

Shadows of Christ & His Bride

Lesson #7

The Bride Willingly Goes The 2nd Mile

Feb. 28, 2024

Gen. 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Before God created Eve, He said: "It is not good that man should be alone;

I will make him a helper fit for him" [Gen. 2:18].

- Adam 1's bride was hidden in him.
- Adam was put to sleep, his side opened, and God took one of his ribs and formed Eve.
- Eve was taken out of Adam's body and then presented back to Adam for a "helper" To rule/reign and have dominion.

When Abraham left the two servants, he said, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you." [Genesis 22:5].

Consider: Abraham knew that God had promised that his future generations would be through Isaac. In the eyes of Abraham, if God wanted him to sacrifice Isaac, then Abraham did not have a problem. God had a problem.

Gen. 22:6, 8 "The two of them walked on together." Why did they not return together?

Gen. 22:19 "Abraham returned to his young men." Where is Isaac?

Why did they not return together?

Key Point: He is edited out of the record from the time he is offered as the sacrifice until he is united with his bride! Genesis 22 prefigures Jesus' death and resurrection, but it also prefigures His return with His bride.

Abraham knows how important this decision will be. After all, the woman who marries Isaac will carry on the promised blessings that God gave him to build a nation that will bless the world. She will be the mother of God's chosen people.

Abraham wisely recruits his household manager, a type of Holy Spirit, to travel back to his homeland [type of world], to his people to seek out an appropriate choice for Isaac's wife.

God the Father desires a bride for Jesus Christ, the Son of Promise and the Heir of all things. He has been promised a Kingdom where He will rule and reign during the 1000-year Millennium. After Jesus Christ's death, resurrection and ascension to the Father, God the Holy Spirit was sent into the world to begin the building of the body of Christ. While the bride is being built, God the Son is at the right hand of the Father. While Christ has gone to prepare a home for us, we are being prepared for our bridegroom. [conformed to the image of Christ > sanctification] We await His return. One day His bride will meet Him face to face.

Phil 3:14-15 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Therefore, all who are mature, let's have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that to you as well.

1. The Will of the Father *The commission to the servant* Gen. 24:1-9
 2. *The obedience and prayer of the servant* Gen. 24:10-14
- 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. 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 traveling, 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."

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.

Gen. 24:11 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.

- Kneeling position is a camel at rest and waiting.
- Camels are watchful; awake with the slightest noise; guards

Note: Camels are not unloaded until verse 32.

- When a camel is born, they tie his 4 feet under his belly, put a carpet over his back, and stones upon the borders of it, that he may not be able to rise for 20 days. They teach him the habit of bending his knees to rest himself, or when he is to be loaded or unloaded.

Corrie Ten Boom: As a camel kneels before his master to have him remove his burden at the end of the day, so kneel each night and let the Master take your burden.

- There is a consistent symbolism surrounding women at wells in the Bible. This is the image of a bride-to-be. Many of the great men of the Bible met their future wives at wells.

The servant is a godly man, knowing his mission will only be successful if God leads and blesses it. His prayer is very specific. He wants God to clearly show him Isaac's future bride. Surely inspired by God, he presents the "camel test." When he arrives in the city, he will ask the young women he meets for a drink from the well. If it is the one God has chosen, she will not only be happy to serve him but also volunteer to water his camels.

Servant's Prayer: Gen. 24:12-14 And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham." Behold, I stand here by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw 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.

Key: God's promise to bless Abraham was intricately tied up with Isaac and his future bride.

- Thou hast appointed = #3198 = proved; determined
- Showed kindness = #2617 = chesed; lovingkindness

Key Point: This is the first Biblical record of a request for divine assistance in the Scriptures. Thus far, no human has asked for such assistance, along with a miraculous sign which the servant specified. He prayed his mission would be successful and God's loving-kindness would be shown to his master.

He prayed that God's perfect will would be carried out in the choice of the bride for Isaac.

Rebekah: The Answer To His Prayer Genesis 24:15-20

24:15 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."

Isa. 65:24 Before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear.

Dan. 10:12-13 from the first day that thou didst set thy heart to understand ... thy words were heard, and I am come in answer to thy prayer ... but the prince of Persia withstood me twenty-one days" The answer was sent on the first day that Daniel prayed, though under God's permissive will its arrival was delayed.

Gen. 24:16 And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her:

➤ The purity of Rebekah: a virgin who stayed pure for her future spouse.
and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

Key: The servant found Rebekah at the water well. A divine appointment

- Wells were sources of living water to sustain physical life.
- Well = pege [Strong's G4077], meaning "a well fed by a spring", and is also translated fountain.

When Eliezer and his men arrived at the well, they had many camels, so they'd be able to escort the future bride and all her possessions and servants back to Isaac. Surrounded by a group of able-bodied men, Eliezer did not appear as a helpless, weary chap begging for a drink. Rebecca, the daughter of Bethuel, the ruler of Aram Naharaim, was a young woman of nobility, not a poor servant girl accustomed to lugging water from wells.

But this is precisely where Eliezer was able to get a glimpse of the righteous Rebecca.

- Her character - - her heart

From the moment he requested to take a sip from her jug, her generosity and greatness radiated in the most discreet and unassuming manner.

- She appears to be a good prospect for the bride of the son.

Gen. 24:17 And the servant ran to meet her, and said,

Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher."

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]

Eliezer makes the 1st move by asking for water that he can drink. Will the woman do ONLY what is asked "the letter of the law" or will she follow the leading of the Holy Spirit?

Gen. 24:18-19 And she said, Drink, my lord; and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said,

I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. [First worship, then service]

Rebekah & The Camel Test: This test involves two aspects: Part 1 is a spoken request:

"I am thirsty." Part 2 is an unspoken request, a need that is not verbalized: my camels are thirsty too! Rebekah not only meets the spoken need, but she also satisfies the unspoken need. She sees beyond the obvious; she discerns something more.

This is the kind of person that the Holy Spirit gets excited about.

She knew exactly what she was getting into. Her words revealed she had a kind and humble heart - just the kind of woman Abraham would want for his son, the heir of promise.

Consider: She is portrayed as Giving the water rather than receiving it.

What is being portrayed? Is the call of a believer to service?

Note: She had already filled the pitcher which involved effort.

It is folly to believe that we will have anything to offer the Father in worship if we haven't been "filling the pitcher" during the week, filling our minds with the Word of God.

Gen. 24:20 And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels."

It's not coincidental that scripture mentions how many camels the servant decided to take on this journey. God is making a point. The "camel test" was not for the faint of heart!

Because this was a "test," we can conclude that it was not a given expectation that a woman would volunteer to water a stranger's caravan of camels.

It would be an act of extraordinary kindness that singled her out from her peers.

Consider: If the well had been easily accessible, they could simply lead the camels to the water, but instead a trough was used. It likely took her hours to perform all this work.

Rebekah & The Camel Test: The magnitude of her task: A thirsty camel can drink 30 - 40 gallons of water at one time. 30 gallons x 10 camels = 300 gallons. Each gallon = ~8 lbs.

Verse 16: Rebekah 'descended' to get the water. The well lay at the bottom of a set of steps.

Rebekah would walk down some steps, bend over to fill her jar, lift the heavy jar onto her shoulder, walk back up the stairs, and dump the water in the feeding trough.

A strong woman could carry about 5 gallons of water per trip. This would require 60 trips.

Rebekah volunteered for a momentous task for a complete stranger. The watering of the camels, a demeaning task, was a gesture that went far beyond social expectations.

[Nelson's Study Bible]

All of this speaks of a willing, wholehearted service that didn't stop to count the cost.

- Undiscriminating service

- It was not a service that begins with much zeal, and then quickly fizzles.

The words *hasted* and *ran* continue to emphasize not only the thought of urgency, but also of the zeal with which she rendered her service.

She didn't stop until all of them had done drinking.

Eccl. 9:10 Whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

Gal. 6:9-10 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

¹⁰ As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith..

Col. 3:23-24 Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Solomon advised that a virtuous spouse is revealed through selfless service:

Prov. 31:20 She stretches out her hand to the poor;

yea, she reaches forth her hands to the needy.

Is this expected as a character trait of the future bride of Christ?

Rom. 12:1 I beseech [urge] you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Rom. 12:13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

James 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, AND to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Gen. 24:19 I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

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.

Note: Repeated filling and emptying to satisfy the thirsty. That which we are filled with is to be poured back out for the benefit of others. Rebekah shows us how to be a voluntary vessel which may be tiring work at times, but it is of mighty use to God.

Gen. 24:21 And the man wondering at her held his peace,
to know whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.

Prosperous = succeed = accomplish what is intended

➤ 1st time in the OT: also in 40, 42 & 56: LORD is always the subject and cause of success.

At first glance, Eliezer's conduct seems surprising. After seeing that Rebecca passed his test, why did he stand by and just watch Rebecca laboriously and singlehandedly provide water for all his camels?

Eliezer considered this part of the test. What if she gave up after the 6th camel and said, forget it, this is too hard! We need perseverance and endurance.

There are those who make generous offers but do an inadequate job, quit, or don't follow through completely. There are others who may do their job, but though they make no demands, they expect some form of compensation or gratitude.

Eliezer continued watching carefully, to see her approach to carrying out a difficult task. These moments would be extremely telling as to whether her offer stemmed from a genuine desire to help someone, or if there was some other underlying motive to her kind behavior. It was only after her job was done, during which she had no expectations from him, that he was able to be absolutely convinced that she had passed the camel test.

Note: The servant found Rebekah at the water well.

The "camel test" was a glimpse of Rebekah's greatness, as she conducted herself in what she would have considered ordinary everyday activity. Be of service where there is a need.

Yet while she fulfilled her duty and beyond, God was now about to fulfill her destiny.

Those Camels Had Blessings Packed Inside! She didn't know that the camel packs had jewelry, riches and would lead her to her future husband.

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.

Her humility, hospitality, & generosity opened the door of God's blessing in her life.

How could Rebekah have known that her extra-mile attitude would give her a place in the lineage of Jesus? She would not only become the bride of Isaac and mother of Jacob.

She would also become the grandmother of the leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel.

Talk about influence! Rebekah's story in the Bible all began with an act of service.

Rebekah passed the "camel test." Her generosity, humility and kindness were desired traits for the future bride of the father's son of promise, the heir.

How will I respond to "the camel test?"

There are really difficult times, when God allows stretching.

How many blessings do we miss out on because we're too busy to stop and serve others?

How willing are we to go the extra mile, to do the difficult and time-consuming simply to serve others with no expectation of reward or benefit to ourselves other than a tired and sweaty body?

I'm not sure if I would have passed "the camel test." Looking back, I'm sure I've missed some opportunities because I was too busy focusing on "me." This is a good reminder to set aside our own agendas and exercise kindness, servanthood, and humility when God presents an opportunity. He just might have something amazing in store for us.

Rebekah's decision changed the course of her life. A different choice and she might have lived out her days in a pagan culture, missing the chance to be part of the story God was unfolding. May God give us the grace to pass our 10 Camel Challenges knowing it comes with blessings.

Gen. 24:22 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;

- 10 shekels = 4.02 oz. Gold = ~\$2,000.00 per ounce
- The servant gives her the gifts even before asking if she is from Abraham's family.
- Her actions truly do speak louder than her words.

Rebekah's experience demonstrates the truth: Labored until the camels were done drinking.

Luke 16:10-11 Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. ¹¹ If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?

Many a believer has denied himself spiritual promotion by disdaining as beneath his dignity, the work assigned him by the Lord. He who refuses to "draw water for the camels," need not look for what he deems "more honorable" service." It will not be given to him.

What marks the believer to whom God entrusts increasingly important service is an obedient heart, and hands encircled with the golden bracelets, service rendered according to God's Word and as directed and led by the Holy Spirit.

Eliezer revealed the wealth of his Master Isaac by the precious gifts he gave Rebekah.

The Holy Spirit by His Gifts gives us a foretaste of what lies ahead for the Bride of Christ.

Key Point: Her faithfulness in doing the menial work of drawing water for the camels led to great promotion: she would become Isaac's bride, and mistress over all his house - a very great honor, for Isaac was a very wealthy, powerful man.

This is a figure of The Glory awaiting those who comprise the bride of the true Isaac.

Camels were not common. Bringing ten of these rare, useful animals would communicate great riches to the family of any perspective wives. These creatures are very strong and fit for carrying great burdens, even a thousand-pound weight.

10: This number is used 242 times in the Bible. It is viewed as a complete number.

Ten signifies the Law; the 10 Commandments. Ten can also denote testing.

- 10 Camels, beast of burden, are used for testing.

Consider: Jesus, the Bridegroom, had to endure trials and suffering. He overcame.

Luke 4:1-2a And Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit returned from Jordan, and

was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ² Being forty days tempted of the devil.

Luke 4:13-14a And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him

for a season. ¹⁴ And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee:

1. The prospective bride must endure and overcome trials and testing.

James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

³ Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

⁴ But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Rom. 5:3-4 ... but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

⁴ And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

I Pet. 1: 6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:...

Romans 8:16-18 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 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. ¹⁸ For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Rev. 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

- The Bride will become a joint-heir with Jesus Christ who inherits and rules all.

Rev. 3:21 To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.

2. The Bride shows hesed love or kindness. She goes beyond the letter of the law.

Hesed ~ 250 times in the Old Testament, expresses an essential part of God's character.

Lovingkindness is derived from hacad = "to bend or bow oneself," "to incline oneself"

"to be gracious or merciful."

Many biblical words such as *mercy*, *compassion*, *love*, *grace*, and *faithfulness* relate to the Hebrew word *hesed* (חֶסֶד), but none of these completely summarize the concept.

Hesed is not merely an emotion or feeling but involves action on behalf of someone who is in need. *Hesed* describes a sense of love and loyalty that inspires merciful and compassionate behavior toward another person.

When examining the details of what transpired during this "camel test," Rebecca's natural devotion, modesty, sensitivity, responsibility and work ethic are readily apparent.

- The boundless *chesed* came forth.
- Rebecca immediately gave him a drink, then offered and drew water for all his camels.
- She saw an opportunity to do something kind, and swiftly went to work.

She didn't question or consider whether she was really needed; instead, she energetically continued filling multiple troughs with water, until the job of satisfying a whole herd of thirsty camels was completed . . . while Eliezer and his men watched her work unassisted.

- She had one motivation: to give to someone else with kindness.
- That intense desire to reach out to others and to jump at the prospect of being of service matched the profile of Abraham's family and for his son, the heir.

Rebecca teaches us:

- To challenge ourselves with real, selfless commitment
- To be initiators, to look for times and places where we can be of service
- To be proactive and useful, without calculating whether there are others around who could or should do the same.

John 13:12-15 When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you?"

¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.

Matt. 5:41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

- Acts of *hesed* are always performed freely, under no obligation or fear of reprisal.

3. The Bride displays the Fruit of the Spirit.

Character traits in Rebekah: kindness, hospitality with eagerness, loyalty, faith, courage,
Humility, love, patience

All that he had prayed for had been granted: ¹³Behold, 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.

Her work in drawing the water was not in itself sufficient qualification to be Isaac's bride.

Good works ought to accompany the new life, but they are not the source of that life.

What more was required to convince him that Rebekah was indeed the woman who would become Isaac's bride? All that God could do had been done. What is lacking?

Rebekah must be of Abraham's kindred and she must be willing to leave country and kindred and follow the servant to Isaac's home. It is a long, difficult journey.

There is no compulsion. The individual must exercise his will and make a choice.

The success of the servant's journey will depend on whether Rebekah will choose to follow him.