

Genesis Chapter 24 Continued

Genesis 24:52" And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the LORD, [bowing himself] to the earth."

"And it came to pass, that when Abraham's servant heard these words":

That Laban and Bethuel said; and no doubt but the mother of Rebekah, and she herself consented that she should be the wife of Isaac, believing it was agreeable to the will of God.

"He worshipped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth":

In the humblest manner he prostrated himself before the LORD, acknowledging his kindness, and goodness, his faithfulness and truth, his power and his providence in this affair.

In the last lesson, we read that the servant had found a wife for Isaac.

The family consented to the marriage, and then the servant bowed down and thanked God.

Genesis 24:53 "And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave [them] to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things."

"And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold":

Ornaments for women, which he had brought along with him for presents, and which were a proof of the riches of his master, and of his generosity and liberality, who had furnished him with such an abundance of rich things to bestow on the person that should be got for his son's wife.

"And raiment, and gave them to Rebekah":

Costly suits of clothes such as in those times were given to persons at their marriage.

"And he gave also to her brother, and to her mother, precious things":

Things of worth and value, which were part of the good things he brought with him from Abraham (Genesis 24:10); as gold, silver, etc.

By this dowry, Rebekah was betrothed to Isaac.

It was also the custom in those days for the father of the groom to give things of value to the family of the bride, but this was much more than the ordinary, mainly because of the great wealth of Abraham.

The gifts to Rebekah, partly, were to make her appearance befitting someone of such stature in their area.

Isaac's bride should be properly attired.

Genesis 24:54 "And they did eat and drink, he and the men that [were] with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master."

"Send me away unto my master":

Protocol and courtesy demanded a messenger be dismissed by the addressee.

His mission was accomplished and after celebrating the victory, the servant was anxious to go back and show his master the beautiful maiden for Isaac.

You can imagine the shock to Rebekah.

The question was, was she ready to go?

Genesis 24:55 "And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us [a few] days, at the least ten; after that she shall go."

"And her brother and her mother said":

Here her brother Laban is set before his mother, as above before his father, being the chief speaker and the principal manager of business.

"Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten":

Which was but a reasonable request; and if no more time is intended, it is much the servant should object, and not readily agree.

It was the usual custom of those times for virgins espoused to continue in their father's house a considerable time before the marriage was consummated,

"After that she shall go":

When that time is elapsed, but cannot think of her leaving before.

This request seemed to be not too much to ask, in the face of the fact that Rebekah just heard of these people the day before.

I am sure her mother wanted to help her prepare, and they would miss her, so they wanted to savor just a few more days with her.

Genesis 24:56 "And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the LORD hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master."

"And he said unto them, hinder me not":

Do not detain me; let me set forward on my journey.

"Seeing, the LORD hath prospered my way":

Succeeded him in what he came about; and by his being succeeded so well, and so soon, it seemed to be the mind of the LORD that he should hasten his journey homeward.

"Send me away, that I may go to my master":

And carry him the good news of his success, and attend his domestic affairs, over which he was set.

We can see his side, as well. He was anxious to share the good news with his master.

Verses 57-58

"Wilt thou go with this man?"

Commendably, Rebekah concurred with an immediate departure, and showed her confident acceptance of what was providentially coming about in her life.

Genesis 24:57 "And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth."

"And they said, we will call the damsel":

Who perhaps through modesty had withdrawn herself to her own apartment, while the man and her friends were discoursing on this subject.

"And inquire at her mouth; what she says to it, whether willing to go directly or not":

The matter in question was referred to her, and left to her decision.

As was the custom in those days, her parents had decided for her who she would marry.

Finally, she was included, then.

Genesis 24:58 "And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go."

“And they called Rebekah”:

Or ordered her to be called by one of the servants.

“And said unto her, wilt thou go with this man?”

That is, directly; the question was not about her marriage of Isaac that was agreed upon and she had doubtless given her consent, and which she inferred by accepting of the presents, but about taking the journey immediately.

“And she said, I will go”:

This must be interpreted consistent with her decent and modest behavior, and as expressive of her agreeing to go with the man directly, having no manner of objection on her mind to it.

But on the contrary found a strong inclination to it, and was determined on it; and perhaps was under a divine impulse, which strongly worked upon her, and caused her to be so willing to leave her own people, and her father's house.

This seemed so unusual to send your daughter with an unknown man into a strange country, but they all believed that this was by God's request.

Genesis 24:59 "And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men."

This is the only free choice in the matter that seems to be given to Rebekah.

Her consent may have been modestly indicated, before her family ratified the contract.

It is plain, however, that it was thought proper that the parents should receive and decide upon a proposal of marriage.

The extent to which the maiden's inclinations would be consulted would depend very much on the custom of the country, and the intelligence and good feeling of the parents.

In later times the custom became very arbitrary.

Rebekah's decision shows that she concurred in the consent of her relatives.

"And her nurse:"

Her name, which we learn afterward (Genesis 35:8), was Deborah.

The nurse accompanied the bride as her confidential adviser and faithful attendant, and died in her service; a beautiful trait of ancient manners.

The blessing consists in a boundless offspring and the upper hand over their enemies.

This was the first indication that Rebekah had been from a well-to-do family, as well.

They sent her nurse.

Genesis 24:60 "And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou [art] our sister, be thou [the mother] of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them."

"They blessed Rebekah and said":

Little did they realize that their conventional prayer wishing numerous offspring to Rebekah fitted in nicely with God's promises of many descendants to Abraham through Sarah and Isaac.

They also wished for her offspring to be victorious over their enemies ("possess their gates"), perhaps echoing God's promises of possession of the land of the Canaanites (See 13:17; 15:7, 16; 17:8).

The more children you had, if you were a Hebrew, the more blessed you were.

This blessing, unknowingly of them, spoke of the 1000's of millions (Christians), who truly are descendants through Abraham.

Genesis 24:61 "And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way."

"And Rebekah arose, and her damsels":

Her maids that were given her by her parents to wait upon her, as was usual in both those times and countries.

"And they rode upon the camels":

That Abraham's servant had brought with him.

"And followed the man":

Who rode before and directed the way; the sense is only, that she went along with him.

"And the servant took Rebekah, and went his way":

Took her under his care, and to be the wife of his master's son, at the hands of her friends, and then set forward on his journey.

Rebekah took some of her servant girls with her.

This was the custom in those days.

The ten camels came in handy, so the girls did not have to walk.

Separation from family is always difficult, but going into a strange country away from family would have been extremely difficult.

Genesis 24:62 "And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south country."

“Lahai-roi” (see 16:14).

Located on the Palestine-Egypt border, about 25 miles northwest of Kadesh-barnea.

Isaac lived there after Abraham’s death (25:11).

The meaning of the name of this well was the well of him that liveth and seeth me, or the well for the vision of life.

Undoubtedly Isaac had prayed there, from the meaning of the well's name.

Genesis 24:63 "And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels [were] coming."

“To meditate”:

How God drew Isaac from home to where Hagar encountered the Angel of the LORD (16:14), remains unknown, but he was in the right place to meet the caravan returning with his fiancée.

Perhaps he was prayerfully contemplating the circumstances of his life and the void left by his mother’s death (verse 67), as well as thinking about and hoping the steward would not return from a failed mission.

Genesis 24:64 And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.

"And Rebekah lifted up her eyes":

And looked about.

"And when she saw Isaac":

Whom she suspected him to be, and therefore inquired of the servant, who told her who he was.

"She lighted off the camel":

Or "fell" from it, not accidentally, or through surprise, but willingly, and in honor to Isaac, as was customary; for had she sat on her camel when she met him, it would not have seemed respectful enough to him.

Genesis 24:65 "For she [had] said unto the servant, What man [is] this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant [had] said, It [is] my master: therefore she took a vail, and covered herself."

“She took a vail and covered herself”:

Convention demanded the designated bride veil her face in the presence of her betrothed until the wedding day.

Rebekah did not want her first meeting with Isaac to be while she was on the back of a camel.

She really knew in her heart who this man was, but she just wanted confirmation.

It was the custom in that country, for the lady to be covered with a vail until after the wedding.

In many Arab countries today, women wear veils in public, even if they are married.

Their dresses cover even their ankles.

This is modesty carried to the extreme.

In most countries of the world, women do not wear slacks.

It is just popular in the United States.

Genesis 24:66 "And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done."

“And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done”:

By what means he found out the person designed for his wife, and got knowledge of her father's house, to which he was introduced, and where he was made welcome; and what agreement he had made with the parents and relations of Rebekah to be his wife, whom he had therefore brought with him.

Just as the servant told Rebekah's brother how he had prayed, and how Rebekah came to the well and gave drink to him and his camels, he, also, related the story in detail to Isaac.

He wanted Isaac to realize that God had chosen his bride for him.

After all these details, there should be no doubt.

Genesis 24:67 "And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's [death]."

“His mother Sarah’s tent”:

He thus established his acceptance of her as his wife before he had seen her beauty.

When he did see her, “he loved her.”

It seemed as though Isaac and Rebekah moved into his mother's tent from the statement above.

Sarah was already dead when Isaac and Rebekah married.

The Scripture did not say how long it has been since Sarah had died, but it does say that Isaac was comforted by Rebekah.

Being her only child, you know that Sarah had given Isaac her undivided attention.

Their bond had to be great.

Even Abraham had loved Isaac so much that he had left all of his wealth to him, as we read in our last lesson.

Even though Rebekah was chosen without Isaac's approval, he had a great love for her.

Genesis Chapter 24 Continued Questions

1. When Abraham's servant heard the answer from Rebekah's family, what did he do?
2. What was the servant thankful for?
3. What three things did the servant give Rebekah?
4. What did he give her mother and brother?
5. What was the custom in those days?
6. Why were these gifts greater than usual?
7. Besides making her happy, what was the raiment for?
8. When did they eat and drink?
9. What did the servant say the next morning?

10. What did the mother and brother ask the servant to do?
11. Why did he say not to hinder him?
12. Who made the final decision?
13. What was her answer?
14. Why were they all willing for Rebekah to go with this stranger from a strange land?
15. Who went with Rebekah?
16. What blessing did they speak over Rebekah?
17. Where do Christians fit into this?
18. What were the camels used for on the way home?
19. What well was Isaac by?
20. What does it mean?
21. What did Isaac see?
22. When Rebekah saw Isaac, what two things did she do?
23. What did the servant tell Isaac?
24. Where did Isaac take Rebekah?
25. Who comforted Isaac after his mother's death?