

Genesis 24 – The Faithful Providence of God

I. Acting On God's Providence (1-14)

A. Abraham Acts On The Promise of God (1-9)

1. Abraham Has Been Blessed By God (1)

2. Abraham Prepares For The Seed Promise (2-4)

a. Abraham Charges His Servant With an Oath (2-3a)

i. "Place Your Hand Under My Thigh?" (2)

- This is where the sign of the covenant was
- The servant was swearing by the covenant of God
- Jacob makes Joseph swear in the same way to bury him in Canaan (47:29)

ii. "Swear By The Lord God" (3a)

b. Abraham Charges His Servant To Find Isaac's wife (3b-4)

i. He commands the servant not to take a wife from the Canaanites

- Abraham understands that the line of the seed will be fulfilled through "Seth"
- Abraham will not allow the lines to be mixed (as they were in Genesis 6)
- Throughout Scripture, Israel's intermarrying with others leads to idolatry (See Exod 34:15-16; Deut 7:3-4)

ii. He commands the servant to find a wife from the line of Seth

- Nahor is Abraham's brother, who still lives in Haran, where Abraham left decades ago
- Nahor is Rebecca's grandfather

c. NOTICE: Abraham is looking past his own death. He trusts that the promise will come through his son Isaac, but he does not sit on his hands waiting. He trusts and believes, but he also acts responsibly to secure Isaac's wife. He isn't waiting for God to drop her out of the sky. God will provide, but He will provide through Abraham's actions.

3. Abraham Trusts God's Providence For The Promise (5-8)

a. The Servant Questions the Viability of The mission (5)

i. "What if the woman won't come?"

ii. "Should I take Isaac to Haran?"

- It would definitely be easier to negotiate with the woman's family if Isaac were present

- The task may have seemed nigh impossible to the servant
 - b. Abraham Trusts God To Provide Isaac's Wife (6-7)
 - i. Abraham commands the servant not to take Isaac back to Haran (6)
 - Abraham is emphatic, telling the servant to beware not to take Isaac.
 - Isaac's presence in the land is a testimony to the promise that his family will possess it.
 - Even it a time of famine, the Lord will tell Isaac not to go down to Egypt but to stay in the land (26:2)
 - ii. Abraham Describes God by His promises (7a)
 - Abraham recounts God's call in taking him from Haran
 - Abraham recounts God's promise to give his seed the land
 - Abraham trust completely that God will be faithful to His word
 - iii. Abraham trusts that God will provide a wife (7b)
 - Abraham knows that God will guide the servant to success because God has promised Isaac's seed
 - c. Abraham Releases the Servant from his oath if the woman is unwilling (8)
 - i. The servant obviously sees the difficulty of the task he is about to swear to
 - ii. The language here is important – if the woman is unwilling the servant is released from the oath.
- 4. The Servant Swears the Oath to Find Isaac's Wife (9)
- B. The Servant Acts and Trusts On God's Providence (10-14)
 - 1. The Servant Prepares ten camels and different goods (10a)
 - a. He is preparing for God to providentially provide
 - i. The servant is not going on his mission unprepared
 - ii. Ten camels is an extravagant caravan, especially if they are loaded with gifts
 - b. He will not go aimlessly wandering, hoping God will provide
 - 2. The Servant Places Himself For God's Providence (10b-11)
 - a. The servant comes to the well outside Nahor's city
 - i. The well is where the women came in the evening to draw water (and socialize)

- ii. The servant has a strategy and is actively seeking to fulfill the mission, while also trusting God to provide)
- 3. The Servant Trusts God's Providence For a Wife (12-14)
 - a. He prays for success based on God's promises (12)
 - i. The servant's prayer is based on God showing "kindness" (or lovingkindness) to Abraham
 - ii. The word used is *chesed* which is not just "to be nice" but it is covenant faithfulness – also translated "mercy, goodness, favor, etc."
 - b. He prays God will make His choice unquestionably clear (13-14)
 - i. The Servant asks for an unbelievable sign for clarification
 - ii. Many women would stop to give him a drink, but no one would ever water his camels.
 - A camel coming off a desert journey could drink 25 gallons of water easy, and the servant had 10 camels
 - The normal size jar for a woman fetching water would be around three gallons
 - The woman offering that would have to make around 80 trips to the well.
- II. God's Providence Works Through Circumstances (15-27)
 - A. God Providentially Fulfills the Servant's Request (15-25)
 - 1. Rebecca Comes to the Well before the Servant finishes praying (15-16)
 - a. She is from the right family
 - b. She is very beautiful
 - c. She is a virgin
 - 2. Rebecca Responds As The Servant Had Prayed (17-20)
 - a. She gives him a drink
 - b. She drew water for the camels
 - 3. Rebecca is Shown To Be God's Choice (21-25)
 - a. The Servant recognizes his answered prayer (21)
 - b. The Servant gives Rebecca extravagant gifts (22)
 - i. A worker around this time would make ten shekels of silver in a year's time (most made less)
 - ii. The bracelets were ten shekel's weight of gold
 - c. The Servant discovers Rebecca's identity and lineage (23-25)
 - i. He asks her identity (23)
 - ii. She is Nahor's granddaughter (24)
 - iii. She invites the servant to stay with her family (25)

- B. The Servant Worship's God Providential Faithfulness (26-27)
 - 1. The Servant bows and worships God (26)
 - 2. The Servant gives thanks for God's faithfulness to Abraham (27a)
 - 3. The Servant gives thanks for God's guidance (27b)
- III. God's Providence Works in People's Hearts (28-62)
 - A. God's Providence Moves the Family's hearts (28-51)
 - 1. Rebecca's Family Hosts Abraham's Servant (28-33)
 - a. Laban (Rebecca's Brother) goes out to meet the servant (28-30)
 - b. Laban welcomes the servant and feeds the camels (31-32)
 - 2. The Servant Retells His story (33-48)
 - 3. Rebecca's Family Agrees To God's Will (49-51)
 - a. The Servant Requests a response from the family (49)
 - b. The Family believes God has sent him for Rebecca (50)
 - c. The Family gives Rebecca for Isaac's wife (51)
 - B. God's Providence Moves Rebecca's Heart (52-61)
 - 1. The Servant Rejoices and Honors the Family (52-53)
 - a. The Servant worships before the Lord (52)
 - b. The Servant gives gifts to Rebecca and her family (53)
 - 2. The Family Requests a Waiting Period of Ten Days (54-56)
 - a. The Servant Prepares to Leave (54)
 - b. The Family asks For her to stay for a time (55)
 - i. Not sure?
 - ii. Want to check into who Isaac is?
 - iii. We will see that it is part of God's plan
 - c. The Servant entreats them to let her go (56)
 - 3. Rebecca is "willing" to Go to Isaac (57-61)
 - a. They Family decides to consult Rebecca's wishes (57)
 - b. Rebecca agrees to go to Isaac (58)
 - i. Remember the servant's oath? – Abraham released him from the oath if the woman wasn't willing.
 - ii. Even in a time of arranged marriages, part of the servant's oath stipulated that he was released if she wasn't willing.
 - c. Rebecca is blessed by her family and sent to Isaac (59-61)