

Lesson 13 – 25 April 2010.

Abraham and Isaac - the Perpetuation of Faith.

Lesson Scope: [Genesis Chapters 23 & 24.](#)

Lesson Focus

Genesis 23 records the events surrounding Sarah's death and burial. Abraham purchased a burying place, the only piece of real estate he ever owned in Canaan. Isaac was thirty-seven years old at this time. Apparently he experienced a lengthy time of grief following his mother's death (24:67).

As the son of promise Isaac needed a godly bride. In keeping with Oriental custom and his parental concern, Abraham took the initiative in this matter. He charged his faithful servant, who bound himself with an oath not to take a wife for Isaac from the daughters of the Canaanites. Instead, he was to return to Haran and find a wife from among Abraham's relatives. Under no circumstances would Isaac be allowed to return to the land that Abraham had left.

Isaac and Rebekah were married twenty years before Esau and Jacob were born (Genesis 25:26). In the years that followed, as the sons came to years, their home seems to have experienced some disharmony and failure. A good beginning does not guarantee continuing success. To perpetuate the faith, every couple must continue to walk closely with the Lord and with each other.

Men and women of faith build strong homes godly principles. Such homes become bulwarks of godliness in an evil world and links in the line of the faithful.

Lesson Aim: To present principles for establishing godly homes.

Theme Verse: [Genesis 18:19.](#)

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment: that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

Lesson Text.

Parental Guidance

Genesis 24:2-4

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: ³And 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: ⁴But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

Providential Leading

Genesis 24:10-19

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. ¹¹And 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*. ¹²And 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. ¹³Behold, I stand *here* by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: ¹⁴And 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.

¹⁵And 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. ¹⁶And 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. ¹⁷And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. ¹⁸And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. ¹⁹And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw *water* for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

Personal Maturity

Genesis 24:56-67

And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the LORD hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master. ⁵⁷And they said, We will call the damsel, and enquire at her mouth. ⁵⁸And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. ⁵⁹And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men. ⁶⁰And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou *art* our sister, be thou *the mother* of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

⁶¹And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. ⁶²And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south country. ⁶³And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels *were* coming. ⁶⁴And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. ⁶⁵For she *had* said unto the servant, What man *is* this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant *had* said, It *is* my master: therefore she took a vail, and covered herself. ⁶⁶And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done. ⁶⁷And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's *death*.

Questions for Study.

Parental Guidance

1. What important principle is in focus in 24:3 and 4? List other Scriptures that support this principle.
2. In what ways should parents guide their youth in choosing a companion?

Providential Leading

3. What important character traits did Abraham's servant's test require?
4. What is involved in "being in the way"?
5. How does one determine the will of the Lord?

Personal Maturity

6. What important qualities are evident in Isaac and Rebekah (24:63-65)?
7. Why is maturity essential for courtship and marriage?
8. How do commitment and feeling relate to love in marriage?

Analyzing the Passage

Sometime after Abraham met the Lord on Mount Moriah, news came that his brother Nahor, now had children and grandchildren (Gen.22:20-24). It was to these people that Abraham's thoughts turned when he considered the need to find a wife for Isaac. At his age, Abraham could not easily travel there himself, so he sent his trusted servant, requiring of him an oath to follow his instructions. Abraham knew that the covenant-making God took an interest in this important matter and would provide a godly companion for the son of promise (Gen.24:7).

The city of Nahor was Haran, in northwestern Mesopotamia (Gen.24:10). Abraham was living somewhere in southern Palestine, seven hundred or more miles away. He was sending his servant on a trip that likely involved four weeks of travel time each way. This was a serious and dangerous undertaking, but Abraham considered it well worth the effort. He insisted that Isaac must not have a Canaanite wife (Gen.24:3).

Abraham's servant dealt with a number of uncertainties as he approached Haran. How could he find a young lady of suitable character and maturity? Could he find such a person among Abraham's relatives? Would her family allow her to go with him back to Isaac in Canaan? Would she herself be willing to go, even though she likely could never return?

One by one, the Lord gave positive answers to each of these questions.

Principles and Applications

Parental Guidance

1. Direction of godly parents is invaluable in seeking a life companion (Gen.24:2-4). Christian parents are concerned for their children and guide them in their choice of a companion because of the spiritual consequences of that decision. Parents' choice of church fellowship and Christian associations lay a foundation years before the age that the children will choose a life companion. They teach their children to be godly. Parents, with their greater maturity and experience, can often discern potential dangers and difficulties that the young person would overlook.

2. The principle of separation must be honored when seeking a life companion (Gen.24:3-4). God's standard has always been that His people should marry "only in the Lord." How "can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). How would two people work together at raising children or serving the Lord if their goals are not similar? Only when both partners are fully committed to serving the Lord can their lives truly blend

in marriage.

Providential Leading

3. Seeking God's will through prayer is essential for finding a suitable companion (Gen.24:12-15). In prayer we express our need to God. Prayer also prepares our heart to receive God's answer. If we truly desire God's will, He will lead us as surely as he did Abraham's servant. When many important decisions need to be made near the time for marriage, divine guidance is essential because no one is wise enough or knows the future well enough to make those decisions alone.

4. Solid character qualities are eminently important in establishing godly homes (Gen.24:14, 17-19). Homes are no better than the people in them. Abraham's servant asked for a sign that indicated character qualities of industry, hospitality, and respect. Ideals are good, but they contribute little to a godly home unless they are expressed in practical ways.

5. Time and contemplation are needed to discern the Lord's will (Gen.24:21). Abraham's servant did not become impatient and conclude that he had found God's choice before Rebekah had met the terms of his request. We must wait for God to reveal His will. Impatience leads to foolish decisions and regret.

6. God continues to lead those who stay in His way (Gen.24:27). If we expect the Lord to lead us, we must follow the direction that we already have. God seldom reveals His will all at once. He wisely waits until we see our need and cry out to Him for direction.

Personal Maturity.

7. In a successful marriage, young people leave their parental homes and cleave to each other (Gen.24:61, 67). When God instituted the first home this is one of the first principles He established. A husband and wife must resolve their differences together and not have one of them drag the problem back to mother and father. Wise parents encourage and they give counsel when asked, but they refrain from meddling.

8. A vibrant fellowship with God paves the way for good home relationships (Gen.24:63). When two people who are serving Christ come together to form a home, they will agree on many basic issues. Adjustment will be much easier when their main goal is to serve Christ. Fellowship with God means that the family has a solid foundation in time of difficulty or decision.

9. Modesty and purity are pre-requisites for establishing godly homes. (Gen.24:65). Modesty and reserve build trust and turn away many tempta-

tions. Principles of modesty and purity must control our thoughts, our dress, and our daily actions. Parents teach modesty and reserve so that the next generation can enjoy freedom of and avoid moral pitfalls.

10. Godly homes thrive when everyone exercises Christian love (Gen.2:67). A Christian home is a place of love and security. God is love, and love will characterize His people. Husbands love their wives, and wives reverence their husbands. Children honor their parents. When anything disrupts the harmony of the home, restitution and forgiveness are exercised to bring peace again.

Important Teachings

1. Direction of godly parents is invaluable in seeking a life companion (Gen.24:2-4).
2. The principle of separation must be honored when seeking a life companion (Gen 24:3-4).
3. Seeking God's will through prayer is essential for finding a suitable companion (Gen 24:12-15).
4. Solid character qualities are eminently important in establishing godly homes (Gen 24:14, 17-19).
5. Time and contemplation are needed to discern the Lord's will (Gen 24:21).
6. God continues to lead those who stay in His way (Gen 24:27).
7. In a successful marriage, young people leave their parental homes and cleave to each other (Gen 24:61, 67).
8. A vibrant fellowship with God paves the way for good home relationships (Gen 24:63).
9. Modesty and purity are prerequisites for establishing godly homes (Gen 24:65).
10. Godly homes thrive when everyone exercises Christian love (Gen 24:67).

Answers to Questions

1. What important principle is in focus in Genesis 24:3-4? List other Scriptures that support this principle.

The principle is that the child of God must choose a marriage companion from among God's people.

1 Corinthians 7:39; Amos 3:3; Genesis 28:6-7

2. In what ways should parents guide their youth in choosing a companion

Parents first need to help their children be godly people. They should also provide a stable home and church life for them. Parents need to provide godly friends for their youth. Parents need to set guidelines that will minimize temptations during courtship. When the couple does marry, parents should refuse to listen to petty grievances. Rather, they should encourage the young couple to be forbearing and work difficulties out between themselves.

3. What important character traits did Abraham's servant's test require?

His test required diligence, hospitality, and kindness.

4. What is involved in "being in the way"?

To be in the way is to be a godly person who is living for God and is surrendered to His will. Being in the way involves following the godly direction that we currently have. It means not considering companions who do not meet the Scriptural standard of godliness.

5. How does one determine the will of the Lord?

First we must operate within the bounds of what the Lord has already revealed. As we are open and resigned to the Lord's will, He will direct us one step at a time through circumstances or through the advice of godly parents or brethren in the church. A feeling of unrest indicates that we should delay a decision or seek another course.

6. What important qualities are evident in Isaac and Rebekah (vv. 63-65)?

In Isaac we see spiritual interest and maturity. In Rebekah we see modesty and reserve.

7. Why is maturity essential for courtship and marriage?

Marriage is not for children; it brings serious responsibilities. Maturity is necessary because feelings are not stable enough to see a couple through the adjustments of marriage.

8. How do commitment and feeling relate to love in marriage?

Where true love is present, feelings will follow. Unless a couple is committed to each other, their love will wane and die. It is commitment, first to God and then to each other, that sees a couple through difficult times. Feelings of love and appreciation bring joy to the union; commitment brings stability and permanence.

Summarizing the Lesson.

Happy the home when God is there,
And love fills every breast;
When one their wish, and one their prayer,
And one their heav'nly rest.
Happy the home where Jesus' name
Is sweet to every ear,
Where children early lisp His fame,
And parents hold Him dear.
Happy the home where prayer is heard,
And praise is wont to rise,
Where parents love the sacred Word
And all its wisdom prize.
Lord, let us in our homes agree
This blessed peace to gain;
Unite our hearts in love to Thee,
And love to all will reign.
—Henry Ware, the younger

Research Guide.

1. The following Scriptures show the importance of marrying only in the Lord: Exodus 34:16; Deuteronomy 7:3, 4; 1 Kings 11:4-6; Ezra 9:1, 2, 12; Nehemiah 10:30; 13:26, 27; Amos 3:3; Malachi 2:11; 1 Corinthians 7:39; 2 Corinthians 6:14.
2. To calculate ages, these references are helpful: Genesis 17:17; 21:5; 23:1; 25:7, 20.