

Genesis (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

[0 : 00] The Book of Genesis The Book of Genesis Highly significant and important as the base of our consideration of this part of God's Word this morning.

I have had on my mind a sense or feeling perhaps that there may possibly be one or another in this congregation who are greatly concerned about the way.

And greatly concerned as to whether they are in the way.

And also what is the way? Its experience and the nature of it.

And also what is the ultimate destiny. I think you will realize what high importance these things have or should have and indeed will have for all those who are being taught of the Lord.

[2 : 44] Of course there are ever so many notions and ideas about the way.

People say, well I'm in the way. And they're quite satisfied with merely saying to themselves largely, I am in the way.

And yet they hardly ever give thought or care or concern as to what it really means. What calls and claims there will be laid upon them if they are and if they know what it really means to be in the way.

But they're just purely satisfied with the claim that they are in the way.

And of course there is, as you well know today, there are thousands of people who have all kinds of ways in their minds. The great majority of which have no relationship whatsoever with the one way which we are trying to unfold this morning.

[4 : 18] And that way which leads to heaven, which is the ultimate object, destiny. Or they say there are people in all parts of the world that have never known much about Christianity.

They haven't heard the word of God, never heard the gospel. But they're in the way nevertheless, their own way of course. But it is far, far off from God's work.

Now I do hope you and I are concerned with one thing and one thing only.

And that is God's way. You know how one of the Lord's servants, Thomas by name, he said to the Lord Jesus, and when you come to weigh up what he said, it is very common, something which takes place, I verily believe, in every believer, from one time or another.

He said to the Lord Jesus, how can we know the way? We know not the way.

[6 : 00] There's something, something very important and striking about that really. I know people have dismissed poor Thomas. They call him Doubting Thomas. But he's not doubting Thomas at all really.

He's one who is investigating. He's a man that is ready to search out and to seek after reality, truth, living experience.

And he said to the Lord, he went to the right person. He said, Lord, we know not. How can we know the way?

You know the answer. The Lord Jesus said to him, I am the way.

I am the way. Well, that one sentence, that kind of summit of truth that stands out like a mighty peak of glorious truth in the word of God is the utterance that came from the lips of the Lord Jesus himself and telling us clearly, plainly, as it does all men, that there is one way and only one way and the only one that will bring us into that way is Jesus Christ the Lord.

[7 : 50] Now, those are very plain, simple things, but they're truths, you know. And the simplest truth is one of the most assailed truths today.

Everyone almost is against it, knows something better than the truth itself. And thus, we have all the confusion and all the vain sentiments that are propagated by so many people of all kinds today.

But you and I want one thing. We want to know the real way, the right way, and he who is that way.

And a second, and that I'm going to concentrate most upon this morning is this. If you are in the way, then you're on the threshold of a most wonderful experience.

Let me tell you that. A most wonderful experience. And I would go further than that and I would say this. The most wonderful experience you can ever come into contact with in this world or in your life.

[9 : 33] life. And that's why I've taken this text out of this remarkable and striking illustration of God's infallible guidance in providence over his people.

life. Now it's only those that are in the way, mark you, that can ever really know these wonderful experiences.

let us look therefore this morning, let us look at this striking illustration, this outstanding incident in the word of God that we have before us in the case of this man.

He was Abraham's servant. He'd been in Abraham's service for many years. If it is Elysia, the one whom Abraham told God about, you remember, before Isaac was born, he said, the only man in my household who is an heir to all my property and all my wealth is this Elysia of Damascus.

If it is the same man, he had been in Abraham's service for well over forty years. And it says in the beginning of the chapter, it says his servant of his house that ruled over all that he had.

[11 : 22] He says, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh. Here was an illustration of verification.

You know, if a person exchanges a property today, they have to have a deed. And on that deed, there's a seal.

It might be a wax seal, or it might be a paper red seal, but whatever it is, the man or person who is enacting the transaction will go and place a finger upon that seal and say, this is my act and deed.

You see, they're virtually swearing that this is the true purpose of their mind and their intent.

Well, now, the same kind of thing took place here with Abraham and his servant. He says, I want you to signify solemnly, reverently, earnestly, that what I'm about to ask you to do, you will undertake with all due reverence, regard, sincerity, and honesty.

[13 : 03] And he swears to that intent and that purpose. Now, I want you to notice this, that in the beginning of this chapter, he tells him, his servant, Abraham tells him, what is the purpose of this journey that he is calling him to undertake.

He tells him in the seventh verse, the great ultimate prospects that Abraham has in his mind, which are no small prospects at all, but very and exceedingly great.

He says this, the Lord God of heaven, which took me, he's telling him a little of his own spiritual history, you see, he's telling this servant of what has happened to him by the grace of God.

Now, that's an important thing for you to notice, especially you that are in the way and longing to find more outlets for your activity and prayerful life and service.

notice what Abraham did with his servant. He told him something about how the Lord had met with him and called him and brought him out of a heathen land and nation.

[14 : 49] And he said, he took me from my father's house and from the land of my kindred, which spake unto me and that swear unto me, saying, unto thy seed will I give this land.

and Abraham says, that same God that so wonderfully dealt with me, called me out of this heathen nation in the early days of my life and swear unto me these wonderful promises, saying, I will give thee this land unto thy seed, will I give it forever and ever.

He says, this same God will undertake for you and for all who put their trust in him, and that God will make your way prosperous.

There's no doubt, you can well believe it, that Abraham's servant would question the reasonable nature of this request.

He would doubt the wisdom of it. Here he was asked to go to a foreign land many, many miles, hundreds of miles away, alone, without Isaac.

[16 : 40] It was strictly forbidden that Isaac should go with him on any account, whatever. Here he was to go, right into Mesopotamia, to look out for a people if he could find them, they may be there, they may not, and to find out among them a suitable wife for Abraham's heir and son.

Now you put yourself in that position, would you have dared undertake such a mission? wouldn't you like undoubtedly he did see all the possibilities and all the probabilities of complete utter failure staring you in the face?

And wouldn't you say perhaps, if not to Abraham, perhaps within your own heart and mind, this is totally unreasonable and will be most certainly end in complete failure.

But you see, he swore to Abraham and he puts it very clearly to Abraham, he says, suppose per adventure the woman, if I find her, if there is such a character, such a person, suitable for thy son, if I find her, that's going to be a formidable task, but if I find her, per adventure she's unwilling to come with me.

and Abraham said, if she's unwilling to come with you, you are free from your oath, but do not take my son into that heathen land, for God said, here, in this land, will I give to him and to his seed, a cherished portion, forever and forever.

[19 : 12] well now, he sets off then. I want us to look at the stages of this journey.

First of all, we find submission, and that was a very clear, definite submission, of Abraham's servant to his master, Abraham, when he swore to him and told him he was willing to go.

I want us to pick that up for a moment. If you are in the way of the Lord, believer, one of the great things you will need is submission, at all times, to the will of the Lord.

You may not understand the will of the Lord. You may not be able to see the end from the beginning, but you will need complete, wholehearted submission to that will.

will. That's one of the absolute necessities in walking in the way of the Lord. Then secondly, we see that he prepared.

[20 : 50] He didn't do it this haphazardly or half-heartedly. He took ten camels, he had a long journey to make, camels were the most suitable creatures to carry him and his goods in that great journey.

He took ten of his master's camels. For all the goods of his master were in his hand, and he arose and went to Mesopotamia unto the city of Naal.

You see, he arose. Preparation and then determination to arise and to go forward.

Yes, these are three important things. We need to keep them very much in our hearts. I'm speaking now to those of you who have followed the Lord, put on a profession of his name, and perhaps you wonder whether you're really in the way, and you want to know what the way really means, and what the features of it really are.

Well, these are three important features. First of all, submission to the will of God, preparation to carry out whatever God has laid upon your mind to undertake and to do, and to do it with all thy might.

[22 : 44] And thirdly, to arise and be going and be doing. you notice in the Old Testament, many of the dear saints of God, they were instant in movement.

Abraham, when God said to him, go to a place that I will show you, and offer up Isaac thy son for a burnt offering, he rose up early in the morning. And Moses, when the Lord said, come up into Mount Sinai, he went up early in the morning.

You see, these Old Testament saints, they set a wonderful example to you and me. There was no delaying, there was no procrastination. They wouldn't say for a moment, oh well tomorrow, as good as today, perhaps next week, it would be more advantageous.

No, arise, he arose instantly. He was on the move. And he had a journey to make, and he was determined to begin.

And so he went. And as he comes to this city of Nahal, where he believed, Abraham had informed him, that his brethren lived in that area.

[24 : 22] Of course, there were many other people living there as well. And it was an unlikely thing that he would fasten upon the right people, right family.

there would be a whole host of others, totally unsuitable for the errand for which he'd come.

He comes near to this city of Nahal, wondering, no doubt, whether Abraham's family was still there, or whether they had departed into another part altogether.

He puts his camels down upon their knees. Common thing for camels to do, but he puts himself on his knees before God.

Prayer. Mark that. and he prays to God. He feels so deeply concerned about his errand and the success of it, or the failure of it.

[25 : 52] And he says, Lord, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee send me good speed this day and show kindness unto my master Abraham.

He's not asking for himself. He's asking for the prosperity of his journey for the sake of his master.

Now there again is a point. If you're in the way, active, submissive, earnestly pursuing that way, you're not doing it to glorify yourself.

or to get credit for yourself and to have praise for yourself in doing it, it's all for your master, the Lord Jesus Christ.

That must be ever kept firmly in the forefront of our minds. God will be saved.

[27 : 21] And here is the example of it in this man, Abraham's servant, whose name we are not really given as far as we can judge. And he says this, he could realize, he could visualize the people, the women would be coming out.

This was the custom in those parts. the women went to the wells, and no doubt there were ever so many wells, and the women would be coming to draw water at a certain time of the day, and there would be crowds of them, of all kinds, of all families, writhing somewhat about the same place and same time.

He says, Lord, let this take place, if it's thy will. Let the woman that I shall ask for a drink of water, and who shall say to me, drink, and let me draw for thy camels also.

Let that woman be the one thou has chosen, I haven't chosen, thou has chosen for my master's servant, Isaac, to be his wife.

Now you know what happened. Even while he was speaking in prayer, that's a very wonderful thing to my mind, my mind, while he was speaking.

[29 : 13] Have you ever had some experience like this, that you've been in a very close, trying, difficult situation, and there's only one thing for it, and that is to pray to the Lord about it.

And while you are praying, there seems to be a wonderful answer, opens up clearly before you, and you said to yourself and to the Lord, this is an amazing thing.

The Lord has intervened in a very wonderful way, and he has answered my prayers, and he has shown to me that I am in the right way.

That was the great comfort and support of this man, Abraham's son. Whilst he was yet speaking, there comes the damsel, whose name was Rebecca, and he runs to meet her, and he says, give me a little water to drink.

And she says, let me, I pray thee, drink a little water, let me, she says, I will draw water for thy camels also until they have done drinking.

[30 : 43] What could be clearer, what could be most propitious in a way of answer to prayer than this? And so, we come to our text, Abraham's servant, before he did anything at all, he worshipped.

He worshipped. The 26th verse, he worshipped, he bowed, the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord.

And he said, blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute, my master, of his mercy and his truth, or his loving kindness is the word there in the original, of his loving kindness and his truth.

I, being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren. you know, my dear friends, today you will find a good many people claiming to be in the way and doing a wonderful work, glorifying themselves.

I have, of course, I suppose you, many of you have, through the post, pamphlets and papers and booklets from all sorts of societies and institutions, and I read and look into them and you find sometimes here's a family, a young family.

[32 : 24] I can't judge them, of course, for their Christian names are Bob and Gwen or something like that. They seem as if they want to belittle these things today and make the most sacred things very common and ordinary and insignificant.

and you will read and you will find all these young people they're doing a great work out in such and such a place. It doesn't tell us what the work is or what their experiences have been but they're doing a great work.

And here they are, there's a photograph of them and they're all for the praises of men and the applauds and so on. You can't find a single thing that they're really doing.

except that they're there. They've made a sacrifice no doubt. They've left their own native land. They've gone into a far distant country. But what have they been doing?

Where is the way? Can they really say like Abraham's servant I being in the way the Lord led me.

[33 : 38] there was there was not a vestige of evidence in some of these that I read of the Lord's leading.

They had instituted the whole thing carried it all out claimed to have a great success in doing it but the Lord is left out of it.

not so with this dear man of God this Abraham servant he says I being in the way the Lord led me.

Now those are the things I want us to lay hold upon this morning I being in the way. My dear friends ponder prayerfully consider deeply whether you can say before God I being in the way.

Do you want to be in the way? Very many people do not Christ said broad is the way and wide is the gate that leads to destruction and many there are that go in there at narrow is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life and few there are that find that.

[35 : 20] I say again let us ask ourselves this question can I say with Abraham's servant I am in the way the Lord led me.

Amen. man now. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[38 : 46] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[40 : 34] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Help us, O Lord, to tell thee all our griefs and pain.

And do thou reveal to us thy love, thy mercy. May the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us now and evermore.

Amen.