

June 12, 2024 - God's Providential Leading

The story of how Rebekah becomes Isaac's wife.

Genesis 24

Also a story of **God's Providence**. His caring provision & direction. Saying of ancient church about the relationship between God and His people: "*Deus pro nobis.*" It means "**God for us.**"

Recall: Abraham (100) & Sarah were old when Isaac was born.

Abraham has been receiving the blessings & promises of God.

- "descendants as numerous as the stars" **Gen. 12, 15 & 17**
- God changed his name from Abram to Abraham. You will be the father of many great nations." Some of your descendants will even be kings. ⁷ I will always keep the promise I have made to you and your descendants, because I am your God and their God. ⁸ I will give you and them the land in which you are now a foreigner. I will give the whole land of Canaan to your family forever, and I will be their God. ⁹ Abraham, you and all future members of your family must promise to obey me.

Sarah dies, 127. Abraham wants a wife for his son. But not a Canaanite.

And wants Isaac to stay in the land God gave him. Story - **READ Gen 24:1-9**

- **24** Abraham was now very old, and the LORD had blessed him in every way. ² He said to the senior servant in his household, the one in charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh. ³ I want you to swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I am living, ⁴ but will go to my country and my own relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac."
- ⁵ The servant asked him, "What if the woman is unwilling to come back with me to this land? Shall I then take your son back to the country you came from?"
- ⁶ "Make sure that you do not take my son back there," Abraham said. ⁷ "The LORD, the God of heaven, who brought me out of my father's household and my native land and who spoke to me and promised me on oath, saying, 'To your offspring^a I will give this land'—**he will send his angel before you so that you can get a wife for my son from there.** ⁸ If the woman is unwilling to come back with you, then you will be released from this oath of mine. Only do not take my son back there." ⁹ So the servant put his hand under the thigh of his master Abraham and swore an oath to him concerning this matter.

1 - Thigh Promise - Sacred. Jacob/Joseph -promise to bury him in Canaan, not Egypt. **The selection of spouse is that important.**

Notice – Abraham is not willing to compromise in 2 areas: family & land.

-- (1) Abraham has seen the lives of non-Israelites... Sodom/Gomorrah.

Spouse needs to be one w/ same morals, ethics, values.

Don't be influence by the wrong people. Here, Canaanites.

-- (2) God's to Abraham blessing is in this land.

Not willing to give up God's blessings to seek a mate.

■ We are willing to look for love in all the wrong places. No stds.

This choice is crucial. Spouse will bless your life, or forever harm it.

2 - Vs. 7 - When we're willing to walk in faith & obedience, **God sends His angels ahead** of us to make sure we arrive at His place of blessing for us.

- God knows how to get you to the person/place you need.

- He'll protect you along your path, getting you ready. Trust Him.

READ Gen. 24:10-21 - ¹⁰... the servant loaded ten of Abraham's camels with valuable gifts.

Then he set out for the city in northern Syria,^[a] where Abraham's brother Nahor lived. ¹¹ When he got there, he let the camels rest near the well outside the city. It was late afternoon, the time when the women came out for water. ¹² The servant prayed:

You, LORD, are the God my master Abraham worships. Please keep your promise to him and let me find a wife for Isaac today. ¹³ The young women of the city will soon come to this well for water, ¹⁴ and I'll ask one of them for a drink. If she gives me a drink and then offers to get some water for my camels, I'll know she is the one you have chosen and that you have kept your promise to my master.

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ While he was still praying, a beautiful unmarried young woman came by with a water jar on her shoulder. She was Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Abraham's brother Nahor and his wife Milcah. Rebekah walked past Abraham's servant, then went over to the well, and filled her water jar. When she started back, ¹⁷ Abraham's servant ran to her and said, "Please let me have a drink of water." ¹⁸ "I'll be glad to," she answered. Then she quickly took the jar from her shoulder and held it while he drank. ¹⁹⁻²⁰ After he had finished, she said, "Now I'll give your camels all the water they want." She quickly poured out water for them, and she kept going back for more, until his camels had drunk all they wanted. ²¹ Abraham's servant did not say a word, but he watched everything Rebekah did, because he wanted to know for certain if this was the woman the LORD had chosen."

3 – Servant prays for God’s direction. Guidance. We should always!

This may likely be Abraham’s influence on all around him.

- Do people who work with us and for us see we’re people of faith?
- Do we **influence** or blend in?

4 - Servant’s Prayer. A specific request for **the girl** to respond to his inquiry by saying, **Drink, and I’ll water your camels also** (24:14).

- When we pray for God to lead, God always answers that prayer. God loves us, and wants to be our Shepherd.

Was customary in those days to offer water to strangers. **Hospitality.** BUT, was incredibly rare to offer to water a stranger’s animals. **Camels** can drink up to **25 gallons** of water; Servant traveled with **10 camels.** (24:10).

Servant watched closely. Still wanted to be sure. Don’t rush.

- 1st impression was good; she answered as he prayed. But is it her?
 - o Too often we rush in, don’t evaluate; don’t watch. First impressions can be false.

²² The servant had brought along an expensive gold ring and two large gold bracelets. When Rebekah had finished bringing the water, he gave her the ring for her nose^[22] and the bracelets for her arms. ²³ Then he said, “Please tell me who your father is. Does he have room in his house for me and my men to spend the night?”

²⁴ She answered, “My father is Bethuel, the son of Nahor and Milcah. ²⁵ We have a place where you and your men can stay, and we also have enough straw and feed for your camels.”

²⁶ Then the servant bowed his head and prayed, ²⁷ “I thank you, LORD God of my master Abraham! You have led me to his relatives and kept your promise to him.”

Rebekah is granddaughter of Nahor, Abraham’s bro. (**Gen 11, Terah**)

- Servant led directly to Abraham’s family. Rebekah - Isaac’s cousin.
- **Thru divine guidance**, servant is led to right place, time, people.

5 – A relieved, grateful servant gives thanks to God. Immediately.

- o When God answers our prayers, worship is the proper response. Give thanks. See God’s leading!

Servant explains his mission. Asks for Rebekah to be wife to Abraham's son.
-- Important for Rebekah & her family to see **God's providential working**.
- Don't overlook faithfulness of the servant. Kept the mission. Did as asked.
- Purpose wasn't just marriage – it was finding the right girl.

Where you look for that person matters.

Servant asks Rebekah's family whether they will bless the marriage (24:49).
Laban & Bethuel acknowledge **this is from Lord**, He orchestrated it all.

They say yes. Next morning, go now? Stay 10 days or so. Ask her: 24:58 *So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?" "I will go," she said.*

6 – Rebekah's willing to go & marry Isaac even tho she'd never met him.

Why? She can give her future to a husband she'd never met **because she was convinced God was at work**.

Can we trust our future to God? Knowing He is good... good in store.

Gen. 24: ⁶³ Isaac went out to the field one evening to meditate, and as he looked up, he saw camels approaching. ⁶⁴ Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She got down from her camel ⁶⁵ and asked the servant, "Who is that man in the field coming to meet us?" "He is my master," the servant answered. So she took her veil and covered herself.

⁶⁶ Then the servant told Isaac all he had done. ⁶⁷ Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebekah. *So she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.*

- **24:65** took her veil & covered herself. A sign that she is betrothed. Having seen Isaac, she indicates her willingness to marry him.

7 – God directs our steps. God providentially directs Abraham's servant to Rebekah. God will direct us to right place, right job, right spouse, friends....

He'll lead if we will follow. Look for signs. Be careful who you marry.

- And when we find them – praise God, worship Him, don't leave.

Don't give up God's blessings & promises to another person.

- This story has a **commonality**– Rebekah is like Abraham – willing to leave her family and country and go where God is leading.

Song of the week – "When God Made You" – NewSong & Natalie Grant