



SERIES: DEEPER LIFE

Here Comes the Bride

Life References: Genesis 24:1-9

Focus Verse:

"For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Corinthians 11:2).

The organ begins to play, striking the opening chords of "Here Comes the Bride." The long anticipated moment has come. Everyone turns to look as the bride starts down the aisle toward her waiting bridegroom. Love is written on their faces.

We all enjoy a good love story, and one is found in Genesis 24. (It is suggested that you read the entire chapter in preparation for this study.)

Abraham, now very advanced in years, desired to find a suitable bride for his son, Isaac. He called the eldest servant of the household to him and commissioned him with the responsibility. Not just any bride would do. Abraham made the servant promise that he would not seek her from among the daughters of the Canaanites. Instead, he was to journey "unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac" (verse 3). His instructions were clear.



© 2008

Visit: www.moretolifetoday.com



The servant agreed to assume the task but questioned Abraham, "What if she isn't willing to follow me? Do I take your son there?" No! Under no circumstances was he to take Isaac there (Genesis 24:5-8). That was not an acceptable alternative. If the girl would not return with him, the servant was released from his oath. However, Abraham did not fear this would happen. Had God not led Abraham to this land and given him promises for the future? God would bring it to pass. "He shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence."

Life Reflection:

Why do you think Abraham was so insistent that Isaac's bride should not come from the people of Canaan?

Do you think the Lord is particular about His bride?

The servant traveled to Nahor in Mesopotamia, the city of Abraham's family. As he neared his destination, he began to pray:

"O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day . . . And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac . . ." (Genesis 24:12, 14).

Before he even finished his prayer, God brought the answer before him. "Behold, Rebekah came out . . . with her pitcher upon her shoulder" (verse 15).

As we read the story, we learn that Rebekah possessed three striking qualities:

1. She had a servant's heart.

Just as the servant prayed, Rebekah of her own accord offered to not only give the man a drink but also to draw water for his camels. She did not do this grudgingly but eagerly and enthusiastically. (Read verses 17-20).

In his book *The Five Love Languages*, author Gary Chapman gives different ways in which we demonstrate love in a relationship. One he calls "acts of service." Such acts





can be powerful expressions of love and devotion. They are performed out of love and not obligation. Rebekah's act of drawing water for Abraham's servant and his animals demonstrates the selflessness of acts of service.

In an article titled, "Unleashing the Power" (*Pentecostal Herald*, March 2006), Nan Pamer wrote of the many new words that have been added to the English language in the past few years. All focus upon self: self-actualization, self-absorbed, self-consumed, self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-centered, and self-sufficient—just to name a few.

The bride of Christ will be focused upon serving Him and others rather than herself. We demonstrate our commitment by service (care) just as Jesus shows His love for us.

2. She had a pure heart.

Scripture describes Rebekah as "very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her" (verse 16). Purity is beautiful but it is more than just in one's physical appearance. One who is pure is chaste, clean, and wholesome. A pure heart speaks of right standing and right living, of character and integrity.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

Life Reflection:

James 1:27 tells us that the believer is to "keep himself unspotted from the world." We are to be pure. What steps do you think we can take to maintain our purity before the Lord?

How does our present society view the importance of righteous living?

How does God view it?



© 2008

Visit: www.moretolifetoday.com



3. She had a willing heart.

Abraham's servant was impatient to accomplish his mission. Food was set before him and those with him, but he could wait no longer to explain why he was there. This duty rested heavily upon him. "I will not eat, until I have told mine errand" (verse 33). As he concluded his story, Laban and Bethuel acknowledged that this was from the Lord. "Take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken" (verse 51).

The next morning the servant was eager to begin his return home immediately. At the family's protest that they needed a few days with the girl before she left, the servant implored, "Hinder me not, seeing the LORD has prospered my way" (verse 56). Finally, the family decided that Rebekah should make the decision. She replied without hesitation, "I will go." Had Rebekah been unwilling to leave her home, she would have been unqualified to become Isaac's bride. She was willing to separate herself from all that she knew and follow in blind obedience and trust.

Life Reflection:

What emotions do you think Rebekah felt as she made her decision to go with Abraham's servant?

Have you ever struggled with obeying something you felt God was asking you to do?

At the end of her journey, Rebekah met Isaac, the man she had traveled so far to marry. The last verse of the chapter tells us, "And he loved her."

Life Response:

The Bible tells us another love story—the love of God and the romance of redemption. While Abraham's servant pursued a life companion for Isaac, Jesus is pursuing His bride for all eternity.

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:31-32).



© 2008

Visit: www.moretolifetoday.com



Life Reflection:

What qualities do you think that Christ is looking for in His bride?

Do you feel He sees many of these qualities in your life?

God separated Abraham unto himself, and his covenant with him was based upon that separation. He said, "You cannot go back and your son cannot go back. Your son's bride must come out from among them and be separated unto me if she will be part of this covenant."

Nothing has changed in this regard. The Lord still seeks those who will separate themselves unto Him. We cannot go back to what we were before and be His bride.

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever" (I John 2:15-17, NKJV).

Life Reflection:

Why do you think separation and purity are so important to the Lord?

Can a bride pledge herself to two bridegrooms at once? Why is it impossible for us to love God and the world at the same time?

Rebekah responded readily when faced with the decision to go to her bridegroom. Today God is asking for our response to His call for purity, holiness, separation, and service. Soon He will call us to be with Him forever.



© 2008

Visit: www.moretolifetoday.com



Do you hear the organ striking the chords of "Here Comes the Bride"? What is your answer?

My Prayer:

Dear Lord, teach me Your ways. Help me to be acceptable; cleanse me from all impurities. I want to live holy and separated unto You for Your service, looking always for Your soon coming to catch Your bride away to forever be with You.

More Deeper Life References:

Isaiah 61:10
Matthew 25:1-13
Ephesians 5:26-27
Revelation 19:8
Revelation 21:9

*Adapted by Susan Tracy
from a sermon by Garry Tracy*



© 2008

Visit: www.moretolifetoday.com