

Th131 God's Plan

Lesson Th131-7 Something to Love

In our last lesson we learned that in the New Testament there were two different words that mean love. *Phileo* love is from the heart, and *agapao* love is from the soul and mind. The disciple Matthew told a story of Jesus talking to the lawyers of his day. In the story Jesus said that the greatest law or command of God was to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind" (Matt 22:37). From this we can see that God expects total and perfect love from us. This is a reasonable expectation as God loves us with the same perfect love. God placed love at the center of his greatest command. From this we can see how important love is to God. Remember what the apostle John wrote? He said that "God is love."

Now it is very important to understand the nature of love. First and foremost, love requires something to love. This is so obvious we seldom think about it. People love many different things. Parents love their children. Men should love their wives. We often have strong feelings for our friends. But people also love things such as money. Love is an action word. As such it requires something to love.

Now Abraham and his wife Sarah had a son in their old age. They named their son, Isaac. He filled their lives with love and joy. Of course Isaac loved his father and mother dearly. In the course of time Isaac's mother died. He was deeply saddened. His heart had been full of so much love towards her and now she was gone and there was a great emptiness in him.

Abraham was now very old as well. He saw the sadness and emptiness within his son and knew that it was time for his son to take for himself a wife. So Abraham placed his oldest servant in charge of finding a wife for his son. "Now I want you to make a promise to me," Abraham commanded his servant. "Promise to me before the LORD, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not allow my son to marry a girl from Canaan. We live among these people, but don't let him marry a Canaanite girl. Go back to my country, to my own people, to find a wife for my son Isaac. Bring her here to him."

The servant took ten of Abraham's camels and left Canaan and traveled to Mesopotamia, that is, Iraq, Abraham's homeland. The servant carried with him many different kinds of beautiful gifts. He finally arrived at the city where Abraham's brother lived. In the evening, when the women come out to get water, he went to the water well outside the city. He made the camels kneel down at the well.

The servant said, "LORD, you are the God of my master Abraham. Please show your kindness to my master by helping me find a wife for his son Isaac. Here I am, standing by this well of water, and the young women from the city are coming out to get water. I will say to one of them, 'Please put your jar down so that I can drink.' Let her answer show whether she is the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac. If she says, 'Drink, and I will also give water to your camels,' I will know that she is the right one. It will be proof that you have shown kindness to my master."

Before the servant had finished praying, a young woman named Rebekah came to the well. She was the daughter of Bethuel. (Bethuel was the son of Milcah and Nahor, Abraham's brother.) Rebekah came to the well with her water jar on her shoulder. She was very pretty and had never been married. She went down to the well and filled her jar. Then the servant ran to her and said, "Please give me a little water to drink from your jar."

Rebekah quickly lowered the jar from her shoulder and gave him a drink. She said, "Drink this, sir." As soon as she finished giving him something to drink, Rebekah said, "I will also pour some water for your camels." So Rebekah quickly poured all the water from her jar into the drinking trough for the camels. Then she ran to the well to get more water, and she gave water to all the camels.

The servant quietly watched her. He wanted to be sure that the LORD had given him an answer and had made his trip successful. After the camels finished drinking, he gave Rebekah a gold ring that weighed 7 grams. He also gave her two gold arm bracelets that together weighed 115 grams. The servant asked, "Who is your father? And is there a place in your father's house for me and my men to sleep?"

Rebekah answered, "My father is Bethuel, the son of Milcah and Nahor." Then she said, "Yes, we have straw and other food for your camels and a place for you to sleep." The servant bowed and worshiped the LORD. He then followed Rebekah back to her home where they were met by her brother, Laban.

While sitting to eat, the servant told Rebekah's family why he had journeyed to their city. He told how their uncle, Abraham, had sent him to find a wife for his only son, Isaac. He told the entire story including his prayer asking God for a sign. At the end of the story he said, "Now tell me, will you be kind and loyal to my master and give him your daughter? Or will you refuse to give her to him? Tell me so that I will know what I should do."

Then Laban and his father Bethuel answered, "We see that this is from the LORD, so there is nothing we can say to change it. Here is Rebekah. Take her and go. Let her marry your master's son. This is what the LORD wants."

When Abraham's servant heard this, he bowed to the ground before the LORD. Then he gave Rebekah the gifts he brought. He gave her beautiful clothes and gold and silver jewelry. He also gave expensive gifts to her mother and brother.

Soon it was time to return to Abraham. Rebekah's father and brother asked her if she was sure that she wanted to go and be the wife of her uncle's son. Rebekah said, "Yes, I will go." Then Rebekah and her nurse got on the camels and followed the servant and his men. So the servant took Rebekah and left.

Isaac was now living in the Negev, a dry region in southern Israel. One evening he went out to the field to think. He looked up and saw the camels coming from far away. Rebekah also looked and saw Isaac. Then she jumped down from the camel. She said to the servant, "Who is that young man walking in the field to meet us?"

The servant said, "That is my master's son, Isaac." So Rebekah covered her face with her veil.

The servant told Isaac everything that had happened. Then Isaac made Rebekah his wife and brought the girl into his mother's tent. Isaac loved her very much. So he was comforted after his mother's death (Gen 24).

This story of Isaac and Rebekah is truly a wonderful story of love. A young man, once full of love for his mother, grieves at her loss. He is full of love but there is no one to receive that love. But when Rebekah is brought to him, he has someone to love and his heart is filled. It is the nature of love to want something to love. Since God is love, doesn't He want someone to love? We will explore this more in the next few lessons.

This lesson is **important** because it teaches that God, who is the source of all love, will provide an object of love to those who desire God's will in their lives.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that believers should fulfill God's command, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.

To **review** this lesson, answer the following questions:

1. What is the one thing that love wants? [Pause for 5 seconds.]
A. If you said that love wants something or someone to love, you are correct.
2. Why was Isaac sad in this story? [Pause for 5 seconds.]
A. If you said that Isaac was sad because his mother Sarah had died, you answered correctly.
3. The Bible tells us that Isaac was comforted at the loss of his mother. How was he comforted? [Pause for 5 seconds.]
A. If you said Isaac married Rebekah and that he loved her, you are right.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to replay this lesson two or three times until you can repeat the story accurately. Then, find someone and teach them this lesson about love.