

# **Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**

## **Bible Study Notes**

### **10-30-19**

#### **Genesis 24**

##### **A Bride for Isaac - Verses 1-14**

<sup>1</sup> Abraham was now very old, and the LORD had blessed him in every way. <sup>2</sup> He said to the senior servant in his household, the one in charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh. <sup>3</sup> 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, <sup>4</sup> but will go to my country and my own relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac." <sup>5</sup> 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?" <sup>6</sup> "Make sure that you do not take my son back there," Abraham said. <sup>7</sup> "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 I will give this land'—he will send his angel before you so that you can get a wife for my son from there. <sup>8</sup> 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." <sup>9</sup> So the servant put his hand under the thigh of his master Abraham and swore an oath to him concerning this matter. <sup>10</sup> Then the servant left, taking with him ten of his master's camels loaded with all kinds of good things from his master. He set out for Aram Naharaim and made his way to the town of Nahor. <sup>11</sup> He had the camels kneel down near the well outside the town; it was toward evening, the time the women go out to draw water. <sup>12</sup> Then he prayed, "LORD, God of my master Abraham, make me successful today, and show kindness to my master Abraham. <sup>13</sup> See, I am standing beside this spring, and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water. <sup>14</sup> May it be that when I say to a young woman, 'Please let down your jar that I may have a drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too'—let her be the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master."

**24:4** Abraham wanted Isaac to marry within the family. This was a common and acceptable practice at this time that had the added advantage of avoiding intermarriage with pagan neighbors. A son's wife was usually chosen by the parents. It was common for a woman to be married in her early teens, although Rebekah was probably older.

**24:6** Abraham wanted Isaac to stay in Canaan, but he didn't want him to marry one of the local girls. This contrasts to the way Hagar selected a wife for Ishmael in 21:21. To have Isaac stay and marry a woman from Canaan would have been easier. But Abraham wanted to obey God in the who as well as in the where. Make your obedience full and complete.

**24:11** The well, the chief source of water for an entire village, was usually located outside town along the main road. Many people had to walk a mile or more for their water. They could use only what they could carry home. Farmers and shepherds would come from nearby fields

to draw water for their animals. The well was a good place to meet new friends or to chat with old ones. Rebekah would have visited the well twice daily to draw water for her family.

**24:12** Abraham's servant asked God for guidance in this very important task. Obviously Eliezer (see 15:2) had learned much about faith and about God from his master. What are your family members, friends, and associates learning about God from watching you? Be like Abraham, setting an example of dependent faith. And be like Eliezer, asking God for guidance before any venture.

**24:14** Was it right for Abraham's servant to ask God for such a specific sign? The sign he requested was only slightly out of the ordinary. The hospitality of the day required women at the well to offer water to weary travelers, but not to their animals. Eliezer was simply asking God to show him a woman with an attitude of service—someone who would go beyond the expected. An offer to water his camels would indicate that kind of attitude. Eliezer did not ask for a woman with good looks or wealth. He knew the importance of finding a woman with the right heart, and he asked God to help him with this task.

### **Rebekah Is Chosen - Verses 15-27**

<sup>15</sup> Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milkah, who was the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor. <sup>16</sup> The woman was very beautiful, a virgin; no man had ever slept with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jar and came up again. <sup>17</sup> The servant hurried to meet her and said, "Please give me a little water from your jar." <sup>18</sup> "Drink, my lord," she said, and quickly lowered the jar to her hands and gave him a drink. <sup>19</sup> After she had given him a drink, she said, "I'll draw water for your camels too, until they have had enough to drink." <sup>20</sup> So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, ran back to the well to draw more water, and drew enough for all his camels. <sup>21</sup> Without saying a word, the man watched her closely to learn whether or not the LORD had made his journey successful. <sup>22</sup> When the camels had finished drinking, the man took out a gold nose ring weighing a beka and two gold bracelets weighing ten shekels. <sup>23</sup> Then he asked, "Whose daughter are you? Please tell me, is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?" <sup>24</sup> She answered him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son that Milkah bore to Nahor." <sup>25</sup> And she added, "We have plenty of straw and fodder, as well as room for you to spend the night." <sup>26</sup> Then the man bowed down and worshiped the LORD, <sup>27</sup> saying, "Praise be to the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned his kindness and faithfulness to my master. As for me, the LORD has led me on the journey to the house of my master's relatives."

**24:15-16** Rebekah had physical beauty, but the servant was looking for a sign of inner beauty. Appearance is important to us, and we spend time and money improving it. But how much effort do we put into developing our inner beauty? Patience, kindness, and joy are the beauty treatments that help us become truly lovely—on the inside.

**24:18-21** Rebekah's servant spirit was clearly demonstrated as she willingly and quickly drew water for Eliezer and his camels. The pots used for carrying water were large and heavy. A thirsty camel drinks a lot of water—up to 25 gallons after a week's travel. Seeing Rebekah go to work, Eliezer knew this was a woman with a heart for doing far more than the bare minimum.

Do you have a servant spirit? When asked to help or when you see a need, go beyond the minimum.

**24:26-27** As soon as Abraham's servant knew that God had answered his prayer, he thanked God for his goodness and guidance. God will also use and lead us if we are available like Eliezer. Our first response should be praise and thanksgiving that God would choose to work in and through us.

#### **Isaac and Rebekah - Verses 28-41**

<sup>28</sup> The young woman ran and told her mother's household about these things.<sup>29</sup> Now Rebekah had a brother named Laban, and he hurried out to the man at the spring.<sup>30</sup> As soon as he had seen the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister's arms, and had heard Rebekah tell what the man said to her, he went out to the man and found him standing by the camels near the spring.<sup>31</sup> "Come, you who are blessed by the LORD," he said. "Why are you standing out here? I have prepared the house and a place for the camels."<sup>32</sup> So the man went to the house, and the camels were unloaded. Straw and fodder were brought for the camels, and water for him and his men to wash their feet.<sup>33</sup> Then food was set before him, but he said, "I will not eat until I have told you what I have to say." "Then tell us," Laban said.<sup>34</sup> So he said, "I am Abraham's servant.<sup>35</sup> The LORD has blessed my master abundantly, and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys.<sup>36</sup> My master's wife Sarah has borne him a son in her old age, and he has given him everything he owns.<sup>37</sup> And my master made me swear an oath, and said, 'You must not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live,<sup>38</sup> but go to my father's family and to my own clan, and get a wife for my son.'<sup>39</sup> "Then I asked my master, 'What if the woman will not come back with me?'<sup>40</sup> "He replied, 'The LORD, before whom I have walked faithfully, will send his angel with you and make your journey a success, so that you can get a wife for my son from my own clan and from my father's family.<sup>41</sup> You will be released from my oath if, when you go to my clan, they refuse to give her to you—then you will be released from my oath.'

**24:28-32** As we read this story we may not have noticed the speed with which it unfolds. Phrases in verses 12 to 33 indicate the urgency in the story? 12 make me successful today; 17 The servant hurried to meet her; 18 quickly lowered the jar; 20 quickly emptied her jar; 20 ran back to the well; 28 The young woman ran and told; 29 he hurried out; 33 'I will not eat until I have told you what I have to say.'

**24:34-41** The servant has done all he can. He knows without doubt that the Lord has led him to Rebekah. The only question now is whether the family and Rebekah herself will agree to let her go. And he won't be able to eat until he is sure of the outcome!

#### **Isaac and Rebekah - Verses 42-61**

<sup>42</sup> "When I came to the spring today, I said, 'LORD, God of my master Abraham, if you will, please grant success to the journey on which I have come.'<sup>43</sup> See, I am standing beside this spring. If a young woman comes out to draw water and I say to her, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar,"<sup>44</sup> and if she says to me, "Drink, and I'll draw

water for your camels too," let her be the one the LORD has chosen for my master's son.'<sup>45</sup> "Before I finished praying in my heart, Rebekah came out, with her jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew water, and I said to her, 'Please give me a drink.'<sup>46</sup> "She quickly lowered her jar from her shoulder and said, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too.' So I drank, and she watered the camels also.<sup>47</sup> "I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?' "She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor, whom Milkah bore to him.' "Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms,<sup>48</sup> and I bowed down and worshiped the LORD. I praised the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to get the granddaughter of my master's brother for his son.<sup>49</sup> Now if you will show kindness and faithfulness to my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, so I may know which way to turn."<sup>50</sup> Laban and Bethuel answered, "This is from the LORD; we can say nothing to you one way or the other.<sup>51</sup> Here is Rebekah; take her and go, and let her become the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has directed."<sup>52</sup> When Abraham's servant heard what they said, he bowed down to the ground before the LORD.<sup>53</sup> Then the servant brought out gold and silver jewelry and articles of clothing and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave costly gifts to her brother and to her mother.<sup>54</sup> Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night there. When they got up the next morning, he said, "Send me on my way to my master."<sup>55</sup> But her brother and her mother replied, "Let the young woman remain with us ten days or so; then you may go."<sup>56</sup> But he said to them, "Do not detain me, now that the LORD has granted success to my journey. Send me on my way so I may go to my master."<sup>57</sup> Then they said, "Let's call the young woman and ask her about it."<sup>58</sup> So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?" "I will go," she said.<sup>59</sup> So they sent their sister Rebekah on her way, along with her nurse and Abraham's servant and his men.<sup>60</sup> And they blessed Rebekah and said to her, "Our sister, may you increase to thousands upon thousands; may your offspring possess the cities of their enemies."<sup>61</sup> Then Rebekah and her attendants got ready and mounted the camels and went back with the man. So the servant took Rebekah and left.

**24:42, 48** When Eliezer told his story to Laban, he spoke openly of God and his goodness. Often we do the opposite, afraid that we will be misunderstood, rejected, or seen as too religious. Instead, we should share openly what God is doing for us.

### Isaac Marries Rebekah - Verses 62-67

<sup>62</sup> Now Isaac had come from Beer Lahai Roi, for he was living in the Negev.<sup>63</sup> He went out to the field one evening to meditate, and as he looked up, he saw camels approaching.<sup>64</sup> Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She got down from her camel<sup>65</sup> 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.<sup>66</sup> Then the servant told Isaac all he had done.<sup>67</sup> 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.

**24:62-65** When Rebekah learned that the man coming to greet them was Isaac, her husband-to-be, she followed two Oriental customs. She dismounted from her camel to show respect, and she placed a veil over her face as a bride.