

GENESIS 24:22-67

"I LOVE IT WHEN A PLAN COMES TOGETHER"

Many of you may remember the popular television show from the 80's called "The A-Team." You could always count on the team leader, Hannibal Smith to say one thing at the end of each show. He would always say. "I love it when a plan comes together."

I'm sure we have all experienced a moment like this at one time or another. We have all "pulled something off" before. It could have been an event or holiday. It could have been something involving business. The point is that we love that feeling we get when whenever our objective has been reached. When we successfully complete a task, there is a feeling of satisfaction. For the mechanic, it is when the car that came in not running rolls out of the garage under its own power. For the coach it is when the team gels and is able to compete on the field.

At any rate, we have all experienced this at one level or another.

Eliezer is seeing success materialize before his eyes. He is feeling the rush of success. He seems to be over the hump, on the downhill side, in the backstretch, rounding third headed for home. Will he complete his mission? Will it be a success? Well, today we will find out. Look in your Bibles at Genesis 24: 21.

Gen 24:21 And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.
Gen 24:22 So it was, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten *shekels* of gold,

Gen 24:23 and said, "Whose daughter *are* you? Tell me, please, is there room *in* your father's house for us to lodge?"

Gen 24:24 So she said to him, "I *am* the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah's son, whom she bore to Nahor."

Gen 24:25 Moreover she said to him, "We have both straw and feed enough, and room to lodge."

Gen 24:26 Then the man bowed down his head and worshiped the LORD.

Gen 24:27 And he said, "Blessed *be* the LORD God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren."

Eliezer was sitting at the well, watching and wondering if this was the right woman. He wasn't sure at that point. Maybe she was just a well-mannered hard working young woman.

I think we have all probably been here before also. You know, when it appears that everything is going well, but you feel that something could go wrong at any moment to spoil it? Some would call this a lack of faith. On some levels and in some situations it may well be. However, if we are honest, there are times and situations where everything does go well for a season, the plan is coming together, then for some reason the wheels just fall off the wagon.

Because of this we are often less likely to praise the Lord openly. We have probably done it before just to be disappointed at the last minute. Then a non-believer is quick to jump in your face and tell you how God has failed you and made you look like an idiot.

What is important to see is that Eliezer is praising God as the story unfolds. He hasn't gone into town bragging about what is going to do. He is going about his business and as things fall into place he praises

God. He doesn't know if this is the particular woman at this point, but he does know that he will eventually find her.

That is faith. His faith is in having the knowledge that he will eventually be successful, not that this is the right woman at this point. For all he knows she may decide not to go back with him. That is fine. He will just have to look again. He knows that God has a plan. Once again he just doesn't know all the specifics.

- He finds out she is from Abraham's family.
- Being hospitable, she offers for him and the animals to stay at her father's house.
- In verse 27 we see Eliezer thanking God for the answered prayer. However, there are more hurdles to jump. Will she go back with him or not?
- I think we should be careful to thank God at each step along the way and in between.
- Verse 27, "Being in/ on the way." In the days before power steering it was always easier to steer a moving vehicle versus trying to steer a vehicle that wasn't moving.

Gen 24:28 So the young woman ran and told her mother's household these things.

Gen 24:29 Now Rebekah had a brother whose name *was* Laban, and Laban ran out to the man by the well.

Gen 24:30 So it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah, saying, "Thus the man spoke to me," that he went to the man. And there he stood by the camels at the well.

Gen 24:31 And he said, "Come in, O blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels."

- Gen 24:32 Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and provided straw and feed for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who *were* with him.
- Gen 24:33 Food was set before him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I have told about my errand." And he said, "Speak on."
- Gen 24:34 So he said, "I *am* Abraham's servant.
- Gen 24:35 The LORD has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys.
- Gen 24:36 And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and to him he has given all that he has.
- Gen 24:37 Now my master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell;
- Gen 24:38 but you shall go to my father's house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.'
- Gen 24:39 And I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not follow me.'
- Gen 24:40 But he said to me, 'The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house.
- Gen 24:41 You will be clear from this oath when you arrive among my family; for if they will not give *her* to you, then you will be released from my oath.'
- Gen 24:42 "And this day I came to the well and said, 'O LORD God of my master Abraham, if You will now prosper the way in which I go,
- Gen 24:43 behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw *water*, and I say to her, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink,"
- Gen 24:44 and she says to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,"—*let her be* the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master's son.'
- Gen 24:45 "But before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went

down to the well and drew *water*. And I said to her, 'Please let me drink.'

Gen 24:46 And she made haste and let her pitcher down from her *shoulder*, and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels a drink also.' So I drank, and she gave the camels a drink also.

Gen 24:47 Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter *are* you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him.' So I put the nose ring on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists.

Gen 24:48 And I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the way of truth to take the daughter of my master's brother for his son.

Rebekah, (Rivkah – “fettered by her beauty”) ran home to tell her family about the man at the well. I am sure the first thing they noticed was all the jewelry she was now wearing. According to weight it was very valuable. She also told them how he had prayed and how things played out at the well. When her brother saw the jewelry and heard the story he made room for Eliezer in the house. This was common hospitality of the day. But it is also important I think to see how he addressed Eliezer. He called him "blessed of the Lord."

That is the same thing they said to Jesus when He entered Jerusalem on what we call Palm Sunday.

Scholars argue whether or not Abraham's family worshipped the same God or not. After all they had come from a pagan land where they were idol makers and even at this time lived in a pagan land. However, when calling Eliezer "blessed of the LORD" He uses the name Yahweh. I believe that at the very least they had a working knowledge of God. After all, if they were pagans themselves, what did Abraham have to gain by finding a wife from among his kinfolk? So their time spent with Abraham had rubbed off on them to some degree at least. You can't

under estimate how your life being lived out in front of others will affect them. You are always sewing seeds whether you know it or not.

To move along with our typology, we see that Eliezer is all about his master's business. None of this is about him, (Eliezer) it is all about Abraham and Isaac. The Holy Spirit always points us to the Father Jesus. He doesn't draw attention to Himself.

In verse 49 we see that Eliezer gets down to business.

Gen 24:49 Now if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. And if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."

Gen 24:50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing comes from the LORD; we cannot speak to you either bad or good.

Gen 24:51 Here *is* Rebekah before you; take *her* and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the LORD has spoken."

Gen 24:52 And it came to pass, when Abraham's servant heard their words, that he worshiped the LORD, *bowing himself* to the earth.

Gen 24:53 Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave *them* to Rebekah. He also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother.

- Eliezer lays his final card on the table at this point.
- Laban states that apparently this thing is of the Lord and that he can't argue with God.
- Eliezer has credibility with them. He is honest, he is generous and what they are seeing of him is consistent. He isn't a flake.

We can be bad witnesses due to inconsistency and appearing to be flakey. Though we are different as Christians, we have to be credible. How do we do this? We give all the credit and honor to God and humbly serve others. This is what Eliezer is doing. He humbly shares his story. He is courteous and unassuming. He is walking in faith and won't be

deterred. If this isn't the right home in which to find a bride then he will just go back Abraham. He in no way is trying to force the issue.

The result:

- Laban agrees to give Rebekah as a bride.
- At that point Eliezer begins to bring out the dowry.

In recounting his mission and journey to Rebekah's family, Eliezer told how he would be released from the vow if the woman did not want to leave with him. I think this is important because it allows for the will of the woman without compromising the integrity of the mission. Not just any woman will do. It has to be the right one. However, if the right one doesn't want to participate then Eliezer gets to come home without being seen as a failure.

What this amounts to is leaving the outcome up to God. No matter what happened at the well or back at the house, the end result is up to God. He gets the glory if things do work out and He isn't to be blamed if things don't work out.

If we master this philosophy our lives will become much easier and less stressful. How much of our time is spent worrying about things over which we have no control? I don't mean to suggest that we don't care about things. Eliezer is very concerned about his mission. He is working hard to see it through, but if he does all he can and things don't work out, then he hasn't failed because ***God is in control.***

The next morning everyone wakes up and gets ready to leave.

Gen 24:54 And he and the men who *were* with him ate and drank and stayed all night. Then they arose in the morning, and he said, "Send me away to my master."

Gen 24:55 But her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us *a few* days, at least ten; after that she may go."

Gen 24:56 And he said to them, "Do not hinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master."

Gen 24:57 So they said, "We will call the young woman and ask her personally."

Gen 24:58 Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go."

Gen 24:59 So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men.

Gen 24:60 And they blessed Rebekah and said to her: "Our sister, *may you become The mother of* thousands of ten thousands; And may your descendants possess The gates of those who hate them."

Gen 24:61 Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.

Here we see Eliezer facing an obstacle. The family is not ready for her to depart. I can understand why. If you had a daughter and then all of a sudden some stranger blew into town with a proposal like this one, would you just turn her loose knowing that this may well be the last time you would see her? Probably not, even though all parties have agreed that this is the Lord's will.

When we think of the Lord's will being hindered we too often attribute it to Satan. We imagine a horned devil opposing us in all that we do for the Lord. Many times that is the case. It is important though that we recognize that sometimes well-intentioned people can hinder us from the Lord's work. That is what is happening here. A family is about to watch a daughter leave forever. They want to visit with her for a while. It is however still a hindrance. Every obstacle isn't from the Devil and there aren't demons under every rock, but a hindrance is a hindrance. ***It isn't as important for Eliezer to identify the hindrance as it is for him to stay on task.*** The same is true for us.

The devil is real and he does attempt to hinder us as much as possible. However, if we stay on task, if we are walking in faith we can't be stopped no matter what or who the obstacle is.

Rebekah is then consulted and she agrees to go so they load up the wagon train so to speak and head south.

Gen 24:62 Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South.

Gen 24:63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels *were* coming.

Gen 24:64 Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel;

Gen 24:65 for she had said to the servant, "Who *is* this man walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It *is* my master." So she took a veil and covered herself.

Gen 24:66 And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.

Gen 24:67 Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's *death*.

I'm sure Rebekah had Eliezer's ear all the way home. I imagine she had a lot of questions about the groom she had yet to meet.

As they approached the Ponderosa she saw a man walking towards them. It was Isaac. He had been walking in the field meditating: praying and mulling over things.

Rebekah put on her veil, as was the custom and dismounted her camel. She met her groom and became his wife. ***We can truly say it was a match made in Heaven.***

I would also like for you to note that this is the first time we have heard of Isaac since chapter 22 when he was taken up to the mountain to be

sacrificed. The parallel with the NT here is that the sacrifice wasn't heard from until he came to meet his bride. (Elaborate)

It is at this point that we need to ask ourselves some important questions.

- Are we credible Christians?
- Are we diligent about God's business while at the same time relying on God for the outcome?
- Are we easily hindered or do we stay on task?
- Are we treating every day of our lives like Eliezer treated his task?
- What I mean by that is are we looking for God in the circumstances and praying for His guidance? Are we praising Him for the positives and relying on Him for the negatives?

If we do then we can say "I love it when a plan comes together" a lot more often.