

Genesis 24

May 5, 2024



CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

MAIN POINT

Trust God in all the decisions of life.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Those of you who are married, where did you meet your spouse? What was the first thing that attracted you to him or her?

If you are not married, what would you hope to find in a spouse if the Lord allowed you to get married?

What is the most important thing to share in common with a spouse? Why?

Marriage is a gracious gift from a God who loves us. When we are young, we all have hopes and dreams for who our spouse will be, what they will be like, and what we will have in common. Getting married is a serious commitment both to another person and to God and should not be entered into lightly. Among the most important considerations



a believer in Christ should make when they are choosing a spouse is: What does this person believe to be true about God? For believers, our faith is the most important thing about us, and it is the most important element in our marriages. Abraham points us to this truth with the care he exercised in selecting a spouse for his son Isaac. Today we will look at God's faithfulness to Abraham and Isaac when He provided Rebekah.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

🌱 HAVE A FEW VOLUNTEERS READ GENESIS 24:1-67.

Why did Abraham not want Isaac to have a wife from the Canaanites? What problems would have been created if Isaac married a Canaanite?

How did Abraham's actions demonstrate what was important to him?

The Canaanites were not a part of the line of the promise. In his time sojourning, Abraham spent a great deal of time around the people of Canaan and knew they did not worship the one true God of heaven. When it came time to choose a wife for Isaac, Abraham did not want his son to be joined into marriage with someone who did not share his faith. Some have used this passage to prohibit people from different races from marrying, but Abraham's directions had nothing to do with race. They had everything to do with faith.

How did Abraham's servant demonstrate faithfulness to God and to Abraham?

Do you take time to pray about your most important and significant decisions? How does prayer help us in those moments?

Before and after he sought Rebekah, Abraham's servant offered prayers to God. God was clearly at work through His immediate and precise answer to his prayer. Rebekah would become the servant of God and the wife of Isaac, in that order. God would be the head of their home. Laban and Bethuel believed the servant's story because they saw God at work in the circumstances.

How is God's hand evident in this story, such that all could rightly conclude, "This is from the Lord" (v. 50)?

What do you see as the central issue of this chapter? How does this affect your faith in God?

Read Ephesians 5:22-33. What is marriage supposed to represent to the outside world?



How do you see gospel threads in this story?

God is an all-knowing, all-powerful, all-loving God who works in and through the lives of His people. One of the best ways married Christians can demonstrate the gospel is through loving each other in a way that honors Christ. Christian marriage is marriage in its intended form and for its intended purpose. When Christian marriages mirror the gospel, they are a compelling witness to God's grace.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

If you are married, what benefits have you seen in being married to someone who shares your faith? If you are not married to someone who shares your faith, what has been particularly challenging?

How could God use more established married couples in the church to reach out to and encourage single men and women who are looking for a spouse, or newly married couples seeking to honor the Lord in their marriage?

To the single person waiting on a spouse, this passage of Scripture speaks directly to your situation. How has Abraham's faithfulness encouraged you as you wait?

For parents, what role does prayer have as you seek to help your children make wise decisions that honor God?

PRAYER

Close your time together by sharing prayer requests, praying for each other, and the group.

Praise God that He is involved in the most intimate details of your life. Thank Him for the gift of marriage and the reality it represents to the world. Pray that the marriages at our church would glorify His name and demonstrate the gospel, and that the singles in our church would glorify God in their devotion to Him.

LOOKING AHEAD

Encourage your group to look ahead to next week's scripture passage as we conclude our study of the life of Abraham:

May 12, 2024 --- Genesis 25:1-8



COMMENTARY

Genesis 24

24:1-9. Abraham, now 140 years of age, had been blessed by the Lord in everything, but one thing was missing—a worthy wife for his 40-year-old son to insure the continuance of the covenant line. Based on his experience with the inhabitants of Canaan—whether the Sodomites or the Philistines—Abraham did not want Isaac to marry a woman from the daughters of the Canaanites. Instead, she must come from his relatives hundreds of miles away in northwest Mesopotamia. Abraham himself was too old to make the journey back, so he summoned his most trusted servant, perhaps Eliezer (15:2), to fulfill the task. Finding the right wife for Isaac required divine help, so Abraham had his servant take an oath by the Lord, God of heaven and God of earth, and also to place his hand under Abraham’s thigh, the bodily zone associated with Abraham’s posterity.

This act symbolically underscored the importance of the task for Abraham’s future and that of his clan. With great faith and prophetic insight, the patriarch promised that God would send His angel before the servant so that he could take a wife for Isaac from the clan. As part of the concern for his posterity, Abraham also warned his servant not to let Isaac abandon the promised land—and with it God’s covenant—by going back there himself to Aram-naharaim.

24:10-11. The chief servant and several other slaves (v. 32) took goods reflective of Abraham’s wealth, which could be used to pay the bride price for Isaac’s wife. The journey from Beer-sheba to Aram-naharaim—located somewhere in northwest Mesopotamia—could have taken a couple of weeks. The town of Nahor could mean that Nahor was the name of the village or that it was Nahor’s hometown. Nahor was the name of Abraham’s brother and grandfather (11:25-26), thus suggesting that this village was populated by Abraham’s relatives.

24:12-14. Being in the ancestral village at the best time and spot to interact with eligible girls, the servant still needed divine help to accomplish his task. He had faith that God had appointed a worthy young woman from this area to marry Isaac and would show kindness to his master. He prayed to the Lord, suggesting a test of hospitality and service. A thirsty camel can drink as much as 30 gallons of water in 15 minutes. Since 10 camels accompanied the servant (v. 10), it is possible that the young woman would have had to draw 300 gallons of water (equal to 2,500 lbs.) from the spring to pass the servant’s test.

24:15-27. Before the servant finished speaking, God more than answered his prayer (Isa 65:24) with the arrival of Rebekah. Not only was she the granddaughter of Abraham’s brother Nahor and a virgin, but she was also very beautiful. With courtesy and enthusiasm, she passed the servant’s test. As a generous reward for her selfless act, the servant gave Rebekah a gold nose ring and two gold bracelets weighing 10 shekels (four ounces). Rebekah was indeed the daughter of Abraham’s nephew Bethuel, and the men and their camels could spend the night with her family.



Overwhelmed with gratitude, the servant bowed down, worshiped the Lord, and praised Him for His acts of kindness and faithfulness.

24:50-53. When Laban and Bethuel—the ruling adult males in the clan—were presented with evidence that the Lord had spoken and had selected Rebekah for Isaac, they released her to be a wife for Abraham’s son. As the bride price the servant then presented gifts to Rebekah, her brother, and her mother.

24:54-61. The next morning, Abraham’s servant asked Bethuel not to delay the return to Abraham, even though it was customary to spend several days with the wife’s family members (Judges 19:8-10). Rebekah’s statement, I will go, expressed her willingness to leave immediately, not her acceptance of the marriage arrangement—that was already settled. As a wedding gift the family gave Rebekah the one who had nursed her, a beloved slave named Deborah (35:8) who attended to her for many years. The clan also gave her a prophetic blessing, commending both fruitfulness and victory for her offspring.

24:62-67. After a journey of hundreds of miles on camelback, the caravan returned to Isaac’s home. Rebekah saw Isaac for the first time on the day she married him. As was apparently the custom on the wedding day, Rebekah covered herself with a veil before meeting her husband. Before presenting Rebekah to Isaac, Abraham’s servant told Isaac everything he had done and what God had done for him. Having waited 40 years to marry, Isaac loved his wife deeply, and was finally comforted after his mother’s death, which had occurred three years earlier (17:17;23:1; 25:20).

