

2009HERO #3 AN ARRANGED MARRIAGE --ISAAC AND REBECCA

Genesis 24:61-66

The German philosopher and scholar, Moses Mendelssohn (1729-86) was born a hunchback. But instead of letting this sour him on life, he became known as a wise and humble man. On a trip to Hamburg, Mendelssohn met a rich merchant who had a beautiful, young daughter, Frumtje. The young man fell hopelessly in love with her. She too was mature beyond her years, and despite his physical defect, was attracted to his gentleness, charm, and his brilliant mind. Mendelssohn spent several weeks in Hamburg, spending time with this lovely girl. Finally before he was to leave he got nerve enough to speak to her father. Her father said: "You are known throughout Germany as a most brilliant young man. And yet... I must tell you my child was a bit frightened when she first saw you." "Because I am a hunchback?" Sadly, the merchant nodded.

Downcast, but not defeated, Mendelssohn asked only one last favor – the privilege of seeing her once more before he left. Admitted to her room, he found her busy with needlework. After some casual conversation He ask: "Do you believe, that marriages are made in heaven?" "Yes," she said, "for that is our faith." "And it is true," he said gently. "Now let me tell you about something strange that happened when I was born. As you know, at a child's birth, according to our tradition, they call out in heaven that the birth has occurred. And when it is a boy, they announce, 'Such and such boy will have this or that girl for a wife.' "Well, there I was, just born, and I heard the name of my future wife announced. At the same time, I heard the great far off voice say, 'Unfortunately, the poor little girl, Frumtje, will have a terrible hump on her back.' Quick as a flash, I cried out, 'O Lord God, if a girl is hunchbacked, she will grow up bitter and hard. Please give her hump to me and let her develop into a well-formed lovely, and charming young lady.'" Frumtje, not only listen to the story, But she married Mendelssohn and they lived a long and fruitful life together.

Now that is one romantic story,
and a true story –
BUT-Are marriages really made in heaven?
Is there someone who is picked out for us from birth?

In 1995, 85% of young adults said
they believe every person has a perfect match.
In other words, they believed marriage was pre-arranged.

BUT that is not a Biblical teaching?
The idea that marriages are made in heaven sounds romantic,

Even comforting,
 And appealing to us,
 But with the exception of Adam & Eve
 Here is no scriptural evidence that God ever “made”
 one specific person for another.

The story of Isaac & Rebekah
 reminds us that while
 marriages aren't “made in heaven,”
 God can and will help us pick out the right person for us,
 And for our children.
 the perfect match.

Lets look at our scripture today for the
 Principles of success in picking a mate for marriage.
 First of all:

I. TRUST GOD FOR YOUR LIFE

Last week we saw where ABRAHAM
 Sent his servant Eliezer back to his home land,
 To find a wife.

**"The LORD, the God of heaven... spoke to me and promised me on 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." (Genesis 24:7)**

The Canaanite women were not Godly women.
 Abraham felt the best place to look
 With his own people.
 Among his own land from which he came.
 He trusted God to provide.

Now the Old servant Eliezer goes
 But notice that he too trust on God to provide.
 He prays a very specific and well thought out prayer:

**"O LORD, God of my master Abraham, give me success today, and show kindness
 to my master Abraham. 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." (Vss. 12-14)**

Eliezer walks up to the well.
 In a strange land
Eliezer trusts God

Third we have the poor groom- ISAAC
 He is left at home waiting.
 What is doing while he's waiting?

“Isaac went out to the field one evening to meditate...” (Genesis 24:63)

Now, that doesn't mean he was humming some

indistinct tune while contemplating his navel.
Meditation in the Bible, means that someone is concentrating on God,
focusing on His promises.

So if you want to find a wife.
First of all go to God.
Abraham, Eliezer, and Isaac were all praying
Trusting God for success.
TRUST GOD

II. ASK GOD GET GOD INVOLVED BEFORE YOU LOOK

Biblically, that makes sense.

We read in **James 4:2** **“You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.”**

It would seem obvious.
If you want God involved in finding the perfect match
It might be wise to get God involved in the beginning of selection process
before the dating gets started.

Too many of us leave our meeting to chance.
Slippery ice—very thin; pretty girl—tumbled in;
saw a fellow—on the bank; gave a shriek—then she sank;
boy on hand—heard her shout; jumped right in—pulled her out;
now he’s hers—very nice; but first she had—to break the ice.

It seems in our culture
We break the ice physically first.
Then we become friends –mentally,
The last thing we think about is our spirituality.
By the way what church do we getting married in?

If God’s consulted at all –
It is more of an after thought.
It’s little wonder that in a recent poll, 84% of parents said
that their children had had their hearts broken at one time or another in their lives.
If God isn’t drawn in at the outset of a romantic involvement
then the result can be disastrous.

At this point, some of you are looking at the person
you married sitting next to you and saying:
“Soooo, that’s what went wrong!!!”
No, no, no, no... That’s not how God works.
EVEN IF your spouse wasn’t the most wonderful person in the world
the same God who can creates the perfect date
can also create the confident marriage.

The person you are married to right now is the
Person you are to spend the rest of your life with.

If you are having troubles?
 It is not your spouse's problem,
 It is your problem.
 Go to God.
 Stay with God.
 Lean on God
 Learn from God.
 ASK GOD.
 If you have children.
 Then start right now by praying for the right person for your child,
 Or grandchild.

III. USE GOD

GOD HAS STANDARDS ALREADY IN PLACE

After all marriage has been around since Adam and Eve.
 God already put in place the principles of a good relationship.
 If you're single, don't get anxious,
 You trust God,
 You ask God
 Then you USE GODS principles
 The first principle is to look in the right places.

Abraham told his servant: **“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” (Genesis 24:3)**

I don't know what Abraham didn't like about Canaanite women,
 but there was something wrong with those girls.
 Don't be looking in Caanan for what you can only find in Aaran.

The point is, there are wrong places to look for a life long mate,
 Bars, Casinos, certain kinds of parties and dances.
 It's not as if we need a laundry list of places that we can't go
 if we want to meet God's best for us.
 It's really quite simple: If you're single,
 don't go to those places.
 And if you're a parent/ grandparent or uncle & aunt,
 discourage your children from looking there.

THE SECOND; is to look for the right character qualities in the person.
Not only are there right places to look for Godly spouse
 There are some right qualities we want to find.

Eliezer prayed:
 That God would send him a woman with good principles.
 Kabbalistic teaching.
 The kindness to a stranger,
God of 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.” (Vss. 12-14)

Notice he doesn’t ask God for a “good looking woman.”
 He’s not searching a beauty queen,
 he’s not looking for sultry babe.
 All he asks is for a girl who’ll water his camels
 This old servant
 Was looking for a servants heart.
 A girl who would offer to water someone else’s camels had a servant’s heart.

A person who has a servants heart doesn’t
 Spend all their time looking at themselves in a mirror.
 But they are involved and interested in others.
 Eliezer knew she was going to be the type who seeks to please her husband

In fact, Paul writes that for God’s people **“... a married woman is concerned about ... how she can please her husband.” 1 Corinthians 7:34.**
 That’s one of the marks of a good Godly woman.

BUT it’s also one of the marks of a good Godly husband.
 Paul writes in **Ephesians 5:28 “... husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.”**

A woman of purity.
 Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder.
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. Genesis 24:15-16

On an afternoon talk show a week ago
 They had on some young women who were bemoaning the fact
 that men are not interested in getting marriage anymore.
 The 30 year old men on the show said:”
 Why should they get married,
 They can have everything they want now without it.
 Including sex.

Rebekah was pure.- a virgin.
 Isaac was pure – a virgin.

Someone wrote Dear ABBY
 Dear Abby: I am 44 and would like to meet a man my age with no bad habits. – Signed
 Rose Dear Rose: So would I.

Young people date today to have sex,
 Not to look for a marriage partner.
 That is a recipe for disappointment.

A study at a Midwestern school showed that 80% of the women
 who had intercourse hoped to marry their partner.
 Only 12% of the men had the same expectation

Our country has had a higher rate of divorce in past 50 years
that seemingly ever before.

WHY?

Partly because Hollywood & Television and the Entertainment industry
have educated us believe in love at 1st sight and sex on the first night.
We wonder why our relationship don't last.

What's interesting, is that in Isaac's culture there
was almost a de-emphasis on physical beauty.

The Bible tells us **Rebekah was "very beautiful" (vs. 16)**

But notice the 1st thing Rebekah does when she sees Isaac:

She asks "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." Genesis 24:65

She doesn't take it off,

She put it on.

That custom carried over up to a few years ago

The Bride coming down the aisle always wore a veil.

SO, there's a right place to look for a mate.

And there are right qualities to look for in a mate.

Your wedding vows are not multiple choice questions!

VI. ACCEPT GOD'S ANSWER.

The hardest thing for people to accept

It is being willing to allow God to say "no." or wait

Every day, 175 Americans aged 65 and older get married
(eight of them for the first time).

"The servant asked (Abraham), 'What if the woman is unwilling to come back with me to this land? ... (Abraham replied) 'If the woman is unwilling to come back with you, then you will be released from this oath of mine.'" (Genesis 24:5&8)

What's Abraham saying here? He's saying that God might just say "no."

One of the problems in people's lives is the belief
that if they don't get married right now
– it's the end of the world.

Listen the conversation of two young women at the singles' club,

"I've had it looking for Mr. Right.

Now I'm looking for Mr. Pretty Good."

Woman to friend, "He's really not Mr. Right—

He's just Mr. Right Now."

Source unknown

There are worse things to experience in this life than NOT getting married.

You could get married to a terrible person.

A person who'll hurt you, or cheat on you, abuse you,

Lie and spend all your savings, criticize and cut you down.
There are all kinds of things that are worse than not being married.

One of “Dear Abby’s” most unusual letters came from one wife who evidently didn’t understand her husband. The letter said, “My husband burns the hair out of his nose with a lighted match. And he thinks I’m crazy because I voted for Obama.”

Take the man who bought two ceiling fans, one for his home and one for his parents. While installing the fan in his home his mother and wife were watching. He said: I had to stand on a chair on my tiptoes. My wife said: : The reason for my troubles: "You're too short." His mother said: ‘NO, The chair's too short.'
Ray Moose, Reader's Digest, February 2005, p. 190 Submitted by: Jeff Cranston
Attitude makes all the difference in a relationship.

Why we need God’s touch on our lives and attitudes
Our perspective and focus if were to make our marriages work.
As Jesus said:

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Matthew 6:33

If you do that – if you allow God to lead and pick out the best course for your life – then, even when you’re heart is broken, you can turn to God for your strength.

CLOSE: Albert L. Peace was a man in love. His fiancée was all he had ever wanted in a woman and they planned to soon be married. Then he encountered a problem that would crush all his plans.

He was going blind.

The woman he had loved and hoped to share his life with walked out of his life forever. She could not stand the possibility of living her life with a man whom she unquestionably would need to care for the rest of her life.

Albert was shattered. But in the midst of his tragedy he sought and found the love of the One that he knew would not reject him.

Taking pen in hand he composed the words of a long favored Christian hymn:
“O Love That Will Not Let Me Go”