Finders Keepers

Genesis 24:1-14

Sermon Outline

A. A Challenge to Fulfill (vs. 1-7):

1. There are several factors that leads to this challenge:

   a) **Following the death and burial of Sarah,** Abraham made arrangements for Isaac to take a wife from among his own kinfolk of Aramea. Abraham thus worked to ensure that the promise of offspring would continue into the next generation. This done, Abraham died (25:7–8) and was buried with his wife by his sons Ishmael and Isaac. Isaac rarely occupied the center stage. In the following years Isaac, who had been the object of his father’s actions, became an object in his son Jacob’s struggle for the promises (27:1–40).\(^1\)

   b) **Advance in age; They came** –Advanced in age means that Abraham’s life based on God’s promises was complete and it was near the end.

   - **Eleazer does not appear as the guardian of Isaac, now forty years old.** \(^2\)

   c) **The Lord** – God through the years had exercised authority and power in sovereignly overseeing and directing all He had promised to do for Abraham.

   d) **Blessed** – God had faithfully fulfilled his promises to Abraham.

   e) **Blessed** – God had faithfully bestowed His favor on Abraham by providing him prosperity and goodwill.

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f) **Blessed** – Abraham is responsible to God to make sure God’s will extends to the next generation.

g) **Said** - Because of Abraham’s age and the numerous blessings God provided him he continually, with no end in sight speaks to his servant about what to do concerning his son Isaac.

h) **Shall not take** – Finding an unsaved spouse is not an option.

i) **Shall not take** – The servant will continually make absolutely certain on a continual basis that Isaac does not get a wife from among the Canaanites.

- The practice of marrying within one’s own tribe or family is called endogamy. Endogamy could be the result of religious, social or ethnic concerns. In this text it appears to be ethnic in that there are no suggestions that the family of Laban, Rebekah and Rachel shares the religious beliefs of Abraham and his family.\(^3\) God’s promise is only with the Semites.

j) **Abraham said beware** – The servant must provide careful attention, watching over Isaac so that he does not go back to Haran. So Isaac is not to go to Canaan or to Haran.

k) **Abraham said beware** – The challenge to find a spouse is a carefully outlined process.

l) **Do not take** – Abraham is continually focused on what God wants for His family and this why Isaac cannot return to Haran or go to the Canaanites.

m) **Do not take** – Being about God’s purposes must be our central focus.

2. The Challenge:

   a) **Servants/ruler of the household** – Abraham lead servant was given instructions to find Isaac a wife. He has a long history of being a responsible person.

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b) **Please; Pray thee; now** – Abraham speaks with a sense of urgency to his servant. The Canaanites are near by and Abraham is getting older.

c) **Swear; Vow; Swore** – Abraham requested that his servant make a pledge to the Lord concerning finding a bride for Isaac. The mission cannot fail.

d) **Lord** – The pledge was made to the One who has demonstrated, throughout the years, to be the one true God who has all power and authority. The mission will be guided by the Lord who is sovereign.

e) **You will go** – The servant must make going to Haran a continual process, almost like a new way of life. He must not stop until this is done.

f) **Take; Receive** – Finding a wife or husband is a character issue first.

g) **Take; Receive** – Abraham’s servant take a wife making the relationship with Isaac and this woman permanent.

h) **Take; Receive** – Whoever he finds is someone who will be committed to her husband all the days of her life.

3. **God is committed to the vision (Genesis 2:15-25; 1 Corinthians 7:1-7):**

a) **Who took me** – God authoritatively permanently took Abraham away from Haran so Isaac cannot return.

b) **Who took me** – God has a vision for your future home – Christ and the church.

c) **Spoke; Speaking** – When God’s message was given to Abraham it was a set condition with no compromise.

d) **Swore** - God’s commitment to Abraham was a pledge that God would faithful to execute for Abraham and his descendants.

e) **Given you** – The land would be generously provided and will always be theirs. The challenge is to fulfill God’s legacy for His nation as it would be for a man and his family ((Proverbs 13:22; Psalm 37:25).

f) **Given you** – Finding a wife is a good thing (Proverbs 18:22; she has the nature of a wife).
g) Angel before you – A messager of God would go be in the presence of the servant to watch over the entire process.

- “His angel” (24:7) may be taken as the “angel of the LORD” first met by Hagar in the wilderness (see comments on 16:7, 9, 11; cp. “angel of God,” 21:17) who also rescued Isaac at Moriah (22:11, 15). A guiding messenger was common in Israel's journey in the wilderness (Exod 14:19; 23:20, 23; 32:34; 33:2; Num 20:16; 22:22).4

h) Take a wife – Abraham uses the word ‘wife’ not woman. This is the same instruction provided to young men in Proverbs 18:22. The nature of this wife is crystalized in Proverbs 31 but it is also structured in Genesis 2:18, 20-25. This is something the servant must work on until completed.

B. Wisdom Required (vs. 10-12):

1. Wisdom Begins with Obedience:

   a) Servants took – Abraham’s servant immediately sought to fulfill what he made an oath to do.

   b) Set out – Finding a wife for Isaac became a continuous way of life for Abraham’s servant.

   - Abraham’s native land, 450 miles away.

2. Wisdom Requires Prayer (James 1:5-8):

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a) **Said** – When Abraham’s servant arrived at the city he continuously, with no end in sight, prayed to God for wisdom and direction.

b) **Lord** – The servant understands that Abraham’s Lord has all authority and power. He has visible seen God in action.

c) **Please or now** – This is a prayer with intense urgency.

d) **Please or now** – It is obvious that the servant understands the significance of this endeavor, how important it is to God’s covenant with Abraham (vs. 6-7), and how important it is to Abraham’s legacy.

e) **Grant me** – The servant did not see this taking place without the Lord’s intervention.

f) **Grant me** – His request demonstrates that the servant understands that the Lord sovereignly reigns and is always in control.

g) **Success** - By success the word means that he was asking for God to put him in front of who the Lord wants to be the wife of Isaac.

h) **Show lovingkindness** – This is a word that is significant in the Old Testament. It is a request for God’s steadfast love. It is also a request for God to remain loyal to Abraham in the manner in which God fulfills this very important wife for Isaac.

i) **Show lovingkindness** – God’s love is steadfast. He will always supply what we need.

C. God’s Will Is Everything (vs. 13-14):

1. **Behold** – After praying the servant became very focused expecting God to fulfill his request.

2. **May it be; to be** – The servant is endlessly seeking God’s presence to be with him.

3. **Please** – He urgently continually seeks God’s direction.

4. **You have appointed** – The servant wants God to be the judge when he approaches the women at the well.
5. **You have appointed** – One of the attributes of a wife is someone who seeks to compliment her husband by her actions – 'suitable helper.' How does this activity demonstrates she is a wife:

   a) God provided guidance in her life so that she was at the right place at the right time.

   b) She was available to be used by God.

   c) Family oriented (Genesis 2:24; 24:15, 28-41).

   d) She is willing to serve not just be served (Genesis 2:18; 24:13,15-21; Proverbs 31; a helper). The man manages the house while the woman keeps it (1 Timothy 3:4;14).

   e) She shows a submissive nature to her father. Eve submitted to the direction of God (2:23).

   f) It is result of God’s guidance with Adam asleep (Isaac is not with the servant as the servant seeks God’s guidance) that a wife was provided.

6. **By this I will know** - The servant will constantly be in the state of being able to distinguish using this exercise who Isaac’s wife will be.

7. **Shown** - All of God’s activities, based on His divine will, will be manifested.

8. **Shown** - Over time God’s divine will is manifested.

9. **Lovingkindness** – God’s steadfast, benevolent love will be manifested by how the servant has success.

10. **Lovingkindness** – An open faithful heart will experience God’s steadfast love.