

Will You Go With This Man?

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[0 : 0 0] Well let's turn back to Genesis chapter 24 and we think of going back to Genesis 12 remember how God called Abraham to leave his country Mesopotamia to go to a land that he would show him that land of Canaan and remember how Abraham went in faith taking his wife and his nephew Lot and we remember how God blessed Abraham and Sarah with a son Isaac and we remember how Abraham, the Lord asked Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son and we remember Abraham's faith he didn't waver but in his heart he offered up his son to God and now we come to the next mention of Isaac in the Bible three years after the death of his mother Sarah and now Isaac is to be married to a woman of God's choosing thereby continuing God's covenant covenantal blessings so when we look at this chapter under three headings a covenant confirmation and commitment but first of all covenant we read there at the very beginning of the chapter now Abraham was old and well advanced in years and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things

Abraham may have felt that he was nearing the end of his life although in fact he would live for a further 35 years and the Lord had blessed him in every way and later in the passage we read the words of Abraham 7 remember we read them together at verse 34 the Lord has greatly blessed my master and he has become great he has given him flocks and herds and silver and gold and male servants and female servants and camels and donkeys and Sarah my master's wife bore him a son when she was old and to him he has given all that he has and we remember God's covenantal promises to Abraham when he cried out for an heir in chapter 15 we read at the beginning Abraham said Lord God what will you give me for I continue childless and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus and behold the word of the Lord came to him this man shall not be your heir your very own heir will be your son look toward heaven and number the stars so shall your offspring be and Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness so in order to fulfill the the covenant promise of God a wife had to be found or chosen for Isaac and Abraham would have sought the Lord with regard to this and he believed that this was God's time and friends whatever your situation is today as we were saying in the prayer you can ask God to direct you for some it might be choosing the right partner for life important decisions but we can commit them to the Lord and Abraham called his most trusted seven probably Eliezer mentioned in chapter 15 the oldest of his household who was in charge of all that he had and Abraham asked his seven to place his hand under his thigh and take an oath in the name of the Lord because this was done in accordance with an ancient custom and Eliezer promised that he would take a wife he would not take a wife for Isaac from among the

Canaanites where they where they now dwelt because Abraham feared that if Isaac chose a wife from a Canaanite background a Canaanite woman then he would be led into idolatry because hundreds of years later remember when the intra when the Israelites actually entered into the promised land the land flowing with milk and honey the Lord God himself commanded them regarding the very same Canaanites the Lord says in Deuteronomy you shall not intermarry with them giving your daughters to their sons and taking their daughters for your sons for they would turn away your sons from following me to serve other gods so that's why Abraham instructed his servant go to my country Mesopotamia and to my kindred my relatives and take a wife for my son Isaac verse 4 now it is always a hundred years since Abraham had followed God's call on his life to leave his country but notice he still recalls it home and my people and my kindred go to my country the blood is strong and so it is with ourselves and especially for many of us who have come back like for myself for example just coming back to the islands or to the highlands it just feels like coming home

I remember they were doing a survey in in the garden shortly after we arrived there and how people had settled there with the smelter and a large Polish community during and after the war and they just did and the gales who had settled had moved from the highlands or the islands and other parts to settle and get work in the smelter and in fact a lot of people from Glasgow and Edinburgh and such like did the same so the men who were doing the kind of survey and trying to get a sculpture to kind of incorporate all these things came and did an interview myself about how the galley community had settled and he just said something like so how does it feel for yourself you know and I said well it's a strange thing I said when we're going back to Eust for holidays to see my father it feels like we're going home and then when we're coming back to Roskeen it feels that we're going home or coming home and I said something like whichever way we're going we're going home and I was invited to the unveiling of the sculpture and when they took the thing down that was the thing that they incorporated at the very top but whichever way we're going we're going home and that is so true for the Christian we're going home this is not our home we're just passing through and I remember to some a lot of people gathered for Brunberg's final concert in Stirling at Stirling Castle and met loads of gales and people from the islands here and met people from Roskeen we were now in Stirling met people from Eust, South Eust, North Eust and different people from different places were saying when are you coming home the Roskeen people when are you coming home the Eust people when are you coming home but for the Christian we will all go home one day and we will be there forever in our promised land heaven itself now notice how Eliasar was unsure if any young woman would be willing to leave her homeland to marry a complete stranger verses 5 to 7 and he wondered if in that respect he could maybe take Isaac to

Mesopotamia instead but Abraham was adamant see to it that you do not take my son back there Isaac the son of promise was to remain in the place of promise the promised land and Abraham trusted the Lord to sort it out he will send his angel before you but to reassure the servant he said but if the woman is not willing to follow you then you will be free from this oath of mine only you must not take my son back there and the servant took the oath so that's covered secondly confirm it confirmation at verse 10 there we read and maybe we can get the verses back up on the screen if you don't have a Bible at verse 10 Elisasar obeyed his servant he set off with other servants and with 10 camels laden with goods including jewelry for the bride to be so the journey was about 500 miles and I'm sure he would have gone 500 miles more but it took 500 miles it would have taken several weeks to complete but finally they arrived in the city of Nehor now that could be a reference to Abrams brother in a horror it could be the name of the city itself and they arrived at a well outside as the evening approached the time when the woman came to draw water thus avoiding the heat of the day and Abraham would have prayed about this matter and now the the servant prayed for guidance verse 12 oh Lord God of my master Abraham please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham and then he set a fleece before the Lord behold I am standing by the spring of water and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water let the young woman to whom I shall say please let down your water jar that I may drink and who shall say back in return drink and I will water your camels let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac by this I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master God's word says before you call I will answer and that's what happened here before the servant had finished praying verse 15 behold in God's providence Rebecca appeared it just so happened that she was from the family of Abraham's brother Neho although Elias or the seventh wouldn't discover this till later on and it so happened that she was unmarried a virgin attractive in appearance it so happened that after she had filled her water jar with water she responded positively to the seventh request friends only God could bring this to pass it's all in God's providence and God's plan there are no coincidences with God and just speaking to the girls coming in who are deciding or have decided where they're going to further their education which courses they're doing I remember my own daughter she was set on a certain course of journalism or whatever and then at the last minute she changed to teaching but then all the courses all the places and the day visits and where you could go and find out about the courses in the places and the universities had gone except Edinburgh University teaching had a no open evening added on and we just set her sat in up and we went down and it so

[11 : 54] happened that we parked in the exact same place where we parked the car when she was five days old and was going to beclude church for the first time and I just looked at my wife and I said this is where we packed when we came to church and she remembered and I said to Catherine I think the Lord's in this she got on that course and yesterday she texted me saying she's finished her final dissertation and folks the stress of dissertations some of you know she's finished the course and I think she'll be going to do a probation in Edinburgh that was all of God's plan God's purpose nothing happens by chance and you know the events unfolded according to Elias's prayer and Rebecca's actions really revealed her kind nature it revealed her willingness to serve not only did she give him something to drink but she watered ten camels as well that would have taken a lot of time and effort there's no small thing to draw and carry water for them all and of course hospitality required and we see it in her own culture required giving water and food to a thirsty stranger but not to his animals that was an extra so she evidently was a hard worker a servant an ideal partner for Isaac so this day just think about this day was like for

Rebecca it started like any other day same old same old watering the camels doing her chores but she had no idea as Rebecca walked towards that well that her life would change forever that soon in God's providence she would meet her future husband and she had no inkling that you would play the lead role in the greatest love story ever told and friends it so happens that you're here today and it so happens that we're preaching from this today this could be a life-changing day for you you could be born again today because it's under the preaching of God's word and the providence of God's movements that were all here today Eliazor observed her and her actions confirmed that she was the one appointed by the Lord and that confirmation resulted in presenting to Rebecca a gold ring and heavy golden bracelets and it was at this point notice that Eliazor inquired about her family as we say to ourselves who do you belong to who's your family what's your slinger and she said well I'm the daughter of Bethiel the son of Milka whom she bore to Neher and she offered them hospitality this was further confirmation look Rebecca belonged to the house of Neher Abraham's brother his prayer had truly been answered at every single point so he immediately bowed down to worship the Lord praying blessed verse 27 blessed be the Lord the God of my master Abraham who has not forsaken his steadfast love he said and his faithfulness towards my master as for me the Lord has led me in the way to the house of my master's kinsman now friends time and time again in this chapter the word used for God's faithfulness God's kindness is this word *hesed* in the Hebrew it speaks of God's covenant obligations it speaks of his unfailing love that speaks of his loving kindness and God demonstrates his sovereign *hesed* by guiding the servant to the right place to ensure that his mission wouldn't fail he had sent his angel before him and friend God's leading fulfills God's purposes so why not bring your own situation to the Lord today he knows your situation as we were singing in Psalm 139 when you got up this morning when you will lie down tonight God willing your thoughts your words before you speak he doesn't make mistakes he knows your age he numbers the hairs on your head he knows everything about you he knew you when you were in your mother's womb and he's the one that you need to look to and turn to in the little things and in the big things like entering into a marriage covenant as we see here so thirdly and finally then we have commitment covenant confirmation commitment verse 28 Rebecca re brushes to tell a husband and her brother Leibn having seen these precious gifts returned with it inviting the servant into the family home with the words come in oh blessed of the Lord so the whole company was offered hospitality but Eliazor refused to eat until he had settled the matter and he tells a whole story from verse 34 to 49 and he concludes with these words now if you will show kindness and faithfulness

to my master tell me and if not tell me so I may know which way to turn then Leibn and Beth you will answered and said the thing has come from the Lord we cannot speak to you bad or good now although Rebecca's father was Beth you hell and he's still living the fact that Leibn has mentioned first shows that he's taken over his head of the family Beth you was well up in years maybe in film can't see that the Lord but he too can see that the Lord isn't all that is happening so both father and son agree that the Rebecca should should become Isaac's wife behold verse 51 Rebecca's before you take her and go and let her be the wife of your master son as the Lord has spoken so a second time Abraham servant bows down and worships the Lord again expensive gifts are presented to

Rebecca and her brother and her mother and only when all that business is concluded did Eliazard accept the hospitality that was offered and they ate and they drank and they spent the night there and the next morning he's ready to go he's eager to go and return to his master with Rebecca but her mother and brother were not yet ready to part with everything had happened so quickly so they made a request verses 55 to 57 let the young woman remain with us just a while at least 10 days as the song used to be just stay a little bit longer and after that she may go but Eliazard was desperate to get on his way don't delay me since the Lord has prospered my way send me away that I may go to my master so that shows to put the matter into Rebecca's hands probably expecting her to delay the journey let us call the young woman and ask her so think about it and think about your own situation today you know tonight we're looking at he saw and how he despised his inheritance and his birthright you have been blessed and how where you've been born how you've been brought up that you've heard the gospel but really you need to respond to that gospel not your father's gospel or your mother's gospel or anyone else's gospel conversion or salvation but your own you need to respond and that's what was asked of Rebecca it all hinged to Rebecca would she be willing would she be willing to give up her land her father's house as her great uncle had done back in

Genesis 12 was she willing to forsake all in obedience to God's call or would she choose to delay the process by remaining as long as possible with her family would she finally have to be torn away from them would she could she make the commitment required of her and can you my friend today make the commitment required of you this is the way walk in and say the Lord Jesus Christ says follow me he says today is the day of salvation he rose and conquered the grave he promises you forgiveness of sin resurrection of life to eternal life to be with him forever he promises you a plan and a purpose he gives you all that but you have to respond like Rebecca had to respond to the question posed to her and that question was will you go with this man will you go with this man and Rebecca didn't hesitate Rebecca said I will go she accepted

[22 : 08] God's call in her life she obeyed unconditionally just as Abraham had done and she was willing to forsake all that she had her father her mother her home her friends her relationships and her relations were all to be left behind and she was ready to go on a long and weary journey to be the bride of one she had never met but soon she would see him face to face friends Jesus ask you today to begin this journey of faith or for others to continue on this journey of faith and he promises that if you do that you too will see him face to face we will see him and we will be like him so Rebecca was asked to let go of everything to get Isaac or keep what was familiar and lose Isaac so it is with you keep what you know and lose salvation or take Jesus seek you first the kingdom of God and then all these other things will be added to you as well let go of everything or let go of Jesus there is no third way Jesus says whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me and Jesus says and everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or plans for my sake will receive a hundred fold and will inherit eternal life leave all else behind follow me anyone who does not give up all and follow me is not worthy of me so there should be no delay for this bride to be the blessed Rebecca and said to her sister may you become thousands of ten thousands and may your offspring possess the gate of those who hate him then she and the young women left with Abraham said and friends isn't this amazing as she journeyed as she made her way Isaac was praying verse 62 now Isaac had returned to Beer la

Huy Roy and was dwelling in the negative and Isaac went out to meditate in the field towards evening and he lifted up his eyes and he saw and behold there were camels coming and Rebecca's journey had been a long one but now she too looked up and Rebecca lifted her eyes and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from the camel and said to her servant who is that man who's that man walking in the field to meet us the servant said it's my master and she took her veil and covered herself a bride to be needed to veil herself in the presence of her future husband and the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done then Isaac brought Sarah brought her into the tent of Sarah her mother his mother and he took

Rebecca and she became his wife and he loved her so Isaac was comforted after his mother's death he brought her into the tent of his mother Rebecca would now care for Isaac as his mother had done and she would love him and don't over him as his mother had done but he would also love her and care for her they would find love and security in each other knowing that the Lord of God of Abraham had brought them together in the most amazing way Jesus loves his bride his bride is the church the church is people like you and like me and he loves us and he came on that great journey from heaven to earth to die for your sin and mine greater love as no one in this than he laid down his life for his friends and this story reminds us of God's love

God's love for Abraham God's love for Isaac God's covenant love the love of a husband for a wife God's love for his church his steadfast unveiling and failing and conditional love and it reminds us of Christ's love for us which cost him everything and that's what we remembered last weekend yes I must suffer yes I must die but yes I must rise again will you go with us now may your response be I will go he'll be before you he'll be behind you beside you above you underneath you underneath of the everlasting arms he will never let you go and he will bring you to the promised land heaven itself let us pray gracious God we thank you for this amazing story that is a true story an account of your blessing and promises you're working out the little things that bring big things to happen and so it is with our own lives things that we can look back on that are part of the plan even the difficult things even the sadness even the suffering but Lord we all need to commit to Jesus today for some for the first time for others Lord just to renew our commitment and despite sadness and difficulties despite a vacancy in a congregation despite everything Lord you ask us to be faithful because you will provide and you already provided the bridegroom for the bride the church Jesus may we love him because he first loved us and gave himself as a ransom for me and we ask everything in Jesus name for his sake amen so can we conclude by singing the traditional version of the 23rd song the Lord's my shepherd we pray now for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the

fellowship of the Holy Spirit to rest and remain with us all now and forever amen