

Session 11: The Bride in Genesis

Introduction

- a. In previous sessions, we studied several New Testament passages which address Christ and His bride. Our goal has been to dig deep into major bridal passages in the New Testament to determine what they teach about our bridal relationship with Christ. A secondary goal has been to attempt to answer the question, "Is every born again believer the eternal wife of Christ?"
- b. We have explored the bridal passages in the book of Revelation, Matthew 22, 24, and 25 and the writings of the apostle Paul. In Sessions 9 and 10 we made the switch from looking at the New Testament to the Old as we looked at the bride in the book of Esther. We want to continue to explore the bride in several Old Testament passages that address the bride in type and shadow by briefly considering several additional Old Testament types and shadows of the bride. Our objective is to highlight them to you so that you can do your own study of them at a later time.
- c. In this session, we will look briefly at Adam and Eve as a picture of Christ and His bride, and then at Abraham sending his servant to take a bride for Isaac. In the next session, we look at Ruth as a bride for her kinsman-redeemer. Since the bridal journey in the Song of Songs is a deeply important allegory of the bridal relationship with Christ, we will devote an entire class to this study at a later date.
- d. Let's begin with Adam and Eve as a picture of Christ and His bride.

Adam and Eve

1. The New Testament alerts us to the fact that Adam and Eve are types of Christ and His bride.
 - a. Two New Testament verses make it clear that God views Adam as a type and shadow of Christ,

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come (Rom. 5:14).

So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit (1 Cor. 15:45).
 - b. In a similar fashion, Eve is a type of the church as a bride for Christ. Paul in Ephesians 5 discusses Christ and the church as his bride. In explaining the bridal relationship between Christ and the church, Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 as the basis for the relationship of Christ to His bride. That is, Paul presents Eve as a picture of the church as Christ's bride.
 - c. With that as the foundation, let's look at several things we learn from the story of Adam and Eve about Christ and His bride. As you study Adam and Eve for yourself, you will probably glean much more than we can share here. However, we present several truths about Christ and His bride illustrated by Adam and Eve.

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I. From the Beginning

1. With the understanding that Adam and Eve present a picture of Christ and His bride, God's eternal plan for a bride for Christ was revealed from the beginning of the Bible.

- a. As we are well aware, the scriptures begin with the marriage of Adam and Eve. As we stated in the previous section, Adam and Eve represent Christ and His bride. We will have much more to say about this in a moment; however, for now the point is that the theme of Christ and His bride is a thread that runs through the entire Bible beginning with first book and continuing to the last.
- b. We know from previous teachings in this class that the scriptures are filled from beginning to end with references to Christ and His bride. As we have stated in prior sessions, the Bible begins with a marriage and ends with one; Jesus' first miracle was performed at a wedding; in the week before going to the cross, Jesus taught much about the bridal relationship. As you know, we also devoted several sessions discussing the bride in the book of Revelation, and, in fact, the church age will end when the bride has made herself ready.
- c. The fact that a thread runs through the entire Bible from beginning to end illustrates how important the bridal paradigm is to God. Moreover, not only does the Genesis account begin with a marriage which in type and shadow form depicts the marriage of Christ to His bride, it also presents God's eternal plan for Christ to have a bride as His eternal partner, the different aspects of God's eternal plan, and the process by which the bride is made ready. We will look in a moment in more detail at these points but for now know that from the beginning of the Bible, God revealed to mankind His plan for a bride for the eternal Son of God.

2. God's eternal plan for a bride for Christ was also revealed to mankind from the beginning of creation.

- a. This was a major surprise to me when I saw it for the first time. As I was preparing to teach this session, it seemed very flat and not something that would be of much interest to those to whom I would teach. So, I began to pray for God to show me more and others in the fellowship prayed for me also. As Bryan would say, I was stunned what the Holy Spirit revealed to me. I began to see in the creation account Christ and His bride, God's eternal purpose revealed in relation to Christ and His bride, the role of the bride in her relationship to Christ and even the task of the bride being made ready.
- b. Therefore, not just from the time in which the scriptures were available to be read, but from the beginning of creation itself God revealed the entire bridal paradigm to all of creation. Whereas the Bible itself is silent on who wrote the creation account in Genesis, there are some plausible answers to this question. Many say that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible. Moses' knowledge of the origins of the world could have been passed to him through a process of oral history from Adam to Moses. Due to the extremely long lifespans of early humanity, very few generations were required to pass this knowledge over thousands of years.

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- c. A second answer comes from the writings of the first century Jewish historian, Josephus. He claims that Methuselah was an ancient historian of his day, who recorded the history of the world (as told by Adam) on stone tablets. These tablets were carried by Noah onto the ark, and after the ark came to rest, Noah deposited the stone tablets in Arabia. Later during the desert wanderings, Moses was directed by God to discover them, where he learned the history of the world and repeated it in the Jewish scripture.¹
- d. In either case, the point for us is that the creation account and its implications were communicated to mankind even from the beginning. That is, God's eternal plan which included a bride for Christ was revealed to man from the beginning of time. As we read the first two chapters of Genesis with the great advantage of New Testament revelation, we can see clearly God's eternal purpose was revealed from the beginning.
- e. With that understanding, let's highlight a few principles we learn from the creation account recorded in Genesis 1-2.

II. The Plan for a Bride

1. First, the story of Adam and Eve not only illustrates the fact of the marriage of Christ to His bride, it also illustrates God's eternal plan and purpose for Christ and His bride.

- a. Genesis 1:26-27 reads,

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
- b. We see in the story of Adam and Eve the eternal plan of the Godhead. As the above passage relates, Adam and Eve were created to reflect the fullness of the image of God in the earth. Adam as a type of Christ is to reflect Christ who in God's eternal plan is to have a bride as His eternal partner. Likewise, Eve who represents the individual believer and the church in general is to be a reflection of the image of the Godhead as Christ's bride.
- c. In this story, we not only see the eternal purpose of God having a bride for His Son, we also see that God's eternal plan is for Christ's bride to reflect Christ's nature and character in fullness. The above referenced passage reads that mankind—male and female--was created for the purpose of reflecting the image of God. Of course, we know that the fall delayed the fulfillment of God's eternal plan for man. Nevertheless, we still observe God's eternal plan depicted here—that is, that Christ would have a bride who reflects Christ's same nature and character.
- d. Therefore, we see from the very beginning of the scriptures God's eternal plan. In this account, we see clearly God's eternal plan was established before creation. With this, we see that God's purpose is not for man to be healthy, wealthy, and have great honor although those things can most definitely accompany our walk with Christ; instead, His plan is to have a bride who reflects Christ in fullness.

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2. Second, Adam and Eve highlight that included in God's plan is the eternal partnership between Christ and His bride.

- a. Several scriptures highlight the eternal partnership intended for Christ and His bride. Note these verses,

...and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth (Gen. 1:26).

Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth (Gen. 1:28)

Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it (Gen. 2:15).

- b. Adam and Eve depict the eternal principle that Christ and His bride are to be eternal partners to take dominion over God's creation. We learn from other places in the scriptures that the task of taking dominion over the earth falls into three categories. During the church age the bride as led by the indwelling Christ is to take dominion over her own life and to make herself ready as a bride for Christ. Secondly, in the kingdom age in which Christ will rule from Jerusalem for 1,000 years, Christ and His bride in partnership will take dominion over the earth, and, thirdly, in the eternal ages, Christ and His bride will partner together eternally to take dominion over all of creation. Of course, all of this is to give to Christ the reward of His suffering.
- c. Let's look next at the bridal relationship depicted in the creation account.

III. The Bridal Relationship

1. First, Adam and Eve depict the companionship that Christ and His bride are to have.

- a. Reflecting again on the creation account, Adam was given the task of naming all living creatures. As he worked on this daunting assignment, Adam quickly realized that he was alone and he had no one suitable for himself. He did not have anyone of like kind to love and be in relationship with. He was alone and desired a companion with which he could have a fulfilling relationship. Saying that it was not good for him to be alone, God created Eve to be his wife. You can sense the excitement in Adam's heart as he saw Eve for the first time.
- b. Since Eve was made before the fall, she was perfect in every way. She was magnificent in beauty. She was pure, blameless, and without any defect. She was the ideal companion for Adam. The word translated *suitable* in Genesis 2:18 means "corresponding to". Eve corresponded to Adam, or in other words was just like him in character and nature.
- c. She was the perfect companion for Adam. Of course, this is God's plan for Christ and His bride. The bride is to be Christ's perfect companion—corresponding to Him and suitable as His perfect partner.

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The idea of the believer being the perfect companion for Christ is such an important idea. Religion, even Christian religion, focuses on ritual and compliance to rules and principles. Even though Christianity does present a number of principles for victorious living, Christianity as is illustrated here is a relationship between Christ and His betrothed bride. It is friendship, companionship, and partnership in which both bride and Christ receive joy and fulfillment in as together they fulfill God's eternal plan and purpose.

2. Second, Adam and Eve depict the union that is to exist between Christ and His bride.

a. Genesis 2:22-24 reads,

The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

b. This section of scripture which is often quoted at wedding ceremonies depicts a beautiful picture of the intended union that is to take place between Christ and His bride. As the passage tells us, believers are bone of bones and flesh of flesh with Christ. They are now joined to Christ and called to be one with Him. The word translated "join" here or "cleave" in the King James Version means: "To stick; to adhere; to hold to; to unite or be united closely in interest or affection; to adhere with strong attachment."² The Hebrew word, *dābaq*, is a strong word that has the literal sense of two being held together by force, as when one person captures another. It has a figurative sense of being "glued to" another.³

c. Drawing from Genesis 2:24, Paul wrote these words, "Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, 'THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.' But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:16-17). When we are born again as the betrothed bride for Christ, our spirit is joined to Christ's Spirit in a way that our spirit and Christ's Spirit are one. Our spirit is in full union with Christ's Spirit—in a sense, glued together as one—in full union. Of course, believers are now on a journey to have the full union with Christ to take place in our soul and body.

d. Thus, in such a beautiful way, the Genesis account conveys how Christ and His bride are joined together as one in union that one day will become full union—one flesh in body soul and spirit.

3. Third, Adam and Eve illustrate the intimate love relationship that is to exist between Christ and His bride.

a. Adam loved Eve with great love and passion. He was incomplete before she came onto the scene. But with her coming, his passionate love for a mate was fulfilled. Mankind's first true love relationship typifies Christ's love relationship with His bride. Frank Viola wrote this in his book, *From Eternity to Here*,

God is perfectly adequate within Himself. But because God is love, He is not content to be adequate in Himself. For this reason, God the Son wanted someone upon whom to pour out the love that coursed within His being, which is the very same love that the Father poured out upon

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Him...Again, the Son's desire for a counterpart was not rooted in any deficiency within Himself. It was instead rooted in the overflowing excess of divine love.⁴

- b. As the above quote says, God was motivated by His love for His creation to have a bride who He can pour out His great passion upon and greatly love throughout eternity. Adam's love for Eve illustrates the great love relationship between Christ and His bride.
- c. In addition to illustrating Christ's great love for His bride, the story of Adam and Eve illustrates the love for Christ that God desires to come from His bride. This is really an important point. Eve was created for Adam and for him alone. There was no other person on earth and no other purpose for Eve to exist. She existed to be a partner for Adam. As such, Eve was totally devoted to Adam as Christ desires His bride to be utterly devoted to Him. Just as Christ is totally devoted and in love with His bride, He desires His bride to be totally devoted to and in love with Him.
- d. The church is created for Christ to be His bride and to be His alone. Christ's bride is to live for Christ in complete devotion, absolute abandonment, and passionate love. No other purpose exists for which a believer should live. We live to be possessed by Christ and to love Him with all our hearts.

IV. The Readying of the Bride

1. To understand how the creation account relates to the readying of the bride, let's look first at Genesis Chapter 2.

- a. Genesis 2:7 reads, "Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." The King James Version translates the phrase "living being" as "living soul".
- b. The Hebrew word translated as *being* or *soul* carries the meaning of both a living person and a living soul.⁵ *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* includes these words: "The inner person is *nepeš*, while the outer person, or reputation, is *shem*, most commonly translated "name."⁶ Thus, Adam was created as a living soul.
- c. To understand the process of the bride being made ready, we need to understand the two trees in the garden. In addition to this point, we also know that the Lord placed two trees in the garden—the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life. God's intent was that man was to not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil for to do so, he would partake of evil or, on the other hand, partake of good apart from God. Instead, God's plan was for man to eat from the tree of life.
- d. Although this never happened, if man had eaten from the tree of life, he would have had his soul progressively filled with the life of God, that is, the life of Christ. As he did this over time, he would be transformed into the image of God as he was created to become.

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2. The bride is made ready by a process illustrated by how Adam was to live.
 - a. The process implied in Genesis 2 is much like the transformation process described in the writings of the Apostle Paul. As Paul wrote, we are to die to self or our soul life and allow the life of Christ fill us up to fullness. This is much like denying eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil and instead eating from the tree of life instead.
 - b. The point is that the creation account describes how man is transformed from his natural state into one who reflects the image of God for which he was created. In other words, not only does the story of Adam and Eve describe God's eternal plan for man which includes a bride for Christ, it also illustrates the process by which a person is made ready as this suitable helpmate for Christ.
 - c. A major take away from this powerful story is that from the beginning of time God revealed the bridal call, the bridal purpose and relationship and the process of how the bride is made ready.
 - d. Let's next look into Abraham seeking a bride for his son, Isaac.

Abraham Seeking a Bride for Isaac

I. A Type and Shadow of the Father and Son

1. In this section we will explore Abraham sending his servant to take a wife for Isaac as a type of seeking a bride for Christ.
 - a. Moving on from Adam and Eve as a type of Christ and His bride, we will now delve into another important type and shadow of Christ and His bride. In this section we will look at Abraham who is a type and shadow of the heavenly Father and Isaac as a type of Christ. More specifically, we will look at Abraham sending his servant to his homeland to take a wife for Isaac.
 - b. This story illustrates another important biblical truth, that being the need for the betrothed bride to leave Babylon and journey toward the promise land where she will be married to Christ. However, before we discuss Genesis 24, let's explain why Abraham is a type of the Father and Isaac a type of Christ.
2. The book of Hebrews clearly and directly states that Abraham is a type of the Father and Isaac a type of Christ.
 - a. Hebrews 11:17-19 confirms that Abraham and Isaac are a type and shadow of the Father and the Son,

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back *as a type* (Heb. 11:17-19).

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3. In addition to the passage in Hebrews, the story of Abraham offering Isaac as a sacrifice further illustrates Isaac as a type and shadow of Christ.

- a. Genesis 22 presents the story of Abraham being willing to offer Isaac as a sacrifice and the Lord at the last moment intervening with a sacrificial ram to be offered in Isaac's place. This amazing story is a type and shadow of Christ going to the cross. Some of the parallels which support this premise are:
 - Jesus is referred to as the heavenly Father's only begotten Son (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:9). Likewise, even though Abraham was also the father of Ishmael, Isaac is referred to as Abraham's only begotten son, just as was Christ (Gen. 22:2, Heb. 11:17).
 - When Jesus went to the cross, the majority of His followers stood at a distance from Him (Lk. 22:54; Lk. 23:49). Abraham's servants stayed behind at a distance while Isaac accompanied by Abraham proceeded to the place of sacrifice (Gen. 22:5).
 - Isaac was not a small child when this event took place. He was old enough to understand what was transpiring and strong enough to resist Abraham. Even so, he willfully submitted to his father. In a like manner, Jesus could have decided not to go to the cross, but He voluntarily submitted to His Father and in obedience went to the cross (Mt. 26:53; Lk. 22:42).
 - When Jesus was sentenced to death on the cross, He had to carry His own cross (Jn. 19:17). When He became too weak to continue, Simon of Cyrene took His cross the rest of the way. In a like manner, Isaac carried the wood to be used in the sacrificial act to the place of sacrifice (Gen. 22:6)
 - Isaac was bound and put on the altar just as Christ was bound to the cross (Gen. 22:9).
 - God provided the ram on the third day as was the time of the resurrection of Christ (Gen. 22:4).
- b. From these examples, we see that the scriptures support that Abraham is a type and shadow of the heavenly Father and Isaac is a type of Christ.

II. Genesis 24 and Christ's Bride

1. We want to turn our attention now to Genesis 24 which records Abraham sending his servant to take a wife for Isaac.

- a. Let's begin by summarizing the story. Abraham who was old by this point desired for his son Isaac to have a wife. Even though every father desires their son to find that perfect helpmate, this was much more than just a way to provide joy and happiness for Isaac. The reason being that God's promise to Abraham was dependent upon Isaac finding the correct bride and their union producing a child of promise. Years earlier, God had promised Abraham that "He would make him a great nation" (Gen. 12:2); that He would "multiply Abraham exceedingly" (Gen. 17:2); and that he would be the father of even a multitude of nations (Gen. 17:4). Therefore, God's promise could only be fulfilled if Isaac was married.

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- b. With this in his mind, Abraham sent his chief servant, probably Eliezer, to his homeland and, more specifically, to his relatives to find a wife for Isaac. With these instructions, the servant departed with ten camels loaded with gifts and provisions, arriving at the city of Nahor. The city of Nahor was where Abraham's brother, Nahor, lived. Abraham's brother, Nahor, remained in Haran when Abraham departed for the land of Canaan. Rebekah, who would become Isaac's wife, was Nahor's granddaughter. Thus, she was a relative of Abraham from his homeland.⁷
- c. The city of Nahor was located in Mesopotamia (Gen. 24:10) near where the Tower of Babel had been located. The land in which the tower was located was called Babel (Gen. 10:7-9). *Strong's Concordance* refers to the Hebrew word translated "Babel" as also meaning *Babylon, Babylonia and the Babylonian Empire*.⁸ *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* refers to Babel as the ancient capital of Babylonia.⁹ Therefore, important to our understanding the application for us today, Abraham's servant went to the city of Nahor to Abraham's relatives in the land of Babylon to find a wife for Isaac. In other words, Rebekah was a relative of Isaac who lived in Babylon.
- d. Before sending his servant on the journey, Abraham made it clear to his servant that the woman who was to become Isaac's wife must be willing to leave her homeland in Babylon and come to where Isaac was. Isaac was forbidden to go to her homeland. Even though she had never seen Isaac in person, she had to be willing to come to him.
- e. When Abraham's servant arrived at Nahor, he went to the well where the young ladies collected water every day. There he encountered Rebekah. He asked for water and she willingly offered him water and even offered to water his camels. In addition, she invited him to stay at her family's home while he was there. As Abraham's servant spent time with Rebekah and her family, he soon realized that she was the one he was looking for. Once he realized she was the one to whom he had been sent, he asked her and her brothers if she would go with him and she agreed. They left together and when they arrived in Canaan, Isaac met her and they consummated the marriage.

2. The story is a type and shadow of the heavenly Father inviting believers to become the eternal bride of Christ and the need for the betrothed bride to journey out of Babylon to be married to Christ.

- a. Although probably obvious, this encounter is a type and shadow of the heavenly Father taking a bride for Christ. In this story, Abraham represents the heavenly Father and Isaac represents Christ.
- b. The servant pictures the Holy Spirit. As the text states, the servant was the oldest in Abraham's household and was in charge of all that Abraham owned. He was sent to take a wife for Abraham's son. Of course, this offers an excellent description of the Holy Spirit. Eternally a part of the Godhead and fully God, He abides in the household of God. He is in charge of the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose. One of the primary roles of the Holy Spirit is to seek out a bride for Christ; to give the bride all of the gifts and provision she needs to be made ready; and to bring her out of Babylon so that she might be made ready for her wedding with Christ. This is a major assignment of the Holy Spirit in our day. A member of the Godhead from eternity past, the Holy Spirit is the eternal Helper currently being sent throughout the earth to invite and prepare a wife for Christ.

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- c. Since Rebekah was a relative of Abraham and Isaac, she is a type of a believer just as Christ is “the firstborn among many brethren” (Rom. 8:29). In this instance, she represents a believer who is being invited by the Holy Spirit to become a bride for Christ.
- d. The entire encounter pictures the Jewish wedding system which was followed in ancient times in Israel and in place during the days of Christ’s earthly ministry. Just like in the Jewish wedding system (see Session 2 to refresh your memory), the bride was first betrothed to her Bridegroom. The betrothal took place in or near the home of the bride. Like in the Jewish system, the bride had to first agree to and accept the bridal invitation. At the time of her agreeing to the proposal and the terms of it, she was then betrothed to her bridegroom and given gifts to seal the agreement. She was provided with everything she needed to be a beautiful bride for her husband. The story of Rebekah beautifully depicts the betrothal of a young Jewish man and woman. The story also depicts the consummation service that is also part of an ancient Jewish wedding. In a typical Jewish wedding of that day, the consummation service took place at a later time and at the home of the father of the groom. Prior to the consummation service, the bride and groom lived apart; however, at the time of the consummation service, the bride and groom would enter the bridal chamber and consummate the marriage.
- e. The story of Abraham’s servant and Rebekah closely aligns with the Jewish wedding system of the day. The servant went to the bride’s home where he invited her to become the wife of Isaac. The invitation was based on her agreement to leave her home and go to where Isaac lived. She was given gifts at the time of the invitation, both to woo her to say “yes” and to give her everything she needed to make herself ready for her bridegroom. After agreeing to the proposal, Rebekah and Abraham’s servant departed for the home of Abraham where the marriage was consummated.
- f. In this brief story, we learn several important truths about the bridal invitation believers are being given and about bridal preparation.

III. Truths from the Story

1. The New Covenant is a bridal covenant.

- a. Genesis 24:2-3 reads in part, “Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he owned, ‘Please place your hand under my thigh, and I will make you swear by the Lord’...”. In doing this, Abraham was reaffirming that sending his servant to get a bride for Isaac was an essential aspect of the covenant God had made with Abraham many years before. The same is true in terms of a bride for Christ.
- b. As we stated in Session 2, the New Covenant is a bridal covenant. There may be other aspects to the New Covenant, but an important and essential element of it is for Christ to have an eternal partner—a bride. The application for us is that God’s eternal plan and purpose is for Christ to have a bride made ready for Him, and that the truths of this type and shadow are an integral part of the bridal covenant between Christ and His bride.

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2. The eternal wife of Christ will arise from within the church or family of believers.

- a. As Genesis 24 states, the bride was required to come from Abraham's relatives and also from Abraham's homeland. Abraham was very clear that whoever would become the bride for Isaac could not come from the daughters of the Canaanites where Abraham lived at this time but from his home country and more specifically from his relatives (Gen. 24:3-4).
- b. This is an important point for our understanding of bridal theology. Many evangelicals believe that the act of being born again makes one the eternal wife for Christ. Of course, we have made the point repeatedly that this is not true. The eternal wife of Christ comes from within the body of Christ. As this passage exemplifies, the Father is sending the Holy Spirit to the church to invite believers to say "yes" to become the eternal wife of Christ.

3. To become the eternal wife of Christ, the bride must come out of Babylon.

- a. We shared a little earlier in the session that Abraham originally lived in the territory referred to as Babylon and his relatives including Rebekah still lived there. Abraham sent his servant to Babylon to find a wife for Isaac. Even though Abraham's servant traveled there to find a wife, it was clear she could not stay there. She had to come to where Isaac lived.
- b. Abraham also made it emphatically clear that Isaac could not go to Babylon under any circumstance to get his wife. She had to come out of Babylon to marry Isaac. He gave clear instructions that Isaac could not go to Babylon to get her and that she had to be willing to leave Babylon in order to be married to Isaac (Gen. 24:4-8).
- c. Not only did Rebekah have to be willing to leave Babylon, she also had to actually leave and travel to the land of promise where she met and married Isaac. It is interesting that her relatives wanted her to delay her journey for a few days before leaving. Abraham's servant would have no part of delaying. They had to immediately depart. There was an urgency for her to begin her journey without delay, The same is true for Christ's betrothed bride.
- d. Here is the application for us. Most, if not, all believers when they initially are born again live in spiritual Babylon enmeshed in Babylon's culture and religion. To become Christ's wife, believers must come out of Babylon. Speaking of spiritual Babylon, the book of Revelation records this command, "I heard another voice from heaven, saying, 'Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities'" (Rev. 18:4-5). Idolatry, false religion, compromise, immorality, witchcraft, and spiritual delusion permeate the Babylonian culture throughout the earth. To be made ready, the bride must be willing to come out of all agreement with the false religion and immoral culture of Babylon and then to actually act so as to come out of her.
- e. Unfortunately, in our day throughout much of the world, many pastors are taking the bride into Babylon rather than calling the bride out of Babylon. In an attempt to be seeker sensitive or to meet people where they are or not wanting to lose people by teaching those portions of the scriptures that don't fit neatly into our Babylonian culture, many pastors are teaching a compromised gospel. In essence, rather than calling people out of Babylon, they are taking Jesus into Babylon. This approach will never prepare a bride for Christ and it must stop.

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4. God will have a bride who will come out of Babylon to be made ready.
 - a. The scriptures record these words, "I said to my master, 'Suppose the woman does not follow me.' He said to me, 'The Lord, before whom I have walked, *will send His angel with you to make your journey successful, and you will take a wife for my son from my relatives and from my father's house*" (Gen. 24:39-40). As this passage suggests, the Lord will have a bride who will follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. Christ will have a bride who will come out of Babylon and make herself ready. This eternal plan of the Lord will be successful. The issue is not if it will be successful, but if an individual will be a part of the coming forth of Christ's bride in the fullness that the Lord desires.

5. Christ will have His bride made ready.
 - a. The issue is will an individual believer make the choice to come out of Babylon to make themselves ready. Individuals have a choice. Regardless of people's choices, the Holy Spirit will be successful in finding a bride for Christ. Genesis 24:39 addresses the issue of what if the woman will not leave Babylon to follow Abraham's servant back to meet Isaac. Verse 41 reads, "...then you will be free from my oath, when you come to my relatives; and if they do not give her to you, you will be free from my oath."
 - b. In a similar manner, if a true believer decides it is too difficult to respond positively to the Holy Spirit's invitation to come out of Babylon so as to be made ready as a bride for Christ, they will remain a Christian but lose the greatest of all eternal rewards, that being to become Christ's eternal partner as His bride. Rebekah had a free choice to come out to Isaac or not. If she had refused, Abraham's servant would have found someone else suitable for Isaac. The same is true with a bride for Christ.

6. God will give the bride who is willing to make herself ready everything she needs to accomplish the task.
 - a. Abraham's servant took with him ten camels loaded with "a variety of good things of his master's" to give to the one who would journey back with him to become Isaac's wife. Just as Abraham's servant led Rebekah back to meet Isaac and was with her every step of the way on the journey, never left her, and provided everything she needed along the way to successfully get her there—the Holy Spirit will accompany the bride throughout her lifelong journey to make herself ready.
 - b. Once a believer says "yes" to the journey of preparation, the Father gives them everything they need for life and godliness, that is, everything they need to be made ready. What a wonderful picture. If one says "yes" to the bridal journey and follows through in humility and obedience, the Holy Spirit will then lead them step by step on the journey of preparation and will provide everything they need to be made ready.

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7. The bride must be open to the Holy Spirit's leadership in her life and fully cooperate with Him as He leads her throughout the journey toward readiness.

a. Notice the initial encounter Abraham's servant had with Rebekah at the well (Gen. 24:11-25). The servant had prayed these words,

He said, "O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today, and show lovingkindness to my master Abraham. Behold, I am standing by the spring, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water; now may it be that the girl to whom I say, 'Please let down your jar so that I may drink,' and who answers, 'Drink, and I will water your camels also' — may she be the one whom You have appointed for Your servant Isaac; and by this I will know that You have shown lovingkindness to my master" (Gen. 24:12-14).

b. As the above passage tells us, the servant was asking for a specific response from the one who was to become Isaac's wife. The response he was looking for was one of humility and cooperation. Rebekah met his qualifications. She willingly gave him a drink. She watered all ten camels and she invited him to stay at her father's home. In other words, she walked in humility and responded positively to the fleece that the servant had put before the Lord.

c. The same is true for the believer who wants to be the bride made ready. As the Holy Spirit leads, believers must respond in humility and obedience to fully cooperate with the Lord's leading. This attitude is not a one-time response; moreover, to be made ready it is an attitude that is required throughout one's life.

8. The Holy Spirit watches over believers to see if they will accept the bridal invitation and will make themselves ready

a. Abraham's servant *put his gaze* upon Rebekah to see if she was the one who would follow him back to Isaac. The passage reads, "Meanwhile, the man was gazing at her in silence, to know whether the Lord had made his journey successful or not" (Gen. 24:21). Other translations state that he "watched silently". Just like Abraham's servant watched the young lady closely to see if she would take the bridal journey to Isaac, the Holy Spirit watches over believers to see if they will accept the invitation to make themselves ready as a bride for Christ. Both initially and all along the journey, the Holy Spirit has set His gaze upon the bride to watch her, lead her, and prepare her. His gaze never abandons her and never ceases to lead her to readiness. His eyes are ever upon Christ's bride to make her ready.

9. There is an urgency to begin and to continue the journey of coming out of Babylon and journeying to bridal readiness.

a. Rebekah's family asked for the servant to delay the journey a few days, but the servant refused, saying, "He said to them, 'Do not delay me, since the Lord has prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master'" (Gen. 24:56). The Holy Spirit is saying the same thing today to the church. Don't delay the journey of readiness. The days are evil and the time is short. It is time for the bride to make herself ready. Therefore, the bride is to make haste in beginning and continuing the journey of readiness.

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- b. Let's close this session with the blessing Rebekah's family spoke over her applying it to the preparation of a bride for Christ, "May you, our sister, become thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them" (Gen 24:60). May the bride of Christ multiply to become thousands of ten thousands so that Christ might have the reward of His suffering—a bride made ready!

¹ <https://versebyverseministry.org/bible-answers/where-did-moses-get-the-information-to-write-the-creation-account>

² <https://av1611.com/kjbp/kjv-dictionary/cleave.html>

³ <https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Topical.show/RTD/cgg/ID/21402/Cleave-to.htm>

⁴ Frank Viola, *From Eternity to Here*, David Cook Publishers, Colorado Springs, CO, 2009, pp. 39-40.

⁵ Nepesh, OT: 5315, *The Online Bible Thayer's Greek Lexicon and Brown Driver & Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*, Copyright © 1993, Woodside Bible Fellowship, Ontario, Canada. Licensed from the Institute for Creation Research.)

⁶ Nepesh, OT: 5315, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, Copyright © 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers.)

⁷ Rebekah, *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Copyright © 1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers

⁸ Strong's OT: 894, *Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary*. Copyright © 1994, 2003, 2006, 2010 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.

⁹ OT:894, *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, Unabridged, Electronic Database*. Copyright © 2002, 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.