

**Russell Kelfer**  
**Here Comes  
the Bride**

**# 708-B**

**Series: God's Living Legends (Part 1)**



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# Here Comes the Bride

It's time for the ten o'clock news and all of the eyes and ears of Jerusalem are fixed on one story. "It is both a mystery and a near murder," the broadcaster says with all of the journalistic intensity that is so typical of the trade. "Our television cameras are poised outside the residence of a man named Isaac, the child of the promise," the newscaster adds in hushed tones. "This man, Isaac, has become somewhat of a hero here in Israel," he says, as he fixes his gaze into the camera's lens. "He it was who was taken up to the top of the mountain by his father, Abraham, and he it was who, according to reports we have, was to be slain by his own father. We have the knife and his father's fingerprints have been positively identified. Why would a father kill his own son? And why would the son just lie there while a 100-year old man tied him up and began to plunge a knife into his heart? DNA tests were done on the knife, but sure enough it turned out to be that of a ...lamb!"

"These are the unanswered questions," the flamboyant journalist continues. "Were it not for the exclusive interview station W O R D had with the servant boy who tended the donkey, we'd never even have known such a near-crime existed," he concludes.

The media doesn't understand, but we do. The reason Abraham was about to slay his son was because God told him to. And the reason God told him to was to test his faith. And if God were called to testify, He would lovingly take the stand and say,

*"Abraham believed Me, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. He believed that if I were to allow him to slay his only begotten son, I would have raised him from the dead, because I keep my word, and I promised him that through Isaac his seed would multiply as the sand on the seashore, and through him all the nations of the world would be blessed."*

*"And,"* God would continue, *"sure enough, when the moment was right, I provided Myself, the lamb, and it was but a portrait*

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*of the true Lamb who one day will take away the sins of the world.”*

In our last study, we observed that journey up the mountain and we saw the foreshadowing of that wonderful moment when Jesus Christ would approach John the Baptist in and John 1:29 John would proclaim, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” We saw in Isaac a portrait of the LORD Jesus who was to come. He was a respectful son. He was a submissive son, an obedient son, a godly son. Now the years begin to pass. The boy becomes a man, a man destined by God to take up the mantle of leadership that will ultimately lead us to the King and to the kingdom. “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” is who Jehovah God was soon to be called. So we see that Isaac’s role in the plan of God is to be no minor one.

In this lesson the curtain goes up in Genesis 24, where we find Isaac, now a man of some forty years of age, saddened by the death of his mother, taking for himself a bride. Both the process and the portrait are of great significance to us in this day. If there was ever any area of life in our generation into which Satan has gained a greater inroad than the holiness of marriage, I don’t know what it is. The visual image of our relationship with Christ through marriage is a target for Satan’s fiery darts. Every now and then as Christians, we need to be reminded of how God feels about courtship and marriage. Isaac and Rebekah’s wedding is a beautiful backdrop for that reminder.

Our first assignment is to look at the passage with an eye to God’s principles of marriage. We begin in verse 1 where we read:

Now Abraham was old, advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in every way. (Genesis 24:1 NAS)

Now why had God blessed Abraham in every way? Was it because He was partial to people whose name began with “A”? Did He flip a coin in heaven and it came down and landed by Abraham? Of course not. Abraham did have a special place in God’s heart, but the reason was that God owned Abraham’s heart. Everywhere he went, Abraham worshipped God. Everywhere he went, Abraham waited on God. Everywhere he went, Abraham walked with God. Abraham was God’s man because God was Abraham’s LORD. He didn’t move without a word from God. He was God’s man from head to toe, so the *Lord blessed Abraham in*

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*every way.* Abraham, being God's man, loved his son very much. He sensed the timing of God for his son to have a wife. Sarah was dead now and Isaac was forty years old and he needed a helpmate. So Dad sets in motion the machinery through which God would choose a wife for Isaac.

And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he owned, "Please place your hand under my thigh," (Genesis 24:2 NAS)

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: (Genesis 24:2 KJV)

The King James version uses the word *eldest* instead of *oldest*; and the word *eldest* here in verse 2 does not mean the oldest, but rather the most trusted, the man who was responsible for all the master possessed. Here is a picture of the confidence God places in His faithful servants as He sends them out on behalf of His Son. Most commentaries assume this servant to be Eleazar. But, as we shall see later, even the absence of his name has spiritual significance. There are no accidents with God. The placing of the hand under the thigh was a means of securing a solemn oath. It meant, "This is no idle promise, but a sacred vow." Now what was it that Abraham wanted to be so serious and sacred about?

In verses 3-6, we see God's prerequisite for marriage. To the Jew, as to the Christian, marriage was to be a closed community. No place in Scripture does God ever sanction His children marrying or dating unbelievers. The entire Old Testament is a catalogue of instruction and experience with this principle as its heart: Two cannot walk together except they be agreed. The entire New Testament paints the picture of the church of Jesus Christ which emerges to be super-imposed upon God's image of the Jew, and its message is without compromise at this point. It says: "Do not become unequally yoked together with unbelievers. God has no fellowship with Satan. Light has nothing in common with darkness. The body of Christ commits adultery when it is united together with the body of Satan." The pages of history are written in indelible ink on this issue.

Within the homes of many Christians are example after example of how this principle works and the consequences for violating it. Do our children understand that? Do we understand that? Christian young people have no scriptural basis ever to date or marry a non-Christian. Now God is merciful. Many have

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done so, and God has been gracious to them; but for every one that does not end in disaster, there are dozens that do. It is a law of God. Write it down.

“and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live,

but you shall go to my country and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Isaac.”

And the servant said to him, “Suppose the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land; should I take your son back to the land from where you came?”

Then Abraham said to him, “Beware lest you take my son back there!”  
(Genesis 24:3-6 NAS)

As we will learn later, the servant represents the Holy Spirit. God’s Spirit is bound by the Father never to lead God’s child back into an unbelieving world for a husband or a wife. Never. Other lessons we have studied have discussed this in length, so just suffice it to say that God’s people are to find their mates among God’s people. Period. Our young people need to know that. It needs to be a principle, engraved in their minds, particularly if they are in public schools where many of their friendships are with unbelievers. They need to understand once and for all that this is not an option; this is an absolute.

Now here is why Christians need not worry about finding the right mate. Here is the verse our young people should memorize.

“The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me, and who swore to me, saying, ‘To your descendants I will give this land,’ He will send His angel before you, and you will take a wife for my son from there.” (Genesis 24:7 NAS)

That’s where they find their mate. God sends an angel ahead of them and chooses. Now if you carefully read this passage, you will see that God has one particular girl in mind for Isaac. It isn’t that God is saying, “Just find a believing girl; any one will do.” He is saying, “Find THE girl that I have designed for you in eternity past; the one I chose with exactly the life message, exactly the spiritual gift, and exactly the experiences needed to pour together with your life and make the one I planned.” Just as Eve was custom-made for Adam, hand-crafted by God, so the

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angel of God was to go ahead of Abraham's servant and create circumstances around which the two would come together, Isaac and the one woman God had chosen for him. Our children need to understand that. It was customary in Isaac's time for men to be settling down by the time they were 30. Isaac is 40 and he is still single. God often saves the best for last. It would have been easy for him to just go out and pick a wife. God preferred to give him *the* wife.

Now the great part of God's will is that He has a plan B for every situation. Should you be married to an unbeliever, or questioning whether you married Mr. Right or Mrs. Perfect, I have news for you. The very moment you stood before a sovereign God and said, "I do" God redesigned the "all things" of your life and you and your mate became the will of God. Don't ever look back and say, "What if?" From that moment forward, he or she became God's will for you.

For those yet unmarried who are looking to find God's best, however, God doesn't just have a wife or a husband for you, He has a special one picked out to best complement your personality, your gift, and your ministry. Wait for that one. Or if you are one of those chosen few whom God has selected to have no one to cling to but Him, He has, as well, only made that selection by careful, divine decree.

So the servant carefully obeys his master's instructions. He takes camels and a variety of good things from his master's hand. He arises and goes to Mesopotamia to the city of Nahor. Verse 11 continues:

And he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water. (Genesis 24:11 NAS)

The servant goes where the women of the city congregated every evening at this time to draw water. Now we see the plan of God. The servant offers a specific prayer. In verse 12 he prays as a servant of the LORD,

And he said, "O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today, and show lovingkindness to my master Abraham.

Behold, I am standing by the spring, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water;

now may it be that the girl to whom I say, 'Please let down

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your jar so that I may drink,' and who answers, 'Drink, and I will water your camels also';—may she be the one whom Thou hast appointed for Thy servant Isaac; and by this I shall know that Thou hast shown lovingkindness to my master."  
(Genesis 24:12-14 NAS)

Now underline the word *one* and the word *Thou*. In the next phrase he says, "And by *this* I shall know." So it's not to be something to guess at. He is saying that there is only one girl and we can rest assured that this one has been appointed by God. It would prove "*that Thou hast shown loving kindness to my master.*" Here is a model prayer filled with illustrations.

1. Look at his faith. He didn't stay home and say, "LORD, send Isaac a bride." He went the distance necessary to the place necessary to demonstrate the faith necessary for God to act. Once you know the will of God from the word of God, you move out. That is real prayer.

2. Look at his humility. He pleaded before God in the name of the one who sent him. "Oh, LORD, the God of my master, Abraham." That is what it means to pray in another's name. To invoke the power of their relationship to God is essential. That is why we pray in Jesus' name.

3. Look at how confidently he prays. "LORD, grant me success today. By this I shall know." He was confident he would have an answer, confident that God would send him the answer immediately.

4. Look at how specifically he prays. He says, "Now LORD, the one who says, 'drink and I will water your camels also,' that is the one." He prayed in faith, he prayed with humility, he prayed confidently, and he prayed specifically.

Now let's look at what happens when somebody prays like that. Verse 15:

And it came about before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor, came out with her jar on her shoulder.  
(Genesis 24:15 NAS)

What a coincidence. At the precise time that the servant arrives and begins to pray, none other than Abraham's brother's daughter arrives with water. That wasn't a coincidence, it was a miracle. A miracle is anything natural or supernatural, the timing of which gives glory to God. That was a miracle! So was that time



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that your car broke down and you had to use the telephone in the gas station where the man was working who had just that day asked God to prove that He was real. God used you to prove He was. So was it a miracle the day that you sat down on the airplane you had not planned to take, in that seat you had not planned to sit in, and it just happened to be by the guy whose wife was praying for him to find Christ, and he did. Miracles. When the telephone rings. Where the job takes you. What the doctor says. How the day progresses. Miracles. You and I, if we believe God and if we expect of God that He be all He plans to be, will see unfold, day after day after day, miracles. The amazing plan of God in this regard is that these kinds of miracles are foolishness to the world. But to us who believe, they are evidence of the power of God.

Can't you see Abraham's servant writing an article for the Nahor News telling how God supernaturally sent Isaac a bride? He said, "I went out by this well and I asked God to send a woman by and she came. She offered my camels a drink." They would have laughed him out of town. "Rebekah always came to the well at that time," they would have answered.

You just happened to be on that plane. Your car just happened to break down there. The world does not have the capacity to receive the natural miracles of God. But listen, beloved Christian, do not let the world squeeze you into that mold. Keep a log of the daily miracles in your life one day at a time, each day on a page. I challenge you to do that. Just the little things God does so supernaturally that you in your spirit know they could not have happened except that a sovereign God was doing the work in the life of His children. At the end of the day, stop and go over the list and compare the list with others in your family and praise God for being a miracle working God. Praise Him for those precious supernatural expressions of Himself which go unnoticed by a cynical and unseeing world.

*(continued next page)*

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OURS IS A GOD OF MIRACLES

Ours is a God of miracles.  
Miracles large and small.  
Some seem so insignificant,  
But these are the best ones of all.

He can part the sea for you  
And make it dry instead.  
He who wept at Lazarus' grave  
Can surely raise the dead.

But those are not the miracles  
That change our lives each day.  
Those miracles are the ones that God  
Lets happen "by the way."

The little things. The answered prayer.  
The check the mailman brings.  
The times we pray for comfort  
And just then the doorbell rings.

These, too, are miracles from God  
Through which He says to you,  
"There is nothing I don't care about  
And nothing I won't do."

Miracles. Bethuel means "separated unto God". So God had picked out the very best He had. He had sent her to the well at the very split second that her appearing would bring the most glory to God.

Now verse 16 describes Rebekah from God's perspective:

And the girl was very beautiful, a virgin, and no man had had relations with her; and she went down to the spring and filled her jar, and came up. (Genesis 24:16 NAS)

Now she may or may not have been a candidate for Miss Mesopotamia, but we do know that she possessed a beauty about her that defied explanation. It must have come from within. I Peter 3 tells us that is the only kind of beauty that God recognizes. That is the beauty God's man should recognize, the beauty of a holy life. It isn't produced by Clairol or Max Factor. No matter what Madison Avenue would have you believe, it is the product of Holy Spirit, Incorporated. It comes from regular applications of His patented product, the Living Word Shampoo. No doubt you have heard of this Living Word. It cleanses, it

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shines, it conditions, it colors, it gives body, it heals, it soothes, it strengthens, and it brings to life that which is dull, listless, and faded. It will even take care of the split ends in your life. You read of its miracles and it will curl your hair. You drink of its holiness and you will be clean. You bathe in its godliness and you will be refreshed. It is inner beauty, God's kind of beauty. Tell your children that is the first thing to look for in a mate. The smooth skin wrinkles anyway. The curly hair either falls out or turns gray. The slim and trim become roughed and stuffed. That which is flat becomes fat. The shell decays in so many ways, but the beauty of godliness grows deeper and deeper day after day after day.

The real key to this verse, however, is in the next phrase, *And she was a virgin and no man had had relations with her*. Show this to the young people growing up in today's generation. We need to go through the whole of Scripture and show them how much priority God places on premarital purity. Begin to teach it as soon as they are old enough to understand. To the world, it is no longer even an alternative. But to the Christian, *it is still an absolute*. This was no ordinary man for whom God was seeking a wife, but the heir of the promise. The woman God was to choose for him had to be of the highest moral purity. My friend, that level of holiness, total premarital fidelity, is the norm for God's children, male and female alike. They need to hear that in this generation.

When you discuss this matter with your children, don't ever forget to tell them the reasons, not the least of which is the symbolism involved. Remember, the male and female relationship is the portrait of the spiritual relationship Christ has with the church. So anytime someone finds physical fulfillment before marriage, it says by illustration that a man can find spiritual fulfillment without coming to know Jesus Christ, and that is a lie. Anytime any believer commits adultery, he or she says by way of illustration that Jesus Christ is only one of several sources of spiritual fulfillment. That is heresy.

So God chose Rebekah for several reasons, not the least of which was she was a virgin. Now in case you are not familiar with the story, you can probably guess what happened next. Rebekah fills her jar and offers the servant water when he approaches. In verse 19 she says, "*Can I pour some for your camels?*" It was an exact answer to the servant's prayer. Now suppose she had just

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fulfilled half of the prayer, given him a drink but said nothing about the camels. You and I would have probably said, “Oh, that is close enough. God just knew my camels weren’t thirsty.” Then right behind that girl walked the *real* Rebekah and we would have never known it. How often we say, “God, I’m not going to move until You prove Your will by doing these three things.” Then, He does one or two and we say, “Thank you, LORD, that is enough, I am convinced.” We don’t give Him a chance to reveal Himself and reveal both His timing and His will.

I believe had Rebekah done or been one thing less than the servant prayed for, the servant would have considered that she was not God’s answer at all. You may wonder why I think that. It is because he was disciples by Abraham. That is why. Abraham knew how to pray. In fact, so concerned was the servant that he find God’s exact choice that even after she had done all that he had prayed for, we read in verse 21:

Meanwhile, the man was gazing at her in silence, to know whether the LORD had made his journey successful or not.  
(Genesis 24:21 NAS)

God not only prepared Rebekah’s heart, he prepared her family as well. God places so much importance on the family’s approval for marriage in Scripture. Now granted we no longer arrange marriages sight unseen for our children. Customs have changed. But the concept that God grants approval through the parents has never changed. First, it initiated with Isaac’s father; then it was sealed by the approval of Rebekah’s father. That is the way the plan of God works. And if you are a young person and your parents are opposed to that marriage or the timing of it, pay attention.

Now Rebekah runs home and reiterates to her family the miracle of the day. First Uncle Laban comes out and enthusiastically greets the servant in verse 31. Finally, in verse 50, when asked for their approval of Rebekah’s traveling with a stranger to another country to marry a man she had never seen, so had the Holy Spirit prepared their hearts that we read this:

Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, “The matter comes from the LORD; so we cannot speak to you bad or good.

Behold, Rebekah is before you, take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master’s son, as the LORD has spoken.”

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And it came about when Abraham's servant heard their words, that he bowed himself to the ground before the LORD. (Genesis 24:50-52 NAS)

That is what we are supposed to do when God answers prayer. We are not to look over our shoulder and say, "You did it again LORD, Hallelujah." We are supposed to fall on our knees before a sovereign God and say, "Oh, what grace! To have a God who cares that much," and worship. In verse 55, Mom begins to argue. She says, "Tell you what, leave her home for ten days, and we will mail her to you." But they gave Rebekah the choice and in verse 58 she says, "*I will go.*"

Now the conclusion of the chapter is a happy ending to one of the most beautiful chapters in Scripture. It ends like this:

Now Isaac had come from going to Beer-lahai-roi; for he was living in the Negev.

And Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening; and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, camels were coming.

And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from the camel.

And she said to the servant, "Who is that man walking in the field to meet us?" And the servant said, "He is my master." Then she took her veil and covered herself.

And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.

Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her; thus Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

(Genesis 24:62-67 NAS)

God was also the originator of the love story. Can't you just envision what Hollywood could do with these last seven verses? The sunset over the edge of the hills, Isaac out in the fields meditating. He sees the camels coming. She sees Isaac. They rush into each others arms and live happily ever after. The music swells, the screen slowly fades. Praise God we don't need Hollywood. The beauty of this love story is unfolded right in the Word of God. From it we see one perfect love story and through it we see so many vital principles where marriage and the child of God are concerned.

But remember, in the living legends of Scripture there exists a strata of truth beneath the surface. It is a strata that must

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be uncovered by the wind of the Spirit as it blows across the land. There is a hidden treasure called spiritual symbolism. You remember in the last lesson that there was so much more meaning to the story of Abraham and the slaying of Isaac than what there was on the surface. There in the soil of its context, bloom the flowers of Jesus, of Calvary, and the Lamb who was slain before the foundation of the world. The whole Bible, you must remember, is simply various unfoldings of one common theme, Jesus. The story of a bride for Isaac is no exception. Let's quickly look at this same passage of Scripture as it is in truth the story of Jesus and His bride, the church.

We've already seen that God has a far deeper significance to marriage than its physical and earthly implications. Marriage is, in every aspect, designed to be a portrait of the relationship between Christ and His church. So courtship then becomes the portrait of Christ as He calls the church. The analogy is endless. This story has tucked within its pages illustration after illustration of the glory of our salvation in Jesus Christ. Let's look back through the story with our eyes on Calvary and see what the story tells us.

1- In verses 4-6 we see the gospel going to the Gentiles. That is anyone who is not a Jew. The Jews would reject the Messiah and then God's Spirit must seek a bride from among another people.

2- The next beautiful portrait is that of the unnamed servant. Though so many believe him to be Eleazar, the Scripture purposely submerges his identity in that of one simply sent on a mission by the father for the glory of the son. Surely here is God's foretaste of His precious Holy Spirit who would be sent forth among the Gentiles by the Father to call out a bride for His Son. His identity was to be submerged in Jesus. Jesus speaking of the Spirit in John 16:13-14 says, "*When He comes, He will guide you into all truth, for He will not speak of Himself, but what He hears, He will speak and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me for He shall take of Mine and disclose it to you.*" So the unnamed servant emerges from the canvas of Isaac's life and says, "I am a portrait of God's Spirit who will call out a bride for God's son, but who will never call attention to myself."

3- We see in verses 5-8 the free will of man. Verse 5: *Suppose the woman will not be willing?* Verse 8: *But, if the woman is not*

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*willing to follow you, then you will be free from this, my oath.* You see, man has a choice. You have a choice. If you are not a Christian, you still have a choice. God will not drug you and drag you down the aisle, a reluctant responder. He will propose to you, but like Rebekah, you must say, "I do."

4- While God will not force you, He will court you. He will send His messenger to you bearing a love letter, a word just to you from Him. It is called the Bible. He will send His friends to love you and show you that you have been accepted into His family. He will call you. He will reach out to you. He will wait for you. He is a persistent suitor as in verse 7. He sends His angels before Him to call out a bride. The Spirit intercedes as in verses 12-14 bringing about circumstances where you as an unbeliever and the master's servant shall meet. He will meet you at the well where Living Water springs eternal. He will ask you to reach down and take up the Water of Life that it might be offered back to Him. The picture goes on and on. He will not force you, but he will face you. He will not drag you, but He will draw you, for oh, how much He desires to have you to be His own.

5- In verse 15, we see that He answers the prayers of the saints who pray for circumstances to bring about unbelievers to a place where they will come to the well. "And it came about before he was finished speaking." Here is a perfect portrait of it in verse 16. We see God's vision of holiness and what a relief. We find we have no holiness with which to be clothed and so God comes to us with His blood and the crimson turns the black to white and He sees us as white as snow. We are undefiled, holy and cleansed, prepared as a bride for her bridegroom.

6- In verses 50-54 we see that once you say "yes" to Christ, the world is forced to let you go. In verse 53 we see Abraham's servant bestow gifts upon Rebekah the moment she says, "yes." It is a portrait of the blessings of the gift God gives His own the instant they respond.

7- In verse 56 we see the temptation to delay and seek just a little more time in the world before following the servant into the arms of the Master. With the decision, "I will go," there comes new freedom, as in verse 60 Rebekah receives a great blessing and promise for making that choice.

8- In verses 61-67 here is the new bride coming to be received by the bridegroom. He is in the fields meditating, representing

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the One who ever lives to make intercession for us. We do not know how long the trip took, but we know that she received blessings even on the way. The unnamed servant was there to see that she arrived safely to her master. Even as the Holy Spirit travels alongside of us, He guarantees our salvation until we are safely home. One day soon we, like Rebekah, will lift up our eyes and see the Son. As she dismounted the camel in humility, we will fall to our knees as His presence becomes real. As she covered herself with the veil, so we shall be in a glass darkly, then suddenly face to face as the veil shall be removed.

9- In verse 66, the servant told Isaac all the things he had done. On that day, God's Spirit will reveal all things that have been done in our lives, both good and bad.

10- In verse 67 Isaac took his bride and they became one and he loved her. One bright and beautiful morning in heaven you and I will hear God's anthem of victory, and the choir in heaven will sing, "Here Comes the Bride." Oh, the symbolism of weddings and of wedding to come. We shall be clothed in white, the holiness of God imputed to us. We shall come forward to meet Him, the bride coming down the aisle to her Groom. The seal of the Holy Spirit, the engagement ring of the ages will show that we are His. The angelic choir will sing anthems of praise. The Son will receive His bride to live with forever.

Those are the messages of Isaac. Those are the messages of marriage. Never a wedding bell peals but that God's voice can be heard calling to his prospective brides, "Come." If you are not yet engaged to the King, you can say yes to Him right now. He'll not force you, but He will face you. He will not drag you, but He will draw you. He may be calling to you even today. You may have come to the well of the Living Water one more time before sunset as Rebekah did. The servant of the King bids you one more time to drink of the Water of Life and receive the gifts of life: the hope, the joy, the peace that are yours in Jesus Christ. The promise is yours that throughout your engagement, that long trip home, His servant will never leave you and never forsake you. Safely He will take you one morning into the waiting arms of the Bridegroom Himself.

So if you have never met Jesus Christ, like Rebekah, all you need do is say, "I will." He will do the rest. That is what marriage is all about. It is to show us that there is an eternal



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wedding awaiting those who say “I do” to Jesus Christ. Here is all you need to do if you are not a Christian. You acknowledge that you are separated from God by means of the sin in your life. You recognize that Jesus Christ paid the price once and for all eternity for your sins. Quietly, you ask Him to come into your heart, cleanse you of your sins and become your Savior and King. You can do that this very moment. You can become part of the Bride of Christ.

One last thought for all Christians. Can you not see in this story that the most vital testimony you have may be your marriage? Those of you who are married can see that in our heavenly marriage there is a perfect partner, Jesus. Here on earth there are two imperfect partners. But what is also true is that God is desiring that each of us portray to the world the role of God and the character of God in our relationship to our mates. This is our role as husbands and wives. He will never leave us nor forsake us. He does not expect from us perfection. He takes us just as we are. He loves us no matter what. He waits for us when we run away. He forgives us when we break His heart. He serves us though we ought to be the servant. He leads us even in hours of our rebellion. He desires as we do that our mates respond rightly, but when He meets with resistance and rejection, still He loves us, and the world is amazed. So the marriage of two growing believers ought to manifest to a confused and lost world the living, giving love of God; two people so caught up in giving that the living comes naturally.

To some of you today, God may be saying that your marriage can be more than it is. It can be a living testimony to a loving God. It is time each of you stopped living for yourself and give yourself and your marriage back over to God once and for all. You may sit down with your spouse in a quiet moment and take their hand and tell them that you love them and then pray and commit your marriage to Christ by serving each other.

You may be in a one-sided marriage where love is not returned and marriage seems to have grown cold and only one of you is following Christ. Here again are the “all things of life” and God may be calling you to play the role of the Savior of the world to an unresponsive mate, to love the unlovable, to respond to one unappreciated, to serve the unnoticed, to, in the midst of rejection, simply love them more. Easy? No. Impossible. But praise God, He in you can do it. Yours is the lead part in the

## Here Comes the Bride

drama of salvation being played on the stage of life in the theater of marriage. It is being played before a live audience. Ask God today to give you a new surge of grace to portray the love of Christ even in the midst of a bad marriage.

Maybe you are divorced or alone. You can, by the depth of your relationship with Jesus Christ, show the world there is one marriage with the guarantee of a happy ending. It is a marriage to God Himself, and it is available to “whosoever will”. Oh, the beauty of God’s picture book of marriage!

### GOD CALLED OUT A BRIDE FOR ISAAC.

God called out a bride for Isaac.  
He chose a particular one.  
He sent forth His unnamed servant  
Saying, “Bring back a bride for my son.”

Now He’s calling a bride for Jesus  
In His gown of pure white to be dressed.  
And all He asks of His bride-to-be  
Is to quietly, simply say, “Yes.”

He stands and He waits at the well of life.  
He will stay till His task is through.  
He is calling a bride for Jesus.  
Oh, could He be calling to you?

Here Comes the Bride

Additional Questions for Focus and Application

1- Who initiated the search for Isaac's bride-to-be? Why do you think that is? What spiritual significance do you find in this principle?

2- Why did God call Israel "Jehovah's bride"? What does He call the church? Why? What ought this to mean to us?

3- Do you believe it mattered *which believing girl* the servant brought back so long as she was a believer?

4- Can you find any Biblical basis for dating unbelievers? For not doing so? Why is this such a deadly compromise? Memorize II Corinthians 6:14-18. Put it in your own words. Teach it to your children or grandchildren.

5- Stop and meditate on the "little miracles" God has brought into your life in the past week. Have you written them down? Have you thanked Him? Have you shared them with your family?

6- Why doesn't the unbeliever grasp the significance of these miracles? Read I Corinthians 2:9-16.

7- Why does God take the trouble to explain that Rebekah was a virgin? Why must we take the time to explain it to this generation? Do even most believing young people grasp its importance? Why not?

8- Do you believe God still has a *special person* chosen in eternity past for every believer He has ordained for marriage? Teach that principle to the young people God has placed in your life.

9- Review the symbolism of this story as found on pages 14 -16 of your lesson. Reread the story. See if you can add to the list. Ask God to give you the capacity to see Messiah on every page of Scripture.

10- If you are married, ask your mate to pray with you specifically that God will make of your marriage the kind of portrait He designed it to be. Ask Him to give you the kind of unselfish love for your mate that He demonstrated for His bride. Then begin to live as though you have it, for you do.

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