

Midweek Meditation, October 7, 2020

Genesis 24:57-67

In the last two meditations, we talked about the whole long process of Abraham's servant, journeying to Abraham's homeland and finding Isaac a wife. Abraham was emphatic about his son marrying a woman from the people of his homeland, rather than marrying a Canaanite woman. So, Abraham's servant makes the long journey to the people of his brother, in a town called Nahor. And the servant is very faithful about listening to, and watching for the signs that God places before him in the process of finding a bride for his master's son, Isaac. God leads this servant to Rebekah, and to make a long story short, this passage makes it abundantly clear that Rebekah was the one that God ordained to be the wife of Isaac, and the partner of the one who was chosen to bring forth God's chosen people. According to all that we have learned up until now, Rebekah will indeed be the matriarch of a line that will number as many as the stars in the sky. So, we begin this story today, as Rebekah says in response to her family's question, "Yes, I will go." As I said last week, Rebekah probably figured that a husband was going to be selected for her at some point in time, no matter what. This servant has shown that Isaac was blessed by God. The servant has made a convincing case, that this was God's plan. Her family believed that it was God's plan. So, this was a decision that was brought forth by God. How could she argue. Plus, in my opinion, she may have figured that her family was not going to find another husband more blessed than Isaac. Nevertheless, she was traveling 400 miles, with Abraham's servant who she just met yesterday. And she was to be married at the end of the journey to a man that she never met before. Talk about taking a risk of faith! So that is where we are. You may remember, at the point when this arrangement was agreed to by her family, she received fancy cloths and lavish gifts. The gifts were given to her to show the abundance of God's blessing upon the house of Abraham. Those gifts were now upon one of the camels that she volunteered to water just the day before. And it was that simple act of kindness that set this whole chain of events into motion. As Rebekah left, her family blessed her by saying, "Our sister, may you increase to thousands upon thousands. May your offspring possess the gates of their enemies." This blessing from Rebekah's family echoes the blessing of God to Isaac, and before him to Sarah and Abraham. This

indicates that Rebekah's family understood God's promise for her and Isaac. They would receive the promised land. And, their offspring would be the people that God chose to occupy the Holy Land. And Rebekah and Isaac would be the people ordained by God to carry God's word to the world in every generation. Next, the story shifts gears fairly quickly. We soon find Isaac out in a field meditating. And he sees the caravan of camels coming toward him. The story also says that Rebekah looked up and she saw her husband to be, and she asked Abraham's servant, "who is this man in the field coming out to meet us." And the servant said, "he is my master. He is the one you will marry." So, she took her veil and covered herself. Then the servant told Isaac, the whole story about Abraham and the covenant, and how God's will had been accomplished by the journey, and that Rebekah was now his betrothed. Now, we are led to believe, that Isaac didn't know anything about this arrangement, much like Rebekah had not known. But, like Rebekah, Isaac comes to realize that this is God's will. And for Isaac, it is also the will of his father, Abraham, and the will of his mother, Sarah. This was all a part of the fulfillment of the promise, that God made to his mother and father so many years ago, when they were called by God to the land of Canaan. This moment was why Isaac was born Isaac knows now, that his purpose, as the seed of God's chosen people, is now one step closer to being fulfilled, if, he accepts Rebekah as his bride. Now, imagine the awkwardness of this first meeting between Isaac and Rebekah. They know nothing of each other, except that, other people believe that it is God's will that they marry. But the story reaches its completion by, Isaac, taking Rebekah into his mother, Sarah's tent, and then marrying her. And the story concludes by saying that he loved her, and that it brought comfort to him knowing that this promise that God made to his mother and father was now one step further toward being fulfilled by this union between him and his new bride, Rebekah. We get the impression that Isaac was honoring his mother by marrying his new bride in her tent. And surely that would have made Sarah very happy. We are given the impression, that Isaac still has feelings of grief in his heart, because the death of his mother is not that far in the past. One point, I want to add here, as we take a step back into the story, is that Rebekah uses the garments given to her as a part of the covenant, to prepare her to meet her bride groom. I believe that this story is part of the basis for the language used in the new testament, about the church being the bride, and the Lord being the

bridegroom. So as a part of the church, we must wear the clothes that we have been given, in the glory of Christ's sacrifice, so that we are prepared to walk in the presence of the Lord. Like Rebekah was veiled with the clothes that she was given from the blessing of the master, we have been blessed by the cleansing power of the blood of the Lamb. We must be dressed for the wedding. Our veil is quilted together with the body and blood of our sacrificial lamb, our Savior Jesus Christ. If we cloth ourselves with these garments, then we are ready to stand in the glory of the master, just like Rebekah, being clothed to meet her bridegroom. Of all the characters in this story about Abraham, and Sarah and Isaac and Rebekah, I think that Isaac and Rebekah's story is one of the most beautiful stories of faithfulness and love in the name of the Lord. They both appear to faithfully respond to God's call without question, even though they are both taking enormous risks of faith, by pledging their lives to total strangers. And it is not just that two strangers are marrying. That sort of arranged marriage probably was not all that uncommon back then. But we need to also must remember, that the possession of this promised land is nowhere near complete. The promised land is not yet in the possession of Isaac. He, like his father Abraham, is still living as an alien in this land promised to his descendants. In fact, that promise, his descendants occupying the promised land, will not even be complete in Isaac and Rebekah's lifetime. And, in fact, one could argue that the promised land, the land of milk and honey, has still not reached its fulfillment even today. And it will not until the coming of our Lord is complete in all of its glory. For now, faithfully answering God's call, Isaac seems to be lovingly honoring his mother by joining in this marriage. And it seems as though, love grows beautifully from such faithfulness. That is what makes this story compelling and beautiful. Next time, we will begin the 25 chapter. Do you want to know what that is all about? Well, in order find out, you are just going to have to tune in next week. Let us Pray.