

Genesis (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Wood, Clement (1920-2010)

- [0 : 00] In dependence upon the Lord for all needed help, I venture to draw your prayerful attention to Genesis chapter 24 and verse 63.
- Genesis chapter 24 and verse 63. And Isaac went out to meditate.
- The margin also says to pray. And Isaac went out to meditate, to pray in the field at the eventide.
- And he lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, the camels were coming.
- Of the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- [1 : 11] Isaac had traveled the least. Isaac lived the longest. Isaac was a man of peace.
- Isaac often dwelt by the well. Here we read of him on this particular eventide.
- Out praying and meditating before God. And it would not be wrong for us to enter a little, as we may be helped, into his meditation.
- First, the wonder, the miracle of his birth. Remember that Abraham and Isaac were beyond at the time of childbearing.
- Nothing is too hard for God. He was the son of promise. The miracle of his birth.
- [2 : 29] This leads us to consider our own birth. I may be permitted to put a personal word here.
- That when I was, I've been told of course this, five days old, the nurse put me into my mother's arms for what was felt to be the last time.
- The miracle of life spared. And as we think of Isaac further, we think here of the miracle of another life.
- The most important of all, a spiritual life. Ye must be born again. Beloved hearer, are you, and that of course by the grace of God, a new creature in Christ Jesus.
- Another step, just briefly. Isaac would never forget that memorable day when he went with his father, with the wood and the fire and the knife, to offer a sacrifice in the place that God had told his father.
- [4 : 06] When he looked inquiringly at his father and said, Father, here's the wood, here's the fire, where's the lamb for the burnt offering?
- My son, God, will provide himself a lamb. Beloved, he's done it.
- The son of his love. But tracing out for Isaac, being bound, and though it is spoken of the word of God as the lad, he was a young man, fully grown.
- Yet bound, it would seem willingly, bound to that altar, anticipating death. When the voice came from heaven, the knife is put away, or at least loosens his bonds.
- He's set free. He stands by the altar. He watches as his father offers up the ram instead of himself.
- [5 : 22] We speak much and rightly so of the faith of Abraham. But I see an added beauty in substitution. I see one in the place of Isaac.

Went out to meditate in the field at eventime. and does thou, beloved hearer, meditate often at night.

I know the days are of turmoil and rush and stress and strain. But oh, that you and I may have been able to have a few quiet moments with God before we go to rest.

and trace out your great, if it is, I trust it is, your chiefest concern is to know that one, none other than the eternal Son of God died in your room and place, that his blood has washed away all your sin, that it is well with your soul.

Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the avon tide. Now comes another very vital part of his experience and a great concern this was to Abraham in his old age and that was a wife for God's gift to him, his son Isaac.

[6 : 56] And I would just add praying that the Lord would direct me to a word most unexpectedly my eyes fell on this scripture that I've read for a hearing I have preached from it long time ago but it came a measure of power I hope with profit tonight.

Now we turn to know to Abraham and see his great concern in his old age. God had blessed Abraham in all things but his concern now was a wife for his son, not one of the Canaanites and this reminds us of the parents concerned, those who fear God over their young as they seek marriage, that it may be under the blessing of God, God's provision, God's guidance, remembering this, that it is until death that do us part and can two walk together except they be agreed and if there are any here in exercise and concern about a one marriage, may the Lord direct and guide your steps.

Here it was a great concern to Abraham and what a great concern it is to praying fathers and mothers and grandparents too for their grandchildren to see the Lord's provision for them.

Now we turn to another character and that is Abraham's servant who was a most godly man, a trustworthy man and to this servant is committed the charge to go to Abraham's former household to see a wife for his son.

And there's something very beautiful here. Now I'm not losing sight of the text. Isaac went out to meditate in the field at even time.

[9 : 05] I see here in this chapter and I pray we may see it in our homes, in our families, in our concerns, the providentially and spiritually continue prayer.

for I feel that Isaac would well know the mission of this servant and doubtless follow him with prayer.

Abraham followed this servant with prayer and this servant himself was a praying man, step by step into the unknown future.

And the chapter itself breathes out the prayerful exercise, waiting, watching, the Lord's hand and direction.

And at last the long journey is brought and he comes. Oh what a moment it was at the time of the evening to the well of water. That would be about three o'clock in the afternoon.

[10 : 14] The time when they drew water from the well. And there is I stand here by the well of water. He stood there praying that God would direct him, God would show him, God would make it plain for him.

He did not wish to put his hand to the matter. He did not wish to choose one for Isaac. water. And again as he sought various signs and tokens he saw all fulfilled the minute detail before his eyes.

And we read he wondering held his peace to what went to know whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous prayer waiting upon God.

Before they pray I will answer. Now it may be said and I think we've got to go very carefully here about seeking signs from God in answer to our prayers.

[11 : 27] You must remember there was no scripture in the days of Isaac and Abraham. Now I feel that the word of God is our guide is our rule and the Lord speaks to us through his word to direct us in the way that we go.

But I do not rule out times when under heavy exercise soul travail agony of spirit where a poor soul may be so burdened anxiously to do the will of God that God in his mercy and compassion does hear our prayer and grant a confirming evidence or token in answer to their petitions.

What is wrong is like the heathen would say look for a certain sign and they say well if that goes that way then it's alright if it goes the other way it's wrong.

For example one thing that the heathen would do would kill a beast and if the liver was healthy they would go forward if it wasn't they wouldn't go forward or they would take an arrow and if it went certain one way or the other way vice versa no that's that's not the way but I've known cases and once in my own life when I never forget a night of earnest anxious prayer before God is the night I was joining the air force in the last war and I begged of the Lord for a word that he would give me before I left home and reading daily night in the portion of the back times of anxiety one word stood out I will instruct thee and teach in the way that thou should go I will guide thee with mine eye I said Lord make it mine oh my dear friend there was no light work here there was soul work here there was agony here there was pleading with

God here there was wrestling prayer as you've been seeing about praying for a real blessing a real token like Jacob I hope I may say that without presumption and the next morning I said nothing to my parents my dear father at breakfast he got the bible and the very second verse he read was the very verse I longed for oh my friend the Lord has compassion upon us I mentioned just one of the K's do mark this it's not just doing something like anything well if it's that way and I do it my friend this is the result of agonizing before the throne of grace and a dear woman a godly woman in a chapel had begged of the Lord and she was in such deep distress tempted by Satan that the minister would quote a certain scripture I don't know what it was but that doesn't matter before the end of that day and the sermons the service went through the sermon in the afternoon was preached and the minister sat down and there was not the word the woman was in deep distress they sung the closing hymn the minister stood up and said friends he said

[14 : 42] I've never done this before in my life I feel constrained to quote a scripture and there was the very word that this dear woman had agonized do you see what I'm getting at that wasn't light work was it I say God does take compassion but mainly I believe we have to wait watch the three points for guidance in our providential concerns first as I would say the word of God secondly the moving of the Holy Spirit upon your own spirit and thirdly the hand of God itself in either opening or closing a door it was said a certain way into a harbour which was the only safe way for the boats to go through where there were three boys in the water and the captain had to keep that in a straight line and it was one safe way into harbour my friend pray your way through step by step and seek grace to wait for

God I'm still thinking of Isaac he's praying I see this servant praying I see in measure the matter unfolding I behold him going in to the house of Laban and Beth you will and I see how they say come in thou blessed of the Lord wherefore standest thou without now is that just a word for any seeking soul exercised about believers baptism oh may that word be spoken when that time comes and don't put it off my dear friend give glory to God only one gave back came back and just gave glory to Jesus after the ten lepers come in thou blessed of the Lord wherefore why why do you stand without why do you not give

I say it lovingly fervently affectionately you stand oh without they offered him a meal but he's the master's business must come first you see the teaching in this old testament seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness all these things shall be added unto you put God first and you that come on the weeknight service sometimes you may have to give up your meal and perhaps come straight from work to chapel for the service and then perhaps have your meal later God bless you put God's house first I know I say with care and it's right to say that if possible get just a little refreshment certainly but put God first but here without and I must hasten on because I want to get to further points in my subject tonight he speaks before them of just what had happened and he says

I came this day unto the well and said oh Lord God of my master Abraham if now thou do prosper my way which I go behold I stand here by the well of water now you look back Isaac was meditating and praying we meditate in our meditation tonight and you look back on certain crises days if I may put it in your life days of vital importance days when you stood before an examining board before seeking employment decisions had to be made great decisions had to be made how you prayed were you not like a dear Nehemiah he stood before a powerful king but he said I prayed unto the king of heaven prayed as you were there prayed that the Lord would control prayed that the Lord would guide and direct you and lead you in his way and give you grace to know and to do his will and so he said how all this was fulfilled and he said

I bowed down my head and worshiped the Lord and blessed the Lord God of my Abraham master Abraham which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son led him in the right way oh but look at the effect of it the humility of it the sacredness of it the solemnity of it the spirituality of it he worshipped you know I get ever so tried about that I mean this how much worship is there in my life but there are times and friends there are times when we worship in most strange places I'll just give you one example just quickly in passing when I referred this afternoon to Gideon down in the tent among those tents and when he had that dream he bowed his head and worshipped fancy there in such a condition such a surrounding and yet we worship

[20 : 15] God as we see it's the hand of God I read and so he speaks to them and says then they said we must call Rebecca and see and so they said to her will you go with this man let me just find the verse that I'm looking for and as he said will you go with this man oh my dear friend are you going with Jesus I say that is your life designed to walk with Jesus as your friend your saviour or are you part of the world and think a little bit about these things is it your desire the Lord control every circumstance of my life direct me all my exercises particularly my spiritual concerns will they'll go with this man

Lord I'm unworthy to be named with the name of Jesus but he came to seek and to save sinners just like me and my desire Lord is to go with my Jesus though I tremble I fear lest I shall fail lest I shall bring reproach on the name of Jesus that I dearly love I will go and so they arose and they set off on a long journey home now we come still still we've left Isaac day by day and I'm sure Abraham too praying and this brings us down to our own little level day by day the affairs of life certain things that are constantly concerning but there are some things a deep concern they're not all solved at once we need grace to continue in prayer to watch the hand of God to be patient to be preserved from taking our own step the heart of man deviseth his own way but the

Lord directeth his steps are you directed by your own heart or are you directed by almighty God step by step providentially and spiritually they reach their destination and we read here Isaac went out to meditate the moment had come he sees her coming in the distance and looks up and he lifted up his eyes and saw and behold the camels were coming you may say what is the spiritual there well I'll tell you I feel guidance at least the camels were the signal that the hand of God was to be seen the provision of God he would wait for the result and maybe you're waiting upon God for the fulfillment waiting for the purpose of God to be made known to you and wait as it were for the camels my dear friend you need much grace and patience to wait the hand of God and to watch and to look for your

God the camels were coming and there it was we read that he loved her and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death and Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the even time now as I may be held and I do pray this is proper as I said no thought until late last night about preaching from this word and I have to leave it with God I do but I want to try and look at this from one or two aspects in our own life first do we pray at night before you go to sleep is there a prayer is there family worship but I'm seeing more here particularly personal personal a prayer you may say I've gone to sleep

I sympathize with you dear friend the Lord Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane he said the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak he knows but beloved is there are there times when you try and pray and come into a wider range in a moment on that matter but and not only because at night but it's a good thing to start the day with prayer you say oh I can't do that I wake up too late I must get on my I must get up and get going to work yes I know that I'm not mindful of it my friend but you know sometimes if you could just spare try and discipline your life just a little time to start the day I think of the psalmist it's a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord to sing praise unto thy name oh most high to show forth thy loving kindness every morning and thy faithfulness every night but that

[26 : 11] I must give and then of course prayer during the day it may be as I've already hinted your office bench your desk the ward that you work in as a nurse the mother at home and the school the teacher and so forth yes this is a place where prayer is wont to be made you have to do much of your business in prayer don't you or you don't pray you're doing it all yourself my dear friend I say lovingly take it all to God in prayer seek guidance be very careful when you face with something and say I know what to do with that that's easy be careful ever be dependent upon God to seek wisdom from above and guidance but went out to meditate took to pray first we would say what about praising did you thank God for the help he's given you did you thank God for the blessings of the day did you thank God that you've got a lovely soft pillow to put your head down on and to go to sleep that night the comforts of life did you thank God for his preserving mercy and every blessing and most of all as a

Christian to thank God for a good hope through grace praising God for all his mercy count your many blessings name them one by one and it will surprise you what the Lord your God has done to praise and bless him to thank him oh my friend how slow we are to thank God but there's another aspect something and I'm not boasting of myself I'm a poor sinner you'll see this when I'm saying it I feel heartily ashamed of myself I mean that I see my sin I see my idle speaking my levity I have perhaps a rather humorous nature I don't believe in being morbid I don't believe in going along with a amorphous expression

I believe what George wrote is to say bright but not light that's the way good balance I think myself I shall never forget I'll confess it I was preaching in Bedfordshire a week night and a dear young friend came up to me the next week in a chapel nearby for the following week and she said I'm ever so sorry I can't be there because I'm working so I'm not coming then oh a minister of the gospel saying that will you have me again in your pulpit I confess it after I said it my heart was broken Lord how wilt thou ever use such a poor thing like me after what I've said of the things of God I believe

I knew what repentance was then I knew what godly sorrow was then and I thought Lord if I'm not permitted to preach there I bow before thy world thou art just the Lord permitted me to go I believe forgave me my friends we look back we see so much imperfection we do I have named it recently I'm ashamed to do it but young people are here why I did it I don't know I was at school quite young I was about ten I suppose I played truant I told lies my head master who was an old colonel in the war years phoned up and said where's your boy send him back to me I went back to school he met me in the garden of the school do you know what he said the school was

Rose Hill he said Rose Hillians do not do things like that that's all he said never forgot it if reproach on the school and as a Christian a poor Christian I see my failings are reproach on him whom I love so meditation at the end of the day sometimes is with tears I don't say literal but sorrow and grief for sin begging forgiveness praying for cleansing then again going out to meditate perhaps misunderstanding and I'm not speaking

[31 : 57] I don't know anything here whatsoever so I'm speaking quite freely aren't I but I know this something can happen in a day as a little bit of a difference arises it can be between in the family it can even be between husband and wife be between brother and sister and so forth it can be with a friend perhaps a misunderstanding perhaps you've been deeply hurt perhaps you go to bed that night meditating and feeling ever so sad but perhaps you go to bed that night and let's be honest I'll get my own back tomorrow let not the sun go down on your rod I've named this before I don't know who the boys were they were different families at school but they were very great friends and they had a terrible quarrel mother was putting her boy to bed and she said you can't go to sleep like that you must forgive your friend oh yes he said I forgive him but wait tomorrow

I'll get my own back that spirit can be in our churches you know friend people say yes I forgive you but they just take the top of the root the top of the weed off they haven't taken the root out real forgiveness that costs something first it costs something for you to say Lord do before you go to bed go to phone up this friend say look I see I'm wrong I'm sorry you'll have a better night even if that friend doesn't receive you fully even if it could be but you're clear you're clear at a church meeting many years ago I'm speaking a practical way tonight I realise that oh and a dear member did get a little bit out of hand but that member at quarter past ten that night phoned me up it was all put straight he was a great man that did that you know again be made willing to forgive oh my friend ever think that that night may be your last night on this earth think of

Joseph think of how he had been treated by his brethren and yet look at his love his forgiveness his kindness and then when Jacob died they thought now there's nothing to stop him taking revenge he continued that forgiveness what an example the Lord Jesus Christ himself gives us an example of forgiveness so my friend so my friend you've got some worries and perhaps you get a sleepless night try and pray about it try and take you to God in prayer perhaps my friend there's something distressing maybe and I don't know of anything here so I'm speaking quite pretty it can be your child the one in the family giving you trouble giving you concern heartbreak pray about it if it's something too hard you don't know how to message it you dread the next morning my friend take you to God in prayer the Lord knows went to into the field in the field at the even time he went to meditate and to pray take you to God in prayer on your bed at night oh you say but I can't leave it there

I know we can't if faith is an exercise oh we can leave it in his hands and there are times when there is a sweet relief in pouring out your heart before God and asking him to help you and you look back and the hymn you've just sung of praying for that blessing of the time of Jacob and his trouble I thought was in a measure confirming to my soul in the meditation tonight praying for the blessing of God praying for Lord make the rough place but perhaps it doesn't ease it gets worse is that the way God answers your prayer it may be that way but don't forget this he's the God of all grace the burden increases the sorrow increases but the

Lord gives all needed grace all needed help went out to meditate to pray in the field to eventide matters too difficult perhaps there's a hospital appointment you don't know what the surgeon's going to say the specialist is going to say that if you're waiting to go in there's an officer operation in front of you you dread it my friends I can only tell you this that the night I was actually in the hospital ready for the operation for my heart operation 11 years ago I was quiet I woke about four in the morning and I just prayed Lord do come he came his left hand is under my thy head and his right hand does embrace me

[38 : 17] I felt it's too good I couldn't believe it but the Lord favoured me with such meditation songs in the night for him now I'm not singing that song to a heavy heart it may be you've had it and you've been hard going and it is so with me far often hard going but the righteous and you don't feel to be the righteous you say of sinners I'm the chief but shall hold on his way now one more word and I really must close I feel rather weary what about the last night you say I don't know when it will be of course you don't is it a concern if tonight the Lord should say to you thy soul is required of thee are you ready where is your hope is it well grounded oh my dear friend now not frightening the seeker the seeker is clinging to Jesus hoping in

Jesus trusting in Jesus that's a good place you'll be safe there but I'm warning those that are building on the sand I'm warning those that have a religion that is artificial outward and not inward my friend seek grace to pray to be made ready to be prepared then oh my God prepare my soul for that great day oh wash me in thy precious blood and take my sins away I'll close with just another illustration many many years ago a minister I think well known I don't know it must be ever so many years it doesn't matter who the minister was but well known called to visit a young woman and she he went there and this woman obviously was in a dying condition he said well I don't know you my dear she said ah she had gone into the place of worship hidden by the stairs the minister had never seen her there but she'd been there

God had taught her her sinner she said one day she was brought as a guilty sinner before God and as time went the Lord blessed her with a sweet sense of pardon she turned to this dear minister I'm not afraid to die he visited her once or twice then again and said this will be the last time and she said I finish with prayer it's all praises it will be for all the dear people of God God bless his word and pardon all of this Amen