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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2188 ~ Rebekah Chosen as Isaac's Wife.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

As Isaac grew into manhood, it became necessary for Abraham his father to find a godly wife for him. Abraham didn't want Isaac to marry a local heathen girl, so it was agreed to look for a wife from Abraham and Sarah's relatives back in Mesopotamia. Abraham's only remaining brother, Nahor, had fathered 12 sons and it was hoped that one of these sons had a daughter suitable for Isaac.

But before such plans could be put into effect, Sarah, who was Abraham's wife and Isaac's mother, died in Hebron, in the land of Canaan. She was a woman of faith at the time she died, at 127 years of age. She's the only woman in the Bible to have her age at death given and her burial described. Abraham felt the pain of his loss and openly expressed his grief. Faith is not the enemy of tears, for we sorrow as those who have hope in the resurrection of God's faithful people.

Abraham mourned for Sarah and he tried to buy a piece of land with a cave at the end of it so he could bury her there. Since Abraham was a foreigner in Canaan and only owned one well at Beersheba, he entered into negotiations with the local people. The asking price for the land was very high but as Abraham was a wealthy man himself, he agreed to pay the price without any protest.

As a result, Abraham finally owned a very small piece of the land promised by God to his descendants. But it was still 500 years later before this land was claimed for God's people. That particular cave became the resting place, not only Sarah and Abraham, but in time, also for Isaac, his wife Rebekah and their son Jacob.

After Sarah's death, there was now a more urgent need to find a bride for Isaac, so Abraham made the arrangements for his most senior servant to travel back to Nahor's family to look for the God-provided young woman.

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Genesis, Chapter 24, gives the details of how God carefully oversaw the finding of a bride for Isaac. Abraham spoke to his most senior servant about making a trip by camel back to his relatives in present-day Syria. People assume that the servant Abraham sent was Eliezer of Damascus because he was Abraham's heir in Chapter 15. But in Chapter 24, the servant isn't named at all.

Although willing to do Abraham's bidding, the servant who was sent first asked Abraham a lot of questions about what he was to do if the young woman refused to come back to Canaan with him. Could he take Isaac to meet her in the city of Nahor? However, Abraham was adamant that Isaac couldn't leave the Promised Land. Abraham then told the servant that God's angel would go before him to ensure the success of his mission.

So the servant set out with a few men and 10 camels laden with gifts, and travelled to Nahor. When he arrived, the servant didn't rely on his own wits but trusted God to guide him to find the right girl. He sat down at a well, tired and thirsty, and needing to give the camels a drink. There he prayed to God and he asked Him to guide him to the right woman. But even before the servant had finished praying, God answered and Rebekah appeared to draw water from the well. She was Abraham's great-niece and was very beautiful. God did more than the servant could have hoped for. Seeing the servant and thirsty camels, Rebekah offered to draw water for him and his animals, and in doing so, she served the servant. It didn't take the servant long to ask to be taken to her home.

When at Rebekah's parents' home, the servant repeatedly acknowledged God's role in leading him to Rebekah. So clearly did the servant give credit to God that Rebekah's father and brother could only answer: "This is from the Lord." And so they agreed to give Rebekah in marriage to Isaac. The servant confirmed the agreement by presenting Rebekah's family with costly gifts.

The next morning, Abraham's servant wanted to leave immediately and return to Abraham and Isaac. But Rebekah's mother and brother wanted to put off the parting for at least another 10 days, and they couldn't agree. To settle the disagreement, they called Rebekah and they asked her. She said she would go. And soon, she and her staff were ready for the trip with Abraham's servant to return to Canaan.

As she departed, her family gave her a blessing. They said to her: "May you become the mother of 1,000s of 10,000s, and may your descendants possess the gates of those who hate them." This was similar to what God had said to Abraham in Chapter 22. Rebekah's family wished that her descendants would take possession of their enemies' strongholds. Since Rebekah's spiritual descendants today constitute the church of Christ, one can be reminded of Jesus' statement in Matthew, Chapter 16, that the gates of Hades (which is the home of the dead) will not be able to overcome His church.

Rebekah was a woman of faith too or she wouldn't have agreed to go. She had only the words she heard from a servant and some treasures that she saw. God had prepared her heart and she made a decision in faith to leave all that she knew and go with the servant 500 miles away. This is an illustration of personal salvation. The Spirit speaks to us about Christ and shows us His treasures, and we then trust Christ, even though we've never seen Him.

Rebekah's kindness to a stranger led within a few hours to her being betrothed to a man that she'd never met but was an heir to not only to wealth but more importantly, an heir to the promises of God. Within a day, she was carried away on a camel and her family, would never to see them again.

In some cultures, parents still choose their children's life partners. This is a safety net to ensure that the young couple are equally matched, from similar backgrounds and social networks. Christians try to do this too, by teaching their children the Bible precept that each believer in Christ is to avoid marrying a person who doesn't respect and wholeheartedly love Jesus. Otherwise, this difference will soon become a source of conflict in the marriage.

Throughout Sarah's life, much was made of her physical beauty. Don't most people want to be good-looking? For both men and women, having very good looks can bring its downside. Such people can receive more attention than they actually want or they're not accepted for who they are but only by their looks. A Christian lady went to a Christian women's gathering. There she saw the most beautiful woman she had ever seen. She said she kept staring at her. Good looks can be a distraction when the mind should be focused on the things of God. And a good-looking person may be conscious that they are always to look their best and this can become a misleading top priority in their lives.

Not every woman has physical beauty but the Bible urges every person to work on their inner beauty. In Proverbs, Chapter 31, it says: "Charm is deceptive and beauty disappears, but a woman who honours the Lord should be praised."

Physical beauty fades with age, so if you're concerned about your outer appearance, you'll be unhappy when the wrinkles come and the body carries more weight than it used to. In fact, did you know that your body may show the beginning signs of aging as early as the age of twenty? That's why God wants us to live in awe of Him and all that He has done instead of looking in the mirror to find our self-worth. He is to be at the centre of our lives and not just somewhere on the edges.

To make comparisons about beauty, try to look at things from God's point of view. If you stand two girls next to each other and one is Miss Universe, whose beauty is limited to physical beauty, and the other young lady is a more average-looking girl who loves the Lord more than anything, the second girl is the more beautiful one in the eyes of God.

In 1st Peter, Chapter 3, it says: "You should not use outward aids to make yourselves beautiful, such as the way you fix your hair, or the jewellery that you put on, on the dresses that you wear. Instead, your beauty should consist of your true inner self, the ageless beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of the greatest value in God's sight."

This verse was written to warn women not to follow the customs of some of the Egyptian women who, during that time period, spent hours and hours working on braiding their hair, doing their makeup and finding the perfect outfit. God would rather see women work on becoming beautiful on the inside and live in modesty, high character and morals — as being beautiful on the inside is the kind of beauty that lasts forever.

God also warned the prophet Samuel about judging people by their outward appearances. In 1st Samuel, Chapter 16, it says: "The Lord said to Samuel, 'Pay no attention to how tall and handsome he is. I have rejected him, because I do not judge as people judge. They look at the outward appearance but I look at the heart.'" The world focuses on what people look like on the outside yet God focuses on what people look like on the inside. Do you put more time and effort into being pretty on the outside or the inside? While there's nothing wrong with wanting to look neat, trim and well-groomed, we need to make sure it's in balance to the heavenly things that we are appointed to do. God would rather see us work on becoming beautiful on the inside through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit and the wonderful attributes that come from Him Himself. We can find these things through searching out God as we read His Bible, worship and sing praises to Him, and engage in prayer against all that opposes God through deception and lies.

How does a woman with marked facial defects cope with her life? In Psalm 139, under the heading of 'God's complete knowledge and care' the Psalmist says: "I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are Your works and that my soul knows very well."

Each person is created in the image of God, and God doesn't make junk! Every person is unique and no two people are the same. God sees you as a masterpiece through eternal eyes; and when you look in the mirror, He wants you to 'know that full well'. Every morning when you've dwelt on unhappy thoughts about your appearance, turn them into positive ones by saying Psalm 139:14 and smiling. God always has your very best interests at His heart, and if you look for His leading, in time He'll show you His way for your life. Older Christian people sometimes give thanks to God that He didn't allow them to be a film star or TV actor as they desired when they were young. His ways are best and they bring about godliness and contentment in life.

The closer we live to our Lord, the more our outward appearance will be transformed and become more beautiful. It will soften with love and forgiveness, and the blessing of generous giving to others. Our beauty is enhanced whenever we share God's love with others. In Acts, Chapter 6, Stephen who was the first martyr of the early church, was transformed by the Lord as he witnessed to the crowd "and all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel."

Let us remember that in Psalm 90, Verse 17, it says: "And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands for us."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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