A Match Made in Heaven

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Preacher: Mike Loosa

[0:00] But I want to ask the question, what is the message being communicated? Why does Moses, so Moses has intentionally chosen to write these things in the way that he has.

67 verses in this one story. Why has he chosen to devote so much material to this account of Abraham's servant finding a bride for Isaac?
Now, is it simply for crowd appeal? I mean, it's a beautiful story. You know, back in Genesis 14, we had the makings of this epic war film, if you remember. And now here is the blockbuster chick flick. And hence my sermon title, A Match Made in Heaven. But let me help frame this narrative in light of the things that have come before us. Now, two weeks ago, we reached a major transition in the book of Genesis.
Abraham is soon to exit stage left. And then Isaac is about to take center stage. And then following him close behind is his son Jacob. For 11 chapters, we've been following Abraham on his journey.
[0:59] And we've seen how through testing and trial and failures along the way, Abraham has grown spiritually. Right? His faith in God, his faith in the promises of God has matured, even though the fulfillment of these promises remain mostly distant and really beyond the horizon, far beyond the horizon of his own life.

And his life, as Abraham's life now draws to the end, there's this looming question. Will God continue his redemptive program when Abraham is dead and gone?
Will God's love and his faithfulness be witnessed by the next generation? Or will it die with Abraham and all be for naught?
Now, parents and especially parents and grandparents, especially who are in this room, perhaps you wrestle with similar questions. Perhaps you wonder whether the love and faithfulness of God that you've experienced in your own lifetime will also be experienced in the generations to follow. Or maybe saints, you wonder for yourself simply whether your best days are behind you. Perhaps the future seems bleak and uncertain. And you ask the same question.
[2:12] Will God's steadfast love and faithfulness continue? Is his redemptive program still ongoing? Genesis 24 is a definitive yes to those questions.

And you know, while it is sort of a classic love story about a man and his bride, it's really far more about the love of God for his covenant people.
It's a story showing us, and this is really the main point of my sermon today, it's a story showing us how from one generation to the next, God loves and leads his covenant people to prosper their way and fulfill his promises.
Okay, from one generation to the next, God loves and leads his covenant people to prosper their way and fulfill his promises. That's what we're going to be talking about today.
Let me just pause here in another word of prayer. Lord, as we consider this beautiful passage, this mysterious passage in some ways, God, help us to understand why it's here and let the truth of this word transform our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus.
[3:16] I pray in his name. Amen. Now in this 67 verse chapter, there are far more lessons to glean, far more connections that Moses is making than we actually have time for today.

But we're going to look at five key principles as we move from scene to scene in this passage. And we're going to keep circling back to that main point. But here is the first main principle.
Okay, point number one. Believers care more about passing on a spiritual inheritance to their children than a physical one. And you could put the word ought. Believers ought to.
But believers care more about passing on a spiritual inheritance to their children than a physical one. Now back in chapter 18, Moses told us that Abraham was old, advanced in years.

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And he was 99 then. Now he's 137. So he's graduated to old, well advanced in years. You know, 62 years earlier. 62 years. Moses has been sojourning, or Abraham has been sojourning in the land. [4:16] He had received the call of God. Right? And the promises of God. Land, seed, blessing. He's witnessed now, at this point, the birth and the preservation of the promised seed, Isaac.

Right? He's been given now, as we saw two weeks ago, the down payment of the future inheritance of the promised land in the acquiring of that burial plot for Sarah. And now we see, look at verse 1 of chapter 24.
The Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. Land, seed, blessing. The promises are being fulfilled. At least in a small part.
At least in small part. Because really the promises remain mostly unfulfilled in Abraham's lifetime. And he's super old. And the shadow of death, due to sin's curse, it still looms large over humanity. Abraham is soon to return to the dust. And so here, he's turning his attention to the preparation of his own departure and the next generation. He wants Isaac to take his place now as God's chosen one.
[5:22] And so here, in this text, he's commissioning this unnamed chief servant of his. And this story validates the wisdom of Abraham in this choice of this particular servant.

This is a servant who shows himself in this chapter to be a model servant. He's wise. He's godly. He's faithful. And so Abraham commissions this trustworthy servant. Look at verse 3. Now, why does Abraham want Isaac not to marry a Canaanite woman?
If you remember, and we've talked about this, I think, even recently, the Canaanites were under God's curse. The Canaanites are a pagan people who don't follow Yahweh the Lord.
Abraham dwells among them, but God is calling him to live distinctly from them. In the world, but not of the world. This is just as God would command the same thing later to Israel.
Jesus would pray this many years later for his disciples. And what Abraham wants for Isaac is to continue this legacy of living distinct from the pagan nations as a follower of Yahweh.
[6:41] But the servant raises a valid concern. He basically says, what if the woman refuses to come with me? Do I then need to take Isaac back there? And Abraham replies, look at verse 6.

See to it that you do not take my son back there. And he repeats it down in verse 8. Only you must not take my son back there. Now why is Abraham so adamant that the servant not take Isaac back to his home country?
Because it's not the land of promise, is it? God had called Abraham in Genesis 12 out of that country, out of Mesopotamia, to go to the land of Canaan.
Isaac might be tempted if he goes back there. Isaac might be tempted to settle there in the east, just like Lot settling in Sodom, right? Drawn to the fleeting pleasures of this world.
And that would go against the promises of God. The word that God had spoken. To your offspring I will give this land. Abraham, for 62 years, has been clinging in faith to this as yet unfulfilled promise.
[7:44] And to the God of the promise. And he longs for his son Isaac to do the same. But did you catch the note of hopeful confidence in Abraham? Look at verse 7.

The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my kindred and spoke to me and swore to me, to your offspring I will give this land. Listen, Abraham says, he will send his angel before you and you shall take a wife for my son there.
All right, God initiated this whole project. He's saying God is going to see it through. He's promised. He's going to see it through one way or another. And you know, just as a side note here, throughout this whole chapter, starting right here in this very verse, there is this beautiful harmonizing of God's sovereignty and providence and man's choice and responsibility.
And we can't fully explain how those things come together. But they're clearly both here. And I think at bottom, Abraham puts more stock in the sovereignty of God throughout this chapter. Now, like hearing Frodo receive his commission to destroy the ring, we anxiously await the outcome of this servant's task.
But I want to pause and just consider this first principle, that believers care more about passing on a spiritual inheritance to their children than a physical one. Abraham's chief concern for Isaac.
[9:08] It's not marrying into a wealthy family. It's not settling somewhere comfortable and secure. It's following his own footsteps of faith. Abraham longs for his son to walk with God.

You know, God had declared back in chapter 18, verse 19, for I have chosen Abraham that he may command his children and household after him to keep the way of the Lord.

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Abraham has been doing just that. And saints, this is our calling today, to command our children and our households after us to keep the way of the Lord, to be more concerned with passing on a spiritual inheritance than a physical one, more concerned with passing on faith than possessions. And again, I speak to parents and grandparents and especially to fathers and grandfathers in this room. What are your best efforts for your kids and your grandkids going towards?
Is it setting them up for financial success? Or is it setting them up for a life of spiritual vitality, of faith and delight in God as followers of Jesus Christ?
[10:19] For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? Do you know what my father left me financially when he passed at the age of 59?

Nothing. Do you know what? My dad left me something infinitely more valuable. He left me a legacy of faith.
He left me a legacy of love for Jesus Christ, of modeling for his children after him what it looks like to keep the way of the Lord. Now maybe you're here thinking, see, I didn't have that growing up. And I, brother, sister, if that's you in this room, I lament that with you. But I want to encourage you that you have something better still. Because you have the very example of Jesus Christ himself. Jesus Christ is our ultimate model of what it looks like to keep the way of the Lord. And you have the presence of the Holy Spirit. He empowers you and he guides you along that path.
[11:26] And you have this church family, brothers and sisters in Christ, to come alongside you and to walk with you. So saints, let us together as one body care more about passing on a spiritual inheritance to our kids, to the next generation than a physical one.

And that's not just the job of parents and grandparents. That is the job of every follower of Jesus Christ. Point number two, believers prayerfully seek God's providential leading while acting with wisdom.
So the servant embarks on this quest. He's journeying hundreds of miles northeast, probably a three to four week journey through the wilderness to arrive at the city of Nahor. This is in upper Mesopotamia.
That's where Abraham's relatives dwell, where he had come from himself. And he comes to this well just outside the city. It says, At the time of evening, the time when women go out to draw water. And he prays to God what is the first recorded prayer in Scripture for specific guidance. Let's look at his words here. He says, Steadfast love.
[12:40] That is that beautiful Hebrew word hesed. Combines the ideas of loving kindness, of mercy, and then also of faithfulness, loyalty. And that's why in the ESV it's translated steadfast love.

It's God's covenant love. And then the servant essentially asks God for a specific sign confirming who the chosen bride for Isaac is. Now what is this about, this sign thing?
Now is this the method that we should use in trying to decide who to date and who to marry? Just ask God for some arbitrary sign that makes it clear? Well, if we think the servant is asking arbitrarily, we need to look a little closer.
Because it does seem that way at first. Now I want to ask, what kind of woman would pass the servant's test? A woman who is servant-hearted?
Who's kind? Who's attentive? Who's hospitable? Who's hardworking? Drawing water, after all, for a man and his ten camels would not be a very easy task?
[13:49] I mean, I might recommend to the Coast Guard that during swab summer they get ten camels and make you guys draw water for them over and over again. Like this is actually not an arbitrary sign the servant is asking for.

And so do you see maybe how the servant is employing God-given wisdom while also relying on God's providential guidance?
And those two things are not mutually exclusive. Now then what happens? Verse 10. Before he had finished speaking, behold, and Rebecca shows up with her water jar. She's, according to Moses, both beautiful and eligible.
And she responds exactly as the servant prayed that she might. And even beyond. She waters his camels until they have finished drinking. Camels drink a lot of water.
Remember, there's ten of them. Now I want you to notice here Rebecca's quick actions of hospitality. The word quick, quickly. She ran again. All these things in these verses.
[14:46] And all of them are reflecting what we saw of Abraham. Abraham's own hospitality back in chapter 18. The servant, verse 21, gazed at her in silence to learn whether the Lord had

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prospered his journey or not.

Sure seems like the Lord has prospered his journey, doesn't it? God, in his steadfast love and faithfulness, is prospering the way of Abraham's servant.
The servant's trusting in the Lord. The servant is obeying the Lord. And God is providentially leading the servant as he's exercising his own God-given wisdom and discernment.
Now what do we take from this little episode here? Well, I don't think that we should replicate the servant's exact method. But as we consider what Scripture has to say about decision-making and discerning the will of the Lord, we see the principle that believers prayerfully seek God's providential leading while acting with wisdom.
Now this is a timely principle for us as a church, as we consider whether to pursue this building at 45 Broad Street or not. Now no doubt it's a timely principle for all of us, as all of us are facing continually various decisions for ourselves, for our family, where to go to school, what house to buy, who to date and marry, what job to pursue or accept, and the list goes on and on and on.
[16:11] How do we make God-honoring decisions in such manners? Now I want to give us a framework that helps us apply this principle here in real life decisions.

How do we discern God's will in life's decisions? Here's the point number one. Pray for a heart that desires God's will above all else. Pray for a heart that desires God's will above all else.
You know, George Mueller has an article called How I Ascertain the Will of God, and he begins by saying this, I seek at the beginning to get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter.
Nine-tens of the trouble with people is just there, Mueller says. Nine-tens of the difficulties are overcome when our hearts are ready to do the Lord's will, whatever it may be.
That's a hard place to get the heart, friends, and that takes prayer. That takes prayer. That's why Jesus says in the Lord's Prayer, petition number two, one is hallowed be your name.
[17:12] Number two, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is, and heaven. Pray for a heart that desires God's will above all else. Two, pray for God's wisdom and providential leading.

God gives wisdom to those who ask. The Bible tells us over and again. And God often leads us through providential circumstances. But here's the third thing. Seek wisdom from God's Word.
The Word of God is the one place where the will and the wisdom of God has been plainly revealed to us. To not seek wisdom from the Word of God would be like kneeling before your front door with your key in your pocket and praying, God, please open this door.
It's like, no, take the key out of your pocket and open the door. We have the Word of God with the wisdom of God given to us. Now listen, the Word will not always give us direct answers to the matters of life that we face, but it will certainly guide us along the path.
And a lot of decisions are actually black and white. Rightily answered by the Word of God. Should I marry this unbeliever? Sure. God's Word makes that crystal clear. Should I take a job that requires me to lie, cheat, or steal?
[18:28] Obviously not. Seek wisdom from God's Word. Here's the fourth thing. Seek counsel from trusted believers. Seek counsel from trusted believers.

Over and again, the book of Proverbs presents the wise person as the one who heeds the counsel of others and the foolish person as the self-reliant one who is constantly stiff-arming others' input.
Here's just one example. Proverbs 12, 15. The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice. Saints, we've been given a tremendous resource.
Look around the room. Tremendous resource in the saints who are indwelt with the Holy Spirit, who have the wisdom of God in them. With all the love in my heart, I want to say, don't be a fool.
Receive and heed the counsel of trusted believers. Number five, think with your God-given wisdom taking into account providential circumstances.
[19:35] Yes, think. Think. God has given us rational minds to put to use. God is not against things like a pros-cons list. That can be really helpful when making big decisions.

And as you think rationally and with the sought-out wisdom of God that you've been received, also consider the providential ways that God might be leading you. Believers prayerfully seek God's providential leading while acting with wisdom.
This is what Abraham's servant does right here in Genesis 24. And God answers. And that leads us to point number three. Believers are quick to perceive God's love and faithfulness and to praise him

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for it.
They're quick to perceive God's love and faithfulness and praise him for it. Now at this point, the servant is pretty confident Rebecca is the chosen bride. And so he gives her these lavish gifts and then he asks her for her identity.
We know her identity already. He doesn't. And then he learns what we already know that she is indeed of Abraham's kindred. She's actually doubly so. She's the granddaughter of both of his brothers.
[20:41] Now that would not be possible under Levitical law later or today. At the time, it was perfectly acceptable. Rebecca invites the servant here and the whole entourage to stay with them for the night and let's see how he responds.

This will be on the screen. We read this together earlier. The servant responds like this. The man bowed his head and worshipped the Lord and said, Blessed be the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his steadfast love and his faithfulness toward my master.
As for me, the Lord has led me in the way to the house of my master's kinsman. Immediately, the servant responds in worship. Now recall our main point.
From one generation to the next, God loves and leads his covenant people to prosper their way and fulfill his promises. The servant recognizes this. This is what's going on and he bows his head in praise and in adoration.
And so I just want to say, God help us, brothers and sisters, to have eyes to see God's providential working in our lives. This is evidence of his love, his ongoing love, his faithfulness to us, to have eyes to perceive it and then to praise him for it.
[21:55] So I want to ask, are you doing that in your private devotional life? Are you praising the Lord daily? Thinking about yesterday's events and considering how God's love and his faithfulness has been on display to you, to your family.

Are you leading your families to do this over family worship? This is why we have quarterly open mic testimony times here to cultivate a culture of thankfulness, seeing God testifying to the work that he's doing.
And friends, we need to cultivate this because if you're like me, then you're naturally focused on the negative. Let's get real for a minute, okay?
This church is filled with people whose jobs train them to point out deficiencies. I know, because I was one of them, right? In other words, for many of us, like, literally our education and employment has trained us to see the negative.
And that's a good thing when it leads to rooting out design and construction errors, isn't it? We want our submarines to come back up. But that's a bad thing if it means that we become blind to the multitude of ways that God is showering us with his never-ending mercies.
[23:13] And that's a bad thing if it means that words of praise are dammed up in our mouths and just words of critique is what trickle out instead. And while we're getting real, let's also realize that our culture and social media is training us to do the same.

God's people need to be different. God is providentially at work in this world. He's showering us with love and his faithfulness is on display and he's proven at church most definitively where?
In the cross of Jesus Christ, the love of God shines through there. He's proven it to us. He's continuing to prove it to us in all kinds of ways. So let's have eyes.
Church, let's have eyes. Let's be different than our culture. Let's have eyes to see God's work, to perceive it and then praise him for it. Just like this model servant of Abraham. Point number four, believers remain focused on fulfilling their mission, rejecting distractions.
And here we're going to breeze through about 30 verses of content here. So look, in verse 28, Rebecca runs off to tell her family what's happened and then, in verse 29, we meet this infamous character in Genesis, Laban.
[24:25] Now at first blush, Laban seems like a pretty decent man. But Moses is a master storyteller and he's actually hinting here at the darker side of Laban's character which we're going to see with a lot more clarity when we get to Jacob's story several chapters later.

But one of those hints is verse 30. Look at verse 30 for a second. Moses clarifies that only after Laban sees the jewelry on his sister does he run out to meet the servant.
So his Abraham-like hospitality is sort of cast in this negative light. Is he simply motivated by greed? But nevertheless, Laban sets a meal before the servant but the servant, he refuses the meal.

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He's like, no, no, no, I've got some words to say. He's come a long way commissioned by Abraham and he's going to accomplish his mission. And so then for the next 16 verses are essentially a retelling of everything that just came before.
So I want to ask, why does Moses basically have everything repeated in this account? And the first thing I think is because Moses is using repetition to underscore some of the key themes of this story and not just this story but the entire Abraham cycle in Genesis.
[25:37] God's abiding blessing on Abraham, right? Fulfillment, fulfillment of promises. Isaac as the miracle child and the sole heir. Abraham's faith walk with the Lord. All these things are reiterated in these verses and perhaps most of all, God's providential leading of Abraham's servant to Rebecca whom he has divinely appointed to be the bride for Isaac.

Now that seems to be not just Moses' main point in retelling the story but also the servant's main point. Because I think a second reason that Moses has this retelling here is he's showing us this servant is exercising tact and persuasiveness to wisely include certain details, leave out certain details because he's trying to convince Laban this is from the Lord.
This is all from the Lord. And is he successful in convincing Laban? Look at verse 50. Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, This thing has come from the Lord.
We cannot speak to you bad or good. Behold, Rebecca is before you. Take her and go and let her be the wife of your master's son as the Lord has spoken. Now as a side note, it's likely that Bethuel, so this is Rebecca and Laban's father, it's likely that he's incapacitated because though he's the father, it's actually Laban who is listed first and Laban clearly takes prominence in this story.
And so based on Rebecca's words, based on the servant's words, they do seem persuaded that all of this is indeed from the Lord, so much so that they actually say, As the Lord has spoken.
[27:14] Did God speak? Well, they're saying, Yeah, through his clear hand of providence, God has spoken. Abraham had commanded the servant, Go to my country and take a wife.

And now Laban and Bethuel are sort of responding, Take her and go. And so the servant, what does he do? He responds yet again in worship. Before he had bowed his head, now he bows himself to the earth.
And then he brings out this costly jewelry, and that would probably be like the bride price, the dowry that he's giving to Rebecca. And then there's this beautiful celebration.
Like it would have been a joyful scene at home that evening. But then Abraham's servant runs into a little snag. Okay, he gets up in the morning, they've met with this success, and he says, you know, he wants to be up and on his way to Abraham.
But look at verse 55. Rebecca's family replies, Let the young woman remain with us a while, at least ten days. After that, she may go. Now that's totally reasonable, actually.
[28:16] And in fact, it was a customary thing. But the servant here, he sees this as in opposition to what God has clearly revealed as his will. He says, verse 56, Do not delay me since the Lord has prospered my way.

Send me away that I may go to my master. Believers remain focused on fulfilling their mission, rejecting every distraction.
Now, brothers and sisters, we too, like Abraham's servant, we have a really important task to carry out, don't we? And there are all kinds of obstacles and distractions that would prevent us from carrying out this task.
Now, what is our task, saints? Our task, as we've characterized it as our church vision, is to know Christ and to make him known. That's our task in this world, to know Jesus Christ and to make him known.
We want to grow as disciples of Jesus and we want to help others do the same. And, you know, Pastor Nick Lauer was here last Sunday preaching on Pentecost. And so from that, we know we don't just have angels going before us.
[29:20] We have the Spirit of the living God inside us. He's empowering us to live out this mission and he helps us, Hebrews 12, 1, to lay aside every weight in sin which clings so closely and to run with endurance the race that is set before us.

And church, we don't just have the Spirit empowering us. We have the very Son of God, Jesus Christ, modeling for us what it looks like. Because Jesus became in his earthly life the perfect model servant.

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He perfectly accomplished the Father's will. He set his face like a flint, where? To the cross. That was the mission that he had been given. Go to the cross to save sinners for all of eternity.
And he did that to the glory of God and for our salvation. And so the author of Hebrews exhorts us to lay aside every weight, to run with endurance, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
Brothers and sisters, what distractions might God be calling you to set aside? What sins, what weights is God calling you this morning to reject in order that you might know Christ more fully and make him known more passionately?
[30:49] There's all kinds of distractions. We could be here for the whole day thinking through the distractions that we face. Is it wasting time on social media? Scrolling, doom scrolling endlessly?

Is it sports? Whether you're watching sports, you have to watch every single one of the games, playing sports, maybe it's consuming the schedule, maybe it's pornography.
Maybe it's an ideal that you have in your mind that you're just unwilling to let go of. A dream job, a dream house, a dream body, and a desire for these things is pulling your affections, pulling your efforts away from the things of the Lord.
Whatever it is for you, I want us to remember here that Jesus Christ was willing to reject every form of earthly comfort so that we could be saved and given eternal life in his name.
May the Spirit help us to be willing to reject every weight, to know Christ more, and to make him known to this world. Believers remain focused on fulfilling their mission, rejecting every distraction.
[32:00] Here's the fifth and final point from this text. Believers act in faith, ultimately beholding the fulfillment of God's promises. Believers act in faith, ultimately beholding the fulfillment of God's promises.

So after the servant's second appeal to send him on his way, Rebecca's mother and brother, they say, all right, we're going to let Rebecca, we're going to let her decide. Will you go with this man, they say?
And she answers, I will go. And again, I think we see here that she is an Abraham-like character in the story. 62 years earlier, Abraham said, I'm going to go.
I'm going to leave my father's house, my country, my kindred. Now Rebecca is doing the same thing, right? She's exercising this faith-filled obedience. And as the family sends her away, they pronounce this blessing over her.
They say, our sister, may you become thousands of ten thousands and may your offspring possess the gate of those who hate him.
[33:07] Now no doubt, unbeknownst to Rebecca's family, this blessing marvelously aligns with what God has spoken to Abraham. Two chapters earlier, as God swore in the covenant to Abraham, this is what God had said.

He said, I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore and your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies.
That is the promise of Genesis 3.15, that one to come from the line of Eve will crush the serpent and undo sin's curse and that promise is being channeled in the line of Abraham, now the line of Isaac and Rebecca.
And so the account ends with this beautiful and romantic scene at the end. The servant returns back home, but not to Abraham, rather to Isaac. And so this is sort of showing us the passing of the baton from Abraham to now Isaac.
And then in the evening light, Isaac lifts up his eyes and he beholds the bride that God has appointed for him coming towards him and Rebecca veils herself and the two are joined together in marriage just like we saw in Genesis 2.
[34:18] And she became his wife and he loved her. And so one generation is passing into the annals of history, but God's love and faithfulness is continuing unhindered to the next generation.

And so I want to ask just a few questions here. Is Abraham's 62 years of rejecting earthly pleasures and living by faith on God's promises all for naught?
Is it all for naught? No, it's not. Will God's redemptive program continue when Abraham is dead and gone? Will God's love and his faithfulness be witnessed by the next generation?
Yes, indeed it will. Do Isaac and Rebecca now have every reason to replicate Abraham's faith? To walk before the Lord in trust and obedience?

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Yes, they do. And brothers and sisters, how much more do we? Our sister, may you become thousands of ten thousands through the ultimate offspring of Abraham, Jesus Christ.
[35:29] Through him, through his life and death and resurrection, Abraham's spiritual children have multiplied as the sand that is on the seashore, as the dust of the earth. Thousands of ten thousands of sinners from throughout the nations of the earth have become sons and daughters of Abraham, sons and daughters of God through Christ.

We are beholding the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham to let us then act in faith like Rebecca, like Abraham and may your offspring possess the gate of those who hate him.
Jesus, the offspring of Isaac and Rebecca, through his death on the cross, he has dealt the decisive blow to the serpent Satan, has he not? The gates of hell are right now, right now, being stormed by the saints in the power of Jesus Christ through his spirit.
Every single day, people once held captive by sin are being freed as they hear the word of truth, the gospel of their salvation and believe in him, Ephesians 1.13. Saints, we are beholding even advancing the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham.
So let us then live our lives not in fear but in faith. What the immediate future holds, we don't know, right? We may not know, we don't have the eyes to see it but we know this, that from one generation to the next, we're coming now, we're 4,000 years after Abraham's life.
[36:54] From one generation to the next, God loves and leads his covenant people to prosper their way. All things are working for the good of those who love him.

To prosper their way and to fulfill his promises. Listen, one day we're going to behold the ultimate fulfillment of every promise of God. But as we wait for and as we hasten that day, we get to daily behold and delight in our loving and leading God.
Please pray with me. Heavenly Father, we thank you Lord for this story which is far more than simply a story of a bride and a groom meeting together. This is a story of the love of the Godhead, the story of God's covenant, faithful, steadfast love for his children, passing on his love, his faithfulness to the next generation and Lord, we are here today, 2026, dozens of generations later and we know that your love is still steadfast.
It's unmoving. You are the same yesterday, today, and forever. God, help us to be a people of hope knowing that we serve that very same God that showed himself to be a God of love and faithfulness to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob.
We have Jesus Christ, the one who has gone before us, who has given up his life on the cross that he might save us from our sins and bring us into an eternal relationship with you, Lord.
[38:21] We know your love. We have experienced your love. God, help us experience it afresh today. And God, I pray that in light of that we would be a people focused on the mission that you've given to us.

God, we want to know Christ more. He is worth everything. He is the treasure of greatest price. We want to know Christ more. God, help us to set aside distractions and weights and we want to make him known to this world.
God, help us to make Jesus known today to our family, our neighbors, our friends, to New London, to this community, to all of New England, to the world. We love you, Lord, because you first loved us.
We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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