

• *Rebekah's story - a perfect illustration of what it means to respond to God's leading*

### The Invitation

1. *To believe that Isaac is real*

2. *To believe that all of the promises of God are attached to this man Isaac*

• *For the Christian – the purpose is wrapped up with the person – Jesus*

3. *To face the fact that responding to God's guidance will involve abandoning her old life*

The story of Abraham's servant looking for a wife for Isaac is not only a classic model of guidance, but it is also a perfect illustration of what it means to respond to the leading of God. For the events that led the servant to Rebekah also brought a great challenge to Rebekah. She was receiving the guidance of God too. There came a point where Laban turned to her and said 'Will you go with this man?' She replied 'I will' <sup>24:58</sup>. This is typical not only of countless marriages; it is also typical of the life of the Christian. Indeed marriage is the greatest illustration of the love between Jesus and His Church. The Christian life is a matter of putting ourselves in the hands of Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to us and says 'Will you go with this Jesus? Will you go to Him? Will you spend the rest of your life in fellowship with Him?' And we respond and say 'I will.'

<sup>24:58</sup>

### Consider the invitation

1. **She is being invited to believe that Isaac is real.** She has never actually seen Isaac but she must take it on trust that Isaac is real and that he is looking for a bride. This is the way it is when God invites us to Jesus Christ. We are told about Jesus in some way or another and the Holy Spirit invites us to believe that Jesus is real.

2. **She is being invited to believe that all of the promises of God are attached to this man Isaac.** If she had heard anything about Isaac it surely must have included the fact that God had said to Abraham 'Through Isaac a seed shall be called to you.' The promise of worldwide blessing was attached to this son of Abraham.

It is the same with the Christian. The Christian is a person who has been invited to believe that all of the promises of God are tied up with His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Out of His fullness we receive every blessing that God has for us. In Him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge. The purpose of God is wrapped up with the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Outside of Him there is no salvation, no knowledge of God, no heaven, no forgiveness of sin, no heavenly inheritance. It is all attached to this person, our Lord Jesus.

She has to respond. And we have to respond. There is no experience of God's salvation for us unless we attach ourselves by faith to Jesus. He is the heir of God. He rules God's kingdom. He must reign until He has put all enemies beneath His feet. We are co-heirs with Him. When we have Him we share everything He has. We share His sonship and become children of God. We share His righteousness and become clothed with a righteousness that is not ours but is bestowed upon us with Jesus. She must not only believe the promises; she must believe that the promises of God are for her personally.

3. **She has to face the fact that responding to God's guidance will involve abandoning her old life.** She has grown up in Haran but if she responds to this invitation her old life is finished.

The Christian is a person who has made a break with the old life of sin. He has said farewell to it for ever and is committed to the new life of inheriting the promises of God.

4. To launch out simply on the basis of the word that has come to her through Abraham's servant

**The urgency of the call**

1. It is an urgent matter

2. It is immediate

• The Spirit does not delay. He goes away if He does not receive an answer

4. She is invited to launch out on this new life simply on the basis of the word that has come to her through Abraham's servant. She had to believe 'the word'. It was not great endeavours or great promises that were involved. It was faith in a word that came to her. 'There is this man Isaac,' said the servant. 'All the promises of God are tied up in him. Will you go with this man?' It was not a matter of seeing; it was a matter of trusting. If she did not trust the word that was coming to her she would never see Isaac or have any experience of the purpose of God.

**Consider the urgency of the invitation**

1. **The call is an urgent matter.** The servant of Abraham is in a hurry. 'I will not eat until I have told my errand,' he says <sup>1</sup>. He tells his story <sup>2</sup> and then he wants an answer. 'If you are going to deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me' <sup>3</sup>.

2. **The call is immediate.** The family is inclined to accept the offer. 'This thing is from the LORD,' says Laban <sup>1</sup>. All seems well for the servant and his mission. He brings out his gifts which are part of the offer <sup>2</sup> and they celebrate with great joy. However, many seem to receive the word with great joy only in theory but then they delay ever acting upon what they have heard. 'Let the girl stay with us a few days' <sup>3</sup>. But we know about Laban's delaying tactics. He was the one who would delay Jacob for seven years as he was seeking for a wife, and then find a way of adding seven years more (as we shall discover in a later story).

But the servant will not allow delay. 'I am about to go back' he says. The question is put to Rebekah personally and immediately. God the Holy Spirit often speaks to us directly and personally, and He wants an immediate answer. 'Today if you hear His voice do not harden your hearts.' The Spirit does not delay. He goes away if He does not receive an answer.

<sup>1</sup> 24:33  
<sup>2</sup> 24:34-48  
<sup>3</sup> 24:49

<sup>1</sup> 24:50  
<sup>2</sup> 24:53  
<sup>3</sup> 24:55

	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible</i> (PTTB) books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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