

The Lord Led the Servant to the Family of Abraham

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn that they can trust the Lord to lead and guide them as they learn to trust the Word of God. In this topic, we are going to see how the Lord guided the servant of Abraham as he prayed for the guidance of the Lord.

The servant of Abraham had promised that he would go to the family of Abraham to find a bride for Isaac. Genesis 24:10-14 says, “Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and departed, for all his master’s goods *were in his hand*. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw *water*. Then he said, ‘O Lord God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham. Behold, *here* I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, “Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,” and she says, “Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink”—*let her be the one* You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master.’” Here, we see that the servant left and traveled the four hundred and fifty miles to the city where part of the family of Abraham lived. That city was named Nahor, which was also the name of the brother of Abraham.

The servant came to the city and made the camels kneel down outside the city near the well that provided water for the city. The servant and those with him had arrived in the evening at the time that the women came out to the well to draw water for their families. Then, the servant of Abraham began to pray. The prayer of the servant teaches us several things about prayer. First, the prayer of the servant was to the Lord God of his master. This meant that the servant had learned to trust God from his master. Second, the prayer was a request as the servant asked the Lord to give him success. Third, the servant asked the Lord to show kindness to his master. Fourth, the servant said that he was standing by the well and the women were coming out to draw water. Fifth, the servant gave the Lord a specific request. He asked the Lord to lead him to the woman of whom he should request water. Sixth, the servant requested that the woman would also offer to water his camels. Seventh, the servant asked the Lord to show him if this was the woman who the Lord had appointed as a wife for Isaac. These things that the servant mentioned in his prayer show that we are able to talk to the Lord about the things we face daily in our lives. The Lord wants to answer our specific needs.

The servant trusted the Lord to show kindness to his master. Genesis 24:15-17 goes on to tell us that the Lord had led the servant to the family of Abraham’s brother, Nahor. Those verses say, “And it happened, before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham’s brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder. Now the young woman *was very beautiful to behold*, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her and said, ‘Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher.’”

In these verses, we see that sometimes the Lord answers our prayers very quickly. In this case, we see that the Lord was already answering his prayer even before the servant had started praying. In fact, the servant was still praying as Rebekah came walking to the well. This meant that she had left her home at least a few minutes before the servant started praying. Since the Lord knows our hearts, He is already working long before we start praying. We then are told how Rebekah was related to Isaac. Nahor was the brother of Abraham. Bethuel was the son of Nahor and Milcah. That made Bethuel a cousin of Isaac. Then, we see that Rebekah was the daughter of Bethuel. That means that

Isaac was her second cousin. Rebekah came walking with the pitcher on her shoulder at the moment the servant was praying. Two things are immediately mentioned about Rebekah. First, she was very beautiful. Second, she was a virgin because no man had known her. This meant that she was both beautiful in her physical appearance and also a woman of moral integrity who was a virgin. The destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and the other surrounding cities made it very clear that the Canaanites, in the land of Canaan, were not known for their moral integrity. That was the very reason Abraham had sent his servant to get a wife from among his own relatives.

We see that the women had to go down some steps to get to the well, which meant that they had to carry the water up the steps before they could even begin the walk back to their homes. As a result, we see that Rebekah filled her pitcher and then came up the steps from the well. It was as she reached the top of the steps that the servant ran to meet her. We see that he then made a request of Rebekah. The servant asked if he could drink a little water from her pitcher. Proper treatment of visitors to any of the cities in that area meant that a resident of the city would show hospitality by providing water to a stranger. As a result, it was proper for Rebekah to give a stranger some water to drink.

However, the servant had prayed for much more. In Genesis 24:14, the servant had prayed that she would say, ““...Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink”—let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master.”” That was a large request because a camel can drink up to twenty-five gallons and the servant had ten camels. That meant that to water the camels, Rebekah would have to offer to draw water from the well and carry it up the steps. That was a lot of work because two hundred and fifty gallons would be about two thousand pounds of water. That would mean going up and down those steps many times. We see how the Lord answered that prayer as Genesis 24:18-21 says, “So she said, ‘Drink, my lord.’ Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink. And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, ‘I will draw *water* for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.’ Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw *water*, and drew for all his camels. And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.” These verses tell us the choice that Rebekah made that day.

We see that Rebekah quickly took her pitcher off her shoulder and gave the servant a drink of the water. However, she did much more when the servant had finished drinking all of the water that he wanted. She told the servant, “I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.” This was exactly what the servant had requested as he prayed to the Lord. He realized that the camels could drink as much as two hundred and fifty gallons of water. The servant knew that was a lot of water to carry up the steps from the well. However, he also knew that God could fulfill his request even though it meant a lot of hard and heavy work for the young woman. The servant had prayed a very specific request and we see that the Lord led Rebekah to offer to fulfill that prayer, even though she did not know what the servant had prayed.

Rebekah immediately began to carry out her offer to the servant. She dumped the rest of the water in her pitcher into the trough so the camels could begin to drink and then ran back to the well to fill her pitcher again. She carried many pitchers of water up from the well and emptied them into the trough where the camels were drinking. This is a reminder of the fact that the Lord had already prepared the heart of Rebekah, even though she did not yet know the reason that the servant had come to her city. Later, we see that the servant gave all glory to God as he told Rebekah, in Genesis 24:27, “And he said, ‘Blessed *be* the Lord God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way,

the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.” This verse makes it clear that the servant recognized the fact that God was leading him even while he was on the way to this city.

While Rebekah was getting the water from the well and carrying it to the trough, we see that the servant stood and watched in silent amazement. The word that is translated “wondering” means *to gaze at or watch with wonder or amazement*. The same thing often happens in the lives of Christians. We pray and make a specific request to the Lord and then are amazed when God answers. An illustration of this is given in the book of Acts, when Peter had been arrested and was to be killed the next day. Acts 12:15-16 says, “But they said to her, ‘You are beside yourself!’ Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, ‘It is his angel.’ Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened *the door* and saw him, they were astonished.” The Christians prayed for Peter but then were amazed when the Lord released him from prison, and he came to the door of the house.

In the case of the servant, he just stood there in silence. He was watching to see if the Lord was going to continue to answer his prayer in the exact way that he had prayed. The word translated “prosperous” means *to succeed, to be profitable, or to prosper*. The servant used this word several times as he talked to the family of Rebekah. After the servant made his request to the family, they wanted Rebekah to stay at least ten days. The servant answered, in Genesis 24:56-58, “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.’ So they said, ‘We will call the young woman and ask her personally.’ Then they called Rebekah and said to her, ‘Will you go with this man?’ And she said, ‘I will go.’” In this statement of the servant and the response of Rebekah, we see that it truly was the Lord who had arranged all of the details and prepared the heart of Rebekah before the servant even arrived. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others how the Lord works in the hearts of others to prepare them to answer prayers. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain this important lesson.