

ISAAC GETS A BRIDE

Psalm 121:2 “From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.”

Last week talked about Psalm 121, that in the midst of worry...

- *I lift up my eyes to the hills* (eager anticipation of good things in bad circumstances...
- *From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*
- *He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.* This is the idea that GOD watches us!

God is the watcher; we are the watchee(s). We are the kind of beings who need to be watched over. If no one is watching over our little life then we are doomed. That is why God is also called our watcher.

The language the scriptures use will change your life if you'll let it.

- *Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand.*
- *The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.* When you're traveling by day in the desert, sun, heat, sunstroke, thirst, that's the great danger.
- *The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.* This is a beautiful way of saying “every moment.”

We are not cushioned; we are kept. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *“Peace is the opposite of security...To demand guarantees is to want to protect oneself. Peace means giving oneself completely to God, wanting no security, but in faith and obedience, resting in the hand of Almighty God.”*

Sometimes things will work out just the way we want...and sometimes they won't. Today, Isaac and Abraham both have fear that Isaac will be single his whole life. They begin to fear God won't fulfill His promises, again.

The story begins with an account of the oath made between Abraham and his servant. The point of the section is to show Abraham's concern for God's promise that was to come to the descendants of Isaac. Though Isaac is a central figure in chapter 22, he is not portrayed there as the promised offspring but rather as the beloved son of Abraham. Moses returns to the themes that loomed large at the beginning of Abraham's story, the promised descendants and the blessing.

- Abraham's descendants were not to be mixed with the inhabitants of Canaan (v. 3). Abraham's desire that Isaac not take a wife from the Canaanites appears to be a further expression of the notion of the two lines of blessing and curse seen in Genesis 9:25-27: “Cursed be Canaan!”
- Abraham's descendants are not to return to the land of their fathers. The Promised Land is their home, and Abraham is careful to ensure that Isaac is not taken back to the place of his father.

Genesis 24 allows the reader to get one last portrait of the faith of Abraham. The questions raised by the servant provide the occasion.

- “What if the young woman does not want to return (v. 5)?” Abraham's reply, “The LORD the God of heaven... will send His angel before you so that you can get a wife for my son from there” (v. 7).

The key idea is that of God's going before the servant to prepare his way. The primary means of getting this message across in the narrative is the words of the servant.

Most Israelites would have known the story of chapter 24, which tells that the point of the narrative is to give due attention to the Lord's role in the events. The writer is not content with leaving the reader alone with such an amazing picture of God's work.

At the conclusion of the servant's account of the events, Laban and Bethuel express their view of the events, acknowledging that it was the Lord who prepared the way for the servant to meet Rebekah.

In the text we have three witnesses to attest that these events have been the work of God:

1. The narrator (vv. 15-16)
2. The servant (vv. 26-27)
3. Laban (v. 50)

The final witness is Rebekah herself, who against the wishes of her brother and her mother, returned with the servant to Isaac. The simplicity of her response (“I will go,” v. 58) reveals the nature of her trust in the God of Abraham.

One commentator speaks of the meeting of Isaac and Rebekah like this, *“Isaac, for the first time in the story, enters the narrative just as the servant was bringing the young woman to him. They both lift up their eyes and see the other in the distance. The narrator, along with the readers, knows who it is that Isaac and Rebekah see, but they themselves do not. Notice how the narrator writes “she saw Isaac”; yet it is not until the next verse that Rebekah herself learns that it was Isaac...The readers learn nothing new as the narrative progresses. It is only the characters that continue to discover the providential ordering of the events; we, the readers, merely watch as the characters discover the greatness of God's leading.”*

As we continue today, we watch and see the greatness of God's leading.