

# 21.5.23 pm

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Date: 21 May 2023

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Good evening, a warm welcome to the service this evening. Just one notice that I didn't have this morning, but I've been reminded of this evening.
- There's a Psalm Praise Night, Farrakhan is that the title of it? Gaelic Samadhi. Samadhi. Gaelic Samadhi this evening in Scalpy Free Church at half past seven.
- And all are welcome to go along to that. So that's tonight, half past seven, Gaelic Samadhi at Scalpy Free Church. We'll be finished before half past seven, so there'll be plenty of time for your commute.
- We're going to begin this time of worship. We'll sing to God's praise from Psalm 40. The first two verses of Psalm 40. I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear.
- At length to me he did incline my voice and cry to hear. He took me from a fearful pit and from the miry clay. And on a rock he set my feet, establishing my way.
- [ 0 : 5 8 ]     We sing these two verses of Psalm 40. We sing in Gaelic. Remain seated to sing. And then afterwards, Callum, I think, is going to lead us in prayer. In Gaelic, please.
- Fr Democracy, first■■■■ers, chígen Arts, ch■■ Nieku,iada play it for the fact that we visionexisting, who must be loved by it.
- Christmas. Christmas. Christmas.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- [ 2 : 3 7 ]     Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- [ 5 : 0 7 ]     Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- [ 7 : 3 7 ]     Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. We'll sing again to God's praise. We'll continue in Psalm 40. And we'll sing from verses 3 to verse 5.
- He put a new song. And on the Lord, God to God, O Lord,
- O God, God, If you could turn,

I'm going to go to 1 John, and we'll be right, I'm going to put a wasp on the window, maybe you could put it, this is God, this is love,

[ 12 : 25 ] God, God, and we'll be right to God's praise, God's praise, God, God, a heart, God, God, and we'll stand to sing to God's praise.

God's praise. God's praise. God's praise. Amen. God's praise. Amen. Amen. Amen.

A heart to face my God, a heart from sin set free, a heart that always fills thy blood so freely shed for me.

A heart resigns, a mist in me, my faith Redeemer's throne, where only Christ is heard to speak.

Where Jesus reigns alone, a humble, lowly, contrite heart, From him that dwells within.

[ 14 : 52 ] A heart in heavenly soul renewed, and full of love divine.

Perfect and bright, and good and good, a holy Lord of mine.

Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart, Come quickly from above.

Cry thy new name upon my heart, Thy new best name, O Lord.

We're going to turn now to Genesis 24.

[ 16 : 06 ] Genesis 24. But before we read this, and take a bit of time studying this, I'm going to ask Ian Morrison to come and lead us in prayer, please.

Just here, please. Gracious Lord, we give you thanks that you are love.

And of all the words that the writer chose, and that your spirit inspired to define you, the one word you have chosen is love.

And there could be many words, Lord. There could be justice, and there could be, for us, there could be condemnation. And that would be fair. But you've chosen love, and we are grateful.

Because it sets us free. And because it covers our sins. And because it gives us something to aspire to in this life.

[ 17 : 24 ] We pray that you would bless David as he expounds in your word. And we pray that you would give us hearts of love. And that you would give us much to think about from this letter, Lord.

That we would worship you for the love that you are. And the love that you have shown us. And that you would give us new ways to carry your name well.

By loving each other in the church. And going out this week and loving others. In Jesus' name we ask this. Amen.

Amen. If you could turn now to Genesis 24, please. You can see from a glance at the chapter that it's long.

It is 67 verses long. So rather than reading it and then reading it again as we step through it.

[ 18 : 31 ] What we're going to do is just take a bit of time reading it and stopping and thinking about some of the lessons and the application from it. And the thing that comes clearly through the letter of John and especially the section that we read is the truth that God is love.

And what we come to tonight in this passage in Genesis 24 is it's a love story. And we can go to many different places to hear and to see love stories.

So if we're on a long journey in the car and the girls have any kind of control over the stereo. Then I can guarantee one of the songs that will be played is a song called Love Story by Taylor Swift.

But it's one of a thousand songs that tell a story of love. And at any time in the box office, the films that are being shown are essentially love stories.

And what we find here tonight is a love story. The best love stories are found in the Bible. And that makes sense because as we read, God is love.

[ 20 : 02 ] He's the source of all love. And so Genesis 24, we could say it's a love story that God is directing.

And because it's a long story, you'll hear less from me tonight. And we'll hear much more directly just through God's word. And the story begins with promises.

So the first point, if you're kind of taking notes and trying to structure the passage, the first nine verses, something that's clear within these verses is an emphasis on promises.

So let's read from verse one. Abraham was now old and well advanced in years.

And the Lord had blessed him in every way. He said to the chief servant in his household, the one in charge of all that he had, put your hand under my thigh.

[ 21 : 07 ] 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.

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? Make sure that you do not take my son back there, Abraham said.

The Lord, the God of heaven, who brought me out of my father's household and my native land, and who spoke to me and promised me an 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.

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. So the servant put his hand under the thigh of his master, Abraham, and swore an oath to him concerning this matter.

Now, we're in Genesis 24, but in every chapter that we've been in, from Genesis 12 right through to Genesis 24, we've been reminded of the promises that God made to Abraham.

[ 22 : 33 ] There was the promise of blessing, and that promise was being realized in verse 1 of Genesis 24.

It says there that the Lord blessed Abraham in every way. He's up in years, and as he comes to the end of his life, this is actually the last thing that Abraham says.

It's the end of his life, although chronologically it doesn't make that clear in the text. But this is the last thing that Abraham has to say, and he's looking for a wife for a son.

But at the end of his life, he's conscious that the Lord has blessed him in every way. And that had been the Lord's promise to him. So he was realizing that.

He was feeling the benefit of that. But the promise that Abraham had received was not just for himself, but it was also for his descendants.

[ 23 : 33 ] He had the promise that his descendants would be numerous. And at this point in time, the number of descendants that Abraham had was one.

Isaac. So Abraham, in his mind's eye, he could see many children coming from Isaac. But at this stage, Isaac is a single man.

He has no wife. And so for God's promise to be realized, that of many descendants, Isaac needed a wife. And so Abraham, who is mindful of God's promise, who is believing in God's promise, he speaks to his chief of staff, and he says to his chief of staff, God has made promises.

He's made promises to me that require Isaac, my son, to have a wife. So I want you now to go forward in faith and leave this place and go back to the place where my people are and find a wife for my boy.

It's the gist of the story. And so the servant, in response, the chief of staff, he puts his hand under Abraham's thigh, which is what they did when they were sealing an oath.

[ 25 : 04 ] It's the kind of thing that should make us very thankful for handshakes in our day and age. And this man, he swears the oath and he makes the promise.

So this section here, the first nine verses, they're full of promises. Abraham is locked on to God's promise.

He believes it. And he approaches his chief of staff, his servant, and he says, I want you now to promise to me to go and act on God's word to me.

And we might ask the question, why is there this recurring emphasis on God's promise? Why is it that there's so much repetition around God's promise?

And the answer is because we need it. You know, from Genesis 12, onward, God's promise, it's as if the volume of the promise that God made to Abraham is turned up higher and higher and higher so that we can hear it more and more clearly.

[ 26 : 23 ] And the sharpness of the picture of the promise that God gives to Abraham, it becomes more and more crystal clear as the chapters go on.

And the reason that we have this is because we need to keep hearing about God's promise because it increases our faith.

We need to keep on hearing God's word because it's through God's word, his promises, that our faith is built up.

Our faith doesn't get built up as we're watching the television. Our faith doesn't get built up as we're flicking through apps. Our faith doesn't get built up as we attend to our business in this world.

But our faith is built up as we keep on returning to God's promises. Romans 10, 17 says, Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

[ 27 : 24 ] And we need faith because without faith, we can't be saved. Without believing in Jesus, there is no salvation.

So we need faith, faith in Christ. And we know from Hebrews 11 and verse 6, without faith, it's impossible to please God.

And so Abraham, he has faith in the word of God. He has faith in the promise of God. It's faith that took him out of the Chaldeans and onto this journey as he follows the Lord.

And it's faith that keeps him day after day, keeping on, keeping on. And it's faith that drives him to send this man out on a search for a wife.

So the first thing we see here is the promises of God. And the second thing we see here as we go now from verse 10 down to verse 25 is we see prayer and progress.

[ 28 : 37 ] And these two things are interwoven. Prayer and progress. Some people, when we speak to them, they consider themselves to be prayer people.

They're not great on getting up and going. But they say, well, you know, I'll certainly pray. And there's other people who are action kind of people and they're always wanting to be doing something, but they really struggle to have the patience to be still and to be in God's presence and to pray.

And what we actually need is we need both. We need each person, each Christian, is called both to prayer and to progress.

And what we see in this section is that there is both prayer and progress. And firstly, we see progress in faith. So verse 10, Then the servant, having received this charge from Abraham and made this promise, then the servant took ten of his master's camels and left, taking with them all kinds of good things from his master.

He set out for Aram Naharim and made his way to the town of Nahor. He had the camels kneel down near the well outside the town. It was toward evening, the time when the women go out to draw water.

[ 30 : 08 ] So it starts with progress. And we see this man going forward, progressing in faith. And faith goes together with common sense.

So this man, he has a mind, he has a logical, sensible mind, and he uses it. The servant's instructions were to find a wife from Abraham's country.

So that's where he goes. He doesn't stay in his own country. He goes to the place where he can expect to meet a woman who will fit this description.

And he goes with good things from his master because he wants to make a good first impression. That's sensible. And he goes to the place where the eligible woman went to draw water.

And so it's all very sensible, straightforward stuff. The servant goes to the right place at the right time. He surrounds himself with the right kind of people.

[ 31 : 19 ] And that's a lesson that we shouldn't overlook. I mean, we might, not many of us here are looking for a wife or a husband at this point in our lives.

Maybe there are some. But every Christian needs to be sensible about where we go and the kind of people that we surround ourselves with.

Every Christian needs encouragement. Every Christian needs fellowship. And where do we find that? Well, we find that in the place where God's people gather together.

We don't need to go to a well, but we are able to come together and meet in a church where God's people can be found. So there's encouragement.

It's a sensible thing. It's a biblical thing to come to the house of God. And so let's continue here.

[ 32 : 21 ] The man, he sets out and he makes progress. He's now at the well. And then we hear him pray.

There's been progress. And now we hear him pray. Verse 12. Then he prayed, O Lord, God and 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 townspeople 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. So it's a prayer. And it's a very specific prayer, which is a lesson we can draw from this as well.

[ 33 : 25 ] Our prayers can often be very general because we're not expecting answers. This is a specific prayer because this man is looking for an answer.

He believes God is listening. He knows that he needs the help of God. He's expecting the response of God. And he's not even finished praying.

And there's progress again. So there's progress. There's prayer. Before he's even said the Amen, there's more progress.

Verse 15, Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel, son of Milcah, who was the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor.

And so, as this girl's comes out, and the man sees her, there's that sense of expectation. Is this the girl?

[ 34 : 27 ] Is this an answer to prayer? This girl is from Abraham's people. Could she be the answer? Verse 16, The girl was very beautiful, a virgin.

No man had ever lain with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came up again. The servant hurried to meet her and said, Please give me a little water from your jar.

Drink, my Lord, she said, and quickly lowered the jar to her hands and gave him a drink. After she had given him a drink, she said, I'll draw water for your camels too until they have finished drinking.

So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, ran back to the well to draw more water, and drew enough for all his camels.

And as this man prays, and as he watches with expectation, he can see right in front of his eyes that God is acting, God is answering his prayer.

[ 35 : 33 ] This girl comes, she's beautiful, she's from Abraham's people, she's pure, she's pure, and not only did she let the camels drink water, and not only did she give him a drink, but she actually said, I'll tell you what I'm going to do, I'm going to draw the water for your camels.

She didn't just let them drink, but she said, I'm going to water them. And we kind of think, well, what's the significance in that? That's ours work.

One of the commentators did the calculations on this, and this is what he said, camels drink more than 20 gallons each after a hard day's work.

And there were 10 camels, so in order to water these camels, we're talking about 200 gallons, a pitcher that Rebecca would have been using, would probably hold right about one gallon, so we're talking about 200 trips back and forth to the well in order to water these camels.

So we're talking about a big job here, we're talking about quite a few hours' work, so her response, it wasn't just an answer to prayer, but it revealed something of the character of Rebecca, she was kind, she was generous, she was caring, and she was a grafter, hard working.

[ 37 : 15 ] Verse 21, without saying a word, the man watched her closely to learn whether or not the Lord had made his journey successful.

When the camels had finished drinking, the man took out a gold nose ring weighing a beka and two gold bracelets weighing 10 shekels. Then he asked, whose daughter are you?

Please tell me, is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night? She answered him, I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son that Milcah bore to Nahor. And she added, we have plenty of straw and fodder as well as room for you to spend the night.

And so we see the prayer answered. And we see the, the, the, we see the, the way that God is at work. There's prayer, there's progress, there's prayer, there's progress, there's prayer, there's progress.

And it's a great illustration for us on how we're to live. As we've followed Abraham in his life, we're learning what it looks like to be a disciple. We're learning what it looks like to have faith.

[ 38 : 31 ] And here is a, a key lesson for disciples. We are to, to live by prayer, and by going forward.

God calls us to pray, to wait upon him, to be still. And he calls us to, to go forward in faith, to trust him, to take steps.

1 Thessalonians 5.17 says, pray continually. And that doesn't mean we're on our knees continually, but it means that as we start the day, we're in prayer.

As we're eating our breakfast, we might have our Bible in front of us, and we pray. Then we find ourselves in a meeting at 10 o'clock, and it's going pear-shaped. And we pray.

And then we're in a conversation with somebody that's a bit tricky. We're not sure if we know the right way to go with it, and we pray. Now we don't get on our knees at every point, but we're continuously praying and asking God to be present with us and active in our circumstances.

[ 39 : 52 ] That's the life of a disciple. Prayer, progress, prayer, progress, prayer, progress. James Montgomery Boyce says this as he reflects on this section.

He says, was there ever an expedition more bathed in prayer than this one? Yet as he prayed, he kept traveling. The servant prayed and worked, for he knew that prayer is given not to make work unnecessary, but to make it effective.

So there's the recurring emphasis from Genesis 12 all the way through, and this chapter begins with that recurring emphasis on God's promise.

And then the second thing we see is we see that twinning of prayer, progress, prayer, progress, prayer, progress. And then as we continue here in verse 26, the next thing we hear is the servant praising God.

Verse 26. Then the man bowed down and worshipped the Lord. He's realized that his prayer is being answered.

[ 41 : 08 ] He's realized that his mission is a successful mission. And the first thing he does on realizing this is he praises God.

Then the man bowed down and worshipped the Lord, saying, verse 27, Praise be to the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned his kindness and faithfulness to my master.

As for me, the Lord has led me on the journey to the house of my master's relatives. And so this man, he's intent on praising God.

That's his mission. That's his focus. And the thing that jumped out at me when I was thinking about this is there's a lot resting on the shoulders of the man.

And all we know about the man is that he's called the man. We don't even know his name. And he doesn't seem to have the slightest bit of attention and drawing attention to himself and telling us his name.

[ 42 : 16 ] His focus is not on himself, but his determination is to praise God. He prayed, he progresses in faith, and he can see that the Lord is at work, and so he praises the Lord.

He thanks the Lord. And we should note that because we are people who are very quick to forget to praise the Lord for all the good things that he does for us, and all the answers to prayer that we are experiencing day by day.

Jesus taught this lesson, remember, with the ten lepers in Luke 17. Ten lepers are healed, only one returns to say thank you and to praise the Lord.

Lord. And you could see that this man here, he's like the one leper. He is consistently, continually thankful.

He has a heart like the heart that we sang of in the hymn, the last hymn, O for a heart to praise the Lord. His heart is always ready and responsive to give God the praise that he is due, the work of God that he sees unfolding before his eyes.

[ 43 : 44 ] It moves him to praise and we see the work of God continuing as we step through this. Verse 28, the girl ran and told her mother's household about these things.

Now Rebekah had a brother named Laban and he hurried out to the man at the spring. As soon as he had seen the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister's arms and had heard Rebekah tell what the man had said to her, he went out to the man and found him standing by the camels near the spring.

Come, you who are blessed by the Lord, he said. Why are you standing out here? I've prepared the house and a place for the camels. So the man went to the house and the camels were unloaded.

Straw and fodder were brought for the camels and water for him and his men to wash their feet. So things are still moving. Things are still progressing.

But this man is still intent at every point on praising the Lord. And we see that in verse 33. The table is set.

[ 44 : 48 ] The smells are coming from the table. He's starving in all likelihood after a long journey. But before he eats, he must praise the Lord. And how does he praise the Lord?

Well, this man, he praises the Lord in the same way that the psalmist did. We sang in Psalm 40 and verse 5. And in Psalm 40 and verse 5, the psalmist, he praises the Lord by speaking of the wonders that God had done, speaking about the grace of God.

And this servant, he praises God by telling out the wonderful works of the Lord. And in verse 33 down to the end of verse 48, the servant, he basically tells the story.

And he says to the people who are around him, as the dinner's getting cold, he says, I have to tell you, I have to tell you how this amazing God has been at work.

And so that's what he does. The food was set before him, verse 33. But he said, I will not eat until I have told you what I have to say. Then tell us, Laban said. So he said, I am Abraham's servant.

[ 46 : 11 ] The Lord has blessed my master abundantly, and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, men's servants and maidservants, and camels and donkeys.

My master's wife, Sarah, has born him a son in her old age. And he has given him everything he owns. And my master made me swear an oath and said, You must not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live, but go to my father's family and to my own clan and get a wife for my son.

Then I asked my master, What if the woman will not come back with me? He replied, the Lord before whom I have walked will send his angel with you and make your journey a success so that you can get a wife for my son, from my own clan, and from my own father's family.

Then when you go to my clan, you will be released from my oath. Even if they refuse to give her to you, you will be released from my oath. When I came to the spring today, I said, O God, O Lord, God and my master Abraham, if you will, please grant success to the journey on which I have come.

See, I am standing beside this spring. If a maiden comes out to draw water, and I say to her, please let me drink a little water from your jar, and if she says to me, drink, and I'll draw water from your camels too, let her be the one the Lord has chosen for my master's son.

[ 47 : 37 ] Before I finished praying in my heart, Rebecca came out with her jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew water, and I said to her, please give me a drink.

She quickly lowered her jar from her shoulder and said, drink, and I'll water your camels too. So I drank, and she watered the camels also. I asked her, whose daughter are you?



She said, the daughter of Bethuel, son of Nahor, who Milcah bore to him. Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms, and I bowed down and worshipped the Lord.

I praised the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to get the granddaughter of my master's brother for his son.

And so he praises the Lord. And he praises the Lord simply by telling out the amazing work that God had done and was doing.

[ 48 : 46 ] And if we take a moment and apply this to ourselves, how do we praise the Lord? Well, we praise the Lord in the same way. Truth be told, there are some days we don't feel like praising the Lord.

There are some days in our mood, in our emotion, we just don't have a kind of response within us that moves us to want to lift our hands in praise.

So how do we praise the Lord? How do we praise the Lord and get that heart that's filled with praise? Well, we do it by remembering and telling out with thankfulness the wonderful works of the Lord.

That's how we move to praise. it's by remembering who God is, by remembering what God has done for us. The man here, he talked about the wife that was provided for Isaac, the wife Rebecca.

We don't talk about Isaac and Rebecca so much. If we want to think about the wonderful, gracious works of God, we talk about the son he has provided for us.

[ 50 : 04 ] Jesus. We talk about Jesus. We go back and remember and meditate on and tell out the greatest love story that there ever was.

It's the story of Jesus. John 3, 16. for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son. He provided his one and only son so that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but will have eternal life.

We remember that. We tell out that. That's how we praise the Lord. We go to verses like 1 John 4, 9 that we read.

This is love. This is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only son into the world that we might live through him.

So we praise the Lord by thanking him in prayer for all that he has done for us. We praise the Lord by telling the people that he puts around us all his wonderful works that he has done for them and for us.

[ 51 : 35 ] So there's promises, there's prayer and there's progress, there's praise forthly, there's a personal decision that's required. Because we might be slightly anxious as we're reading all this.

This huge conversation in verse 34 to verse 48 is happening and it's all about the, this is a conversation that is going to change the direction of the life of Rebecca potentially.

We might be asking, you know, where is Rebecca? What is she thinking in the middle of all this? We might worry about her as these men talk and make a decision that's going to affect the rest of her life.

And what we see is that Rebecca's family, they're very involved here, but the decision, the final decision here actually rests with Rebecca.

There's a personal decision that she is required to make. And so in this next section, we see that God is at work.

[ 52 : 45 ] Everyone can see that God is at work and they can see the blessings that are offered that Rebecca could enjoy, but Rebecca has to make her own decision.

Verse 49 Now if you will show kindness and faithfulness to my master, tell me, and if not, tell me, so that I may know which way to turn.

We can see here how they're reflecting on the fact that God is at work. Laban and Bethuel answered, this is from the Lord. We can say nothing to you one way or the other. Here is Rebecca, take her and let her become the wife of your master's son as the Lord has directed.

When Abraham's servant heard what they said, he bowed down to the ground before the Lord. He's in praise again, recognizing that God is at work. Then the servant brought out gold and silver and jewelry and articles of clothing and gave them to Rebecca.

He also gave costly gifts to her brother and to her mother. Then he and the men who were with him ached and drank and spent the night there. When they got up the next morning, he said, send me on my way to my master.

[ 54 : 03 ] But her brother and mother replied, let the girl remain with us ten days or so, then you may go. And this is a danger point here, because this man has instructions to go and find a wife.

They recognize here God is at work. They recognize God has directed them to this girl who is the wife to be. But the family are saying here, well, okay, we see God is at work, but let's just, let's not rush off immediately.

Let's, give us ten days or so. We will obey. We will go God's way, but not today or tomorrow. Ten days time.

Let's take ten days. Let's just calm down here, and then we'll go. And so there's a danger here. There's a danger of delayed obedience, which in effect is disobedience.

But this servant, he is intent on seeking God's will first. He's intent on being obedient to the charge that he has given, to the promise that he's made.

[ 55 : 20 ] And so he said to them, verse 56 Do not detain me now that the Lord has granted success to my journey. Send me on my way so that I may go to my master. Then they said, let's call the girl and ask her about it.

So they called Rebecca and asked her, will you go with this man? And it's a personal decision. They recognize God is at work.

They see the potential blessings. But the question has been asked of Rebecca. Will you go with this man?

And she now has to make a personal decision. Nobody can do this for her. It's with her. And in application, we all have to make a personal decision in following the Lord.

Nobody can make that for us. We can see God at work perhaps in our lives. We can hear him speak. We can sense the blessings that would be available to us in having our sin forgiven and having a friend in Jesus who will walk with us through life, through death, into life everlasting.

[ 56 : 44 ] We can see all these things perhaps, but to become a Christian, we have to make a personal decision. Not a family decision, but a personal decision.

We have to make a personal decision to follow the Lord. And Rebecca is at the point of that decision. Her relatives are encouraging her. The man is telling her about the blessings.

But she has to make her own decision. And so do you. So do I. In a sense we have to do this every day.

In the gospel message we are being asked the question, will you go with this man Jesus? Will you trust him? Will you follow him?

it's a personal decision. And we all are called to make it. And the final point that we come to here is that there's a profession of faith.

[ 58 : 05 ] Rebecca, she's at the point of decision, but she needs to make the decision. and what we see here and what we hear in this instance is that she makes the decision readily.

Will you go with this man, Rebecca? I will go, she said. So she speaks out her profession of faith.

She makes a personal decision, but it's not a private decision. she speaks out this profession of faith, and then she shows that she is a woman of faith because she packs her bags, and she goes.

She talks and says, I will go, and then she walks. So, verse 59, they sent their sister Rebecca on her way, along with her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men.

And they blessed Rebecca and said to her, her sister, may you increase to thousands upon thousands, may your offspring possess the gates of their enemies. Then Rebecca and her maids got ready and mounted their camels, and went back with the man.

[ 59 : 23 ] So the servant took Rebecca and left. Now Isaac had come from Bir Lahai, Roy, where he was living in the Negev. He went out to the field one evening to meditate, and as he looked up, he saw camels approaching.

Rebecca also looked up and saw Isaac. She got down from her camel and asked the servant, who is that man in the field coming to meet us?

He is my master, the servant answered. So she took her veil and covered herself. Then the servant told Isaac all he had done.

Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebecca. So she became his wife, and he loved her. And Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

faith. And we have a happy end to this chapter in the love story.

[ 60 : 29 ] Rebecca, we hear her, she professes her faith, and then she goes. And I can just imagine Rebecca would have had lots of fears as she set off.

she couldn't see where she was going. She didn't know really who she was going with. She was leaving behind many things.

She was leaving behind people that she loved. there was a cost to this. But God was leading her. And we see the kind of beauty in the romance of the ending as you almost get the sense of them being in the field and their eyes meet and they fall in love and they're married.

And another chapter in God's promise is fulfilled. So what's the application for us as we finish?

Well I think the application in this instance is straightforward. If we know and love the Lord Jesus, if we have gone with him, if we are trusting him, if we are following him, if we have faith in him, then that faith needs to be professed.

[ 61 : 58 ] our faith in Jesus, it should be spoken out with our words and it should be shown out through our lives.

And yes, there is a cost. Rebecca knew that and she set off. And yes, sometimes it's scary and I imagine Rebecca felt that as she saw her relatives in our land becoming a distant speck on the horizon.

But Rebecca believed in God's promises and she discovered as she went that to go God's way was to go the way of blessing.

So be encouraged tonight. If you're trusting in Jesus, if you're believing in him, if you have gone with him, profess your faith in him.

Tell somebody. Tell out through your words and show out with your life that you're trusting that you're loving the Lord who first loved you.

[ 63 : 18 ] That's the application. God may God enable us to follow him as we reflect on this passage.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this love story. We thank you that you are the God who is always at work. You make promises and your promises are always true.

We thank you that to follow you is always the way of blessing. It's never trouble-free. scary. It is costly. It's a way where there can be all kinds of twists and turns.

But we thank you that you're the God who blesses your people. We thank you that you're the God who loved us so much that you sent your son to die so that we can be in a relationship with you which begins in time and goes on eternally.

We thank you for the vastness of your love for us that we see on the cross. This is love not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his son to be an atoning sacrifice for our sin.

[ 64 : 32 ] We thank you that in the gospel we hear that question going out. Will you go with this man Jesus? And we pray that tonight every one of us would respond by saying I will go.

And we pray that you would give us the courage to speak out the faith that we have in Christ and to show out the faith that we have in Christ and the way that we live our lives.

So hear our prayers and help us to follow you well. And we pray this in Jesus name and for his sake. Amen. We're going to sing to finish and we're going to sing the hymn Bless the Lord on my soul.

Ten thousand reasons and more that we have to praise the Lord for all that he has done and continues to do for us. We'll stand to sing to God's praise.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul, worship his holy name.

[ 65 : 40 ] Sing like never before, O my soul, I worship your holy name.

The Son comes up, it's a new day dawning. It's time to sing your song again.

Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me, let me be singing when the evening comes.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul, worship his holy name.

Sing like never before, O my soul, I'll worship your holy name.

[ 66 : 40 ] You're rich in love and you're slow to anger. Your name is great and your heart is kind.

For all your goodness I will keep on singing ten thousand reasons for my heart to find.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul, worship his holy name.

Sing like never before, O my soul, I'll worship your holy name.

And on that day when my strength is failing, the end was near and my time has come, still my soul will sing your place unending, ten thousand years and then forever more.

[ 67 : 52 ] Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul, worship his holy name.

Sing like never before, O my soul, I worship your holy name.

And I may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forever more. Amen.