

Genesis 24:62-67 and 25:1-18

In last week's lesson, Rebekah had accepted God's will in her life without hesitation.

When she was asked if she would leave her home and family to marry a man she had never seen, she said, "**I will go.**"

Thus began the long journey to Canaan and to her Isaac.

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This journey reminds us of the long and sometimes arduous journey that each Christian is involved in at this present time.

We are travelling through this present evil world, but we are travelling in company with our guide and protector Who delights to teach us more about Christ.

John 16:13 "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

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Well, for Rebekah, the weary days and yet precious days of travelling were nearly over.

And for the believer, there is an end in sight also.

Like Rebekah, whether the Christian's journey finishes in death or the coming of the Lord, the end is just the *beginning*.

No, Rebekah was not only contemplating the end of a weary journey. She was

looking forward to being united with Isaac.

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And while this young lady is completing the last leg of her journey, let's look in on Isaac's affairs.

V 62 **"And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south country."**

This is a short verse with a lot of implications.

For some years now, Abraham had been living at Beer-sheba.

However, by this time, Isaac was no longer living at home.

Verse 62 tells us that Isaac was living in the south country near the well Lahairoi.

No reason is given for this move. However,
I don't think it is too surprising.

First of all, Isaac was a grown man.

He was now 40 years old, and no doubt, under
God's blessing, had become as
prosperous as his father.

So, although no reason is given, it is quite
possible that their herds of cattle and
sheep had made it impossible for them
to live together.

However, Isaac was not like his uncle Lot.
He did not choose some wicked civilization
to live in just because it might be
good for business. No, he chose
Lahairoi for a completely different
reason.

As you might remember, this well was named
by Hagar to commemorate God's
intervention in her life.

We find that account back in Genesis 16:13-

14 **"And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?"**

14 **Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered."**

The full name "**Beerlahairoi**" means "the well of Him Who liveth and seeth me."

It was a place that Abraham's family would naturally associate with God.

So apparently Isaac was the type of man that wished to dwell in God's presence.

And no doubt that was exactly what he was doing on that special day when Rebekah arrived.

V 63 **"And 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."

I wonder what his meditations were about. No doubt he had been thinking a lot about the bride that God would provide through the faithful ministry of his father's eldest servant.

And as would be natural, he probably wondered what she would be like.

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But I'm sure there were other things on his mind.

He might have been puzzling over his Mount Moriah experience.

Even though it had been some years now, that rather horrendous time of testing might still have been fresh in his mind.

Why had God found it necessary to put him and his father through that stressful situation?

Oh, he realized that the experience had increased his faith and his father's faith also, but there still seemed to be a deeper meaning behind it all.

And there was something else in the back of his mind.

Although it had been about three years now since his mother's death, he still missed her very much.

Oh, he knew God didn't make mistakes, but her passing had left a empty spot in his life.

No, he didn't have all the answers, but there was always the realization that God had uniquely blessed him.

Yes, the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant were always on his mind, and he knew his life was definitely guided by God's plans.

And actually, the next step in God's plan had just appeared on the horizon!

V 63-64 **"--- and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.**

64: And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel."

V 63 says that Isaac **"lifted up his eyes,"** and V 64 tells us Rebekah **"lifted up her eyes."**

I'm sure that Jesus is looking forward to the rapture of His Church.

But the question is, are we looking forward to **"that blessed hope, and the glorious**

**appearing of the great God and our
Saviour Jesus Christ"?**

We need to ask ourselves if our eyes are fixed on the horizon, or are we taken up completely with the bumpy camel ride, the dust, and the wicked inhabitants of the land.

Oh, Rebekah was aware of her discomforts, but she was much too involved in looking for Isaac to think much about them.

Yes, after the hundred questions she had already asked, she was the first one to ask, "**---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.**"

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---"What man is this that walketh in the
field to meet us?"

The servant needed to identify Isaac because
Rebekah had said yes to a man she had
never met!

And the first time she saw him, he was
coming to meet them.

No, the servant didn't need to take Rebekah
to Isaac's door.

He had been *looking* for her, and had
intercepted their little caravan before
it could reach his home.

And Christ will not be waiting for us in
heaven. He will come to *meet us* in the
air.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 says--"**For the Lord
himself shall descend from heaven with
a shout, with the voice of the
archangel, and with the trump of God:**

**and the dead in Christ shall rise
first:**

**17: Then we which are alive and remain
shall be caught up together with them
in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the
air: and so shall we ever be with the
Lord.**

**18: Wherefore comfort one another with
these words."**

And I think Rebekah had been comforting
herself along the way.

When the trials of the journey had pressed
heavily upon her soul, she would simply
say, *It won't be long now and I will
meet Isaac.*

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V 66-67 **"And the servant told Isaac all
things that he had done.**

67: And 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."

Isaac had prepared a home for Rebekah in the south country by the well of Lahairoi-- as Christ has prepared a place for us. No, she was not going to live in her father-in-law's home at Beer-sheba. She was to have a place of her own.

However, until the wedding, and we don't know when it happened, just as we are not told when the church will be raptured, she was given temporary residence in Sarah's tent.

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For three years, Abraham had kept Sarah's tent in tact.

All of her personal things were there, but
no one had been allowed to live in his
wife's tent.

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Abraham had loved his wife dearly, and Isaac
had also been very close to his mother.
So, not only did Rebekah fill the empty
place in Isaac's heart--she filled the
empty place in Sarah's tent.

But Rebekah is not Sarah. She is a
different person entirely.

And the Church is not Israel.

However, on a temporary basis, the church
has been brought into that special
place formerly occupied by Israel.

Yes, the church, which is composed of both
Jew and Gentile, has been brought into
the place of spiritual privilege that
is presently vacated by Israel.

Christ's love for Israel is still great.

Indeed, at one time, He lamented over Jerusalem saying, **"how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"**

However, at this present time, Jesus finds His joy in the church, His blood-bought bride.

And Israel is never regarded as the bride of Christ. She is referred to in scripture as the wife of Jehovah, and someday she will be restored.

Someday, under the leadership of her Messiah, Israel will be revived in the Promised Land, the land that God has given to her as a perpetual possession. But right now, God's focus is on the bride of Christ.

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So Rebekah stayed in her mother-in-law's tent until her formal marriage to Isaac was completed.

We don't know how long this took.

It could have been days or even weeks, but I suspect the time was very short.

And after the marriage supper, Isaac would be taking his beloved bride to the place he had prepared for her.

Rebekah's sojourn in Sarah's tent was a good time, as Abraham got to know his daughter-in-law better, and Isaac was always so loving and kind.

She appreciated this special accommodation, but actually she could hardly wait for that wonderful time when her new husband would take her to their new home in Lahairoi.

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And what a privilege it is for the Church of Jesus Christ to be dwelling in *Sarah's tent* during this *Age of Grace*, to be the recipient of the love and care of God the Father and God the Son.

But what a glorious day it will be when the "**marriage supper of the Lamb**" being over, *our Isaac* will take us to the "**mansions**" He has prepared for us.

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As we begin chapter 25, the scene completely changes.

Abraham is alone once more.

His beloved wife Sarah has been gone for about 20 years, and now that his son's wedding is over and Isaac has returned to his own home, Abraham's tent has become a rather lonely place.

Oh, Abraham's flocks and herds are well
cared for under the excellent
supervision of his faithful eldest
servant.

And his many servants are always coming and
going, so there is no lack of activity.
But it is activity in the midst of
loneliness.

God is aware of Abraham's loneliness, as in
Adam's case He was aware that **"It is
not good that man should dwell alone."**

And, as He had always provided for his
servant needs, He now provides--**"an
help meet for him."**

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Genesis 25:1 **"Then again Abraham took a
wife, and her name was Keturah."**

If her name is any indication of her character, she must have been a sweet lady.

I am told that Keturah means "incense," or "she who makes incense to burn."

We don't know anything about her background or nationality, but I would assume that she was not a Canaanite.

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But although Abraham was now *free* to marry, it seems from the context that Keturah did not enjoy the same marital status as Abraham's first wife.

Verse 6 mentions Abraham's combines, and I am assuming that this would refer to Hagar, whom he shouldn't have married in the first place, and also Keturah. Consequently it is quite certain that Keturah understood that if there were

children, they would not be equal heirs
with Isaac.

And as it turned out, there were children,
in fact, a lot of children.

Yes, the man who had gone childless for most
of his life now found himself the
father of a rather large family.

Although I will not attempt to pronounce the
names in V 2-4, all of Keturah's
children are duly recorded here.

In these few verses, her 6 sons, 7
grandsons, and 3 great-grandsons are
all named.

Wonder of wonders, Abraham was now the
father of 8 sons!

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Many years ago, Sarah had been convinced
that they were too old to have
children.

Genesis 18:2 " **Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"**

And in a very real sense, she was right. Actually at the time she said that, they were *much* too old to have children.

In fact, scripture clearly says concerning the physical possibility of them having children that Abraham's body was "-- **now dead, when he was about an hundred years old,**" and also scripture speaks of "-- **the deadness of Sara's womb.**"

But that was before God stepped in to revitalize them shortly before Isaac's birth.

So you see, there is never a time or situation when it is impossible for God to fulfill His promises.

But even the birth of Abraham's two sons had not paved the way for the fulfillment of all of God's promises.

Years ago, God had promised Abraham, --" **I have made thee a father of many nations,**" and these *two* sons would never make that happen.

Even after Isaac's successful marriage, and after children were born to him, he would only be the father of one nation. And even though, in His permissive will, God had promised Abraham that he would make Ishmael a great nation, his descendants would never become *many* nations.

But in these six sons, born so late in his life, God had created a posterity that would make Abraham "**a father of many nations.**"

No, there is never a time in our life when we can say it is too late for God to act.

Some people say, "Where there is life there is hope," and there is a lot of wisdom in that saying.

But it would be more correct to say, "Where there is God there is absolute certainty."

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Ve5 **"And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac."**

According to God's command, and in all fairness to Sarah, Isaac was to be his sole heir.

There was also a distinct obligation to Isaac's wife.

In Genesis 24:36, the eldest servant had plainly said--**"And Sarah my master's**

wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath."

And Abraham's earthly riches were not the only consideration. There was the spiritual heritage contained in the Abrahamic Covenant as well.

Under the terms of that covenant, all the land of Canaan would belong to his descendants, and also, in his seed--- **"all the nations of the earth"** would be blessed.

Of course the last part of that covenant referred to Christ Who would be born an Israelite, and would bless all nations.

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V 6 **" But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son,**

while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country."

Abraham showed a great deal of wisdom in this.

No doubt wills were not as infallible as they are today, so Abraham decided to *do his givin' while he was livin' so he would be knowin' where it was goin'.*

By settling things now, he knew there would be no tendency for arguments at the time of his death.

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No doubt Abraham's "**gifts**" would consist of flocks and herds and servants, so his boys would get a good start, and it would not seriously affect Isaac.

After all, Isaac had been 40 years old at the time of his marriage, and had a place of his own.

And no doubt, like his father, he had prospered quite well under God's blessing.

So, sometime before his death, Abraham must have greatly reduced his own resources and given each of his sons a good start.

In so doing, Abraham had been a wise steward, and had left no impediments in Isaac's way.

So at the time of his death, Isaac would get *all that remained* of his earthly possessions, and, of course, inherit God's special spiritual blessings, which would be of no special interest to the others.

Thus Abraham insured that God's plans would not be hindered by his family.

Isaac would be the "**heir of all things,**"
again making him a true type of Christ.

John 17:10 "**And all mine are thine, and
thine are mine; and I am glorified in
them.**"

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V 7-8 "**And these are the days of the years
of Abraham's life which he lived, an
hundred threescore and fifteen years.
8: Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and
died in a good old age, an old man, and
full of years; and was gathered to his
people.**"

We now say goodbye to a great man, indeed, a
man that had been called "**the Friend of
God.**"

And although in past ages men had lived much
longer than Abraham, for his time he
had certainly lived to a grand old age.

At the time of his passing he was 175 years old, his son Isaac was 75, and Jacob and Esau were now teenagers, being 15 years old.

He had outlived Sarah by 50 years, and for 100 years he had walked the pilgrim pathway of a true follower of God.

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God said "**these are the days of the years of Abraham's life.**"

As God numbers the very hairs of our head, so He took note of every day of Abraham's life.

Abraham had lived for 63,000 days, 36,000 of them as a believer.

And as we have already noted, somewhere along the line, Abraham had developed the habit of beginning each day early, and in the presence of God.

Genesis 19:27 " And Abraham gat up early in
the morning to the place where he stood
before the LORD."

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V 8 "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and
died in a good old age, an old man, and
full of years; and was gathered to his
people."

He "was gathered to his people."

Physically speaking, this could not refer to
his relatives.

Most of his people lived and no doubt were
buried back in Mesopotamia, but that's
not where Abraham was laid to rest.

Abraham was buried in Canaan beside his wife
Sarah.

No, Abraham was not gathered to his
relatives. He was gathered to *his*

people, the Old Testament saints who trusted in Jehovah.

He went to that special place where the Old Testament saints were comforted.

Actually, it was the place which Jesus identified 1900 years later as

"Abraham's bosom."

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V 8 says Abraham **"died in a good old age."**

No doubt this simply means Abraham had lived for many years.

But I like to think that it also implies that Abraham finished his course as a man satisfied with God's goodness, having had a full and useful life.

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Years ago I remember walking down a street in London, Ontario, with a Christian friend of mine.

We happened to meet an old, very sad
transient shuffling down the street
past us.

Everything in his appearance spoke of
hopelessness and bitterness.

My friend turned to me and said, "The Devil
has a lot of happy young people, but he
doesn't have any happy old people."

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I think Abraham was a *happy* old man.

The King James version says that Abraham
died "**full of years**," but the original
text really says that he died *full*.

He had lived life to the full, and was now
ready to move on to a better place.

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V 9-10 **"And his sons Isaac and Ishmael
buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in
the field of Ephron the son of Zohar**

**the Hittite, which is before Mamre;
10: The field which Abraham purchased
of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham
buried, and Sarah his wife."**

We don't really know if Ishmael managed to get back home before Abraham's death. If he did, it must have been a real comfort to his father.

Here was the dear lad that he had been obliged to send away many years ago. It would have done his heart good to see him working in agreement with his half-brother Isaac, whom he had once mocked. Together they were making arrangements to fulfill their father's last wish. He would be buried in the cave of Machpelah in the Promised Land beside Sarah, the wife he had always loved.

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Here we end our long journey with this great servant of God.

From the home of an idol worshipper to becoming the father of God's Chosen People, his life is a testimony to God's goodness.

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With Abraham's passing, Isaac became the only surviving link in the Messianic line.

V 11 **"And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi."**

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The Holy Spirit now turns to the task of recording the life of God's chosen man Isaac.

But before He does, He briefly records
Ishmael's posterity.

God had promised Abraham 12 princes.

That promise is recorded back in Genesis

**17:20 " And as for Ishmael, I have
heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him,
and will make him fruitful, and will
multiply him exceedingly; twelve
princes shall he beget, and I will make
him a great nation."**

In Genesis 25:11-19, the names of those 12
princes are recorded.

It is a lasting testimony that indeed God
keeps His promises.

**V 12-18 "Now these are the generations of
Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the
Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto
Abraham:**

13: And these are the names of the sons

of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,

14: And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa,

15: Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah:

16: These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.

17: And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people.

18: And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou

**goest toward Assyria: and he died in
the presence of all his brethren."**

His descendants became the great Arab
peoples of the earth, and the enemies
of Israel.

Materially speaking, God has been good to
them.

He has given them great power and great
wealth in natural resources.

Today they control a great deal of the oil
reserves of the world, and the wealth
and power that go along with them.

Once Golda Meir, with her typical Jewish
sense of humour, said, "Can you imagine
Moses dragging us forty years through
the desert to bring us to the one place
in the Middle East where there is no
oil?"

But there is a great day coming for Israel,
and you can be sure of that.

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So, with this brief record, Ishmael passes
off the scene.

The Genesis record now concerns itself with
Isaac, and next week, Lord willing, we
will do the same.