

2009 HERO #2 JUNE 28 - THE OBEDIENT SERVANT Genesis 24 ELIEZER OF DAMASCUS

Today's scripture challenges us with the question,
How does a servant become a friend?
How does a stranger come to be treated like a family member?
We all know how a family member can come to be treated like a stranger?

Abraham's wife Sarah has just died,
And Abraham moved to obtain a wife for his son Isaac to comfort him in his grief.

Slide of land--Here we are introduced to Abraham's chief Servant -Eliezer.

He was an acquired servant or slave from Haran.
We don't know how Abraham got him,
Of if Abraham named him Eliezer.
But Eliezer means "mighty, divine helper"
This servant became a trusted friend
And custom had it that a childless man could adopt
one of his own male servant to be his heir and guardian of his estate.
Abram apparently contemplated doing this with Eliezer,
Or perhaps had already done so.

He tells God: O Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus. Genesis 15:2

I can tell you that if trouble occurs in a family it is usually around
An inheritance or an estate.
Can you think of all the opportunity for deceit, or just complacency
To let things happen and let old Abraham die
Without fulfilling the promise.
But this old servant Eliezer remains faithful to Abraham knowing
That when he gets Isaac a son, the inheritance was doomed.

Who can you trust today with your life?
An angel came to a faculty meeting and offered the selfless dean a choice of three
Wishes. Wisdom, wealth, beauty. He immediately chose wisdom. The Faculty was
impressed and said now that you have the gift of Wisdom say something to us.
He said: I should have taken the money.
Who do you trust with your life?
Abraham could trust Elizer.
Because he is as faithful to Abraham as God was faithful.

I. THE SERVANTS OATH

The Placement of the hand near the organ of procreation
symbolized a last will and testament
And called for faithful implementation on the part of his son.
Isaac must accept Abraham's and God's choice.

24:2 Put your hand under my thigh. I want you to swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I am living, but will go to my country and my own relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac. Genesis 24:2-4

Abraham laid the responsibility on the Chief Servant of the house
 To get a wife for his son Isaac.
 You think teenagers are unhappy now because their parents might
 Object to who they are dating or running around with.
 Get a servant on the job and you got some real issues.

Some of you are older and getting married.
 Your children are wondering about who you're marrying.

Take the family who was disturbed that Grandpa Ezra, aged seventy-five, had decided to get married. What worried the relatives was the fact that the bride Ezra had selected was a young, healthy twenty-two year old. One of Ezra's sons cornered him and pleaded: "Look Paw, you must give this more thought. It's very serious. In fact, a thing like this could prove fatal!" "So what?" answered Ezra, unperturbed. "If she dies, I'll marry again."

I. THE SERVANTS OATH

II. THE SERVANTS CONCERN

The servant asked him,

“What if the woman is unwilling to come back with me to this land? Shall I then take your son back to the country you came from? Genesis:24:5

The country would have been Mesopotamia.

But God had said to Abraham To your offspring I will give this land. Genesis 12:7 and 16:7

So Abraham didn't want him to go back
 But to proceed to the promise land.

Make sure that you do not take my son back there, Abram said: “The Lord, the God of heaven, who brought me out of the my fathers household and my native land and who spoke to me and promise me on oath, saying “to your offspring I will give this land- he will send his angel before you so that you can get a wife for my son from there. Genesis 2:6-8

Then Abraham said:

If the woman is unwilling to come back with you, then you will be released from this oath of mine. Only do not take my son back there. Genesis 2:9

So the deal was sealed.

Then the servant put his hand under the thigh of his master Abraham and swore an oath to him concerning this matter. Genesis 24:9

III. THE SERVANT'S MISSION

Eliezer job was to persuade a strange woman to come home with him

Be the wife of his Master son.

You parents think you have a tough job.

I checked the internet on “What women want” in a man, in a marriage,

I got over 77 million hits.

Poor Eliezer didn't have access to : Guerrilla tactics on dating.

The 10 commandments of meeting a woman.

15 ways to a woman's heart.

This old faithful servant just prepares for the journey.
By loading up 10 camels full of the finest clothes and jewelry,
That Canaan could produce.
I bet it included chocolate.

Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and left, taking with him all kinds of good things from his master. He set out for Aram Naharaim and made his way to the town of Nahor. Genesis 24:10

He had the camels kneel down near the well outside the town; it was toward evening, the time the women go out to draw water. Genesis 24:11

IV. THE SERVANT'S PRAYER

Have you every wished that your children would follow you in your faith.
That they would be as faithful in their devotions to God.
To the church and to the principles of God's word as you are, or taught them?

Would that we all could find a servant like Eliezer.
He goes to the land of Aram.
He stopped in the evening at the well.
He didn't start looking for girls.
He bowed his head and looked for God.

Perhaps when we choose a wife,
We would do well to follow Eliezer.
If we want to find a good woman or man.
First go to God.

We are told that the mode of Eliezer's request was inappropriate;
he "put God on the spot".
Very specific details,
But he got it from watching Abraham relate to his God.
He saw the wonders and miracles God had done for his master Abraham,
And Just like Abraham,
Eliezer asked God for a sign to validate his errand.

Then he prayed, "O Lord, God of my master Abraham, give me success today, and show kindness to my master Abraham. See, I am standing beside this spring, and the daughters of the town's people are coming out to draw water. May it be that when I say to a girl, "Please let down your jar that I may have a drink, and she says: 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too'—let her be the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master." Genesis 24:12-14

Just as Eliezer finished his prayer and stood up,
the young ladies from the city came to the well.
This was their time to enjoy one another's company.
They were talking and laughing and
didn't even notice the stranger standing nearby.

Eliezer carefully looked at each one.

"This is really important. I surely do hope I choose the right one,"
he thought to himself.

"But I prayed and I know God will help me."

Eliezer noticed one particular young woman.

When Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. The girl was very beautiful, a virgin, no man had even lain with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jar and came up again.

He approached her saying,

"I have traveled a long way and am thirsty. May I please have a drink?"

Drink, my lord, she said: and quickly lowered the jar to her hands and gave him a drink. Genesis 24:15-18

Then after she had given him a drink, she said:

"I'll draw water for your camels too, until they have finished drinking. Genesis 24:19

Now Eliezer was a big man.

He had an entourage of 10 camels.

It is ridiculous that this young woman would water his camels.

But it make sense when we understand that the Kabbalistic teachings

Stated that the "way you treat others, is the way God the creator treats you."

So Rebekah filled the pitcher and gave it to the lead camel.

And went back ten times for ten thirsty camels

While this big old servant looked on.

You remember what a camels hump is all about.

It's their water cooler- holds gallons

But this young woman lived what she believed.

After Eliezer found out whose daughter she was.

His first act was to reward her with a gold nose ring and two gold bracelets .

When the camels had finished drinking, the man took out a gold nose ring weighing a beka and two gold bracelets weighing ten shekels. Genesis 24:22

Ok parents: I guess nose rings have been around a long time.

Disgusting in this common cold country, but nothing new.

The Jewish rabbi Rashi believed that

The two gold bracelets symbolized the two Tablets of the Torah;

The ten shekels weight symbolized the Ten Commandments (Rashi).

And then Eliezer bowed down and worshiped the Lord Genesis 24:26

V. THE SERVANT'S URGENCY

The girl invited him to come to her father's house for the night.

And Laban and Bethuel relatives of Abraham

invited Eliezer to share their home and hospitality.

And to bring the news about Abraham and Sarah.

Eliezer was a great story teller.

He relates the story of Abraham and Isaac,
 His mission and how it unfolded.
 With the answer to prayer in such a way that
 Laban and Bethuel and his daughters
 Were caught up in it.
 And bought into it.
 Enough to agree to send their daughter with a stranger
 To a foreign land
 To meet an unknown husband.

This is from the Lord; we can say nothing to you one way or the other. Here is Rebekah; take her and go and let her become the wife of your master's son, as the lord has directed. Genesis 24:50-51

**Then Eliezer gave them lavish gifts and articles of clothing
 Costly gifts to her brother and to her mother. Genesis 24:52**

The next morning Eliezer was up and ready to return.

But Laban and Bethuel wanted 10 days to celebrate Genesis 24:55

But Eliezer knowing that Abraham was over 140 years old
 The long trip back,
 The uncertainty of the area.
 He said:

Do not detain me, now that the Lord has granted success to my journey. Send me on my way so I may go to my master. Genesis 24:56

They said:

Let call the girl and ask her about it. So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?" "I will go," she said: Genesis 24:57-58

Friends, this was before online dating.
 Before cameras, internets, facebook or twitter.
 There were no pictures of the prospective bride or groom.sent ahead.
 This is a shot in the dark
 This is a prayer walk for Rebekah and Isaac
 And a faithful servant.

Is God calling you to a task today that is bigger than yourself?
 Is God asking you to step out to a challenge an opportunity?
 That we don't see the end to yet?
 Asking you to make a commitment,
 To sign up your life to a mission that seems overwhelming?
 Maybe we have hesitated too long already.

I challenge you like Eliezer.
 To trust God,
 To pray,
 And to act with the confidence and obedience,
 Reach out and claim what God would have for your life.
 And the God of Abraham and Eliezer.
 Will be with you all the way home.

