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land:

J. Vernon McGee: Man has been given free will and must make decisions in his life.

Man asserting his free will, will not stop or interfere with the program of God who is running on schedule. You have a free will, but God will hold you responsible.

God gives a man a choice. We can choose God, or we can reject God.

God has given us a choice to make that no machine could make.

Always true: God has never had but one way to save mankind >

by the cross of Jesus Christ; His death & resurrection.

When Cain & Abel came to God, Abel brought a lamb. Abel came by FAITH looking to the coming of a Savior. He was not saved by offering the lamb. He was saved by grace through faith.

Heb. 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which it was testified of him that he was righteous (upright, in right standing with God), and God testified by accepting his gifts. And though he died, yet through [this act of] faith he still speaks. [God saved him because he came by faith and obeyed God.]

Always true: Man must make a choice.

1. Adam had to make a choice.

2. Cain & Abel made a choice.

3. Noah made a choice. He did not have to build the ark. By faith, he obeyed God.

Heb. 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

4. Abraham had been successful in the Ur of Chaldees. He made a choice. [Heb. 11:8-10]

5. Joseph was in the land of Egypt. He could have gone the way of the Egyptians.

He made a choice for God.

6. Moses had to make a choice. Chose to suffer.

Hebrews 11:24-26 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the temporary pleasures of sin, ²⁶ considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

7. Daniel had to make a choice. He & 3 young men living in land of Babylon.

8. ALL the apostles made a choice.

Jesus never forced them. He simply said, Follow Me. They had to choose to follow.

9. Paul, on the Damascus Road, said, Lord, what will you have me to do?

He had persecuted the church, and he could have continued.

John 1:9 That was the true Light, which lights every man that cometh into the world.

I John 2:2 And He is the propitiation [satisfies wrath & justice of God] for our sins:

and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Heaven is the predestined eternal abode of the saved. The lake of fire is the predestined eternal abode of the unsaved. Each man chooses for himself whether to respond to the working and conviction of the Holy Spirit or to reject it.

Gen. 24:5 emphasizes the truth: Those who constitute the Bride of Christ will be in that company, not by compulsion or chance, but by choice.

Man must choose God or reject Him. You cannot stay neutral. You are not a robot or machine.

Key: Rebekah had to choose to follow the unnamed servant to the land of the Father.

Gen. 24:5-6 The servant said to him, "Suppose the woman is not willing to follow me to this land;

- Willing by grace through faith to say yes to Jesus Christ.
- My spiritual journey to the Father's house: Must be led by the Holy Spirit.

^{5b}should I take your son back to the land from where you came?"

⁶And Abraham said unto him, Beware, that you do not take my son back there! [again]

Oath #3: He would not take Isaac back to Abraham's former home. [Chaldea =type of world]

- He does not want Isaac out of the country.
- The son is not to leave the father's side. The bride is to be brought to him.

How do I reconcile what seems to be an issue in the Bible?

The answer to the servant's question was unequivocal.

The use of the word again implies: Isaac had been in Chaldea before.

- We know Isaac had never literally been in Chaldea.
- Isaac was the only patriarch who never left Canaan.

Issue: How do we account for bringing Isaac "again" where he had never been in person?

- Isaac was figuratively in the loins of Abraham when he was in Chaldea.

That Isaac may be viewed as having once been in Chaldea is clear from Heb 7:9-10 where Levi is viewed as having given tithes to Melchizedek.

Heb. 7:9-10 And as I may so say, Levi also, who received tithes, paid tithes in Abraham.

¹⁰ For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him.

"Levi ... paid tithes in Abraham, for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him [Abraham]."

In the same way Isaac, still in the loins of Abraham, was in Chaldea when Abraham was there.

- It can only have been figuratively, when like Levi, he was in the loins of his father.

Consider: All the seed of Abraham are said in the 4th generation to come to Canaan again, though they had none of them been in person there before.

Gen. 15:16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again:
for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

Gen. 24:6 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son there again.

Gen. 24:7 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 there.

Abraham's Testimony & Walk

Heb. 11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

- Abraham's walk began when "the Lord God of heaven" called him.
- The bride's walk must also begin with an obedient response to the call of that same God.
- What is true of Abraham and of Rebekah is true of every member of the family of faith

1. "... which took me from my father's house."

Obedience to the call of God, as it would be given by Abraham's servant in the form of his invitation to Rebekah to follow him and become Isaac's bride, must take her from her father's house, as it must also take every believer out of Satan's house, for Satan is the spiritual father of every unbeliever.

Col. 1:12-14 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: ¹³ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

Ps. 103:4 Who redeems thy life from destruction;

who crowns thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

2. and from my kindred She must separate herself from her kindred, as every believer must separate himself from Adam, for In Adam all die ... in Christ shall all be made alive. I Cor. 15:22

3. "and which spake unto me." She must be willing to listen to God, as must every believer.

4. and that sware unto me." God had promised Abraham much, and he believed that promise. Rebekah must believe the servant's promise, and so must every believer.

5. unto thy seed will I give this land." What was given Abraham became Isaac's.

What was Isaac's belonged also to Rebekah. The believer has the same promise.

The Father has given all things to the Son.

Rom. 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;

if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Isaac, in the loins of Abraham, figuratively walked the same path. As it is with every member of the household of faith, so has it been with the Son Who is Head of that house,

"... Christ as a son over his own house: whose house are we" [Heb 3:6].

He too, walked step by step in the same path of obedience. The path of faith never changes.

Key: Abraham's refusal to even consider a Canaanite woman teaches us that only those who are of the household of faith can have part with Christ.

Gen. 24:8 "And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee,

then thou shalt be clear of this my oath: only bring not my son there again."

The necessity of the woman's willingness is emphasized again. God would impress the truth that acceptance or rejection of salvation is a choice which involves man's will.

In Gen. 24:17, Eliezer runs to Rebekah. With eagerness he initiates their interaction.

Likewise, the Holy Spirit eagerly runs to you. But you must respond.

If you are unwillingly to respond, God does not hold the Holy Spirit responsible. [24:8]

The servant's responsibility would be fulfilled when he had delivered the invitation.

It then became the responsibility of Rebekah to accept or reject that invitation.

The final responsibility in regard to a person's salvation rests with man's free will,

as does also the responsibility of the believer to submit his life to God's control.

In the OT & NT, the word used for election, both in Hebrew & Greek, means:

elect election choose chosen

These simply mean to choose: of both divine and human choices.

God has the divine volition "to choose." Paradigm of Divine Volition:

- Foreknowledge = proginosko
- Election = eklegomai
- Predestination = prooizo

Consider: Election looks back to Foreknowledge.

When you start talking about election, remember God has foreknowledge.

God knows the end from the beginning. Omniscient, all-knowing [Isa. 46:10]

Dr. Warren Wiersbe- "Some men so emphasize election, they destroy human responsibility.
It is as though man is a robot or a machine."

There is Divine corporate election: Israel [Isa. 45] & The Church [Ephesians 1:4]

Divine individual election: 1. According to the foreknowledge of God

I Pet. 1:2 Elect [chosen] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

Election involves: God's redemptive plan, Christ's sacrificial death,
the Holy Spirit's revelation of the Truth, and man's obedience in response.

Foreknow = 4267 = proginóskō = to know beforehand = used in the NT of

"God pre-knowing all choices - and doing so without pre-determining or requiring them."

2. We were chosen entirely by God's Sovereign Grace, not human merit. [I Pet. 9:11; 11:5-6]

Dr. J Vernon McGee's teaching showed he believed in both election and man's freewill.

John 6:37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me,
and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me" states a truth, and that is election.

"and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" is also true, is free will.

"The Father gives men to Christ, but men have to come."

- Election and free will are both in this verse.

I don't know how to reconcile them, but they are both true.

The free will of man is never violated by the election of God.

The lost person makes his/her own choice.

Because Spurgeon preached a "whosoever will" gospel, someone said to him, "If I believed like you do about election, I wouldn't preach like you do." Spurgeon's answer: "If the Lord had put a yellow stripe down the backs of the elect, I'd go up and down the street lifting up shirt tails, finding out who had the yellow stripe, and then I'd give them the gospel. But God didn't do it that way. He told me to preach the gospel to every creature that 'whosoever will may come.'"

Jesus says, "and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "So, my friend, you can argue about election all you want to, but you can come. And if you come, He'll not cast you out. Someone may ask, "You mean that if I'm not the elect I can still come? My friend, if you come, you will be the elect."

McGee: Have you felt the drawing, the conviction of the Holy Spirit that you were a sinner in need of the Savior? Did you respond to the Holy Spirit's call and wooing? Did you repent and put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ? Congratulations! You are one of the elect.

Wiersbe: The most important thing to recognize is the fact that salvation begins with God and not man. If it is in any way on the part of man, then we have reason to boast and suddenly salvation becomes a matter of works.

Wiersbe: Predestination is never used in reference to unsaved people. God has never predestinated anybody to be lost. If you are lost, it is because you have rejected God's remedy. Predestination has to do with God's people. It only refers to saved people.

- Election: refers to the people of God.
- Predestination: refers to the purpose of God for those who are saved

Romans 8:29 For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He [Jesus] might be the firstborn among many brethren.

We adhere firmly to the Biblical teaching of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility.

"God clearly does choose, but man must also accept God's invitation to salvation."

God, "based on his foreknowledge, has predestined the believer, to...

Deut. 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Consider: There are some things only God knows. He is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent.

- Psalm 90:2 He is also eternal.
- Jer. 29:11 He knows the future.
- Prov. 15:3 He sees all things.

Humans are finite and limited in our knowledge—we cannot fully or completely know everything about God or His purposes. So the "secret things" that belong to the Lord are those things that only He knows as the Creator and Sustainer over all creation [Col. 1:16-17].

This does not mean that humans cannot know *anything* about God.

- Deut. 29:29 speaks of "things revealed."

Though God is mysterious, and certain "secret things" belong only to Him, He has chosen to reveal Himself to humanity through His Word [II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21].

God has chosen to make Himself known to us through His Son, Jesus [John 1:14; Heb. 1:1-3].

Isa. 46:9-10 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else;

I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning,

And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying,

'My plan will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';

Dr. Warren Wiersbe- "The mystery of divine sovereignty and human responsibility will never be solved in this life. Speculation in Bible study is a dangerous thing."

G. Campbell Morgan: When all my attempts at exegesis fail, I worship God.

Gen. 24:8 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee,
then thou shalt be clear of this my oath: only bring not my son thither again."

Abraham has asked his servant to swear to find a wife for his son Isaac among his extended family back in his old homeland. The servant has asked what to do if a woman cannot be found who is willing to live in Canaan. Should Isaac move to Abraham's old homeland to live in order to be married to one of the women of his extended family?

Abraham position's is clear: Isaac cannot be allowed to go to Mesopotamia.

Isaac's place is in the Promised Land of Canaan.

This is the home of Abraham's future offspring.

Isaac must not marry a Canaanite and be assimilated into the Canaanite people. Isaac must not return to Abraham's people and settle outside of the land of promise. This would risk the family's loss of identity as those who belong to God. This is a spiritual issue.

Abraham does not want to risk the identity of Abraham's descendants as God's chosen ones.

Only one path would work: Isaac must marry a woman from Abraham's people and also live in the land of promise as a people living among, but separate from, the Canaanites.

There is continued emphasis upon the fact that Isaac was not to be brought again into Chaldea.

Heb. 9:24-26 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

²⁵ Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

²⁶ For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

"We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all

For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" [Heb 10:10-14].

The spiritual truth God would teach us: Christ, having been here on the earth once to make atonement for sin, will not return to it as Savior.

When Jesus returns to this world and sets His feet on the Mount of Olives, He will come as Judge, Conqueror and King of Kings.

The Christ Who was once Himself on earth will have by His side for all eternity a bride who has been called out of that same earth.

Gen. 24:9. "And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master and swore to him concerning that matter."

The commission would be discharged with the same punctiliousness as if Abraham himself had gone. In this we see the affinity between the Father and the Holy Spirit. They are One. His favorite name for Abraham was "my master," which he used nineteen times in this narrative. He lived and served only to please his master.

Gen.24:10 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.

From Hebron in Canaan to Haran, located in Mesopotamia, was about a 17-day journey.

1. All the goods of his master were in his hand.

All of God's vast resources are at the disposal of the Holy Spirit.

Out of that limitless supply He equips each man for the work to be done.

2. Takes a demonstration of the master's wealth.

To bear the presents for the bride, to enhance the dignity of his mission, and to serve as a means of transport for the bride and her companions on the return journey.

3. Went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

Mesopotamia = exalted; a picture of this world which has exalted itself in opposition to God.

Babylon represents a life of spiritual indifference, sloth and worldly compromise —
a religion empty of God and His holiness!

God's people in Babylon for 70 years were told to separate from physical Babylon and return home to Jerusalem.

Why were the majority not willing to return to Jerusalem and come out of Babylon?

After 70 years and a couple of generations of children, the majority of adults confronted with the prospect of a long walk [hundreds of miles], the rebuilding of a city and temple, years of hard labor, and few of the nice things of life: Why go back? In Babylon they had become culturally acclimated both in culture and language. Business was good in the largest and only empire of the time & they weren't fighting with their Arab and Canaanite pagan neighbors. Only those who believed in the uniqueness of the call of God on the Jewish people and retained in their hearts, faith in the promises of their written inspired Scriptures, are the ones who returned.

Spiritual fornication or adultery is described as friendship with the world:

- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

I John 2:15-16 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Key: Any Christian who loves the world is controlled by the spirit of Babylon.

Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their love of human recognition and position.

Matt.23:5-7: But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

Many Christians are ignorant of the operation and influence of the spirit of Babylon in their lives. They do not realize that spiritual forces are behind the natural desires of the flesh and the mind causing them to become inordinate to the point they very subtly steal the time and energy we should spend with and for God.

Col. 3:5: Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Satan through the spirit of Babylon has deceived the majority of the Church by this subtle error: overemphasis on material blessings and financial prosperity.

They omit the weightier matters: judgment, mercy, which give the fear of the Lord and faith for the salvation of our souls which will produce perfection and spiritual maturity. Why?

- Keep the Church and/or individual believers in captivity to carnal Christianity.

II Cor. 11:2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I MAY present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Chaste: #53 - hagnos = This is the root from which hagnosmos [#38], the word SANCTIFIED, comes from. Holiness or *hagnosmos* in the Greek has been defined by Wescott as "the preparation for the presence of God."

II Cor. 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Paul saw the local church as a bride, engaged to be married to Jesus Christ [Eph. 5:22ff; Rom. 7:4]. The church—and individual Christians—must keep herself pure as she prepares to meet her Beloved. The peril, then, is that of unfaithfulness to her fiancé.

The engaged woman owes her love and allegiance to but one—her betrothed.

If she shares herself with any other man, she is guilty of unfaithfulness.

The word translated "simplicity" means "sincerity, singleness of devotion."

A divided heart leads to a defiled life and a destroyed relationship.

Gal. 4:19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

Today the church is financially and materially comfortable in spiritual Babylon.

Most do not desire to make the necessary spiritual sacrifice and discipline it will take to leave Babylon and go to Zion. They do not care that the material things they love in Babylon are choking the Word in their lives keeping them in captivity to carnal Christianity and spiritual immaturity sending leanness to their souls:

Mark 4:19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, chokes the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

Psalms 106:13-15 They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel:

¹⁴ But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.

¹⁵ And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

Rebekah, who lived in Mesopotamia, the city of Nahor, which is Chaldean [Babylonian], must be willing to come out of this land, follow the unnamed servant and make the long journey to the land of Isaac to become the bride of Isaac, type of Jesus Christ.

What will the journey entail before she meets her bridegroom face to face?

This was not an easy journey through innocuous land. Josephus, a Jewish historian described travel through this area like this: "It requires much time to pass through Mesopotamia, in which it is tedious travelling, both in winter for the depth of the clay, and in summer for want of water; and, besides this, for the robberies there committed, which are not to be avoided by travelers but by caution beforehand."

Key: She must be willing to follow the unnamed servant [type of the Holy Spirit] in the journey. She is surrendering to FOLLOW HIM. He will prepare her to be the bride for the son. This is not a decision that one should make lightly. A covenant spouse is worth a difficult journey. It is worth expending great effort to find one.