



Our passage for today tells a most remarkable love story. Before I tell you the story, there is some context I need to give. In Genesis 24, we discover Abraham is 137 years old. The Scripture tells us that God had blessed him in every way.

But at this point in his life, Isaac, who had been born to him and Sarah when they were 90 and 100 years of age... was still single. If Abraham was to have descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore, Isaac needed a wife.

In that day and time, it was customary for parents to choose who their children would marry.

Anybody here wish it was still like that?

Because of his advanced years, Abraham entrusted this responsibility to Eliezer, his chief servant.

Abraham gave Eliezer specific instructions, 24:3-4:

Genesis 24:3-4  
“I want you to swear by the LORD,  
the God of heaven and the God of earth,  
that you will not get a wife for my son  
from the daughters of the Canaanites,  
among whom I am living,  
but will go to my country and my own relatives  
and get a wife for my son Isaac.”

Did Abraham not want Isaac to marry a Canaanite woman because he looked down upon the Canaanites?

The answer to that question is no.

How do we know that?

Remember Abraham’s dealings in Genesis 23 with Ephron the Hittite from whom he purchased a cave in which to bury Sarah?

In his interactions with Ephron, and the other Hittites who lived in Hebron, Abraham was gracious and courteous.

You can read about this in Genesis 23.

Abraham was the same way in his interactions with King Abimelech in Genesis 21:22-34 regarding the well of Beersheba.

So why then did Abraham give this directive to his chief servant?

The answer is found in a NT command.



This analogy is rooted in agriculture and would have been easily understood by first century readers.

To be yoked together with another person... is to be bound to them... like two animals are bound together by a yoke, so that, where one goes the other goes, what one does the other does.

The yoke mentioned in the book of 2 Corinthians... is obviously not literal but representative. Of what?

Of a covenant that binds two people together.

In this command God says to his people... a believer is not to be bound by covenant to an unbeliever.

At the first wedding described in Genesis 2:24... a wedding that was officiated by God himself, when Adam and Eve entered into a marriage covenant with one another, three verbs were used to describe the “yoking together” of a man and a woman.

Genesis 2:24

For this reason a man  
will **leave** his father and mother  
and **be united** to his wife,  
and they will **become** one flesh.

**Leave**... in the making of a marriage covenant... a new relationship is begun that supersedes one's relationship with their father and mother.

**Unite**... in the making of a marriage covenant promises and vows are spoken in the presence of God and witnesses that express the intent of a man and a woman to forge an exclusive life-long relationship.

**Become**... within the parameters of the marriage covenant, there is room for a deep and profound unity to develop between a husband and wife over a lifetime.

This same directive was restated in the book of Ephesians.  
But in Ephesians a most surprising theological application is made.

Ephesians 5:31-32

“For this reason a man  
will leave his father and mother  
and be united to his wife,  
and they will become one flesh.”

**This is a profound mystery –**

A man and a woman becoming one flesh is a profound mystery.

But the profound mystery of marriage... is intended by God to point to another mystery even more profound...

Ephesians 5:31-32

“For this reason a man  
will leave his father and mother  
and be united to his wife,  
and they will become one flesh.”

This is a profound mystery –  
but I am talking about Christ  
and the church.

... that of the relationship between Jesus Christ and his church.

When a person receives and believes in Jesus they enter into... a covenant relationship with the triune God, like that of the marriage between a man and a woman.

Is it not incredible that God desires to have with us... such an exclusively, committed love relationship?

Jesus spoke of this in Matthew 11:28-30.

Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to me,  
all you who are weary and burdened,  
and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you  
and learn from me,  
for I am gentle and humble in heart,  
and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Jesus intentionally used the word “yoke.”  
Here in the gospel of Matthew he invites his listeners to enter into a covenant relationship with himself... to willingly yoke their lives to his.

It is important to clarify that being yoked together with Jesus is not a burdensome thing.

What is burdensome is living disconnected from the triune God.

Abraham had entered into a covenant relationship with God in Genesis 15:17-21 and 17:7-14, where...



**God yoked his life to Abraham, and  
Abraham yoked his life to God.**

When Isaac was circumcised, he too, entered into a covenant relationship with the God of his father, which meant, all the promises which God had made to his father now were his as well.

Why didn't Abraham want Isaac to marry a Canaanite woman?  
Because the people of Canaan had turned away from God.  
They had exchanged the truth of God, plainly revealed in the creation, and had chosen to love and serve created things, rather than the Creator.

It was the Canaanites love of the abnormal, that suppressed the truth and corrupted their thinking, and in turn their behavior.  
As a culture, the Canaanites were moving every further away from God.

Abraham knew that Isaac could not yoke his life to a Canaanite woman and live in covenant relationship with the LORD.

The NT explains:

2 Corinthians 6:14

Do not be yoked together  
with unbelievers.

For what do righteousness and wickedness  
have in common?

Or what fellowship  
can light have with darkness?

What harmony is there  
between Christ and Belial?

Isaac's covenant relationship with the LORD was the relationship that determined and shaped all other relationships, including his marriage... no one was to supersede the place held by the LORD in his life.

This is why it was of the utmost importance that Isaac marry a woman who shared his faith in the LORD.

Rebekah was beautiful, hospitable, compassionate to people and animals; she was strong, energetic and welcoming. But the quality that mattered most when it came to her being a wife for Isaac... was that she believed in and loved God.

If I had been Eliezer, I would have asked the same question he asked of Abraham in verse 5:

“What if the woman is unwilling to come  
back with me to this land?  
Shall I then take your son back to the  
country you came from?”

Genesis 24:5

Abraham answer to his chief servant was explicitly clear:

**You are not to take Isaac back!**

Going back to the life we lived before God found us... are not options for the one who follows Jesus.

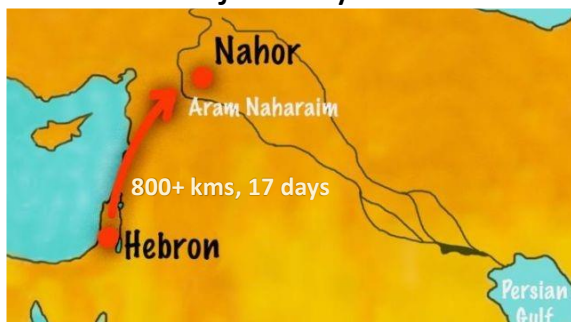
Abraham realized that his ask of Eliezer was huge.  
But look at the assurance he gave to him.

“The LORD, the God of heaven,  
who brought me out of my father’s household  
and my native land and who spoke to me  
and promised me on oath, saying,  
‘To your offspring I will give this land’ –  
he will send his angel before you so that you  
can get a wife for my son from there.”

Genesis 24:7-8

On the basis of this assurance, Eliezer in v.9, swore an oath to Abraham that he would do as Abraham asked.

So we’re ready now... to hear what happened when Eliezer set out from Hebron and journeyed to Nahor in a search of a bride for Isaac



When Eliezer arrived in Nahor, the first thing he did was pray – v.12-14.  
God answered Eliezer – v.15-21

Eliezer asked Rebekah, v.22-23 – “whose daughter are you?” and “Is there room in your father’s household for us to spend the night?”  
Her answer compelled Eliezer to worship – v.26-27



The welcome of Rebekah's family – v.28-33a

Eliezer's reveal – v.33b-49

Laban and Bethuel's response – v.50-51

Eliezer worshiped again – v.52

Eliezer gave the family Abraham's gifts – v.53

Eliezer requested to immediately return to Abraham – v.54

Laban and the mother's answer – v.55

Eliezer's response – v.56

Rebekah's decision – v.57-58

Rebekah is sent and blessed by her family – v.59-61

Isaac and Rebekah met – v.62-66

Isaac and Rebekah are married – v.67

How would you like to have had this as your "how we met" story?

We need to ask – why does this story include such detail?

Why did this story receive more space than the story of creation?

**56 / 67**  
**1417 / 1751**

Let me give you three reasons that I thought of.

- 1. The LORD wants us to know that the story of his rescue is a love story.**

## a love story

I came across an article on the Ligonier website that was written by Warren Gage.

In the article Warren imagined Rebekah saying to Eliezer, as they journeyed from Haran to Canaan, “Tell me about Isaac.” This is the response he imagined Eliezer giving.

“Rebekah, the young man who is to be your husband had a most remarkable birth. An angel of God announced that he was to be born. His birth was nothing less than a miracle, for his mother was both barren and far beyond the years of childbearing. Abraham named him Isaac, which means ‘laughter’ because of the joy he brought to his parents and to their household.

But there came a dread day when his father was told to offer up his beloved son upon an altar of sacrifice. And so, Abraham set out with him on a three-day journey to the mountains of Moriah. There Abraham made it known to Isaac that he was the sacrifice God required that day.

Isaac permitted himself to be bound for the sacrifice. But at the last-minute God intervened and spared Isaac from the knife Abraham had raised to slay him.

Abraham named that place “The LORD will provide.”

This is truly who the LORD is!

I must tell you Rebekah... Abraham sent me to seek for... the woman... God had chosen as a bride for his son. And you, precious daughter, are that chosen one! He led me right to you!

You will be an heir along with Isaac of the blessings of the covenant which God entered into with Abraham and now with Isaac.

Through your offspring all nations of the earth will be blessed.

This is the young man you will marry.

This is the one who will love you.” Warren Gage, Ligonier Ministries

All of God’s dealings with Isaac were motivated by his love for Isaac.

It is love that compels God to rescue the fallen sons and daughters of Adam and Eve.

Consider this word picture of God found in Zephaniah 3:17.

**Zephaniah 3:17**

**The LORD your God is with you,  
the Mighty Warrior who saves.  
He will take great delight in you;  
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,  
but will rejoice over you with singing.”**

Though we live in period of time that the Bible calls the last days, and though the brokenness of the world is always before us, these days in which we live, are days where God... in love... through his Spirit and his followers, is urging the people of the earth to come home to Him... the One who created them and did everything necessary to save them.

The people of God are not called by God to pronounce damnation upon the earth, but rather, to urge people to turn their lives towards Jesus. It is the kindness of God, demonstrated at the cross of Jesus... that melts a hardened heart and leads one to repentance. Romans 2:4

And so I say... **be encouraged today... the hope offered to the world in Jesus Christ is truly good news!**

- 2. Genesis 24 impresses upon the reader that those found by God, are led by God, and that God's providence and care is evidenced in the ordinary and the extraordinary, the small as well the large.**

Look how the LORD led Eliezer!  
Are you not left astounded?!  
Jesus also spoke of this in Matthew 6:25-32.

And so, I say... **be encouraged today that the LORD will do the same with you.**

- 3. In the story of Genesis, the emphasis now shifts from Abraham and Sarah... to Isaac and Rebekah.**

Our faith is a faith to be passed on... to our children and to others... who will carry it forward to the next generation.

Christianity is not a faith one is born into.  
I am not a follower of Jesus because I was born into a family who followed Jesus.

I am a follower of Jesus because on September 18, 1971, in response to the triune God's pursuit of me, I believed in and received Jesus as my Savior and welcomed him to be the One in charge of my life.

The triune God who pursued me for the first fifteen years of my life, used my family to make himself known to me.

I have a heritage of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, great-great grandparents who loved God and served God.

But I am not a follower of Jesus simply because my ancestors were. I am a follower of Jesus because God revealed himself to me and in faith and trust of him, I turned my life towards him.

This is the story of some of you, as it was Isaac's story. He had a spiritual heritage from his parents. But he had to make their faith... his own... and he did. We know this because when God revealed himself to Moses at the burning bush, the LORD said to him,

**"I am the God of your father,  
the God of Abraham,  
the God of Isaac  
and the God of Jacob."**

Exodus 3:6

And what we have received, we pass on... in hope that our children and others... will choose the LORD as we chose him.

I know that not everyone here comes from a family who follows God. Did Rebekah trust in the LORD before Eliezer's visit?

We are not certain.

But we do know, her decision to go with Eliezer to a land she had never known, to marry a man she had never met, because of promises made by God to another man and woman she had never met, was one she made and expressed when she said, "I will go."

As Abraham and Sarah had done long ago, Rebekah left her home and family and went to the land of promise... in obedience to the LORD. Through Eliezer, God called Rebekah from Haran... and Rebekah said yes to the LORD.

Did she know the full extent of what she had said yes to?  
I don't think so.  
But whoever does!

This is why covenant is so important in following Jesus.  
We trust him for the unknown, confident that he who chose us and found us and saved us will never abandon us.

And so I say... **be encouraged today... that God is faithful... and will use your life and witness in the life of your family and others... to build his church in this generation, and the generations to follow until he returns.**