

Isaac Marries Rebekah

Genesis 24:1-67

As we pick up the story of Abraham and Isaac, we find that Abraham's wife and Isaac's mother, Sarah, has died. Abraham is 140 years old. Isaac is about 40 and has not yet married. As we begin this week's story, we're immediately puzzled by Abraham's command to his servant. Why did Abraham have his servant place his hand under Abraham's thigh? This was apparently a gesture of trust, a ritual that confirmed a covenant between two people. It was also a symbol of an eternally binding oath. Jacob used the same ritual when soliciting a promise from Joseph (Genesis 47:29).

Abraham was determined that Isaac would not marry someone from the lands around him and that only a wife from Abraham's own people would do. Abraham likely felt too old to make the journey, and he probably didn't want his son Isaac to leave him. So he chose to send his trusted servant, who is often assumed to be Eliezer (Genesis 15:2).

Eliezer's journey was not a simple day trip. It was a journey of 800 to 1,000 miles each way and would likely have taken a couple of months—perhaps longer—each way. Notice what Eliezer did when he and his servants arrived at their destination: He prayed. He knew that to accomplish his mission, he needed direction from the true God.

Notice that "before he had finished praying," Rebekah appeared. God did as Eliezer had asked, and he did it immediately! Rebekah did precisely what Eliezer had described in his prayer, and he confirmed that she was the right person by asking whose daughter she was. Then

he responded as we should when God answers prayer: He praised and worshipped God!

In agreeing to go with Eliezer to marry Isaac, Rebekah expressed great faith of her own. She was giving up an elaborate wedding near her home, she was giving up everything familiar to her, she was promising to marry a man she had never seen, and she was committing to live nearly a thousand miles away, likely never to see her family again.

God doesn't always make his plans as clear to us as he did to Eliezer. But God will always provide the direction we need when we seek it.

Devotion for Leaders

The One Thing: Everyone needs direction from God! In a growing relationship with Jesus, we can ask him daily for guidance and proceed confidently under *his* direction!

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: Abraham's servant accepted a difficult task, so he asked for wisdom and help from God. We who teach God's children also have a difficult task! As you prepare to teach this week, ask God for his help. Be as specific as possible, and wait confidently for his direction!