

Genesis Chapter 24

Genesis 24:1 "And Abraham was old, [and] well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things."

"And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age":

Being now one hundred and forty years of age, for as he was a hundred years old when Isaac was born, and Isaac was forty years of age when he married Rebekah, which was at this time, Abraham must be of the age mentioned (see Genesis 21:5),

"And the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things":

With all kind of blessings, with temporal and spiritual blessings; the former seems chiefly designed here, because of what follows.

God had blessed him, as Aben Ezra observes, with long life, and riches, and honor, and children, things desirable by men.

Verses 2-4

"Put ... thy hand under my thigh ... swear" (see note on verse 9).

A solemn pledge mentioning the LORD's name and formalized by an acceptable customary gesture indicated just how serious an undertaking this was in Abraham's eyes.

At his age (verse 1), Abraham was concerned to perpetuate his people and God's promise through the next generation, so he covenanted with his servant to return to Mesopotamia and bring back a wife for Isaac.

Genesis 24:2 "And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:"

"Eldest servant":

This may have been Eliezer (of 15:2-3).

He worshiped God (verses 26-27, 52); he was devoted to Abraham (verses 12b, 14b, 27); and dedicated to finishing the task (verses 33, 56).

If in fact he was this Eliezer, then his loyalty in serving the heir who had displaced him is even all the greater.

Eliezer, at 85 years of age, had risen to steward, or “chief of staff,” a position of substantial authority (indicated in verse 10).

He would have received all Abraham’s wealth if he had no son (see 15:1-2), yet when Isaac was born the inheritance became Isaac’s.

So, not only had he loyally served his master despite having been displaced by another heir (15:2-4), but he also faithfully served that heir (verse 67).

Verses 3-4

Matrimonial arrangements were made by parents, and chosen partners were to come from one’s own tribe.

It was apparently customary to marry one’s first cousin.

But Abraham’s higher motive was to prevent Isaac from marrying a Canaanite pagan after Abraham’s death, thus possibly leading the people away from the true God.

Genesis 24:3 "And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:"

“Daughters of the Canaanites”:

The command to marry only within God’s redeemed community was given latter through Moses, but here is an example of the godly Abraham desiring to be separate from the pagans surrounding him (Deut. 7:3-4; 1 Kings 11:4; Ezra 9); and Paul’s “only in the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:39).

Abraham realized that he was growing old.

His son, Isaac, was at the age where young men seek a wife.

This servant that Abraham had entrusted all to, has certainly been a man of integrity who loved and feared God, or else Abraham would not have had the servant to swear by Him.

Abraham realized that the people around him were a heathen people; he did not want his son, Isaac, unequally yoked to these women of the world.

Canaan, at this time, was not living for God.

Abraham recognized God for being God of both earth and heaven, when he made the servant take the oath.

Genesis 24:4 "But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac."

"But thou shalt go unto my country":

Not Canaan, which though his by promise, yet not in possession, but Mesopotamia, as appears from (Genesis 24:10); which taken largely included the Chaldea (see Acts 7:2), the country where Abraham was born, and from whence he came.

"And to my kindred":

The family of Nahor his brother, which now dwelt at Haran in Mesopotamia, called the city of Nahor (Genesis 24:10; see Genesis 29:4); of the increase of whose family Abraham had heard a few years ago (Genesis 22:20).

"And take a wife to my son Isaac":

He did not want his son to marry out of the godly family: for the problems that come from marrying the ungodly are set forth in various places throughout the scriptures.

And the reason this family was chosen, not only because related to Abraham, but because it had sprung from Shem, who was blessed of God, and whose God the LORD was; nearness of kin was no objection and hindrance to such a marriage, the laws relating to marriage not being given till the time of Moses.

Even today children would be much better off, if they only would seek someone of their own faith to marry.

We should not even consider people of the world for a lifetime mate.

Abraham was sure this family was believers.

Genesis 24:5 "And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?"

"And the servant said unto him":

Before he would take the oath, being cautious of it, and desirous of knowing how far it reached, and what it would or would not oblige him to, which was prudently done said:

"Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me into this land":

Supposing this should be the case, as it is not unlikely that the woman would object to coming along with him to the land of Canaan, and insist upon Isaac's coming into her country, and dwelling there, what must then be done?

"Must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?":

That is, must I agree with the woman on these terms, and promise that Isaac shall come and dwell with her in Mesopotamia?

Now there was good reason for the servant's putting this question, since he was neither ignorant of the call of Abraham out of that land, no more to return to it, nor of the promise of the land of Canaan to him and his posterity.

As for bringing Isaac "again", where he never had been in person, this may be accounted for by his being in the loins of Abraham when he was there, and came from thence, as Levi is said to be in his loins when he paid tithes to Melchizedek, and to pay them in him (Hebrews 7:9).

This servant was not as sure as Abraham that he would be able to find the right wife for Isaac.

Even if he found her, he was not confident that she would believe, and then follow him into a strange land.

His question was a reasonable one, if you were not taking in to account of Abraham's standing with God.

Verses 6-7

"That thou bring not my son thither again":

Should the expected scenario not materialize (verse 5), then the dictates of the oath were lifted (verse 8), but the option of Isaac going was summarily rejected because it suggested a nullification of God's promise and calling for the land of promise (verse 7).

Genesis 24:6 "And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again."

"And Abraham said unto him":

Not blaming him for putting such a question, nor of charging him with impertinence, but just plainly seeing the propriety of it: and in order to clear up this matter to him, he then gives the following instructions.

"Beware thou, that thou bring not my son thither again":

For the command to come out of the land of Chaldea, never to return more, and to come into the land of Canaan, and there abide, respected both Abraham and his posterity.

Besides, it was dangerous for Isaac to go into a family, where, though there was some knowledge of the true God.

Yet there was much superstition and idolatry in it, as appears by various hints in the sequel of this history, lest he should be corrupted, and degenerate from the true religion.

Genesis 24:7 "The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence."

"He shall send his angel before thee":

A statement of Abraham's faith that the 450 mile expedition to Mesopotamia was clearly under divine oversight.

You see, God had spoken to Abraham and he was sure that the girl, that God Himself had chosen for Isaac a wife, would gladly come with the servant.

He felt that she would be such a lady that the LORD would already have prepared her for just this.

Abraham's confidence in God was so strong; there was no chance for failure.

Genesis 24:8 "And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again."

"And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee":

Or, "but" if, which is said by Abraham, not as doubting she would be willing, of which he was satisfied, being persuaded that God who had made him willing to leave his own country, and his father's house, would make her willing to do the same, and come and settle with his son in the land that God had given him.

But this, and what follows, he said to make the mind of his servant easy, who had some doubt about it, or however was desirous of knowing how he must act should that be the case; and what it was he was to take an oath to do, and how far, and how far not, that would oblige him.

"Then thou shalt be clear from this my oath":

Which he enjoined his servant to take; the sense is, when he had done all he could to get the consent of the damsel, and her friends, to go with him and marry his master's son.

After all, if she could not be prevailed upon to come with him, then he was free from his oath, having done all that he had obliged him to.

"Only bring not my son thither again":

Neither agree with the damsel and her parents, that he shall come to them, nor persuade him to comply with such terms.

Again, there was no question in Abraham's mind.

If God tells you to go, then there can be no results except good results.

Then he told the servant, but if by some unusual circumstance this did not happen, I would not hold you to the oath.

Genesis 24:9 And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.

"Thy hand under my thigh":

Thigh is a euphemism for the procreative organ.

This act either symbolized that the yet-unborn children would avenge any violation of the oath, or solemnized the oath in the name of the God who gave circumcision as the sign of the covenant (47:29 for the only other instance).

An ancient Near Eastern custom by which an intimate touch affirmed an oath (47:29).

After the servant realized that things beyond his control would not be charged to his account, he swore as Abraham had asked him.

Genesis 24:10 "And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master [were] in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor."

"And the servant took ten camels, of the camels of his master, and departed":

To bear the presents for the bride, to enhance the dignity of his mission, and to serve as a means of transport for the bride and her companions on the return journey.

"For all the goods of his master were in his hand":

Which agrees with what is before said, that he was the steward of his house, and ruled over all that he had; this in our version, and others, is put in a parenthesis, and given as a reason why the servant took, as it may seem of himself, so many camels as he did, and then he had set forward on his journey.

"And he arose, and went to Mesopotamia; or Aram Naharaim, Syria of the rivers, which lay between the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates, called therefore by the Greeks Mesopotamia.

The three Targums render it Aram or Syria, which is by the Euphrates.

"Unto the city of Nahor":

This was the brother of Abraham, and his city was Haran, whither he came, either with his father, or with Abraham, out of Ur of the Chaldees, or followed them there, and where he and his family stayed and settled.

This servant had to be a very trusted servant, because all of Abraham's goods were in his care.

In these times, up until the son became of age, the father would trust an old faithful servant over the child.

This was an obedient servant, going where his master sent him to bring a wife for Isaac.

Note the ten camels.

We have learned before that the number ten has to do with the world.

This was a close relative where the servant was going.

Genesis 24:11 "And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, [even] the time that women go out to draw [water]."

"And he made his camels to kneel down":

Which these creatures are used to doing when they are loaded and unloaded, also when they take rest, and it was for the sake of the latter they were now made to kneel.

It seems that this is what is not natural to them, but what they are learned to do.

"Without the city":

The city of Nahor, Haran, near to which the servant was now come.

"And it was by a well of water":

Which place was chosen for the refreshment of his camels, as well as of himself and his men.

"At the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water":

Which was the custom for women to do, for the necessary uses for their families; as it was especially in the eastern countries: and the Arabian women to this time, after they have been hard at work all day.

Weaving, or grinding, or making bread, at evening they set out with a pitcher or a goat's skin, and, tying their sucking children behind them, trudge it in this manner two or three miles then to fetch water.

Verses 12-14

The steward's prayer manifest not only his trust in God to direct affairs but also the selflessness with which he served Abraham.

His patience after prayer (verse 21), his worship at answered prayer (verse 26), and his acknowledgment of divine guidance (verse 27), also portrayed his faith.

Genesis 24:12 "And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham."

"Kindness unto my master Abraham":

The word kindness is "chesed" (20:13): he now is earnestly asking God to be faithful to His servant Abraham.

God had promised Abraham a seed, and He had given him one; now Abraham wants to get a bride for the promised "seed" in accordance with God's standards of separation.

He asks God to be faithful to His servant Abraham and provide for him.

Then (in verses 14, 27 and 49), he testifies that God did show chesed, covenant-faithfulness.

Genesis 24:13 "Behold, I stand [here] by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:"

"Behold, I stand here by the well of water":

Wishing, hoping, and expecting that something would turn out that would direct and instruct what further to do, and that would lead on to the business he came about.

"And the daughters of the men of the city came out to draw water":

Which was the usual custom in those parts about that time.

And this was a principal reason why Abraham's servant stopped at the well, not only to refresh himself, his men, and his animals, but in hopes he should meet with the damsel there he had come for.

Or at least should hear of her, or meet with some one or another that would direct him to her.

Or something would fall out there that would be a means in God's spiritual power of bringing about what he was sent to do.

Genesis 24:14 "And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: [let the same be] she [that] thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master."

"I will give thy camels drink also":

Hospitality required giving water to a thirsty stranger, but not to animals.

A woman who would do that was unusually kind and served beyond the call of duty.

Rebekah's servant attitude was revealed (verses 15-20), as was her beauty and purity (verse 16).

This servant, like so many of us today, was entering very strange territory.

He had no idea, on his own, how to seek Isaac a wife.

He asked God for His help.

His plan was a good one, because all the women of the city came to this well for water.

Camels drink tremendous amounts of water, so the girl who offered to draw water for them would, first of all, be very industrious, and also have a great concern for people and animals that were in need.

This humble spirit in this girl would be just right for Isaac's wife.

Notice that this servant spoke of God as Abraham's God.

This servant was intelligent to be able to figure this little plan out and lay it before God.

Genesis 24:15 "And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder."

"And it came to pass, before he had done speaking":

In his heart (Genesis 24:45); for his prayer was mental; while the last words were dropping from him, that very moment, as the Targum of Jonathan; so soon were his prayers heard and answered (Isaiah 65:24).

"That behold Rebekah came out":

Out of Haran, the city of Nahor who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother.

A daughter of Bethuel, which Bethuel was the eighth and last son of Milcah, and who was the daughter of Haran and the wife of Nahor, both brothers to Abraham.

This is the genealogy of Rebekah, and for the sake of her is the account of Nahor's family given (Genesis 22:20).

“With her pitcher upon her shoulder”:

To fetch water from the well for the use of the family; which, though the daughter of a wealthy person, she did not disdain to do; an instance of diligence and humility.

Genesis 24:16 "And the damsel [was] very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up."

"And the damsel was very fair to look upon":

Of a good countenance and beautiful aspect.

“A virgin: neither had any man known her”:

Not only was reckoned a virgin, but was really one, pure and incorrupt.

"And she went down to the well and filled her pitcher, and came up":

By which it appears the well lay low, there was a descent unto it, and an ascent from it.

Rebekah was very diligent and speedy in doing her work, she did not stay to look at strangers, or hold an idle conversation with other damsels that came there on the same account.

This beautiful young maiden was not only beautiful on the exterior, but was a virgin, as well, pure in every way.

She was Isaac's 2nd cousin.

She was at the very well where Abraham's servant waited.

Genesis 24:17 "And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher."

"And the servant ran to meet her":

He did not stop her as she went to the well, but stayed till she had been there and filled her pitcher, and then he made all the haste he could to meet her, in order to have the sign and token answered he had requested, which could not be done until she returned.

"And said, let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher":

Or taste a little of it, (as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan states); or suffer me to swallow a little of it.

For it was not so much to quench his thirst that he asked for this, for he could have got, and perhaps had water out of the well before this time, or however could easily have supplied the water himself.

Genesis 24:18 "And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink."

"And she said, drink, my lord":

Signifying at once that he was welcome to drink what he would, giving him a very honorable title, observing that he had a pretty large retinue with him of men and camels; so that she took him for some considerable personage.

"And she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand":

From off her shoulder, and let it rest upon her hand or arm, and gave him drink; let him drink what he would of it.

Genesis 24:19 "And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw [water] for thy camels also, until they have done drinking."

"And when she had done giving him drink":

Whatever he pleased to have.

"She said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking":

She proposed to go back to the well, and did, and fill her pitcher, and repeat it as often as was necessary, until the camels had enough; and this now was the sign or token the servant had desired might be, by which he would know who was the person intended for the wife of his master's son.

And this was granted him, which shows that it was not a rash and ill thing which he asked, but what was agreeable to the will of God, and to which he was directed by an impulse of his.

As we can easily see, the LORD quickly answered his prayer; this maiden was beautiful, courteous, tender-hearted, and not lazy.

The servant's search was over, but now, there was the task of convincing her and her family.

Genesis 24:20 "And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw [water], and drew for all his camels."

"All his camels":

A single camel can hold up to 25 gallons and he had 10 of them.

Serving them was a great task as she filled them all (verse 22).

Genesis 24:21 "And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not."

"And the man wondering at her":

At her friendliness and courteousness to a stranger and at her humility and condescension to take upon her such a service; at her readiness, diligence, and the extended effort in it; and the quick dispatch she made; and at her expressions and conduct being so exactly agreeable to the sign he desired to have.

And at the spiritual power of God in bringing him to this place so timely; and at the damsel, that she should come just at this time, and every way answer his expectations and desires.

"Held his peace, to wit":

Or to know, to think and consider further with himself: whether, or "if":

"The LORD had made his journey prosperous or not":

Or if not; he was reflecting and saying within himself, surely God had made his journey prosperous; or if not, how was it that such strange surprising circumstances should occur?

Or what else must be done by him?

Or what methods must be taken for the future.

Isn't that just like we do?

She did everything he had prayed about, and yet, it seemed so easy to him, so that he just started to doubt.

God gives us a sign, and we are too blind to see it.

Genesis 24:22 "And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten [shekels] weight of gold;"

"And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking":

Having had enough to quince their thirst and satisfy them, by means of Rebekah's drawing water for them.

"Then the man took a golden earring":

Out of his pocket or out of a box or parcel that was upon the camels.

"Of half a shekel weight":

Which were eighty barley corns, for a whole shekel weighed one hundred and sixty.

The Targum of Jonathan says, "the weight of a drachma", which was the half of a didrachma or common shekel.

"And two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels' weight of gold":

A handsome present this was, and suitable to a virgin.

"Shekels":

See note on 23:14, 16.

Genesis 24:23 "And said, Whose daughter [art] thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room [in] thy father's house for us to lodge in?"

"And said":

After he had given her the earring and the bracelets, he put the following question, as it is related (in Genesis 24:47); the question was put before those were given.

"Whose daughter art thou?"

The reason of this question is, because by her answer to it he would know whether she was of the family related to Abraham or not; from whom only, according to his oath, he was to take a wife for Isaac, and which would in a good measure satisfy him as to what he had been thinking about, whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.

"Tell me, I pray thee, is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?"

By her answer to this he would know whether her family was wealthy, and so fit to be in connection with his master's; and besides, if she appeared to be the person he hoped she was, he desired lodging in her father's house, that he might have better opportunity of managing the affair he came about.

Genesis 24:24 "And she said unto him, I [am] the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor."

"I am the daughter of":

In formal introductions, an abbreviated genealogy provided for specific identification (22-23).

She was Isaac's cousin.

Genesis 24:25 "She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in."

"She said moreover unto him":

In answer to the second question.

"We have both straw and provender enough":

For the camels, straw for their litter, and provender for their food, as hay, barley, etc.

"And room to lodge in":

For him and his men; this she could venture to say, and invite him to come and take up his quarters in her father's house, without going home to relate the question put to her, and to have leave to give the invitation, knowing full well the generosity, liberality, and hospitable spirit of her father.

This surely would convince the servant.

God had sent him to this family where he would find Isaac's wife.

These gifts that he gave Rebekah were very valuable.

They were made of pure gold.

Since the gifts were made of gold, we can be assured of his intentions.

More than looking for a place to rest, he was looking for a way to meet and talk to her parents.

Genesis 24:26 "And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD."

"And the man bowed down his head":

To show what a deep sense he had of the divine goodness, and in humble acknowledgment of the favors he received in being thus providentially directed.

"And worshipped the LORD":

Gave thanks unto him, that he had thus far prospered him, hoping and believing that things were in good forwardness, according to his master's mind and will.

Genesis 24:27 "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: I [being] in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren."

"And he said, blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham" (see Genesis 24:12).

"Who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and truth":

Or hath not withdrawn his mercy, grace and goodness, truth and faithfulness; for his loving kindness, he does not take away from his people, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail.

His mercy and grace in making kind and gracious promises continue, and his truth in performing them sooner or later appear, and both in this case.

As Abraham believed in the grace and goodness of God, that he would send his angel and direct his servant, and make his way prosperous, here was now an appearance of his truth and faithfulness, in making good the promise or prophecy on which Abraham's faith was built (see Genesis 24:7).

"I being in the way":

By the way of the well; in the right way (as Jarchi), in which he was directed; in the way of his duty, following the steps of divine Providence, and observing them.

It is good to be in the way which God directs to and prescribes, especially in religious things, where the blessing and presence of God may be expected.

"The LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren":

Nahor, whose granddaughter Rebekah was, was Abraham's brother, and Bethuel her father might be called so, as Lot was, who stood in the same relation to Abraham as he did (Genesis 14:16).

Though the servant was not as yet come to the house where they lived, he had met with one of the family, and had got an invitation to it, and was on his way there and near it.

This servant suddenly had realized that God was able to do mighty things to work things out according to His plans.

Even though he had spoken of God as Abraham's God, he, too, bows and worships God himself.

He knew that it was not by accident that he was led to this well and met this Rebekah.

Genesis 24:28 "And the damsel ran, and told [them of] her mother's house these things."

"And the damsel ran":

Having invited him to come and lodge at her father's house, that he might not be brought in abruptly, she ran before to acquaint the family of what had passed.

"And told them of her mother's house these things":

She did not go to her father to inform him of it; rather the reason was, because her mother had a house, tent, or an apartment to herself, as women in those times and places used to have (see Genesis 24:67).

Possibly because daughters are generally more free to converse with their mothers and impart things to them than to their fathers, which may be the true reason of Rebekah's conduct.

Verses 29-31

"Laban":

From what is revealed about his character (chapter 29), there is reason to believe that his sight of all the presents and the camels generated the welcome.

Genesis 24:29 "And Rebekah had a brother, and his name [was] Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well."

"And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban":

Perhaps he was her only brother, or however the elder brother, the principal in the family, her father Bethuel being old:

"And Laban ran out:":

Out of his house, and out of the city of Haran.

"Unto the man unto the well":

This was after Rebekah had got home, and had related to the family whom she had met with at the well, and what had passed between them.

Just like any little young girl would do, she ran home to tell all.

Rebekah's brother seemed to be the nearest thing to a man in the home.

Laban rushed out to meet this man that his sister was telling about.

"Laban" means white.

So this was a fair skinned tribe.

Genesis 24:30 "And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well."

"And it came to pass, when he saw the earring, and bracelets upon his sister's hands":

From whence he concluded that he was a rich and generous man she had met with, and might hope to receive a gift also upon giving him an invitation to his house; and ran to him to bring him in; for that Laban was of a covetous disposition, appears from the whole story of him.

"And when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, thus spake the man unto me":

Inquiring whose daughter she was, and whether there was any room in her father's house for him and those that were with him to lodge in.

"That he came unto the man":

Made haste and ran till he came to him.

"And, behold, he stood by the camels at the well":

He did not follow Rebekah, but kept still at the well, expecting somebody would come out of the house and give him an invitation into it, upon Rebekah's representation of him.

Rebekah told her brother about the gifts, and about what the man said unto her.

Laban went to check it out, and make sure his sister was telling him the way it really was.

The servant was still waiting at the well, and he now knowing that his mission was about to be fully accomplished.

Genesis 24:31 "And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels."

"And he said, come in, thou blessed of the LORD":

Both with temporal and spiritual blessings; he concluded he was blessed with the former by the presents he had made to his sister, and by the men that attended him, and the number of camels that were with him.

His worshipping of God and thankfulness to him which Rebekah had observed and related.

"Wherefore standest thou without?"

This he said either as rebuking him that he did not follow his sister upon her invitation, or rather as pressing him to make no more delay.

"For I have prepared the house":

Swept it clean, or ordered it to be so and had fitted and furnished it with everything convenient for him and those with him.

"And room for the camels":

He had ordered the stable to be cleansed also, and everything provided there fit for the camels; so that some time elapsed between Rebekah's return home and Laban's coming to the well, though no doubt everything was done with as much haste as possible.

Laban invited the servant in.

He even called him blessed.

Laban could obviously see the ten camels laden with goods, and he knew this was a man of means, else why would he give Rebekah these expensive gifts?

Laban had undoubtedly had his servants to prepare a place for this guest and put out provender for his camels, as we see (in verse 32).

Genesis 24:32 "And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that [were] with him."

"And the man came into the house":

Upon the pressing instance that was made unto him; for so it may be rendered, "wherefore the man came".

"And he ungirded his camels":

Took off their bridles, which hindered them from eating, or as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi state; or loosed their girts and took off their burdens, that they might have rest.

This may be interpreted either of the servant and of his men by his order doing this, it being the first thing that travelers do when they come to an inn to take care of their cattle; or rather of Laban, as what follows must be interpreted of him.

"And gave straw and provender for the camels":

Straw for their litter, and provender to eat; this Laban did, or ordered to be done.

The Targum of Jonathan expresses his name, and no doubt he is intended, for who should give these but he?

"And water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him":

Which was usually done to strangers and travelers in those hot countries (see Genesis 18:4).

Genesis 24:33 "And there was set [meat] before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on."

"I will not eat until":

The first order of business was to identify his master and to explain his assignment, but not without stressing the blessings of God upon his master and upon his trip (verses 34-48), and also not without immediately seeking to conclude his task and return home (verses 49:54-56).

This is the portrait of a committed, faithful, and selfless servant!

Genesis 24:34 "And he said, I [am] Abraham's servant."

"And he said, I am Abraham's servant":

Not Abraham himself, as this put Laban at ease, if he so thought, but a servant of his; which was enough to introduce his purpose.

His master being a near relation of theirs, and well known to them by name, if not in person.

Genesis 24:35 "And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses."

"And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly":

With temporal blessings, after specifying, which are of God, and are here ascribed to him, the Father, fountain, author, and giver of all such mercies.

"And he is become great":

In the world, and highly honored and esteemed among men.

"And he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and menservants and maidservants, and camels and asses": Though many of them were obtained in the diligent use of means, yet with the blessing of God.

Others were the gifts of princes to him, as of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and also of Abimelech king of Gerar.

Yet, as it was the LORD that put it into their hearts to be so liberal to him, they are here called his gifts (see Genesis 12:16).

Genesis 24:36 "And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath."

"And Sarah, my master's wife":

Who must be well known to this family, by name at least, being, as is generally supposed, the sister of Milcah, Nahor's wife, and Bethuel's mother.

"Bare a son to my master when she was old":

Even when ninety years of age, (Genesis 17:17).

This is mentioned because it was an extraordinary thing, and an instance of divine power and of the favor of God.

And this son of their old age must be very dear unto Abraham, as it follows.

"And unto him hath he given all that he hath":

By his will.

There was great hospitality being shown Abraham's servant and those that were with them.

The desert was dry and dusty.

It was a very pleasant custom to wash one's feet after many hours in the hot sand in sandals.

The servant was so excited in finding the right family that he would not eat, until he explained who he was, and why he was there.

He brought good news to Abraham's relatives about him.

Abraham had left home at the request of God, and probably, they had not heard from him since he left.

They were happy to know he was alive, and of all his blessings.

Genesis 24:37 "And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell:"

"And my master made me swear" (see Genesis 24:3).

In (Genesis 24:37), the servant relates the oath his master made him take, and the charge he gave him, much in the same language as (in Genesis 24:3).

Genesis 24:38 "But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son."

See notes on Genesis 24:4.

Now, he has told all.

The main thing was that Isaac was not to marry a heathen.

Genesis 24:39 "And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me."

See notes on Genesis 24:5.

Genesis 24:40 "And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house:"

See notes on Genesis 24:7.

Genesis 24:41 "Then shalt thou be clear from [this] my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee [one], thou shalt be clear from my oath."

See notes on Genesis 24:8.

Genesis 24:42 "And I came this day unto the well, and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go:

"And I came this day unto the well":

There he was come at length by several days' journey, not on the same day he came from Abraham, as the Jewish writers say, by means of a miracle.

"And said, O LORD God of my master Abraham":

Being come to the well, he prayed as follows.

"If now thou do prosper the way which I go":

His meaning is, that if it was the pleasure of God that he should succeed in what he was come about, that he would let him know it by a token (sign).

In Genesis 24:42, he relates the token he desired, which was granted him, and his success, as before recorded from Genesis 24:21.

Genesis 24:43 "Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw [water], and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink;"

See notes on Genesis 24:14.

Genesis 24:44 "And she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: [let] the same [be] the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son."

See notes on Genesis 24:14.

Genesis 24:45 "And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew [water]: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee."

And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder":

See notes on Genesis 24:15.

"And she went down unto the well, and drew water":

See notes on Genesis 24:16.

"And I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee":

See notes on Genesis 24:17.

Genesis 24:46 "And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her [shoulder], and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also."

See notes on Genesis 24:18.

Genesis 24:47 "And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter [art] thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands."

“And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou?”:

See notes on Genesis 24:23.

“And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him”:

see notes on Genesis 24:24.

“And I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands”:

See Notes on Genesis 24:22.

Genesis 24:48 "And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son."

See notes on Genesis 24:26.

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

“And now, if you deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me”:

The servant directs himself to more than one, to the whole family, and especially to Laban and also Bethuel.

If you will do my master a kindness, and grant him the favor he requests, that a damsel of this family may be given for a wife to his son; and, if you are hearty and sincere in granting this, tell me at once.

"And if not, tell me”:

If you do not choose to gratify my master, and are not hearty in this matter, let me know.

"That I may turn to the right hand or to the left”:

Look out elsewhere among the daughters of some of the other sons of Nahor; for he had seven more which Milcah bare to him besides Bethuel, as well as four others by a concubine (see Genesis 22:20).

The servant had given the family the whole story, and then awaited their answer.

Verses 50-51

The servant's conviction and focus was obvious and intense, precluding anything but immediate acknowledgment of God's leading and anything less than a full compliance with his request from Rebekah's father and brother.

Genesis 24:50 "Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good."

"Then Laban and Bethuel answered":

The order of the words in the original is, "then answered Laban and Bethuel"; the word for "answered" is in the singular number, from whence it may be concluded, that Laban gave the answer in the name of Bethuel, he consenting to it, who might be an old man, and left the management of his family affairs to his son.

"And said, the thing proceedeth from the LORD":

That Rebekah should be given to Isaac, as the Targum of Jonathan adds: this matter appears to be according to his will and pleasure, he seems to have appointed it in his decree, and to be bringing it about by his providence.

For these men, though they were in part idol worshippers yet had some good notions of the true God, and of his government of the world, and of his ordering all things in it according to the counsel of his will.

"We cannot speak unto thee good or bad":

Cannot deny the request; the thing was so plain that they had not anything to object to it.

Genesis 24:51 "Behold, Rebekah [is] before thee, take [her], and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken."

"Behold, Rebekah is before thee":

Not only was present, but she was delivered to him, or his request was granted.

"Take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife":

Not that they meant he should go away directly with her; for they afterwards solicit her stay with them some time; but they agreed that he should bare her and conduct her to Isaac, to be taken by him for his wife.

"As the LORD hath spoken":

For so they understood the sign given to the servant to know her by, as the determination of God.
The family agreed, because they believed it to be the will of God.

Genesis Chapter 24 Questions

1. How had God blessed Abraham?
2. Who ruled Abraham's house?
3. What did Abraham make the servant do to insure he would follow orders?
4. Where is the LORD God of?
5. Who was Isaac not to marry?
6. Why did Abraham send the servant away to find a wife for Isaac?
7. Where was the servant sent?
8. What would happen, if she wouldn't come?
9. Who shall go before the servant and prepare the way?
10. What, in Abraham, left no chance for failure?
11. What would the servant be clear of, if the girl would not come?
12. How did they seal the promise?
13. How many camels did the servants take?
14. Where did he go? What city?
15. What did the servant make the camels do? Where?
16. What time was it?
17. What did the servant do?
18. Who came to the well?
19. What would the servant ask one of the girls?
20. What would show this girl was thoughtful, and not lazy?
21. What was the name of the girl the servant chose to ask?

22. Describe her.
23. What relation was she to Isaac?
24. What did the servant give her?
25. What did he ask her?
26. Who was her grandfather?
27. What was her brother's name?
28. When the servant realized God had answered his prayer, what did he do?
29. Why did the servant call Him Abraham's God?
30. What had to happen before the servant would eat?
31. What was the family's answer after hearing the whole story?
32. Why did they answer this way?