



A Bride for Isaac

Lesson Focus

When Abraham sent his servant to obtain a wife for Isaac, God demonstrated His control, even in humanly difficult situations. God kept His promise, providing Rebekah according to His perfect plan.

Key Passages

Genesis 24:1–14, 24:50–67

What You Will Learn

- God's perfect plan in the events leading to the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah.
- God's sovereignty in the affairs of man.

Memory Verse

Genesis 12:1–2 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."

Prepare to Learn

Scriptural Background

With a solemn oath, a quest to a distant land, an unexpected stranger, and the search for a bride, Genesis 24 is the remarkable account of God's sovereign provision of a wife for Isaac. Through Isaac and Rebekah, God would keep His promises to Abraham—to increase his descendants to as many as the sand and the stars; to give them a rich inheritance in the land of Canaan, taking possession of the cities of their enemies; and to bless all nations on earth (Genesis 12:2–3, 22:16–18).

It is important to mention two events that are described in Genesis 22, two chapters before the account of this lesson. The first event is God's dramatic test of Abraham's faith. Abraham demonstrated trust in the sovereignty of God (Hebrews 11:17) by not withholding his son, the son of promise—Isaac. God then reiterated His promise to bless all nations through Abraham's descendant. The second event, although a seemingly obscure fact, is the birth of Abraham's grandniece, Rebekah (Genesis 22:20–23). God was setting the stage for the fulfillment of His promises.

Abraham—By the opening of Genesis 24, Abraham's beloved wife Sarah had died (Genesis 23). Abraham was experiencing the blessings of wealth promised by God (Genesis 12:2). However, though God had promised that he would have descendants as numerous as the

stars (Genesis 15:5), as of yet, Isaac (his son) had given him no grandchildren. In chapter 24, Abraham called his oldest servant to return to Abraham's relatives and bring back a wife for Isaac. It is interesting that Abraham did not go himself, nor did he allow Isaac to leave Canaan. Isaac's future was to be in Canaan and nowhere else, for God had promised this land to Abraham's descendants (Genesis 12:1–9, 13:14–18, 15:1–21).

The Servant—The servant proved obedient and loyal in every way, faithfully yielding to his master and the son. He modeled a walk of faith by praying for specific guidance while actively preparing, traveling, testing, and waiting for God's answer (Genesis 24:12–13). And when he received God's remarkable answer, the servant responded with worship and eagerness to return the bride to his master's son (Genesis 24:52–54).

Rebekah—Through the providence of God, Rebekah was gracious and eager to submit to His plans for her life in fulfilling His eternal purposes.

Isaac—Just as Isaac once trusted his father's will even though it meant stretching out on an altar for sacrifice, he now trusted his father to secure a bride for him.

The history of Isaac and Rebekah is a small reflection of the Creator

God's great story of redemption. From before the time sin first entered the world, God has had a plan to call out a people for Himself. He poured out the awful penalty of sin upon His holy Son and then raised Him up. He sent His Spirit into the world to prepare a bride, the church, for His Son.

Historical/Apologetics Background

It was important to Abraham that Isaac's wife be a relative from his homeland, Haran (Genesis 24:4). The history and descendants of Isaac's grandfather, Terah, are given in Genesis 11:27–32, allowing us to confidently determine the relationship between Isaac and Rebekah. Terah was the father of three sons: Abraham, Nahor, and Haran. Of Terah's three sons, Abraham moved to Canaan, Nahor remained in northwest Mesopotamia, and Haran died in Ur (Genesis 11:28).

Abraham's brother, Nahor, became the father of eight sons. One of those sons, Bethuel, became the father of Rebekah (Genesis 22:21–23). Thus, God records for us that Rebekah and Isaac were first cousins once removed.

In considering marital unions in the Old Testament between family members like that of Rebekah and Isaac, keep in mind what Genesis 5:4 teaches. Adam and Eve had sons and daughters, and close relatives married. This was the way the world was populated at the beginning and repopulated after the Flood with Noah's family. The law against close relatives marrying didn't come

Those who have abandoned all, and have put their trust in God, share fully in the inheritance promised through the Son (Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 19:29, 25:34; Ephesians 1:3–12; Colossians 1:22; Revelation 19:7).

until the time of Moses (Leviticus 18–20). Before then, there were few genetic defects (mutations) that today make it inadvisable for close relatives to marry. God's Word has the answers—we need to begin with His truth.

Often people are quick to discount the Old Testament as untrue, unrelated, or unreliable. However, God has provided this information—all of it—so we can see that it is precisely recorded and intended to weave a tapestry of redemption from beginning to end.

God often reveals things in the world today that confirm His history. This account we are studying is a good example.

Because of what we know today about Mesopotamian culture, we can understand Abraham's reluctance for his son to return there. And we can see why God had to call Abraham away. Archaeological discoveries in the area reveal that the people worshipped the moon god, Sin (also called Nanna). There are rather horrifying accounts of royal burial pits that include not only a royal personage but numerous servants and musicians who evidently committed mass

suicide. It becomes clear that God intended Abraham, the one through whom He planned to bless all the families of the earth, to journey to a new location—one which was in a far more strategic spot for disseminating this global blessing.

The fact that the ancient city of Haran still exists today is further confirmation of the Bible's history. The Bible tells us that this is where

Abraham's father, Terah, took Abraham, Sarah, and Lot (Genesis 11:31). In this same area, Turkish villages still bear the name of Abraham's grandfather and great-grandfather, Nahor and Serug (Genesis 11:22). God's Word is true and provides us with answers to questions we may encounter.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.

Studying God's Word

How did God use a pitcher of water to provide a wife for Isaac?

Take notes as you study the following passages.

Genesis 24:1–14

Genesis 24:50–61



Examining Relationships

Complete the Examining Relationships worksheet.

Take notes as you study the following passage.

Genesis 24:62–67



God's Word in the Real World

1. Why did Abraham refuse to have Isaac marry a woman from the Canaanites, and what parallel can we draw to God's plan for marriage as described in the New Testament?
2. What must be true about God in order for Him to orchestrate all of the events surrounding the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah?
3. What comfort can you draw from understanding that the same God who appointed Rebekah to be Isaac's wife is still in charge of the world we live in today?
4. What is the significance of Eliezer's worship at the granting of his prayers? Do you respond the same way?

5. What benefit is there in uncovering the details of the timing and relationships surrounding this passage of Scripture?

Prayer Requests
