

PERTH BIBLE CLASS – JANUARY TO MARCH 2005

BIBLE BRIDES – REBEKAH

READING – GENESIS 24

SETTING – this chapter and those before and after give a picture of future times.

Ch. 22 Isaac is laid on the altar – the Lord Jesus will go to the cross

Ch 23 Sarah dies – Israel will be set aside as a nation.

Ch 24 A bride for Isaac – the church will be gathered in as a bride for Christ.

Ch 25 Abraham marries Keturah – after the rapture God will recommence His dealings with Israel.

The chapter gives details of the sending of the servant to bring Rebekah as a bride to Isaac.

- v 1 – Concern of the father
- v 2 – 9 Charge to the servant
- v 10 – 14 Committed in prayer to God
- v 15 – 28 Character of Rebekah
- v 29 – 50 Confession of the Servant
- v 51 – 61 Challenge to Rebekah
- v 62 – 67 Coming of Rebekah

Our study will concentrate on the areas that directly concern Rebekah. Suffice to note that Abraham is specific in his instructions to his servant. For the continuance of the family name a wife could have been taken from the area in which he was now living but for the fulfilment of the divine plan the bride must come from “my country” v 4 and she will need to be willing to come out to her husband “bring not my son thither again” v 6. The servant is unnamed although may have been Eliezer of Damascus – see ch 15 v 2. He is not important in the gathering of the bride but is at all times dependent on God v 12 “O Lord God ---- I pray”. In his confession in the home he speaks nothing of himself but his master v 34 “I am Abraham’s servant”.

The character of Rebekah v 15 – 28

Her name Rebekah means captivating or delightful. **Her beauty** “very fair” v 16. While we do not seek to portray the external as the people of God there should be externally things that are pleasant and delightful. Something external must have marked the disciples – see Acts 4 v 13 “they had been with Jesus”. We are also charged “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works” Matt 5 v 16. Rebekah’s beauty was not just external but internal “a virgin” v 16. In a day that is exceedingly sinful good that this characteristic of moral purity should mark the people of God. Paul exhorted Timothy “keep thyself pure” 1 Tim 5 v 21.

Her exercise

- v 15 Her pitcher upon her shoulder
- v 16 Filled her pitcher
- v 19 I will draw water for thy camels also
- v 20 Ran again unto the well

All of these statements give indication that she was not afraid of hard work. As Christians we are charged “whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might” Eccl

9 v 10 “Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord” Rom 12 v 11. When the disciples were called by the Lord Jesus we read of them “washing their nets” Luke 5 v 2 and “mending their nets” Mark 1 v 19. God uses busy people.

Her identity v 24 “I am the daughter of Bethuel”. She was not afraid to declare to whom she belonged. Paul wrote of his new identity as a servant of Jesus Christ “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ” Rom 1 v 16. How sad in the gospel of Matthew to read of Peter’s three denials ch 26 v 70 “I know not” v 72 “I do not know the man” v74 “I know not the man”. Do I declare my identity or try to keep it hidden?

Her welcome – v 25 “we have both straw and provender enough and room to lodge in”. In the New Testament we are encouraged “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers” Heb 13 v 2. It is one of the features of those who would be exercised to be overseers in the local church “given to hospitality” I Tim 3 v 2. The Lord Jesus as he moved on earth seemed to enjoy those who opened their home to him.

The Challenge to Rebekah v 51 – 61

The servant having spoken of his master and the purpose of this visit and how God had wondrously answered his prayer at the well with the arrival of Rebekah is anxious to return “send me away unto my master” v 54. The family wish some delay “Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten” v 55. How the world and the flesh hold us back from the things of God. In unsaved days many will recall how they delayed responding to the gospel. As believers in the Lord we still can be marked with putting things off. Good to note the eunuch in Acts 8 v 36 “what doth hinder me to be baptized”. On profession of faith he was immediately baptized by Philip. This was very much a feature of the early Christians – see Acts 2 v 41 – 43.

The matter is put to Rebekah “wilt thou go with this man” and her response is immediate “I will go” v 58.

Such a decision is not without cost. She was to leave all local connections be it family or friends and would unlikely see them again. Those who will live for God and put Him first may also face the cost. To true followers the Lord Jesus says “take up his cross and follow me” Mark 8 v 34 and Paul reflecting on how his life for Christ has turned from how it would have looked in unsaved days says “for whom I have suffered the loss of all things” Phil 3 v 8. We can be assured that any such sacrifice when weighed in heaven’s scales is “treasures in heaven” Matt 6 v 20. We are all challenged with the words of Rom 12 v 1 “I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice”.

The Coming of Rebekah

Our chapter closes with the lovely picture of Isaac coming to the field “at the eventide” v 63. The day was drawing now to a close. Only when this day of salvation ends does the heavenly bridegroom come. At this very point Rebekah’s long journey with the servant is over and “she saw Isaac” v 64. There is the union of Isaac and Rebekah and he “brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent -----and Isaac was comforted” v 67.

The words of the hymn seem to catch this moment

He and I together entering Those bright courts above

He and I together sharing All the Father’s love.

What a day glorious day that will be.