

### **INTRODUCTION:**

- Eliezer, Abraham's servant, goes to the city of Nahor with the hopes of locating the family of Nahor who is Abraham's brother and from Nahor's grandchildren finding a wife for Isaac
- In Genesis 22:23 only one girl is mentioned, Nahor's grand daughter Rebekah
- When Eliezer arrives in Nahor, he prays that the young woman who gives water to him and his camels, let that one be the wife for Isaac and before he finished praying Rebekah comes to the well
- He asks her for water, which she immediately gives and then offers to water his camels
- After the camels are watered, Eliezer places 2 gold bracelets on her and puts a gold ring in her nose... not sure how this went down
- Then he asks... whose daughter are you?
- She says... I am the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah's son, whom she bore to Nahor... BOOM
- The young woman he meets is the granddaughter of Abraham's brother!
- That's why Eliezer bows his head and worships the Lord
- He thanks God for His goodness to his master (boss) Abraham

### ***Now that's something to point out***

- Do you thank God for His goodness to your boss?
- Do you thank God helping you do a good job for your boss?
- Or do you only thank God when He blesses you personally?
- As a culture, especially in California... we've become so individually focused that we've forgotten that blessing often flows to us through someone else
- If the company I work for is blessed, then I'll be blessed by having a place to work and provide for my family
- If my boss is blessed, then his employees will be blessed
- If my church is blessed, then my family is blessed
- If my pastor is blessed then the ministries under him will be blessed
- If my family is blessed... if my husband is blessed and so on
- What an important principle to thank God for His blessing on those he places in positions of blessing over you

Genesis 24:29–31 (NKJV)

<sup>29</sup> Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban, and Laban ran out to the man by the well. <sup>30</sup> So it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah, saying, "Thus the man spoke to me," that he went to the man. And there he stood by the camels at the well. <sup>31</sup> And he said, "Come in, O blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels."

- Laban comes to meet Eliezar and they are living in her mother's house which suggest Bethuel is no longer able to fulfill his role as the patriarch of the family
- Thus Laban as the oldest son takes on the responsibilities as the head of the family and invites Eliezar inside to negotiate the betrothal of Rebekah

#### Genesis 24:32–49 (NKJV)

<sup>32</sup> Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and provided straw and feed for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who *were* with him. <sup>33</sup> Food was set before him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I have told about my errand." And he said, "Speak on." <sup>34</sup> So he said, "I *am* Abraham's servant. <sup>35</sup> The LORD has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys. <sup>36</sup> And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and to him he has given all that he has. <sup>37</sup> Now my master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell; <sup>38</sup> but you shall go to my father's house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.' <sup>39</sup> And I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not follow me.' <sup>40</sup> But he said to me, 'The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house. <sup>41</sup> You will be clear from this oath when you arrive among my family; for if they will not give *her* to you, then you will be released from my oath.' <sup>42</sup> "And this day I came to the well and said, 'O LORD God of my master Abraham, if You will now prosper the way in which I go, <sup>43</sup> behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw *water*, and I say to her, 'Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink,' <sup>44</sup> and she says to me, 'Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,'—*let her be* the woman whom the LORD has

appointed for my master's son.' <sup>45</sup> "But before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down to the well and drew *water*. And I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' <sup>46</sup> And she made haste and let her pitcher down from her *shoulder*, and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels a drink also.' So I drank, and she gave the camels a drink also. <sup>47</sup> Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter *are* you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him.' So I put the nose ring on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists. <sup>48</sup> And I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the way of truth to take the daughter of my master's brother for his son. <sup>49</sup> Now if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. And if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."

- Eliezar begins by stating that Abraham has become very rich and that Isaac has inherited all the wealth
- He then emphasizes that Abraham sent him to get a wife from Abraham's father's house
- He even mentions that Abraham said God would send an angel to guide him to the right person and lo and behold that person is Rebekah
- He also adds if she doesn't come back with him, he is released from his oath to find Isaac a wife... so this is a limited time offer
- He shared the wife he was praying for... a wife who would serve him water and water his camels... which is what Rebekah did
- When Eliezar realized Rebekah was from Abraham's father's house, he gave her gifts and worshipped the Lord who led him to Rebekah
- Then he asks Laban for permission to take Rebekah to Isaac

#### Genesis 24:50–51 (NKJV)

<sup>50</sup> Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing comes from the LORD; we cannot speak to you either bad or good. <sup>51</sup> Here *is* Rebekah before you; take *her* and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the LORD has spoken."

- This is the first time Bethuel is mentioned, but he doesn't really have a role in the negotiations... but he does give his consent to the marriage
- Notice their response... this is from the Lord so we can't say no... here's Rebekah, take her to be Isaac's wife as the Lord has spoken
- Now, this doesn't always work... guys

- When I had my first official date with my wife, we went to the Good Earth Restaurant in Oceanside
- It was a “healthy” restaurant and on the way back home the Lord spoke to me and said... you could marry this one if you wanted
- In my heart I said I wanted to marry Roxie and so I told her what the Lord told me and she looked at me and said... you’re crazy... I don’t even know you! So it doesn’t always work like it did for Eliezar

Genesis 24:52–54 (NKJV)

<sup>52</sup> And it came to pass, when Abraham’s servant heard their words, that he worshiped the LORD, *bowing himself* to the earth. <sup>53</sup> Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave *them* to Rebekah. He also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother. <sup>54</sup> And he and the men who *were* with him ate and drank and stayed all night. Then they arose in the morning, and he said, “Send me away to my master.”

- Eliezar is not giving a dowry or a payment to the family for the bride
- He is simply giving them gifts to bless the family for agreeing to give Rebekah to Isaac in marriage
- This was a celebration and thus the gifts are given in the spirit of celebration, not a bridal price

Genesis 24:55–61 (NKJV)

<sup>55</sup> But her brother and her mother said, “Let the young woman stay with us *a few days*, at least ten; after that she may go.” <sup>56</sup> And he said to them, “Do not hinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master.” <sup>57</sup> So they said, “We will call the young woman and ask her personally.” <sup>58</sup> Then they called Rebekah and said to her, “Will you go with this man?” And she said, “I will go.” <sup>59</sup> So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham’s servant and his men. <sup>60</sup> And they blessed Rebekah and said to her: “Our sister, *may you become The mother of thousands of ten thousands*; And may your descendants possess The gates of those who hate them.” <sup>61</sup> Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.

- There is no doubt the family is aware that they will never see Rebekah again

- They remember when Abraham left with Sarah and they want to spend 10 days with their daughter before she goes
- But Eliezar says... don't keep me from going back, God brought this together, let me complete this mission and go back home
- So they put it to Rebekah and she agrees to leave and they said Rebekah with her wet nurse (her legal guardian)
- The family blesses Rebekah... you will become the mother of thousands of ten thousands... an interesting blessing considering they were not informed of the blessing given to Abraham
- Rebekah leaves with her maids (her bridal party)

#### Genesis 24:62–67 (NKJV)

<sup>62</sup> Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South. <sup>63</sup> And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels *were* coming. <sup>64</sup> Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel; <sup>65</sup> for she had said to the servant, “Who *is* this man walking in the field to meet us?” The servant said, “It *is* my master.” So she took a veil and covered herself. <sup>66</sup> And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. <sup>67</sup> Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's *death*.

#### ***Beer-lahai-roi is the name of a “well” in the Negeb***

- Isaac goes to this place to offer his evening prayers
- And as he is praying, he looks up and sees the caravan of camels and goes to meet them
- Rebekah sees Isaac and says... who is this man!
- She covers herself... modesty
- Eliezar tells Isaac the whole story and Isaac brings Rebekah into Sarah's tent and they consummate their relationship

#### ***Notice... there is no wedding ceremony***

- When they consummate the relationship, they are considered married
- It is the case today... when two people consummate their relationship, God considers them married
- There was only one kind of woman who had children out of wedlock in the Bible... a prostitute or an adulteress woman

- Thus if you got a woman pregnant out of wedlock, she was considered your wife under the law
- Now... God has not changed his view of marriage... which means there are a lot of young women acting like prostitutes and adulterers
- Young men lack integrity and get young ladies pregnant and then abandon them
- Both are the direct result of the absence of the father's influence in the family because we have a generation of fathers who would rather get drunk, party, do drugs, play video games and live irresponsible lives
- They are the result of a generation of fathers who rejected God and removed God's influence from the culture... by removing the prayer from schools, the Bible from school curriculums
- And so we are reaping what we've sown as a nation

***Now in the Hebrew it reads...***

- "im Sara ha-ohela" which literally means Isaac brought into the tent Sarah his mother
- Now Sarah is buried, so Isaac didn't take his mom into the honeymoon tent...
- However, by taking Rebekah into Sarah's tent and consummating the marriage, Rebekah became like Sarah and stepped into Sarah's role
- When Sarah was alive, she lit the lamp, brought light into the family from Sabbath eve to Sabbath eve, there was blessing in the dough and a cloud attached to the tent (a sign of divine protection)
- But when Sarah died, it all stopped... until Rebekah came and now it has returned to the home
- What a beautiful picture of the wife and her value to the family
- But also, through Rebekah the promise given to Abraham and also to Isaac will be fulfilled and Rebekah has taken Sarah's place in the family
- But notice vs. 67... Isaac loved Rebekah
- It is the same word used to describe God's love for his people... it's a loyal love, a deep love, the kind of love where you're just enamored by the person you're in love with
- As a result, Isaac was comforted after his mother's death
- This one line tells us that Isaac was in mourning and in need of comfort

Genesis 25:1–6 (NKJV)

**25** Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah. <sup>2</sup> And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. <sup>3</sup> Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. <sup>4</sup> And the sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. <sup>5</sup> And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac. <sup>6</sup> But Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines which Abraham had; and while he was still living he sent them eastward, away from Isaac his son, to the country of the east.

***Abraham remarries and his new bride is Keturah***

- Through Keturah Abraham has 6 children, half brothers to Isaac and 8 grandchildren showing that Abraham is blessed in his later years
- Of the 6 names listed, only 3 have been documented as becoming nations
- Zimram refers to the Arab tribe Zamareni documented by Pliny the Elder
- Jokshan is unknown
- Medan is a variant of Badana mentioned in the Annals of Tiglath-pileser III
- The Midianites were located east of the Gulf of Akaba in northwestern Arabia
- Ishbak is the north Syrian tribe of lasbuq mentioned in the monolith of Shalmaneser III
- Shuah (Suhie) was located on the right bank of the Middle Euphrates below the mouth of a river known as Habur
- Now vs. 6 is interesting because Abraham had concubines... Hagar and Keturah... Keturah he gives the status of a wife
- This means her sons are entitled to their share in the inheritance
- But Abraham gives everything to Isaac (including the land)
- Thus the gifts Abraham gives to the sons of Keturah are most likely compensation for their surrender of future claims to the inheritance
- To guarantee this, Abraham sends his sons away to the country of the east...
- The Hebrew text says they go to the land of Kedem which is a wide territory that covers the Land of Israel from the Middle Euphrates to Northern Arabia

Genesis 25:7–11 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> This *is* the sum of the years of Abraham's life which he lived: one hundred and seventy-five years. <sup>8</sup> Then Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. <sup>9</sup> And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, which *is* before Mamre, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, <sup>10</sup> the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth. There Abraham was buried, and Sarah his wife. <sup>11</sup> And it came to pass, after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac dwelt at Beer Lahai Roi.

- Abraham died in a good old age, full of years
- What a blessed life!
- He is buried in the burial plot he purchased from the sons of Heth where Sarah is buried
- Notice vs. 11... after Abraham's death, Isaac is blessed
- While Abraham was alive... the favor of the family was on him, but after he died the favor was transferred to Isaac
- I think it's important to note that God works through people and his blessing doesn't depart as long as they are alive
- So if you're next in line and you're hoping the first guy would hurry up and get out of the way... God didn't bless Isaac until Abraham died
- I believe there is a spiritual principle here that we need to recognize in terms of honoring those whom God places in positions of leadership
- Another thing to notice... Ishmael and Isaac come together to honor Abraham's death

#### Genesis 25:12–18 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> Now this *is* the genealogy of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham. <sup>13</sup> And these *were* the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, <sup>14</sup> Mishma, Dumah, Massa, <sup>15</sup> Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. <sup>16</sup> These *were* the sons of Ishmael and these *were* their names, by their towns and their settlements, twelve princes according to their nations. <sup>17</sup> These *were* the years of the life of Ishmael: one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. <sup>18</sup> (They dwelt from Havilah as far as Shur, which *is* east of Egypt as you go toward Assyria.) He died in the presence of all his brethren.



***Ishmael has 12 sons who become 12 princes of nations***

- The term “prince” or “chieftan” is the Hebrew word “nasi” and it refers to the secular leader of a tribe
- Hence we have the difference between Ishmael’s descendants and Isaac’s descendants...
- Ishmael was a secular government, Isaac was governed by God

- The Tribe of Nebajoth settled in the Transjordan area and became the Kingdom of the Nabateans, an Arab people located around Petra
  - The Tribe of Kedar became herders of sheep and goats who lived a seminomadic life east of the Land of Israel in Syria and Jordan
  - The Tribe of Adbeel was conquered by Tiglath-pileser III and assigned to the border of Egypt
  - The Tribe of Mibsam was absorbed into the Tribe of Simeon in 1 Chronicles 4:24
  - The Tribe of Mishma settled in an oasis named Jebel Misma in Northwest Arabia
  - The Tribe of Dumah settled in the modern city of al-Jawf in Northern Arabia, east of the Gulf of Akaba
  - The ancient name of the city was Dumat al-Jundal and it was known as Adumanti, the stronghold of the Arabs by Esarhaddon in 680 B.C.E.
  - The Tribe of Massa is mentioned in Proverbs 30:1 and 31:1 and by Tiglathpileser III as an Arabian people, but their location is unknown
  - The Tribe of Hader is not found, but the name Hadad is a commonly included in Arabic names
  - The Tribe of Tema settled in a famous oasis on the caravan route from Southern Arabia to Southern Mesopotamia and is mentioned in Isaiah 21:14 and Jeremiah 25:23
  - The Tribes of Jetur and Naphish are described as Hagrites, descendants of Hagar in 1 Chronicles 5:19 and were known as being a predatory group of Arab people that settled in the area of Lebanon
  - The Tribe of Naphish appears to have been absorbed into the Israelite tribes during the days of the Monarchy of King David and Solomon
- All 12 tribes lived in “villages” from Havilah to Shur (East of Egypt towards Assyria)
  - From the historical record, there is no way Ishmael could be the father of the Arab nations... he is only the Father of a portion of the Arab nations

Genesis 25:19–22 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> This *is* the genealogy of Isaac, Abraham’s son. Abraham begot Isaac.  
<sup>20</sup> Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian (Syrian added later signifying the Syrians dominated the area at the time of the writing of Genesis) of Padan Aram (Haran), the sister of Laban the Syrian (Laban being mentioned again points to Bethuel not being able to fulfill his responsibilities as the patriarch). <sup>21</sup> Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she *was* barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived. <sup>22</sup> But the children struggled together within her; and she said, “If *all is well*, why *am I like this*?” So she went to inquire of the LORD.

- Verse 19 begins another section in Genesis
- The second series of narratives relating to Isaac begins with “Toledot”
- Some interesting facts about Isaac... he doesn’t settle in Hebron where Abraham lived until he retires in his old age
- He is the only son who remained monogamous, the only patriarch to engage in agriculture and the only one who never left the Promised Land... but not much else is written of his life
- Vs. 21 says Rebekah was barren, like Sarah but Isaac “pleaded” with the Lord for his wife... they did not use a concubine (a sign of faith)
- In the Hebrew it means Isaac prayed often for God to give them a child
- I believe it’s good to pray often until God answers your prayer
- She becomes pregnant with twins and we’re told the pregnancy is a difficult one so she inquires of the Lord... why am I like this?
- Some scholars translate this... why did I yearn to become pregnant? And compare it to Rebekah’s complaint in Genesis 27:46 where she says what good will life be to me?

Genesis 25:23–28 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup> And the LORD said to her: “Two nations *are* in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; *One* people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger.” <sup>24</sup> So when her days were fulfilled *for her* to give birth, indeed *there were* twins in her womb. <sup>25</sup> And the first came out red. *He was* like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau. <sup>26</sup> Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau’s heel; so his name was called Jacob. Isaac *was* sixty years old when she bore them. <sup>27</sup> So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a

man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. <sup>28</sup> And Isaac loved Esau because he ate *of his game*, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

- Two nations in Rebekah's Womb
- Jacob (heel catcher) who would become Israel
- Esau who would become the Edomites
- Their rivalry would define their relationship for generations, but God says to Israel in Deuteronomy 23:8... you will not abhor an Edomite for he is your kinsman
- BUT their history is that of a long and bitter hatred between brothers
- Esau was a man's man and Isaac was a momma's boy
- Isaac loved Esau and Rebekah loved Jacob
- Esau was a skilled hunter (which was held in low esteem) and Jacob as a chef (Remember the only other hunter in Genesis was Nimrod)

#### Genesis 25:29–34 (NKJV)

<sup>29</sup> Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. <sup>30</sup> And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me (literally, give me some food so I can gulp it down suggesting Esau had really bad manners) with that same red *stew*, for I *am* weary." Therefore his name was called Edom (red). <sup>31</sup> But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day." <sup>32</sup> And Esau said, "Look, I *am* about to die (an exaggeration); so what *is* this birthright to me?" <sup>33</sup> Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. <sup>34</sup> And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils (no meat, but red beans); then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised *his* birthright.

- The firstborn son had the legal rights to the family inheritance
- He received the wealth, the business, the land, everything
- But it wasn't guaranteed... the father could grant his inheritance to another heir or the legal heir could barter away his future inheritance
- That is what Esau does with Jacob for the price of a bowl of "red stew"
- Esau's man's man attitude gets the best of him and we're told he despised his birthright (looked at it with contempt)
- He didn't value it and so he sold it for a moment of pleasure
- Even though Esau was Isaac's choice, Esau wasn't God's choice because Esau was ruled by his desires, not governed by God