

GENESIS

F O U N D A T I O N S

Chapter 24 Study Guide

June 20, 2004

Genesis 24

1. BACKGROUND, CULTURE & EXEGESIS

Interesting story filled with some typology. It begins with an unnamed servant who we know to be Eleazer (see Genesis 15:2). In Hebrew, this name means “comforter.” Eleazer is a type of Holy Spirit who is sent to gather a bride for Abraham’s son. Did you know that Gentile Brides seem to be introduced by unnamed servants? (Check out Ruth 2) Here we have Ruth, the Gentile bride of Boaz, who is the kinsman-redeemer, being introduced by, you guessed it, an unnamed servant. Why this information? We are the Bride of Christ (the Gentile Bride of Christ) and who introduces us to our Groom? You guessed it – the Comforter. Also, for all you rapture buffs, here’s another interesting fact: “Gentile Brides” have no deaths recorded.

Well, back to the story. We learn a lot about Rebecca in this chapter; first of all she has the heart of a servant. Not only does she offer water to Eleazer but also to his ten camels. As you know, camels can go a long time without water and part of the reason why is that when they take in water, they take in a lot of water – to water ten camels would take a long time! Also, she shows courage and faith. To actually leave home with a stranger and to be married to man she’s never met ... wow!

When she meets Isaac, it is not surprising that he is at Beer Lahai Roi – which means the well of Living Water. This is a fitting conclusion since the Holy Spirit is also depicted as Living Water!

Soul-Winner So What

What does it mean to you to be the Bride of Christ? What kind of bride are you?

Small Groups Question

What are some of the character traits we see in Rebecca in this chapter?

What does the Bible say about servant hood?

What does Beer Lahai Roi mean? Where in the New Testament do we read about Living Water?

There was another person that had their prayers answered at this well – who was it?

2. THEME & AUTHORSHIP

Themes

A couple predominate themes are found in Genesis. First is fact that this is a Book of Beginnings, the great introduction to the drama of redemption.



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Second, we see God preparing a people – here we have God choosing and then testing. Whether it is Abraham, Isaac, Jacob or Noah for that matter God chooses and then begins to winnow and purge. Remember the goal is to create a people who would fulfill Genesis 3:15. It will be here that the initial step will be taken for man's redemption by a divine covenant made with a chosen race whose early history is here portrayed.

Author – Moses / **Date** - 1450 – 1410 BC

3. WORD STUDIES

24:4 “But you shall go down to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son.”

We see in this section that Isaac is a type of Christ. This story illustrates that Christ is the Bridegroom and His ministers are His friends (Jn. 3:29). Their highest task is to persuade souls to come to Him (2 Co, 11:2). The bride of Christ must not be of the Canaanites, but of his own kindred, born again. Ministers, like Abraham's servant, must lay themselves out with the utmost wisdom and care to serve their Master. We also see how God would provide a good wife for his young master, and this was a good prayer. “*A prudent wife is from the Lord*” (Prov. 19:14. He desires his master's wife to be humble and an industrious woman, raised to care and labor, and be willing to put her hand to any work set before her; that she might be of a courteous disposition, and charitable to strangers. When he came to seek a wife for his master, he did not go to the town circle or the park, and pray that he might meet one there, but to *the well of water*, expecting to find one there well employed.

Soul-Winner So What

Note that God's servants are to persuade souls to come to him. The bride of Christ can only come from his kindred. One must be born again to enter into His kingdom. A good wife is from the Lord. What lessons can single people learn from this story? We must acknowledge God in all our ways (Prov 3:6). Pray for your spouse and remember how and where Abraham's servant found Isaac's.

Small Groups Question

1. What kind of servant are you? Do you believe that God will provide for you? Do you allow Him to guide you with His eye?
2. Single or not, how can you apply Abraham's spouse searching technique?

4. Attributes of God

Imminence: Theologians talk about God having two over-arching attributes: imminence and transcendence. The first means that God is intimately involved in people's lives. While the latter means that God is totally somewhere else (Heaven) and that this realm is beyond our comprehension. In Genesis 24, we see God's



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sovereign imminence involved in finding Isaac his wife while also answering Abraham and His servant's prayers which are directed towards Him in Heaven. Thus, God touches the hearts of Rebekah, her brothers and family, and He orchestrates so that as they come to Isaac he happens to cross their path and be out meditating under the evening stars (24:65).

Soul-Winner So What

How is God using you to work in the hearts of those around you?

Small Groups Question

How do these attributes affect our prayer life or understanding of God?

5. BIBLE DIFFICULTIES / PROBLEM PASSAGES

In Genesis 24: 12-15, the chief servant prayed an amazing specific prayer:

1. Worshipped Him - *O lord God of my master Abraham*
2. Completely unselfish - *show kindness to my master Abraham*
3. Specific - verse 14
4. Above all He trusted God to direct affairs

Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came up. She was not any girl but Issac's cousin. WOW! In verse 21 we see he waits patiently after the prayer to receive confirmation. In verses 26-27, he worships again and acknowledges God's divine guidance. What is God's promise when we pray? Seek and you will find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will answer you, rescue you, refresh you, comfort you, and feed you abundantly. Surely all these promises by God will be fulfilled if we wait for them in faith.

Soul-Winner So What

How can interceding for those around us change our hearts? You clearly see the chief servant's faith as he prays on behalf of Abraham and his son.

Small Groups Question

Are we unselfishly praying for those around us? Are we praying specifically or in generalities, knowing if our prayers are being answered? Take time to share one or two specific prayer request in your group, keep a journal and record answers as people share praises throughout the year.

6. Additional Small Groups Questions



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1) Gen 24:3

...and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell...

Abraham's purpose in sending back his servant to his own people for a wife for Isaac was to keep his descendants free from idolatry.

The Canaanites came through the son of Ham and grandson of Noah, who laid a curse on him (Gen. 9:24). The Canaanites had many gods in which they worshipped, headed by El. Hadad (the storm god), and Dagon were the more prominent images of worship, as well as Ashtaroah and Anath which were goddesses of sex and war.

Rebekah was actually a distant relative of Abraham (24:48).

- How important was it for Isaac and Rebekah to adhere to the wishes of Abraham in the future of their sons? (Genesis 27:46-28:2).
- What future consequences would inner marrying produce? (Exodus 34:10-16)
- In Deuteronomy 7:1-6, what warning is given and why?
- What was the overall role and responsibility of the Patriarchs and the nation of Israel?
- How does the oath that Abraham requested of his servant in Genesis 24 apply to disciples of Jesus Christ today? (2 Corinthians 6:14-17)
- How do you apply 1 Cor. 15: 33 to your own life today?
- What is the context of James 4:4?
- As a follower of Christ, how do you sum up this study?
- As a believer in a dark world, in what manner am I to associate with the wicked? As a believer, who am I to separate myself from? (1 Corinthians 5:1-13)

Soul-Winner So What

As the history of the patriarchs and the nation of Israel reveal God's plan of preserving His people. Are we more equipped to answer those who inquire as to why God gave the Israelites the command to separate themselves from others?