



Surrey Hills BAPTIST CHURCH

“Here Comes the Bride”

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If you have been with us, you know we are in a series of messages in the Old Testament in which we are looking at the big events in the Old Testament. Curiously enough, every week (even though we are in a narrative in the Old Testament so far) we have ended up talking about Jesus. The entire Bible, the Old Testament points to the cross. The New Testament points back to the cross.

A few weeks ago we talked about creation. We talked about Adam and Eve. We talked about Noah. Now, we have talked about Abraham. Abraham is an interesting guy. Remember, he is the one that the three major religions of the world all revere. The Muslims think he is great because they trace their lineage back through Ishmael. The Jews trace their lineage through Isaac. Then we see as Christians that our Lord Jesus Christ is from the tree of Abraham. He is a significant guy. We talked about in Genesis 22 how Abraham took Isaac up to Mt. Moriah. Last week we talked about trials. Today, we are going to wrap up Abraham, and we are going to start talking about Isaac.

It is an interesting time here. I get it that not everybody loves Valentine’s Day. Some people believe that it is a holiday that has been construed by greeting card people and florists just to make money. As we are doing our study through the Word, it is interesting that God has brought us today to a passage about love. One of the greatest love stories in the entire Bible is what we are going to study today. I saw this week that Sirius radio has a channel dedicated to only love songs. I understand that does not appeal to everyone because maybe you are not in the love stage of life or maybe you are single or you are single again. But let’s see if the Father can teach us something today through the word of God through four characters. We are going to look at the father, Abraham. We are going to look at the son, Isaac. We are going to look at the bride, Rebekah. And then we are going to look at the servant.

I think it is significant to tell you up front that I am going to talk today about *types*. There are people that I think go way to the extreme about this whole thing about *types*. I’m not that guy. But I do believe there are some clear, obvious evidences that God is giving us a picture of things to come. For example, last week we looked at Genesis 22 where Abraham took Isaac up the mountain. Remember, Isaac was carrying all of the wood himself. He was laid as the sacrifice. Isaac was clearly a picture or a *type* of Jesus, the Messiah. It is clear that some things you just cannot get away from. Webster’s Dictionary says this, “*a type is to figure, to represent by a model or symbol beforehand.*” A *type* is a person, a place, a thing, or an event that is a foreshadowing of a future person or event. We will see here some clear pictures, some *types* if you will. I want to give you some rules. You have to say a *type* is a *type* and is for real and legit only if the scripture declares it.

For example, in Exodus and Numbers, the children of Israel were in a dry and thirsty land. It was a barren

wasteland. They needed water, and God told Moses to strike the rock. (Exodus 17) Then 40 years later, they are in need of water again, and in Numbers 20 God tells Moses to speak to the rock. Remember, Moses was disobedient and didn't get into the Promised Land. The truth of the matter is that 1 Corinthians 10:4 clearly points to us that that rock was a picture or a *type* of Christ. So, when we talk about *types*, they have to be scripturally sustainable.

Furthermore, the structure has to dictate it. Now there is nothing in the Bible that says all of these feasts in the Bible really refer to the life of Jesus. But, it is curious to me that Christ died during the time of Pentecost. Christ's rising was on the day of the First-fruits of the Spirit descending. There is something that I think is significant and worthy of investigating concerning the *types* of the Bible.

Finally, I would just tell you that God spends one chapter talking about creation, but there are numerous chapters talking about the tabernacle. The tabernacle represents Christ. We talk about the things we love. Therefore, bear in mind that we are going to see some pictures today in the arena of *types* or *typology*. If you have not studied this before, today may be a good learning experience for you.

I. The Father's Charge – Go Find a Bride

In Genesis 24, Abraham is going to be a *type*. He is going to represent the Father—the Heavenly Father. Abraham is now old. He was getting on in years. He was probably around 140 years old because we know that Isaac is going to be 40 years old, so Abraham is a pretty old guy.

A. There is a Command to go and Obtain a Bride

Let's begin in Genesis 24:1, "*Abraham was now old, getting on in years, and the LORD had blessed him in everything.*"² *Abraham said to his servant, the elder of his household who managed all he owned, "Place your hand under my thigh."* That is kind of an unusual thing. I don't know that I'm going to hang out with Doug and say, "Hey, put your hand under my thigh." But the truth of the matter is, that was nothing more than shaking hands and having a covenant and agreement. That is all that was. That seems a little bit weird to us, but in that day that was the way in which you made a promise. It was a covenant. Put your hand under my thigh so I will know that this is a significant, meaningful thing for you. Abraham is talking to his servant in verse 3, "*and I will have you swear.*" That is an oath. That is a covenantal agreement. We have talked about covenants. They cannot be voided if new circumstances arise. A covenant is made to God. Of course, the greatest covenant is what God gave to us. The marriage covenant is also significant.

Continuing on in verse 3, "*Place your hand under my thigh and I will have you swear by the LORD, God of heaven and God of earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I live.*" You see the picture. You have Abraham, and he is sending the servant out to go find a wife for Isaac who is 40 years old. He says, "Just promise me that you are not going to get a wife from one of these Canaanites." This is significant. It is mentioned at least two times in the passage that we are going to go over. The truth is Abraham said this to his servant, "I want you to get a woman who believes like we believe." The Canaanites would have been polytheistic. They would have believed there were many gods. Abraham believed in one God. Abraham says, "Don't go out get some woman for my son who does not believe like us."

How many fathers want the best for their children? 100%. Students, I just want to tell you straight up, when your parents talk to you about what the Bible has to say about not being unequally yoked with an unbeliever, it really starts with your dating life. I know it is a weird thing, but every marriage began with a date. Therefore, you should not date someone you could not marry. If a person is not someone who you could marry, then you have no reason to date them. You say, "Preacher, you don't understand. I'm doing missionary dating. I'm going to go date them, and then I'm going to bring them to Christ." Some of you could say, "My wife brought me to Christ." I get it. In an honest moment, you would have to say that is not the best way. And I'm not even sure it is God's

perfect will. So, we don't want to marry anyone who does not believe like us. I'm just going to say the following straight up: Don't date anyone you could not marry. Don't date someone who is not a Christian. And I would add (this is the pastor's parentheses), don't date anyone who is not a growing Christian. For us young people, we need to be taught that just like Abraham wanted the best for his son, your parents (when they give you direction, and they give you guidance) they only want the best for you. When they say, "No," it is the parents' prerogative. I think parents need to say, "No" sometimes. How are you going to expect your children to make good choices if you don't help them to make good choices.

B. There is a Cost to Consider When Going to Obtain a Bride

Genesis 24:5, "*The servant said to him, "Suppose the woman is unwilling to follow me to this land? Should I have your son go back to the land you came from?"*" Isn't that kind of how it is in life when God gives us a command like to go and to share the gospel in Matthew 18. And we say, "What if somebody does not like me? What if they are turned off to the gospel?" Which they will be. We need to understand that because that is part of the deal. It does not matter. Notice in verse 5, "*The servant said to him, "Suppose the woman is unwilling to follow me to this land? Should I have your son go back to the land you came from?"*" The servant is saying, "What if they don't like me?" We do that in the Christian life. What if they turn me off? What if I get embarrassed? What if I offend someone? We must count the cost. This is a little application here.

Notice in verse 7, "*The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from my native land, who spoke to me and swore to me, 'I will give this land to your offspring'— He will send His angel before you, and you can take a wife for my son from there.*" Here is the bottom line. You take the analogy of the Great Commission to go and share the gospel. What Abraham is saying to his servant is, "Hey. Your responsibility is to go do what you have been called to do. If she does not come with you, it is not your responsibility." We have a responsibility to take the gospel. It is not our responsibility to try to talk people into things. It is the Holy Spirit that draws, but we have a responsibility to communicate the gospel. Here we see the father. He is very interested. He says, "Go get the bride." We understand that God has a road map for us, and we are not to be unequally yoked.

In chapter 24, I am going to pick up in verse 10 because we are looking not only at the picture of Abraham as the father but look at the picture of the servant. He was dedicated to do whatever the father had told him to do. He is a servant. I want us to see very clearly. I'll go through the list here. Abraham represents God. Isaac represents the Son. Rebekah is a *type* of the redeemed. The servant is the servant of God; that is us. And, of course, the angel is the Holy Spirit.

II. The Servant's Commitment

I want us to take a look beginning in verse 10 concerning the servant's commitment. The father says, "Go get me a wife for my son," and then notice in verse 10 what the servant has to say as he responds to the father. "*The servant took 10 of his master's camels and departed.*" The master said to the servant, "I want you to go," and the servant did what? He went. Our marching orders are for obedience. What did he do? He took a bunch of camels, and he took a bunch of gold and some of the heavy stuff.

Verse 12, "*LORD, God of my master Abraham,*" he prayed, "*grant me success.*" That is bless me. Allow me to do supernaturally what is not naturally possible and show kindness (that is the favor of God) on my master Abraham. Here he says, "I'm standing here, and I'm going to go and do what you want." He is off to the town of Nahor.

In Genesis 24:13-14 the servant says, "*See, I am standing beside this spring, and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water.*"¹⁴ *May it be that when I say to a young woman, 'Please let down your jar that I may have a drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too'—let her be the one you have*

chosen for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master.”

In verse 17, he sees her in the distance. Why he picked her above others, I don't know. I think she perhaps was astoundingly beautiful. So the servant goes up to this woman. Get the picture. The pot of water on her shoulder, and she is walking along. He says, "I'm thirsty." She says, "Well, I'll give you a drink." So she takes her water pitcher down and gives him a drink. Then she says, "Oh, by the way, Sir, if you would like, I will also give a drink to your camels." And he says, "Yes! She's the one!" Get the picture. There are 10 camels. It is suggested that a camel on a full day's walk will consume about 20 gallons of water. So you've got 10 camels at 20 gallons of water. That is 200 gallons of water! Girlfriend here is dipping 200 gallons. Rebekah went the second mile. There is never a traffic jam on the second mile highway. The servant says, "Hey, I want to tell you about the most eligible bachelor in the Middle East. He comes from a wealthy, wonderful family." In other words, what he is saying to her is, "Let's make a deal. I've got all of this gold. I've got all of these things that I am going to give you, and I want you to come back and to follow me." Lo and behold, she says, "We've got plenty of food at my house, why don't you come to my place." She gets the family involved. This relative, perhaps a brother, Laban, is going to get involved.

Notice what happens in chapter 24:54-55, "*When they got up in the morning, he said, 'Send me to my master.'*"⁵⁵ *But her brother and mother said, "Let the girl stay with us for about 10 days. Then she can go."* So the family is cautious. But understand, this guy has come in, and he is asking this girl to go to a place she has never been to marry a man she has never seen, to go to another country, to leave her family. I think it is right that they were prudent here. The servant responds in verse 56, "*But he responded to them, "Do not delay me, since the LORD has made my journey a success. Send me away so that I may go to my master."*" Then they come up with this very interesting idea. They said, "Well, why don't we see what Rebekah thinks about all of this." They say, "Hey, Rebekah. What is your opinion on this?" Verse 58, "*They called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" She replied, "I will go."*"⁵⁹ *So they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men."*

A. The Servant Represents the Holy Spirit

Do you find it interesting that the servant's name is not mentioned? I think it is kind of a *type* of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not to bring glory to Himself but to glorify Jesus Christ. When we serve others, it is not to get glory for ourselves. We are to be servants of God. It is interesting that the word "master" is used some 44 times in this particular narrative, which is a very long narrative.

III. The Bride's Confidence

A. She Accepts the Offer

Let's transition. We've talked about the father, and we've talked about the servant. Beginning in verse 55, I want to talk about the bride. Rebekah says, "*I will go.*" (Genesis 24:58) She accepts. I think it is an interesting picture. The situation is laid out. Did Rebekah do anything to earn this relationship she is about to have? No. All she did was respond to what had been laid out to her by the servant. Don't you see the picture? We have a responsibility to communicate the gospel, and those without the gospel have the responsibility to respond as they have been drawn by the Holy Spirit. It is totally a God thing. She responds. Rebekah represents the church—the bride of Christ.

B. She Proceeds by Faith

Let's begin reading in verse 61, "*Then Rebekah and her young women got up, mounted the camels, and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and left.*" What you don't hear a lot about is what happened on the journey.

I have this saying, “I think men speak the most when the scripture speaks the least.” If you will allow me a little conjecture here, what do you think happened on the journey back to Isaac? I have to think that Rebekah is asking the servant, “Tell me about this guy that I am going to invest my everything in. Tell me about Isaac.” What a great picture for us. We need and should get to know the one that we are committing our life to. She has unbelievable confidence. She proceeds by faith. She was asked to believe a man she didn’t know. She was asked to move to a land she had never seen. Then she was rewarded. It is this amazing picture.

Now, think back to Genesis 22. I wonder if on that journey the servant said, “I’ve got to tell you a story. There was a time when Isaac was a teenager that he was taken up on a hill, and he was to be sacrificed, but he walked away from the hill.”

IV. *The Son’s Covenant*

This leads us to our final character of the day—the son. I am going to begin reading in verse 63 of our chapter today. “*In the early evening, Isaac went out to walk in the field, and looking up, he saw camels coming.*” Give me a little latitude here. Here Isaac is out in the field, and maybe he is wondering, “Am I ever going to get a bride? I’m 40 years old, and my father has been promised to be the father of many nations. Therefore, if it is going to happen, it is going to have to happen through me. We need to continue this lineage and this heritage.” So he looks up, and he sees this camel. I don’t know. He might wonder if it is a mirage or are they really coming? Could this possibly be my bride?

Rebekah is coming here with a servant, and she says to the servant, “Is that hunk of a guy—is that the guy that I’m going to spend the rest of my life with?” With Valentine’s Day coming up, imagine this in slow motion—he starts going to her. In typical fashion, she takes the veil and covers herself. Then they get together. It is a wonderful picture of how they have this love, one for another. It is important that they would get together. It is important for the nation of Israel. It is really important for all of us that they as a couple would get together.

A. *The Son Represents Jesus at Calvary*

There are three things that I think Isaac represents in *typology*. I think Isaac represents Jesus at Calvary. In Genesis 22, he went up the hill. He walked off Mt. Moriah. I told you three weeks ago that there is Mt. Zion, there is Mt. Moriah, and there is Mt. Calvary. Essentially, we are talking about the same mountain area. Isaac was just like Jesus. He went up the mountain, carried his own cross, and then came down. Alive! You see this picture, this *typology*, that the son represents Jesus at Calvary.

B. *The Son Represents Jesus Waiting for His Bride*

Furthermore, I see that the son represents Jesus waiting for the bride. Remember early on the servant wants to take the son and Dad said, “No. This is our land, and we are going to stay here. I don’t want you to take my son.” And so Isaac is waiting. What is that verse that you hear so many times, “*Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.*”² *My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?*”³ *And if I go and prepare a place for you.*” (John 14:1-3) What does the Bible say Jesus is doing right now? He is at the right hand of God making intercession for us. He is waiting for the bride of Christ to come just as Isaac waited for his wife, Rebekah, to come. It is a beautiful picture here. We used to sing a song called, “The Savior Is Waiting.” I think there is truth that the Savior is waiting. He has gone to prepare a place. He is at the right hand of the Father. He is waiting. That is what Isaac did. He was waiting for his bride.

C. *The Son Represents Jesus Welcoming His Bride with Joy*

Now, who is the bride in our terms? The church. We constitute the bride of Christ. Well, the son also represents Jesus welcoming the bride. Remember I told you that Isaac came and he went and they connected. Think about what is going to happen in heaven. It is going to be a party in heaven. The Bible calls it the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Listen to Revelation 19:7, “*Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come.*” What are we talking about? We are talking about where the Lamb of God and the bride are married together. There is a party. There is a celebration. It is a worship time. “*And his wife hath made herself ready.*”

You know the husband has a responsibility. In Ephesians 5:25-26, the Bible says, “*Husbands, love your wives, just as also Christ loved the church.*” We are the church. We are the bride of Christ. We have a responsibility to allow Him to do this, “*and gave Himself for her,²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her.*” Who is “*her*”? The bride. Who is the bride of Christ? The church. He wants us to be cleansed in the “*in the washing of water by the word.*” It is the Word of God that cleanses us and washes us.

In a way, I love being old. I’ve done a lot of weddings. You have heard this said before, but I’ve never seen an ugly bride. A lot of times I will go by and pray with the bride and the groom. In this bride’s room, it is crazy. They trash the place. They are getting dressed, and there are clothes everywhere. This is like before makeup. Everything is disheveled. Hair is going everywhere. They are in the process of preparing for the wedding. They are cleaning up. They are making up. They are making sure that there is not anything that is not taken care of. Really, the application for us today is this: We as the church—as the bride of Christ—have a responsibility to clean up our mess, to clean up our act. Whenever we believe Jesus is coming doesn’t matter. We do believe that He is coming to receive us unto Himself. Don’t you, church, want to be prepared as a bride adorned for her wedding?