

A Bride for Isaac, the Child of Promise

swear by Yahweh, the God of heaven and God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, (Gen 24:3, LSB)

In Genesis 24, Abraham is old, and Isaac is not married. This is a problem. Isaac must continue Abraham's lineage. But how will he do it without a wife? Abraham is so old and so concerned that he asks his oldest and most trusted (unnamed) servant to take an oath that he will find Isaac a wife. But she must not be a daughter of the Canaanites because they are idolaters – they worship foreign gods. This may be the most crucial lesson in this story. Isaac is not to marry someone who will distract him from worshipping the one true and living God – Yahweh. 1 Kings 11:3-4 states plainly: King Solomon's "wives turned away his heart...after other gods." Abraham does not want this for his one and only covenant son. Instead, the unnamed servant must return to Abraham's country and family, where he must search for a wife for Isaac. In v. 12, the servant asks Yahweh to grant him success in finding Isaac a wife. At a well, the servant meets Rebekah. Could she be the one? Is Yahweh already answering his prayers? The answer is 'yes.' Through extensive negotiations, Rebekah agrees to return with the unnamed servant and be Isaac's wife (v. 34-67). But what about getting a spouse today? What if I don't have an unnamed servant to find me a wife (or husband)? And, could this story be a foreshadowing of the Holy Spirit securing a bride for the ultimate Child of Promise – Christ Jesus?

Christian men and women must recognize that in most situations, it is God's plan for a man to find a wife (Gen 2:24) and raise godly sons and daughters (Mal 2:15). Remember, it is God who said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him" (Gen 2:18). Are you willing to believe that God is correct? Is Proverbs 18:22 meant to be believed literally that "he who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from Yahweh?" Paul writes about marriage in 1 Corinthians 7. In v.2, he writes, "But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband." Today (2025), young adult Christians wrestle with obtaining a college degree, securing a good job, and getting married. Many times, the refusal to marry before graduation results in sexual immorality that should have been prevented by marriage. Paul addresses this struggle. He writes, "But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion" (1Co 7:9). Two lovers burning with passion one for another should marry. Fewer are marrying than ever before, but the benefits of marriage have not diminished. Multiple studies by secular socialists consistently prove that married men and women do better. According to Harvard Medical School, "Numerous studies conducted over the past 150 years suggest that marriage is good for health" (<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mens-health/marriage-and-mens-health>). Those married also do better financially and in many other ways – happiness, contentment, etc. All this is often called the marriage dividend.

Preparing for marriage starts early in developing character traits and disciplines necessary to be a good husband or wife. Living selfishly for oneself comes naturally for an unsaved man or woman. Young men and women must begin thinking about marriage earlier in life. Each should ask themselves if they are trying to be the person someone would want to marry. Am I an honest person? Am I lazy? Do I care about others more than myself? Do I know how to share? Am I willing to compromise and have the discernment to know when it's appropriate to compromise? Questions like these and many others are meant to help one self-evaluate. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and ask yourself: do I know how to love others? Ladies, look at how your boyfriend or potential husband treats his mother. She has been the most significant woman in his life up to this point – how he treats her will help you see how he will treat you.

Are you a follower of Christ? Yes. Then, you must not, under any circumstance, marry someone who isn't also striving to follow Christ. This may mean finding a spouse will be more challenging, and you may not get to marry the funniest, cutest, or most athletic person. But those things are surface-level things. You want to know if the Spirit has changed his (her) heart. Is he (she) a new creation? Pray. Pray now. Pray that God will lead you and direct you. The unnamed servant in Genesis 24, responsible for finding a wife for Isaac, prayed. He prayed to Yahweh (24:12-14). Since you don't have an unnamed servant looking for a spouse for you, pray to Yahweh yourself. Ask Him to show you what you need to work on to be a better future spouse. He knows who you will marry. Ask Him to work on the one you will marry. Ask Him to protect you from marrying a Canaanite. Finally, contemplate how this story of the unnamed servant finding a wife for Isaac points to the Holy Spirit through regeneration (the birth from above), creating a bride for Christ – His church.