

## Would you be willing to move 400 miles and marry sight unseen?

Genesis 24 – Isaac and Rebekah

Isaac had 3 tremendous events in his life – miraculous birth, Sacrifice & his wife. However, in one generation, Isaac had already slipped digging wells before alters.

***24:1 Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.***

Imagine what it would be like to be like Abraham and be blessed in all things.

***24:2-4 So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, "Please, put your hand under my thigh, 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; but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac."***

Putting your hand under the thigh was taking an oath not to marry a Canaanite. **Do we take the decision on who to marry as serious as Abraham? Will you trust in the Lord for him to bring a daughter or son of the King to marry your child? When you were looking for a spouse was this your first criteria in a mate? Are you praying for your children's spouse today?**

***24:5-6 And the servant said to him, "Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?" But Abraham said to him, "Beware that you do not take my son back there."***

**Why did Abraham not want to send his son to that land he left?**

***24:7-9 The LORD God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land,' He will send His angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be released from this oath; only do not take my son back there." So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.***

True Faith is not blind faith. Abraham is the father of the faith but he rests on the words on God not on empty promises. He knows God is in control but He also knows he cannot test or tell God what to do. He leaves room for God's sovereign decision. Beware of those that tell you your faith was not strong enough that's why God did not answer your prayer. **Trust in His words and Let God be God! Be still and know He is God. Have faith that God cannot work it out another way.**

***24:10 Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, for all his master's goods were in his hand. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor.***

Notice the servant has charge of all that the Abraham has.

**Do you trust God and the Holy Spirit with all you have?**

**24:11 – 12** *And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water. Then he said, "O LORD God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham.*

He follows etiquette. He was not supposed to water himself and his camels before those who own the well, so He patiently waits and prays for the Father to lead him. **Did you do that when you selected a bride?**

**24:13 -14** *Behold, here I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink'—let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master."*

The servant puts Himself where the ladies are at the time they are out and chooses a criteria that is quite unlikely to pick. Knowing that his camels need to be watered and require up to 300 gallons, asking the Lord to provide a lady willing to do that is a high bar. Israel wells are excavated in the limestone, with steps descending to them meaning this well very likely required her to do the stairs along the way as well for good measure.

Recap: He was sent by the Master, went to where the women were, waited patiently, prayed, and set a high standard based on Love (Philia).

**Are you praying for rain, but not preparing the fields? Do you assume He is not coming through and settle for your best instead of God's best? This has far reaching application beyond just marriage.**

**24:15 -20** *And it happened, before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder. Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher." So she said, "Drink, my lord." Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink. And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.*

How pretty was she if the bible says she was beautiful? Servant ran to meet her. God is not against beauty it just has to be more than skin deep.

**24:21 -25** *And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not. So it was, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels of gold, and said, "Whose daughter are you? Tell me, please, is there room in your father's house for us to lodge?" So she said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah's son, whom she bore to Nahor." Moreover she said to him, "We have both straw and feed enough, and room to lodge."*

The servant waits to see if this is God's leading. Nahor is Abraham's brother. Being in the way, the Lord led him. If you have a willing heart, the Lord will lead you. 10 Shekels = 4 ounces of Gold. As bride she is to be adorned, and like us she gets adorned from the Father based on her works. **How about you? Do you want your bling here or in Heaven?**

**24:26-27** *Then the man bowed down his head and worshiped the LORD. And he said, "Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren."*

He says thanks and stops to praise the Lord, and recognizes it is the Lord.

**Consider the servant's response to meeting Rebekah (vv 26-27). What do his words and actions reveal about the character of this man whom Abraham sent to find a wife for Isaac?**

**24:28** *So the young woman ran and told her mother's household these things.*

You know this is a real story, but she gets the bling and runs to Mom's house to tell her everything! However, the brother, Laban see an opportunity and he has a different plan. She sees and imagines Prince Charming, but he is already thinking "Show me the Money!" **Does this happen to us as well?**

**24:29-33** *Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban, and Laban ran out to the man by the well. So it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah, saying, "Thus the man spoke to me," that he went to the man. And there he stood by the camels at the well. And he said, "Come in, O blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels." Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and provided straw and feed for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. Food was set before him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I have told about my errand." And he said, "Speak on."*

Laban was all about the stuff. He ran when he saw all the camels and sure sign of wealth. When he saw the gold and the camels, big dollars signs went off in his head. Jacob will learn a few things from Laban later on.

See the sarcasm. "Oh Blessed of the Lord" coming from the guy with idols from many gods (Gen 31:19) and saying while he is calculating the dowry price....

The Servant had just finished a journey over four hundred miles by camel caravan. Certainly, he would want to eat and rest. How do you explain his urgency to get to the matter at hand (vv. 28-33)?

When and how did you realize the importance of finding God's choice in marriage?

**Gen 24:34** *So he said, "I am Abraham's servant. The LORD has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys. And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and to him he has given all that he has. Now my master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell; but you shall go to my father's house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.' And I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not follow me.' But he said to me, 'The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house. You will be clear from this oath when you arrive among my family; for if they will not give her to you, then you will be released from my oath.'*

**Gen 24:42-49** *"And this day I came to the well and said, 'O LORD God of my master Abraham, if You will now prosper the way in which I go, behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw water, and I say to her, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to*

*drink," and she says to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,"—let her be the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master's son.' "But before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down to the well and drew water. And I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' And she made haste and let her pitcher down from her shoulder, and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels a drink also.' So I drank, and she gave the camels a drink also. Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter are you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him.' So, I put the nose ring on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists. And I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the way of truth to take the daughter of my master's brother for his son. Now if you 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."*

Rebekah had met the servant and his caravan at the well; she had accepted the costly jewelry from him (v.22), no doubt with an idea of what it meant; but she had not heard his story. Imagine her now as she hears him explain his mission (vv.34-49). **What would be her apprehensions? What about her hopes?**

Abraham was the first in his family to believe in the Lord, and he left his father's household shortly afterward (Gen 12:1-4). Rebekah may not have known the Lord. Her brother Laban possessed images that were "household gods" (Gen 31:19). **As Rebekah listened to the servant's story, what would she learn about the Lord? As you tell your stories, can others who may not have a personal relationship with the Lord (like Rebekah) get a glimpse of the Lord?**

*Gen 24:50-61 Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing comes from the LORD; we cannot speak to you either bad or good. Here is Rebekah before you; take her and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the LORD has spoken." And it came to pass, when Abraham's servant heard their words, that he worshiped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth. Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother. And he and the men who were with him ate and drank and stayed all night. Then they arose in the morning, and he said, "Send me away to my master." But her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us a few days, at least ten; after that she may go." And he said to them, "Do not hinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master." So they said, "We will call the young woman and ask her personally." Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go." So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her: "Our sister, may you become The mother of thousands of ten thousands; And may your descendants possess The gates of those who hate them." Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.*

**What role does Rebekah's own willingness play in the story? (vv.50-61)**

When Rebekah set out to marry Isaac, she was accompanied by her servants and her nurse who had taken care of her in childhood (vv.59-61). **When we marry, we still maintain ties to our earlier lives. How is marriage affected by a partner's reaction to those ties? How could some of these ties caused conflict their relationship? How do this play out in our relationships today?**

*Gen 24:62-67 Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were*

*coming. Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel; for she had said to the servant, "Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It is my master." So she took a veil and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.*

Isaac does not appear in the story until verse 62. **From verses 62-67, what do discern about what was going through Isaac's heart all this time?**

*If you are married what difference will it make in your marriage if you have complete confidence that the Lord has brought the two of you together? If you are single, how can you more fully submit your future to the will and wisdom of God?*

*How will you honor God's wisdom and sovereignty in the choice of marriage partners in your marriage or singleness? In other marriages?*

Case Study for Marriage – Spiritually and Physically

Father	Son	Holy Spirit	Church
Abraham	Isaac	Servant	Rebekah
God	Jesus	Helper (Holy Spirit)	Bride

24:34-38

Paraphrased it is our story.

The servant sent by the Father speaks of Father's Glory, and the many mansions (Heaven), He tells of the miraculous birth of a Son. The Son is given all that the Father has. Then He says the servant was sent to find a wife for the son from his father's house (Called out / believers).

The servant does not live by bread alone and will not be deterred or delayed from his mission. Are we that way? I am afraid I am so easily distracted, delayed and drawn away from my mission daily.

24:39-46 Recap. Followed by asking for her hand in marriage.

24:53 Once she is released to Jesus. The Spirit comes with gifts. Believers receive the gifts – spiritual gifts.

24:54-57 Early in the morning the Spirit desires for her to go the Son. Yet her former life pulls back wanting her to stay and delay being with the Lord, but ultimately it is a personal decision. Rebekah has to decide for herself to say or go. How many times does the world pull us back as we start on the path? Did this happen in your marriages where friends or the world try to pull you back?

24:58 Just picture this beautiful young girl hearing the Servant tell of the father and the Son, and she quietly takes it all in. Then the question finally comes to her, and she says "I will go". **How about you? Do you hesitate? Do you put conditions? Do you ask but what does he look like?** Not her, she simply trusted in the Holy Spirit and say I will go!

24:59-61 She is blessed and sent off which is now fulfilled prophecy. But before she can meet the Son she has a long rough camel ride in the desert.

**Now, how many of ya'll felt like you were on a long camel ride before you met your wife?**

24:62-63 The camels were coming! This is a picture of the dead in Christ who will see Jesus coming to meet in the clouds. Here physically you hear the song playing "here comes the bride" set to a trumpet of course.

24:64-67 the church will be veiled in a robe of righteousness after our ride through the desert. Jesus loves the Church, and He is comforted with everyone who says, I will go.

### Camels

Camel milk is the basic food of the Somali people, and many nomad tribes of the desert depend on the camels, like the Tuaregs of Sahara and Arab Bedouins, for transporting, milk, meat, wool (1.5 kg from a dromedary, 4.5 kg from a Bactrian camel) and leather. In , the Bactrian Camels offer the hair from which the felt, the material for traditional yurt tents, is made.

Camel meat is taboo for the Non-Muslim populations of the Middle East and North Africa: Jews, Egyptian Coptic (Christians), Zoroastrians (Iran), Mandaeans (Iraq, Iran), Neo-Assyrians (Syria, Iraq, Turkey), Ethiopians (Christians), while for Muslims in Egypt and other countries of Near East, basturma (salty camel meat) is considered a delicacy.

In many areas, camels were used for paying the bride's price.

Camels are gregarious and well adapted to their environment, the desert. They can carry heavy cargoes, stand sand storms and large temperature differences. Camels are called the "desert ships", and they can swim when they encounter water. The north Borollos has a depth varying between 20 cm and 2 m (0.6 to 6 ft). It cannot be crossed by boat or vehicles, and only camels can be used in this case.

A camel can resist 17 days without drinking under a scorching heat. It was wrongly believed its resistance resided in the water kept in the hump or in a stomach pouch. If it doesn't drinking anything for 17 days, a camel can lose a third of its weight, without being affected. But when it catches the opportunity, it can drink 104 liters of water at once (the Bactrian Camel, which is larger, can drink up to 120 liters), in 7-8 minutes! But three days later, there is no sign of water in its stomach or hump.

To resist the lack of water, the camels have several means of adjusting to the situation. Their body temperature varies depending on the environment: in the cooler morning is of 34°C, whereas during the hot afternoon it goes up to 40-41°C. The kidneys' function is regulated depending on the water availability: they produce 7 liters of urine when water is abundant, and 500 g when it does not drink for days. When thirsty, transpiration is reduced towards zero.

Camel's feces are dry (and used for fueling fire when drought) compared to other ruminants (just 40-60 % water): a dromedary loses 2.5 kg liters of water daily through feces while a cattle 20-40 liters! Camel feces are consumed by insects and gerbils (desert rats) (which recover this way a part of the water).