

WILT THOU GO...?

FOR CHRISTIANS, THE QUESTION OF ALL QUESTIONS

By Arlen L. Chitwood

The question which Rebekah was asked in Gen. 24:58 (“Wilt thou go with this man?”) and her response (“I will go”) form the heart of *the most important matter* that will ever confront any Christian at any time throughout the present dispensation. The question and corresponding answer have to do with *the very reason for a Christian’s salvation*. A person has been *saved for a purpose*, and Gen. 24:58 has to do with *that purpose*.

Genesis chapter twenty-four forms an integral part of a larger type covering five chapters — chapters twenty-one through twenty-five. And these five chapters together, in a type-antitype framework, set forth a chronological sequence of events relative to Christ, Israel, and the Church, beginning with Christ’s birth and ending with realized blessings for man during the coming Messianic Era.

In these chapters, “Abraham,” the father of Isaac, typifies *God*, the Father of Jesus; “Sarah,” Abraham’s wife, typifies *Israel*, the wife of God; “Abraham’s servant,” sent into the far country to obtain a bride for Isaac, typifies *the Holy Spirit*, sent into the far country to obtain a bride for Jesus; and “Abraham’s subsequent remarriage” typifies *God subsequently restoring Israel to her prior place as His wife*.

In this respect, chapter twenty-one has to do with “the birth of Isaac,” typifying *the birth of Christ*; chapter twenty-two has to do with “the offering of Isaac,” typifying *the offering of Christ*; chapter twenty-three has to do with “the death of Sarah,” typifying *the setting aside of Israel*; chapter twenty-four has to do with “Abraham’s servant searching for a bride for Isaac in the far country,” typifying *the Holy Spirit in the world today searching for a bride for Christ*; and chapter twenty-five has to do with “the remarriage of Abraham,” typifying *the future restoration of Israel*.

Note the context of chapter twenty-four. Events in this chapter occur between *the setting aside* (ch. 23) and *the restoration* (ch. 25) of Israel; and, in the antitype, they foreshadow events occurring during the present dispensation.

The Holy Spirit is in the world today seeking a bride for God’s Son. That’s what Genesis chapter twenty-four is about. This chapter is not about salvation per se. Rather, it is about *the purpose for salvation*.

Abraham sent his servant into the far country to procure a bride for his son. And before the servant ever left Abraham’s home to fulfill his mission, Abraham made him swear that the search would be carried out *solely among his own people*, among those referred to as “my kindred” (vv. 3, 4, 9).

Then the servant took “all the goods of his master” on *ten camels* (a number signifying *ordinal completion*) and departed for the far country to search for and obtain a bride for Isaac — a bride which *must* come from Abraham’s own people (v. 10).

And, in the antitype, that’s *exactly* what the Holy Spirit has been doing in the world for almost 2,000 years. God has sent the Spirit into the world to procure a bride for His Son; and

the Spirit, in perfect accord with the type, has been searching for the bride *from among the people of God*.

The primary task of the Holy Spirit throughout the dispensation, again, in perfect accord with the type, is to show the people of God — Christians — *all of the Father’s goods*. These are goods which will one day belong to the Son, with Christians being invited to co-inherit with the Son in that coming day (v. 36; 25:5; cf. John 16:13-15; Rom. 8:17-23).

And the search is almost over. The dispensation has almost run its course. The time when the Spirit will have completed His work, subsequently removing the bride, is almost upon us (vv. 60ff).

ACCEPTANCE OR REFUSAL

The Holy Spirit’s search for a bride for God’s Son is a work subsequent to His work surrounding man’s eternal salvation. Bringing the former to pass (a work effecting man’s removal from his dead, alienated state, through the birth from above) allows the Spirit to bring the latter to pass (a work involving the search for and procurement of the bride). And this subsequent work of the Spirit has to do with *the central purpose* for His former work.

The question, “Wilt thou go with this man?,” brought over into the antitype, is a question directed *solely* to those within the family of God, to Christians. It is a question which involves following the present leadership of the Spirit, with a view to that which lies out ahead. It is a question which involves allowing the Spirit to open the Word to a person’s understanding, allowing the Spirit to lead that person “into all truth.” And this truth, textually, can only center around the things of the Father which will one day belong to

the Son, something which *Christians alone* can fully grasp and understand (I Cor. 2:9-14).

The Spirit is in the world today revealing to Christians, from the Word, all the things surrounding the Son's future glory. And, through this process, Christians are being instructed and warned concerning present faithfulness (encompassing all the various things involved therein — one's calling, the race, the spiritual warfare, etc.), with a view to the glory lying out ahead.

And through the Spirit opening the Word in this manner, Christians are being extended an invitation to have a part in this future glory; and Christians, relative to this invitation, can do one of two things: They can either *accept* the invitation or they can *refuse* the invitation.

Acceptance is associated with one day becoming part of the bride of Christ (and realizing the Son's inheritance with Him), as Rebekah's acceptance had to do with her one day becoming the bride of Isaac (and realizing the son's inheritance with him).

But a Christian's *refusal* will leave the person in a position where he cannot realize any of these things, as a *refusal* on Rebekah's part, had she done so, would have left her in exactly the same position relative to Isaac and his inheritance.

Either way though, *acceptance* or *refusal*, the family relationship remains unchanged. Rebekah's *acceptance* wrought no change in her position within Abraham's family; nor would there have been a change had she *refused*. And so it is with Christians today.

A Christian's presently possessed eternal salvation was wrought through a past, completed work of the Spirit based on the past, completed work of God's Son at Calvary. Thus, eternal salvation is a finished work, wrought entirely through and on the basis of Divine intervention; and *no*

change can ever occur.

Salvation by grace through faith — the good news surrounding the grace of God — is one thing; but "so great salvation," "the saving of the soul" (Heb. 2:3; 10:39) — the good news surrounding the coming glory of Christ — is something else entirely. And it is *the latter*, not the former, which the Spirit's ministry to Christians centers around throughout the dispensation.

Christians have been saved for *a revealed purpose*, the central mission of the Spirit in the world today is to bring *that purpose* to pass, and the decision concerning having a part in *that purpose* is left entirely to each individual Christian. A Christian can "go with this Man" — the Spirit sent into the world to procure a bride for the Son, the One through Whom the offer is being extended — or he can refuse to go.

This decision is the Christian's alone to make. And the decision which he makes will have *far-reaching ramifications.*

THE GOAL

The goal, of course, is that set forth in the latter part of Genesis chapter twenty-four, leading into the things set forth in chapter twenty-five. It is *a successful completion of the search, followed by a removal of the bride, followed by marriage.* And this will, in turn, be followed by *Israel's restoration and future blessings.*

(All Christians will be removed from the earth at the same time, shown by Rebekah and the damsels accompanying her going forth on *ten camels* to meet Isaac [signifying *completion*, i.e., *they all went forth* (cf. vv. 10, 61)]. However, *Rebekah alone* is seen taking a veil and covering herself when meeting Isaac [a type of the wedding garment to be worn *by the bride alone* when meeting Christ (vv. 64, 65; cf. Rev. 19:7, 8)].)

After Abraham's servant had procured the bride for Isaac, he removed the bride from the far country. And, at the same time, Isaac came forth from his home to meet Rebekah. They met at a place between her home and his home; and they then went to his home, where she became his wife (24:61-67).

And so will it be with Christ and His bride.

After the Holy Spirit has procured the bride, He will remove the bride from the earth. And, at the same time, Christ will come forth from heaven to meet His bride. They will meet at a place between the bride's home and His home; and they will then go to His home, where the bride will become His wife (cf. I Thess. 4:14-17; Rev. 1:10; 4:1, 2; 19:7).

Then, that which is revealed in Genesis chapter twenty-five can be brought to pass. Messianic blessings will be ushered in; and the glories of the Son, with His consort queen, will be manifested for all of creation to behold (Psa. 24:1-10; Isa. 2:1-4; Rev. 20:1-3a).

The present search for and the future glory awaiting the bride of Christ centers around *the greatest thing* that God has ever designed for redeemed man — *to co-inherit with His Son, occupying positions on the throne with Him in that day when He is revealed in all His power and glory.*

And it is *this glory and co-heirship* which the Spirit has been sent into the world to reveal to Christians. Until the search for the bride has been completed, the revelation of the Son's coming glory will continue, and the invitation will remain open. But when the search has been completed...

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