

Session 10 Pictures of the Bride: Rebekah, Part 2

INTRODUCTION

We're gathering back for Session 10. We're beginning on page 5: "The certainty of divine intervention." We're continuing our study on "The Pictures of the Bride" with Rebekah.

"The master's goods." All of God's power is at the Holy Spirit's disposal. He can use it when He wants it. He's going to really use it at the end. When the time comes for the bride to come forth, He will so powerfully use all of His Master's goods. Acts 1:17-19 tells us, "All of Your sons and daughters will have dreams and visions. There will be signs in the heavens and signs on the earth" (Acts 1:17-19, paraphrased). Even the sun and the moon will obey the Word of God. Everything will line up under the orchestration of God's plan with supernatural power in the hour in which God culminates His purpose on the earth.

"Ten camels" speaks of an abundance. You'd think that if you want to go meet a girl and win her heart, a camel full of jewels is pretty good. This man is bringing ten camels. *Abundance* is the word, an abundance of gifts, because the point of the camels is to bring provision to bring the girl back. The camels are to bring gifts for the purpose of awakening her heart in love, and then providing for her to go through the wilderness. I don't think you need ten camels; what's being emphasized here is abundance. The camels carry the gifts and the provisions, the food and water.

A BRIDE WHO REFLECTS HER HUSBAND'S SERVANT'S HEART

The camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water. It's the evening time, the time when the women go out to draw water. It's outside the city and it's late at night. We know evening means it's at the end of the day. That's what the Lord has said; that the day is coming to an end (Rom. 13:11?). We're approaching the time when the Lord will return.

The place is late and it's outside the city. In other words, this girl is a very hard worker. She didn't go to the fourth bathroom in the house and turn on the automatic tap; she's walking way out there to get water. She's a worker. We saw that she has to be willing to follow the servant, the Holy Spirit, but the number one characteristic that's manifest when the Holy Spirit looks at her is her servant's heart. Her servant's heart is extravagant. The Lord is the ultimate Servant, Jesus Christ. He wants a bride that's equally yoked. He wants a bride that's meek, that rules in meekness as a servant, because the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in eternity are servants—not only in redemption, but before the redemption was ever enacted. In Their heart They think of others all the time. That's the quality of the heart of God in the Godhead.

He wants a bride who has a servant's heart—not just someone who looks out for her own comfort and her own interests. I've got a big groan that says, "Oh!" Someone give me a groan. The Lord is going to end the day with all of us denying our flesh. It's liberty, so they say. I'm not claiming maturity in that area, but I want it. There will be success. The Holy Spirit is dependent upon the Father each step of the way. It's the Father's plan each time; it's never the Holy Spirit is. He's always the servant of the Father, every step of the way. We're always the servants of God the Father in our ministries if we're doing it the real, Holy Spirit way.

This thing really has grass root implications, because so often the people don't respond in the way that we want. I don't mean they don't all repent because we want them to; I mean they rise up and strike us, they hate us and

slander us, but if we're really servants of the Father we can release it and go on. I've found time and time again that I'm not as much the servant of the Father, as I am someone who wants things to work right with my own agenda in place. Again, the agenda doesn't have to be riches and fames; the agenda is for life to go well. The Holy Spirit is interested in me and you growing in love as His servants. He allows certain things to take place.

“FAITHFUL IS HE WHO CALLS YOU, WHO ALSO WILL DO IT”

“Behold, I stand.” He's standing by the well of water and the daughters of the city are coming out to draw water. I like that. The Holy Spirit says, “I stand.” The Lord told Moses in Exodus 14:13, “Stand still and see the plan unfold.” “Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord” (Ex. 14:13), is what God told Moses.

The Holy Spirit is waiting on the Father. It's hard to think of the Holy Spirit as anxious, because He's not. Let's apply this to the servants of God who are friends of the Bridegroom. It's so easy for us to get into striving. It takes faith to wait, right? It really takes faith not to give up our hope in the wilderness. He told the servants, the friends of the Bridegroom, “Stand; just stand. Don't make it happen. I've already got a plan. Rebekah is already on her way to get water and I've sent her. You don't even know it.”

It's so wonderful when we're waiting before the Lord and we let events unfold, but the pressure, the pressure of the needs of the moment so often causes us to try to make the events happen more quickly because the need is so great. In leadership, the people are crying out to have their needs met. In our little situation here we desperately want a different facility. We've wanted it for a few years. Our facility is very inadequate. I've been given so many good master plans. I say, “Man, I'm so afraid.” Because I know there's a building, like Rebekah. It's coming. It's on the way somewhere, somehow, and I can't get out there. The only reason I say that about a building is because the Lord has spoken to us with such detail on a number of occasions. It's astounding! He has been so faithful in our past about providing buildings. He's done it a few of times. He told us in advance, and it happened exactly, down to the last detail. He's actually told us about a few of them. We're sitting back and we've known it for years; it's a powerful revelation.

When push comes to shove, I don't mind if a committee goes out and looks around, but I said, “Don't pull me into it, because I know in the end that the Lord is unfolding something and I'm too afraid to mess it up.” We'll find a decent building for a good price, get ourselves twenty million dollars in debt, and then the real thing is going to manifest and we're cooked ducks. I said, “I refuse to do that.”

I know in the flesh that sometimes having to wait drives me crazy; it's frustrating, having to stand and wait. I want to meet the need, because the need is apparent. The need is causing trouble. Anyone know about the need that causes trouble? “Lord, if You would hurry up, then I wouldn't push You.” I've told the Lord sometimes, “Lord, I'm trying to hurry up and wait, but it isn't working.” We want to take matters into our own hands. We want to unfold the thing. We want to force it. It says in 1 Thessalonians 5:24, “Faithful is He who calls you, who also will do it” (1 Thess. 5:24, paraphrased). It's so true.

THE BRIDE AND THE SERVANT WITH A WILLING HEART

“Behold, I stand by the well” (Gen. 24:43). He's just standing there. He has all these riches. He could have bought off anyone. He has more gold and silver in those camels. He's just standing there, waiting. That's the Holy Spirit waiting on God the Father's perfect timing and orchestration, or, if we think of it in terms of the human servants, we have to stand.

They said, “Stand by the well of water.” Of course, the exciting thing about the well of water is that it’s the place where the thirsty come. He knew that Rebekah was going to be thirsty. It’s evidenced by the fact that when the plans were made known to her, she said, “Let’s do it.” She had never even seen Isaac, but she was willing to leave everything to go marry him. She had never seen him in her life. Talk about a willing heart! She was willing.

Here’s the heart of the Holy Spirit, or the heart of the friends of the Bridegroom. He says, “Let it be that the young woman to whom I say, ‘Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,’ and she says, ‘Drink, and I’ll give your camels a drink,’ let it be” (Gen. 24:43, paraphrased).

He says it again: “Let her be the one that You have appointed, and by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master” (Gen. 24:44, paraphrased). There’s an issue of prayer going on. “Let it be”: he says it twice there. There’s a reaching to God in the process.

Again, the details are somewhat insignificant, although you could work on the various phrases there, but the real point of the matter is that God is giving some information in advance. He doesn’t do that on most things, but He does do it on occasion. Then He pulls off the plan. He orchestrates it to prove His control; that’s the point.

THE GREATEST AMONG YOU WILL BE THE SERVANT OF ALL

I want you to get the picture of these camels. Think of the odds of this; this is a very dramatic fleece. This isn’t a small fleece, because this gal has to come up to the well to do her own work, right? What do they do at the well? Hypothetically, let’s say there’s a bucket that can hold a gallon or two gallons of water. They lower it twenty, thirty, or forty feet, and pull it up with their own arms to get one or two gallons of water. That’s hard work, right? A camel holds twenty gallons. There are ten camels and they’ve traveled the whole length of the wilderness. They’re thirsty. Let’s just be practical. We’re talking about this young gal being willing and eager, after she’s finished with her work, to pull the bucket up 200 more times to help a stranger. I know our Master’s Commission’s kids have got some really good servant spirits, but I’ve never seen anyone with a servant spirit like that. She’s going to go so far beyond the call of duty. She’s going to meet this total stranger and say, “I would love to pull that bucket up thirty, forty feet, 200 more times for you. What’s your name again?” The chances of her just volunteering that out of nowhere are pretty remarkable. It’s going to reveal the heart of the servant. Of course, she’s going to be moved by God to do this, but instead of being moved by God to do some other event, she’s moved by God to exhibit the extraordinary heart of a servant, because that’s the heart of Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, “The greatest among you will be your servant” (Mt. 20:26, paraphrased), and Jesus is going to have a bride that’s the greatest of all. She will be a servant. When He said, “The greatest of all,” I have no doubt He had His bride in His mind. He said, “I’m the Servant. I’m lowly. I’m meek.”

Peter picks up on this in 1 Peter 3:5. He tells the women to adorn themselves in meekness. Again, the only time Jesus described His character was in Matthew 11:29, when He depicted Himself as lowly and meek. Peter says, “Put on garments of meekness” (1 Pet. 3:5, paraphrased). Then, later in the same book, he tells the young people, “Clothe yourselves in meekness.” Why? Because the Lord is going to have the greatest of all brides—a bride like Him.

BEWARE OF GETTING FLEECE BY YOUR FLEECE

Anyway, the servant says, “This way I’ll know. I don’t want any guesswork. I don’t want to be in anxiety or striving”—if we’re relating this to a human servant. “I have to know, Lord. This is too important.”

The thing is supernaturally natural. Everything is converging together. Of course, I’ve seen a few things all converge together and it not be the Lord. If you get too heavy into that, where you don’t have to have a relationship with the Holy Spirit and you look for external things lining up, you can get fleeced by your fleece. I can tell you a few stories where eight or nine details lined up in a manner that was absolutely bizarre. To this day I’m confused by why it happened, unless the Lord was using it to say, “You’re of the new covenant. The Spirit of God lives in you. I’ll help you from the inside, not just from the outside. I’ll help you on the outside, but My voice is on the inside of you. I will lead you and guide you.”

The old covenant was external guidance. The new covenant is internal guidance. Sometimes they’ll all line up and the Holy Spirit is only inoculating you from living like an old covenant saint. He wants you living with friendship with the Holy Spirit in a relationship, not just with everything lining up. Sometimes the Spirit gives the witness. The very events He said are going to happen actually happen. So they line up on the inside and the outside and everything is wonderful. Everything is converging.

By the way, this isn’t a New Age thing, OK? That just dawned on me. I was picturing the man on the radio. Hey, I’m still wounded. When I talked to that man today, I was just telling him what I should be doing. I wasn’t speaking as a total overcomer.

THE INTENTION OF THE BRIDE’S HEART: PURITY AND SERVANTHOOD

The intention of the bride’s heart: purity and servanthood. That’s what comes out again. The Lord said, “The greatest of all is your servant” (Mt. 20:26, paraphrased). He wants the greatest of all for His bride.

“And it happened, before he had even finished speaking. . .” (Gen. 24:15, paraphrased). There it was: she was on her way, and the first sentence out of her mouth was going to be, “I would love to draw that old bucket 200 times.” That’s the first thing that will come from her lips. That’s exactly the sort of person that the Lord has called to His Son.

Rebekah, the daughter of one of Abraham’s brothers, came out with a pitcher on her shoulder (v. 15). That’s what the Bride of Christ looks like. Jesus was girded in a towel the last time He was with His servants. His bride comes with a pitcher on her shoulder. It’s the same imagery: coming in the garb of a servant.

“Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin” (Gen. 24:16). No man had known her. And she went to the well. She went where the thirsty people go. She went where the servants go. There are so many things about the well; there’s so much imagery of water in the purpose of God.

The servant ran to meet her: “Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher” (Gen. 24:17). He said, “Can I just have a little drink?”

She had to say, “A little drink? I’ll give you 200 bucket loads.” That’s what she had to answer, in essence.

She said, “Drink, my lord” (Gen. 24:18).

“Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink” (Gen. 24:18b). That’s the key word, *quickly*. Again, we’ll look at these in a moment here. I’ll say all this again in about ninety seconds.

When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw water for your camels also.” What an extravagant statement. This is a major statement right here: “Until they have finished drinking” (Gen. 24:19). Bride of Christ, I pray for thee now that you’ll have this heart.

In verse 20, the word *quickly* shows up a second time. “Then she quickly emptied her pitcher in the trough and ran back” (Gen. 24:20, paraphrased). She’s been quick twice, and now she’s running in her enthusiasm for all the camels. And the man is watching in wonder. He’s marveling at this ball of enthusiasm to serve this total stranger. There’s a divine energy going on here. He’s wondering at her, and of course when you think of the Holy Spirit, He knows exactly what’s going on because He’s God. In the human sense he’s saying, “Lord, it’s adding up. This thing is unfolding right in front of me.” He remains silent. He didn’t tell her the whole plan, “so as to know whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not” (v. 21, NKJV).

THE CONTEXT FOR A GREAT WORK OF GOD IS THE MENIAL TASKS

Rebekah, the bride with the meek heart. There she is: she’s pictured on her first appearance with a pitcher on her shoulder. Her first picture in the Word of God of the bride that’s willing to follow the Holy Spirit is the bride with the garment of the servant. That’s the very last way Jesus was pictured to His disciples before the cross. This isn’t an accident. Jesus’ last message, as we learned from the first session, was the parable of the wedding. Jesus’ last presentation of Himself was as a servant. The two of them go hand in hand.

This is kind of a side point, but the pitcher on the shoulder and the menial tasks are so often used by God. We want the dramatic. God so often moves supernaturally in the midst of the natural. The context for the great work of God throughout history and the visitation of God is through the menial tasks. It’s amazing to read stories of men and women of God who were visited by God throughout history, and He always appeared in the midst of the menial. We want to be romantic; we want angels to appear and lift us up into the mid-heavens and the mountains to fall. The Lord says, “Go mow your lawn and I’ll talk to you out there.”

It’s really where He meets us. I could just give you a list of people. David was on the backside of Bethlehem, this little, dinky town, where Ruth had lived generations before. It had a population of maybe 142. Hooterville High is where David went to high school. He’s tending sheep. Samuel comes into town. All the seven older brothers are invited. David doesn’t even get invited, but God’s mailing list is totally up to date. He knows exactly where David is. Little Davey is out there singing songs, doing the most menial tasks, and God knows exactly where to find His servants, in the midst of the mundane.

Moses is tending sheep. There’s a fire burning up there in a bush. I think of Joseph trying to be faithful down in the dungeon with all the menial tasks of living in an Egyptian dungeon, more than a few thousand years ago. What a difficult place to live in! This is where God meets His servants, over and over and over and over again. This is where Jesus calls His disciples. They’re fishing all night, tired and exhausted. That’s where the great apostles are called, right in the context of laboring all night. They’re bummed out, bored and depressed because they caught no fish.

We could go on and on and on. “Faithful in small things,” is the truth Jesus taught. We’re trying to get in line to where the awesome prophet calls us out. That isn’t what we need. We need to be faithful in small things. We can be the servant on the back hills of the desert, and God’s mailing list is so up to date that we don’t have to have the big guns come into town and say, “Yea, thou art the one.”

“Oh, I knew it. I knew it and now everyone else knows it.” That isn’t how it has to be. It honestly doesn’t.

I’m only making fun of my own little schemes. I’m not just making fun of yours; I’m making fun of me right now, and Eric. Because you like that, don’t you? Do you identify, or are you thinking of me right now? Oh, you’re thinking of me. OK. He’s just having fun.

EVEN IN OUR IMMATURITY, WE’RE ADORNED BY GOD

“Now the woman was very beautiful to behold.” She’s beautiful to God. I have no doubt that the young woman was beautiful in the natural. The message to us is Revelation 21:2: God has adorned the bride. God has adorned; God has made her beautiful. What God calls beautiful is so totally different than what man calls beautiful. God calls a willing spirit adorned with beauty. He sees a yearning; even in our immaturity we’re called beautiful, so many times in Song of Solomon. We’re adorned by God; we’re made beautiful by Him, by the gift of righteousness, and by the Holy Spirit producing a willing spirit in us.

IF WE DON’T FEEL LIKE A VIRGIN, WE WON’T LIVE LIKE A VIRGIN

She’s a virgin. I’m sure she was a virgin in the natural in the original context, but everyone who said yes to Jesus Christ has been washed (2 Cor. 11:2-3). You’re a virgin before God.

I’ve said it a number of times: we need to have this truth penetrate our hearts, because if we don’t feel like a virgin, we won’t live like a virgin. We’re clean before God. Regardless of the robbery and perversion and thievery you came out of, you’re a virgin in the sight of God. You’re made pure, because the blood of Jesus is significantly more powerful than the stain of your sin is. You’re a pure virgin in His sight. That’s very important. She felt like one and lived like one. In Jesus, if we take the truth, it empowers us to live like one. “Pure from sin” is what I mean by that.

HE ASKS FOR A LITTLE; SHE OFFERS A LOT

“And the servant ran to meet her and said, ‘Please let me drink a little water’ (Gen. 24:17). He only asked for a small amount of water.

She said, “Drink everything. I’ll give all your camels water, too.” All he asked for was a drink or two, for a cup. She said, “I’ll give you everything.”

We see that the word *quickly* is mentioned twice. There’s an eagerness in her heart. She wants to give him drink because he’s thirsty. She has compassion. She’s like the Lord in this regard. He asks for a little; she offers a lot. There’s an extravagance about her spirit in serving.

“And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, ‘I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.’ Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels” (Gen. 24:19). Ten camels times twenty gallons is 200 gallons. That’s just

simple math. She's equally yoked to the Son of God as a servant. She works quickly, with enthusiasm, rather than grudgingly.

Again, the Lord cultivates this. I don't think that in the natural she was like this all day, every day. That isn't the point that they're trying to make. The point is this: when the bride is coming forth, she will have this enthusiasm for servanthood, like He does.

"And the man, wondering at her. . ." (Gen. 24:21). In the human arena we can see all the events adding up. Yet God will give us more of the plan. It will unfold little by little as we go. Even then he's not sure, but it's adding up as he's going. "Lord, I want to know everything now."

He says, "No, I'll give you this day your daily bread. I'll give you the guidance that you need today."

I say, "Lord, I want to change the prayer. 'Give me this day my yearly bread.' I want enough money and I want enough guidance for all of '96. Give me this day my yearly bread and I'll be happy and You'll be happy."

He says, "No, no you won't, because your heart will drift from Me. I know you."

"No, Lord. Trust me. I'm different."

"No, no you're just like the others. You're just like they are. Your heart will drift. There's a propensity in you to drift. I'll give you daily provision, daily protection, daily guidance. I'll give you daily bread."

"When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a golden nose ring"—or the other versions say, *earring*. I don't want to do the nose ring... never mind, I was just kidding; I was about to make a joke. Most versions say *earring*, which speaks of the bondservant. The man, the servant, the Holy Spirit wants to give the bondservant sign, and then two bracelets for the wrists weighing ten shekels of gold, which are very expensive.

SEEING THE UNFOLDING PLAN IN TERMS OF THE PURPOSES OF GOD

He said, "Whose daughter are you? Please tell me, is there room in your father's house" (Gen. 24:23, paraphrased).

She said, "I am the daughter of all these men." Then, in verse 25, she says, "Yes, we have enough straw and we have enough food for the animals. Bring the whole group in." Just what you want your daughter to say, isn't it, when she meets a bunch of strangers: "Bring the whole gang over. My mom just went shopping yesterday!"

"Then the man bowed his head down and worshiped the Lord" (Gen. 24:26). If the Holy Spirit is honoring the Father as friends of the Bridegroom, we're worshiping God because the plan is working. We're not excited because now we have this powerful ministry, it's all going well, and we're going to be famous, but he goes right into worshiping the Lord. He's connecting with God because the power of God is working and the will of God is unfolding. He doesn't see it in terms of himself. He sees the unfolding of God in terms of the purpose of God and people growing in love.

It's so easy for us, when God works a miracle through us, to prepare ourselves for being famous and renowned and, well, maybe if we tell our story some doors will open.

The Lord says, “No. I want you to worship Me when this happens. I want you to fall down. I’ve used you to awaken love in people. Now fall down and love Me, because that’s what the thing is about. It isn’t about you getting excited about opening doors.”

“He said, ‘Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His mercy’” (Gen. 24:27).

“The young woman ran” (Gen. 24:28). This gal has so much energy. How did she run? Maybe I’m just getting older, but I’m thinking, “My goodness!”

She told her mom everything. “Mom, you won’t believe it. I just lifted 200 buckets and I met this man.”

THE GOLDEN EARRINGS AND THE GOLDEN BRACELETS

Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban. This old stinker shows up later, doesn’t he? Laban is a crafty man. He runs out; he hears there’s money in it, so he runs out to meet the man by the well. I really believe that, because of the way that he’s pictured later on in Genesis as a wheeler and a dealer.

“It came to pass, when he saw the ring and the bracelets, and he heard her words. . .”

Rebekah said, “This man spoke thus and so to me.” Laban runs out to go see the man, and he stands by the camels, and there he is, right by the well, just as Rebekah said.

The golden earring and the golden bracelets indicate the bondservant. We know that gold speaks of a divine nature. That means serving, right? Golden bracelets on the hands speak of serving. “The greatest among you is the servant of all.” It just keeps being emphasized.

IS THERE ROOM IN YOUR HOUSE FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit says, “Is there room in your house?”

She says, “Come, Holy Spirit. There’s room in my house. Yes! Come to my house. Come, Holy Spirit.”

“Well, it will cause a lot of commotion when I come with what’s on My heart.”

“That’s alright. Come.”

“You’ll end up with different scenery when this thing is over. You want me to come?”

“Come! Come, Holy Spirit. Rearrange the house.”

He says, “OK.”

I just put, “Come, Holy Spirit.”

She says, “There’s enough.” She said, “There’s enough for you.” She’s got a generous spirit. “We want You welcomed. We will do anything to make You welcome. There’s enough. We’re in a position to open ourselves up to You.”

THE PURPOSE OF GOD IS TO ESTABLISH MERCY

It's about worshipping. It's not about just putting it in our newsletter so that we can have more open doors; it's about making us worshipers. When God uses us to make other people worshipers, it's supposed to make us worshipers. It isn't supposed to make us happy about being rich and famous. There's nothing wrong with the Lord honoring you. There's nothing wrong with people honoring you in a right way. At the end of the day, God wants us to be worshipers when the blessing of God is on us. He does this to establish mercy. His whole purpose is to establish mercy.

“So the young woman ran and told her mother's household these things.” The young woman ran. She had passion and enthusiasm; she believed it. She had faith: she was telling everyone.

It's like the Samaritan woman in John 4. When Jesus said, “You have had five husbands, and the man you are with now is not your husband” (Jn. 4:18, paraphrased), she told the whole city! She was excited because the move of God had touched her life and she could see it was going somewhere that was important in the heart of God.

It spreads through the whole family. She wants everyone to know. When the Spirit of God is moving and it's right, we want to invite others. We don't want to just keep it for ourselves. She wants everyone to know about it. She tells everyone that she knows.

Laban comes out. Again, he's a crafty fellow, but even he's moved. I don't know what his motive is, because again, later he manifests himself as being a little dishonest and greedy. The mention of gold was there, but maybe he's being moved sincerely. I can't tell. I don't want to have to repent to him when I meet him in heaven, so I'll be nice to him down here. He was a good man. He ran. He's got the same excitement by the tokens of the Holy Spirit.

HONORING THE HOLY SPIRIT

Honoring the Holy Spirit. Verses 31-32: “He said, ‘Come in, O blessed of the Lord!’” Okay, there you go. He's got a good heart. “Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels” (Gen. 24:31). “Then the man came to the house and unloaded the camels” (v. 32, paraphrased).

Oh, I like that: “unloaded the camels.” When the Holy Spirit unloads the gifts in the house, there are many. He says, ‘You're on the outside. Come on the inside, inside of my life, in the inside of my family. Come, Holy Spirit. You're welcome in my business.’

I don't want to encourage showmanship, lack of wisdom, but we don't want to be ashamed of the Holy Spirit in our family and our business and our house and our marriage and everywhere else. Again, some people are exhibitionists. That's the word I was looking for. They want to get attention for the sake of attention. We're not trying to make a point for the sake of the point, but there's a gentle and wise and discrete way to say yes to the Holy Spirit. “Come into every area of my life.” I don't want to fuel up the exhibitionists who want to go make a point about another point. Rather, we're saying yes to the Holy Spirit. That will look a hundred different ways to a hundred different people. Don't get a mindset of what that looks like.

“Invade my home. We’re ready. We’re prepared. We’re ready to receive You. We’re ready to receive You. We’re prepared. Our hearts are saying yes to You.” That’s the house in which the bride is raised. “Unload the camels. We want to receive everything the Holy Spirit brings. We have provided for You.” In other words, “You’re totally welcome. We’re going out of our way to make You comfortable here.” That’s the point. “We will go set up new beds. We will go get water from the neighbors. We want You welcome here in our house. We will do anything to make You welcome. We won’t wrestle with You; we will work hard so that You’re welcome.”

THE URGENCY OF THE SERVANT’S APPONTMENT

“Food was set before him to eat, but he said, ‘I will not eat until I have told about my errand.’ And he said, ‘Speak on.’ So he said, ‘I am Abraham’s servant’” (Gen. 24:33-34).

I like that. It was the custom of the eastern culture that you always ate first and did business second. You never did business first and ate second. That was so contrary to the custom. There was an urgency to this. He says, “I’m not here just to do secondary things. I’m urgent. I’m focused. I want to produce love in the heart of My people.” There’s an urgency. He says, “I won’t sit and be casual. I want to attend to the issue of people saying yes to the bride—saying yes to love. I’m on a mission, an errand. It’s not casual.”

The Holy Spirit has, if I may say so, blinders on His eyes to see people grow in love. He’s really focused on this. He wants to see us in meekness and voluntary love.

He says, “I’m Abraham’s servant.” He says, “I’ve been sent from the Father. My eyes are on the Father. I belong to Abraham. It’s so easy to get in trouble, and my eyes get on the people causing me the trouble. I get on the people watching my trouble, and my eyes get off of Abraham. I’m a servant of the Lord. I’m sent from the Lord. I’m before the Lord and I’m His servant. I’m not using the power of God to promote myself. I’m not using the lack of the power of God to be all depressed. I’m just His servant.”

That’s what God wants our identity to be. When we’re the servant of the Father, our eyes are on Him, not on the people who are causing us trouble or the people watching our trouble. Our eyes are on the Lord and we’re servants. We want to see people grow in love. We don’t mind if someone else gets the bigger portion, as long as people grow in love. We’re servants. That’s the identity of the friends of the Bridegroom.

THE NECESSITY OF THE REVELATION OF GOD

The necessity of the revelation of God. As always, I’ve got to speed this up here. I get happy on the front end and then get rushed on the back end. I’ll just give you the comments and tell you the story without reading it all. How’s that?

“The Lord has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys. And Sarah my master’s wife bore a son to my master when she was old” (Gen. 24:35).

The Holy Spirit is bragging on the magnificence of Jesus. “He’s great! He owns everything!” First he’s talking about the greatness of God. He’s talking about the person of God. Flocks, gold, servants—in other words, every area of life belongs to Him. Animals, minerals, humans, everything belongs to Him. That’s the first point: everything is the Lord’s (Ps. 24:1).

He says, “Now let me tell you the story. Let me tell you God’s story.” Of course, God’s story’s the gospel. “There was this lady who couldn’t have a child, and she had a supernatural child.”

Our story is, “There was this woman who was a virgin who had a child. It’s a supernatural child. This Child is the heir of everything. All things are His.” The Holy Spirit is telling God’s story to the household to get them to say yes to the bride.

When we hear the story, the real story, the unedited story, it awakens our spirit to love. It says, “Wow! If He loves me that way, then I’ll love Him back.” So he tells the story.

“My master made me swear” (Gen. 24:37). He’s telling the story of how Abraham said, “You’ll go get a bride for my son, and you can’t do it this way. You have to do it that way.” The whole bridal plan is being told to the family. That’s the point. Why? So that they could identify with God that He’s great and He owns everything; so that they could identify with His plan.

They said, “OK. It’s about my life. I’m a part of it.”

He’s going on, telling them the whole story. He’s talking about little Rebekah sitting there. He says, “Then the Lord told me and I said, ‘Lord, perhaps this woman won’t follow me.’ Then he said, “Well, I’ll tell you what. The angel of God is going to go with you.” He’s telling them the whole story.

The point is this: we tell the story of the bride and how the Son provided the bride for Himself. That very story is what prepares the bride. That’s the point. It’s preparing her to say yes. The story itself is preparing her. We can’t hear the story enough. We will sing about it in heaven forever. We will sing the songs in heaven. We keep singing the same old story. It never loses its luster.

He tells of the supernatural intervention, how angels were involved, and the work of God’s hand. The story is so wonderful. He says, “This is about My Master’s Son. My Master has appointed everything to Him.” The nations belong to His Son (Ps. 2:8).

He says, “But before I had finished speaking, there she came out” (Gen. 24:45, paraphrased). It was incredible! The point is, he’s telling the story of the bride to prepare the bride. That’s the point.

“He fell down and worshiped again” (Gen. 24:52, paraphrased). This man is so connected that when he sees his ministry produce love, he loves more. Again, he’s not running out the door saying, “I will be famous. They will come to me now for sure. I was used of God!” He becomes a worshiper instead of a boaster when God uses him. Instead of strutting, he falls and worships. This is the Holy Spirit, isn’t it? The Holy Spirit’s heart is that He honors God when He does the will of God. He doesn’t boast; He just wants to be hidden and He wants to honor God. That’s this principle when we talk of the Holy Spirit. When we talk about the friends of the Bridegroom, we want to get lost in God when He uses us to bring people to His kingdom.

The Holy Spirit waits for our response. Here’s what the servant said: “Now if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me” (Gen. 24:49). He says, “I want to know your answer.” He wants an answer. “If not, then tell me no, so that I can go to the right or to the left” (v. 49b, paraphrased).

LOST IN LOVE FOR GOD AS THE FRIEND OF THE BRIDEGROOM

Then Laban and his father answered and said, “This thing is from the Lord. We can’t tell you if it’s bad or good. It’s just God. Yes, yes, it’s God. It’s from the Lord. It’s yes. Here’s Rebekah. Take her and go and let her be the wife of your master’s son as the word of the Lord has spoken.”

“It came to pass, when Abraham’s servant heard their words, that he worshiped again” (Gen. 24:52, paraphrased). There he is. This is awesome! Are you getting the point? He bows down. He’s lost in admiration and honor of God as the Holy Spirit. He’s lost in love for God as the friend of the Bridegroom.

Then the servant, the Holy Spirit brings out the jewelry. He just goes extravagant, with silver, and gold, and new clothing, and precious things. He’s pouring out His precious things because they said yes.

The servant says, “Answer me. Tell me. Will you say yes? I’ve told you the story. I’ve told you about how great my master is. I’ve told you about the story to come and find a bride, about how it relates to you personally and how I got here specifically to your family. Tell me. You’re the first choice. Will you say yes? Because if the answer is no then I’ll go to the right or the left. I’ll go to the second choice. If you turn me down, God has another person who will say yes.”

I don’t mean saying yes to being saved. That’s not what I mean, but if we say no to the mission of God in this city, the Lord says, “Then I’ll raise up someone else to do it. If you won’t go with me, I’ll raise up someone else.”

In that sense, God isn’t counting on humans for the most significant issues of His purpose. If we don’t lead our neighbor to the Lord, He’s got another person who will.

Some people like to think, “Well, if we don’t do it, then the man goes to hell.”

I don’t believe that. God loves your neighbor so much more than you do. If you get carnal and he goes to hell forever, that’s a pretty big deal. “I hope I wasn’t on the back end of someone’s MTV habit! Glad they overcame it to talk to me or I would be in the abyss.” It’s bigger than that. God’s purpose is more solid than that.

We do have unique twists in contributions. We have a flavor that nobody else has, but on the big issues, God says, “If you won’t say yes, then I’ll call another city, another nation. I’ll call another people. I’ll call another generation. I’ll call another neighborhood.” God’s plan stands even if certain elements say no to certain parts.

I’ve heard people say, “Oh, it’s all going to be so terrible. If they say no, then God won’t do it.” No, God will still do it. They just miss out on the party and that’s sad, but God’s purpose isn’t going to fall to the ground.

They say, “Yes. Take her, yes.” He puts the love gifts. The Holy Spirit is helping the bride respond. He endows her with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Silver is redemption; gold, divine character. Remember, it was granted to her to be arrayed with fine clothing on the wedding day (Rev. 19:8). It was granted to her by God to be arrayed in new clothing

The precious things: I think of the parable that says that the scribe out of his treasure brings forth old and new. I think of precious things as wisdom. Again, it doesn't really matter what the imagery is. It works any way. The Lord is basically blessing us.

THE URGENCY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO FINISH HIS MISSION

Again, we see the Holy Spirit's jealousy, His urgency. "And he and the men who were with him ate and drank and stayed all night." There's sweet fellowship going on right there. The Holy Spirit is accepted. There's a sweet fellowship.

"Then they arose in the morning, and he said, 'Send me away to my master'" (Gen. 24:54). He said, "I'm ready to take her now." There's an urgency. "I want 'now' obedience."

"Her brother and her mother said, 'Let the young gal stay a few days. Maybe ten more days. The answer is yes, but we have to get ready.'"

The Holy Spirit says, "Today is the day of salvation. Today is the day of obedience, now" (2 Cor. 6:2, paraphrased). Today is the day to say yes. He wants "now" obedience.

He says, "Send me away. I want to go away now with the answer and the girl. Today is the day, and I've called it. I want 'now' response."

NOT ALONE DOES THE BRIDE SAY, "COME"

They ate and drank. That's fellowship, yet they still have hesitation. The Holy Spirit is saying, "Send Me away now." In other words, "Let Me go home with the bride." It's that cry from Revelation 22:17. Not alone does the bride say, "Come"; the Holy Spirit says it as well. The Spirit is saying, "Lord, I want this thing brought to an end. I want to finish the purpose."

The Holy Spirit is crying to the Lord, "Come." He wants it to be settled now. I don't fully understand how that works in His sovereignty, but I know there's an urgency. There's a jealousy. He wants 'now' obedience.

They said, "In a few days" (Gen. 24:55, paraphrased). There's some hesitation, some procrastination. The Holy Spirit said, "Don't hinder Me. Don't stop Me right now. Don't quench Me. Don't grieve Me now. Don't hinder Me now."

Here's good news: the Holy Spirit will always offer the quickest and the easiest way to get the point across. It could be difficult, but it's the easiest. It could be long, but it's the quickest. On a scale of one to ten, if it's an eight or a seven, it wouldn't have worked. He'll never do nine if eight will get the job. He'll never do it later if we will respond in love earlier. He says, "I don't want to be grieved and hindered. I want love now. If you'll say yes now, then we will get there quicker."

There's voluntary love. "We will call the young woman and ask her personally." They said, "Let's leave it up to the woman. Rebekah, will you go?"

She said, "Yes!" I love her. She said, "Are you kidding? He's from the Lord. God is in it. I love God. I love this man, I hope. Yes, a thousand times." The love that's within her is manifest. I love that.

A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN IN THE FULLEST SENSE

“So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham’s servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her: ‘Our sister, may you become the mother of thousands’” (Gen. 24:59-60). The spirit of prophecy is now coming on her to strengthen Rebekah for the wilderness journey to go all the way back home.

It’s hundreds of miles. It says, “You’ll become the mother of thousands.” This is interesting. This is nearly the same prophecy—certainly the same prophecy in concept—that the Lord gave Abraham and Isaac back in Genesis 22:17-18. The Lord told Abraham and Isaac, so in essence, Isaac received this word. Now Rebekah’s getting it as well, and they will be married. She’ll say, “I have this one prophecy; it’s the only prophecy I’ve ever gotten.”

He’ll say, “Well, when my dad had that knife, and the ram finally yelled, that’s the same prophecy I got.” It will be a match made in heaven in the fullest sense. The spirit of prophecy is on her to prepare her for the journey of the wilderness.

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE SPIRIT IS THE ONLY SURE WAY IN THE WILDERNESS

The bride’s journey through the wilderness. “Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels through the whole wilderness journey” (Gen. 24:61, paraphrased). I like this: “So the servant took Rebekah and departed” (Gen. 24:61b, NKJV). Just underline that phrase: “The servant, the Holy Spirit, took hold of Rebekah.” She’s possessed by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, the servant, takes Rebekah. Then they leave the place where they’re supposed to leave.

The camels speak of the instrument God uses to provide on the wilderness journey. The camels are the instruments you get across the wilderness. It’s God’s provision in the wilderness. She’s in God’s provision. God will provide (Mt. 6:33). “Seek ye first the kingdom of God. I will provide; I will be there to help you. Just go through the wilderness with me.”

I like that verse, that phrase. It says that “Rebekah arose and followed the man” (Gen. 24:61, paraphrased). Fellowship with the Holy Spirit is the only sure way in the wilderness. “Follow the man.” Again, it’s the Holy Spirit. Follow the servant, the faceless, nameless servant from God. That’s the only sure way in the wilderness.

ISAAC IS WAITING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WILDERNESS

I’m sorry I misjudged this. I had no idea. Of course, I’ve never done this before, and we’re running so late here. We will be done in just a moment.

Isaac is on the other side of the wilderness now. Jesus is on the other side; He’s already in the eternal city (Rev. 21). He’s out to meditate in the fields in the evening. Again, it’s late in the day, late in this age; the evening time of history.

“He lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were coming” (Gen. 24:63). Isaac is our prize. He’s attentive. He’s looking. He’s attentive to his bride. He’s watching her all the time. The eyes of fire are gazing on his bride all the time with eyes of love. He’s always attentive to his bride. He hasn’t forgotten. He hasn’t overlooked us. He’s not busy doing something else. He’s always attentive.

Here's the fun part. "Rebekah lifted her eyes and she saw the Son of God and she dismounted from her camel" (Gen. 24:64, paraphrased). You know how she runs everywhere. She jumped off that camel and she took off full of love. Now that's what happened here in Genesis 24. When we see Him we will be dismounted not from the camel, from the earth. We will be caught up in the air to meet Him and we will be with the Lord forever.

Dismounted is an understatement; we will be enraptured when we see Isaac. It's true.

"For she had said to the servant"—to the Holy Spirit—"Who is this man walking in the field?" (Gen. 24:65). "The servant said, 'It is my master.' So she took a veil and covered herself" (ibid).

That speaks of her tremendous humility, her gratitude; her main concern was to show gratitude, thanksgiving, and honor. She wasn't ashamed or embarrassed. She wanted to say, "You're greater than I." That's what she was saying.

I'm sure when we dismount and run to Him, we will want to say to Him, "We're so thankful that You sent Your Servant to get us. You provided. You gave me gifts to wake me up. You gave Holy Spirit-orchestrated supernatural events to get my attention."

When we see Him, we will say, "Thank You, thank You, thank You. I needed Your intervention."

"And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done" (Gen. 24:66). There's the fellowship of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity—Jesus and the Holy Spirit fellowshiping in the Trinity. At the very end, at the very last, He's still just a servant. The Holy Spirit says, "Hey!"

Jesus says, "Oh, thank You."

He says, "I'm just Your servant. I'm just Your servant. I only did it because You wanted it. I don't want to be honored anywhere. I'm just a servant when it's all said and done. She loves You. You love her. I'm happy. That's all I wanted."

That's what the friends of the Bridegroom are about. Well, they kicked you out. They took all your money and they scandalized you, but a lot of people love God and God loves them in the wake of it. You won. You're just a servant at the end of the day. He wants no credit. His joy is in their love. He wants no credit, no recognition. His joy is in their love. Mission accomplished. You won. They love and you love. Everyone is happy now.

"Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her" (Gen. 24:67). Oh, I love that. "He took Rebekah." Now the Holy Spirit isn't the One taking Rebekah; rather, the Son of God is taking Rebekah forever to be with the Lord, forever. How many verses in the New Testament say, "To be with the Lord?" It says, "took her," here in number two, but it should say, "loved her." He loves her in the way the Father loves the Son (Jn. 15:9).

"So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death" (Gen. 24:67). Jesus endured the shame and the agony of the cross for the joy set before Him. Now the joy is in His arms right here; the joy is us. The purpose of the wilderness is accomplished. We're with Him in joy, in love forever.

Amen. Let's pray.

MINISTRY TIME

Oh, we love You, Lord. Oh, we love You, Lord. We love You, we love You, we love You. Lord, there are so many things we don't know. Send Your gifts to us. We're dull of hearing and You don't mind that, so help us, empower us, carry us. Bring the camels. Provide. Come in abundance, because we don't hear easily. We would say yes if we could just see You in it. Help us to see You in it so that we can go through the journey in the wilderness. Help us to know our destiny: that we will be mothers of thousands and tens of thousands with You. Let us see that, in order to prepare us to go through the wilderness in love for You. We thank You in Jesus' name. Amen.