

## “The Fingerprints of God” (Genesis 24:1-67)

In Genesis 24, we come to one of the greatest love stories known to man: The blind marriage of Isaac and Rebekah. This chapter is the longest chapter in the book of Genesis;<sup>1</sup> yet, it shifts scenes like a romantic movie.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the story of Isaac and Rebekah is more than just a story of “boy meets girl.” It is a wonderful revelation of the sovereign work of God. Driving each scene is the implied question: How will God carry out His incredible promises? Abraham has been promised immeasurable seed that will bless the earth. Therefore, further questions abound: What woman will the Lord find for Isaac to further this promise? How will He overcome the inevitable human stumbling blocks?<sup>3</sup> In this account we will see that *God will guide us, as we are faithful to His Word.*

Our story begins with these words: “**Now Abraham was old, advanced in age; and the LORD<sup>4</sup> had blessed Abraham in every way**” (24:1). The two-fold repetition of “old” and “advanced in age” is deliberate. In the Bible, old age is a sign of blessing on a great person (cf. Josh 13:1; 23:1; 1 Kgs 1:1).<sup>5</sup> The same is true today. If God has given you long life and you’re walking with Him, praise Him for His goodness to you. Verse 1 affirms “**the Lord had blessed Abraham in every way.**” This is also true of us, isn’t it? While the material blessings of Abraham are not ours, we are recipients of God’s blessings. When you consider your life, you should be able to see the many blessings that God has given (Jas 1:17). These blessings that we take for granted everyday are evidence of the fingerprints of God. When we acknowledge the Lord’s blessings and express gratitude we take a step forward in recognizing His hand of providence.

In 24:2-4, Moses moves from an introductory comment to the storyline. As we have already noted, Abraham is an old man. Like many men Abraham makes use of his “golden years” by getting his house in order.<sup>6</sup> High on his “To Do List” was finding a godly wife for his son, Isaac, who is about 40 years old at this time (25:20). So he sends for his unnamed servant<sup>7</sup> and makes a very important request: “**Please place your hand under my thigh, and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, but you will go to my country and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Isaac.**” The oath Abraham makes with his servant seems a little bizarre. I don’t know about you but I don’t want another man putting his hand under my thigh!<sup>8</sup> Yet this was customary in Abraham’s day (cf. 47:29), and this oath alludes to circumcision (cf. 17:11).

Abraham asked his servant to swear an oath not get a wife for Isaac from the Canaanites (cf. 9:25). Abraham’s mindset is that it is better to have no wife than to have a Canaanite wife. In the Old Testament period, the family was the most important educational unit (Deut 6:6-7; Prov 1:8). Undoubtedly, Abraham understood the critical role of the mother. If Isaac had an unbelieving wife there would be little chance of having godly children.<sup>9</sup> So Abraham insists that Isaac marry a woman who is a believer (Deut 7:3-5; 1 Cor 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14-16). Where else would Abraham send his servant than to his own relatives? Now I am not recommending this for any young people today. But I would suggest that if you want to find a godly spouse you look where godly Christians should be. Furthermore, if you want a godly spouse you need to be the kind of person a godly spouse will be looking for.

A point of tension in our story hits in 24:5 when Abraham’s servant says, “**Suppose the woman is not willing to follow me to this land; should I take your son back to the land from where you came?**” This is a legitimate question. This is not the age of the Internet. A young woman cannot go to *Equally Yoked*, look at a man’s picture, read about his interests, and then make a thoughtful selection. What Abraham is seeking to do, however, would require blind faith...and not too many women are so eager that they will step out, sight unseen.

In 24:6-8, Abraham resolves the tension when he says, **“Beware that you do not take my son back there! The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me and who swore to me, saying, ‘To your descendants I will give this land,’ He will send His angel before you, and you will take a wife for my son from there. But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this my oath; only do not take my son back there.”** Twice Abraham warns his servant not to take Isaac back to Ur (24:6, 8; cf. 12:1; Luke 9:62). This is faith! Abraham knows God has called him out of Ur and has promised him abundant descendants and land, so he is willing to trust the Lord in whatever He chooses to do. This is a great illustration of salvation. When God calls you, He is calling you out of something to something. He doesn’t want you looking back to your old life. He wants you to move forward and press on, to new life in Christ.

After hearing the strength of Abraham’s convictions, **“the servant placed his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter”** (24:9). The point of this section is to show Abraham’s concern for God’s promise that was to come to the descendants of Isaac (cf. 21:1).<sup>10</sup> In these verses, he also takes upon himself the responsibility of ensuring that God’s program continues to the next generation.<sup>11</sup> Like Abraham, we must be willing to claim God’s promises and do all we can to ensure that His kingdom program continues in our descendants and in our church.

In 24:10-27, we enter a new section. Moses writes, **“Then the servant took ten camels from the camels of his master,<sup>12</sup> and set out with a variety of good things of his master’s in his hand; and he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor.** [Nahor was the brother of Abraham.] **He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water”** (24:10-11). Verse 10 encompasses hundreds of miles and several months as the servant assembled a caravan and made his way to Mesopotamia. In 24:11, there is a subtle wordplay connecting this section with the previous section. Moses records that Abraham’s servant **“made the camels kneel down.”** This appears to be an unnecessary detail but the Hebrew verb **“kneel”** (*wayyabrek*) sounds just like the verb “bless” (*barak*) in 24:1. Moses is drawing the reader’s attention to the fact that the arrival at the proper place was all a part of the divine blessing.<sup>13</sup> God’s hand is in the events of this story.

In 24:12, the servant prays, **“O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today,<sup>14</sup> and show lovingkindness to my master Abraham.”** Notably, this unnamed servant is the first person described in Scripture as asking for divine guidance at a critical juncture.<sup>15</sup> Now I might have gone about this task in a very different manner. I might have come into town advertising the fact that I worked for a very wealthy foreigner with a handsome, eligible son who was to be his only heir. I would have publicized my task and declared that only one lucky girl would be chosen. To select such a bride I might have held a “Miss Mesopotamia” contest. Only those who were the most beautiful and talented would be allowed to enter, and the winner would become the wife of Isaac. But that’s not what this godly servant did. Instead, when his small caravan arrived in Nahor he immediately went to prayer! When we are in need of divine guidance prayer should be our first activity rather than our last resort.

Notice, this servant prays a bold prayer. He asks for God to provide a wife for Isaac **“today.”** I’m sure many young people looking for a spouse would like to pray that prayer: “Oh Lord, give the answer today!” But God does not always guarantee to be so speedy.<sup>16</sup> Sometimes He desires us to persevere in prayer. Are you praying about decisions you need to make regarding relationships? Have you committed them to the Lord? If you need to make a decision regarding business, have you prayed about it?

The servant prays that God will **“show lovingkindness”** to his master, Abraham. This word translated **“lovingkindness”** (*hesed*) refers to God’s covenantal loyalty. Abraham’s servant can pray with bold confidence because he knows that the God of Abraham is faithful to His promises. Do you have a proper view of God? Do you recognize His love and compassion for you? The servant goes on to say, **“Behold, I am standing by the spring, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water; now may it be that the girl to whom I say, ‘Please let down your jar so that I may drink,’ and who answers, ‘Drink, and I will water your camels also’—may she be the one whom You have appointed for Your servant Isaac; and by this I will know that You have shown lovingkindness to my master”** (24:13-14). Culturally it was a normal act of hospitality to provide water to thirsty travelers. But the idea that a woman would also provide water for ten thirsty camels was going far beyond what would normally be expected. In praying this prayer the servant “stacked the deck” against finding someone. It would take a remarkable woman to volunteer for this lowly and backbreaking task.

Yet, in 24:15, Moses pens these important words: **“Before<sup>17</sup> he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham’s brother Nahor, came out with her jar on her shoulder.”** Did you catch that? While the servant is praying the answer is already on the way. This is classic God! He is so gracious and faithful that He often answers prayer before or as we’re praying. He does this to demonstrate His power. The servant’s answer to prayer is named Rebekah. She is the daughter of Bethuel, a second cousin of Isaac. This is exactly what Abraham was seeking for his son! Furthermore, in 24:16, we learn that **“the girl was very beautiful, a virgin, and no man had had relations with her.”<sup>18</sup>** Rebekah was very beautiful. Her appearance isn’t the primary basis of the servant’s choice, but it is interesting to note that God chose a wife that would also be attractive to Isaac. She was a virgin. She did not practice “safe sex”; she practiced “save sex” for marriage. She understood that sex was a gift from God, to be enjoyed within the commitment of marriage. Maybe you’re thinking, “That’s nice to preach, but I have already made those mistakes. What should I do?” First, seek the forgiveness of God (1 John 1:9). Then make a new commitment to God and to the person whom you are dating. Begin practicing God’s standard for moral purity.<sup>19</sup>

At this point in our story Abraham’s servant is beside himself. (If he is single, he’s probably wishing he was Isaac.) Nevertheless, he runs up to meet Rebekah and says, **“Please let me drink a little water from your jar.”** She said, **“Drink, my lord”; and she quickly lowered her jar to her hand, and gave him a drink. Now when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, ‘I will draw also for your camels until they have finished drinking.’ So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, and ran back to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels”** (24:17-20). In these verses, Rebekah demonstrates an amazing servant’s heart. To grasp what a wonder this was we must understand that the ancient well was a large, deep hole in the earth with steps leading down to the spring water, so that each drawing of water required substantial effort. Moreover, a camel can consume 25 gallons of water in ten minutes. How would you like to get 250 gallons of water for ten camels? With a water jar holding about three gallons of water this means that Rebekah made 80 to 100 descents into the well.<sup>20</sup> Rebekah’s labors filled 90 to 120 sweaty minutes.<sup>21</sup> Ladies, *Pilates*, *Spinning*, and *Tae-Bo* have nothing on this workout. Interestingly, Rebekah didn’t realize that she was about to become an integral part of God’s eternal plan of salvation by marrying Isaac. She served simply because it was the pattern of her life. I wonder how many of us desire to be used of the Lord in great ways, but have not proven reliable in the small things in life? (See Matt 25:21) Women, are you willing to serve your husband and children like Rebekah? Are you a woman who is known for how you serve?

By the way, both Jacob (29:1-12) and Moses (Exod 2:15-22) found their future wives at a well, after long journeys. Single men, guess where you should be hanging out? Seriously, these stories anticipate an event in the life of Jesus in John 4.

On His long walk home from Jerusalem Jesus stopped at a well in Sychar where He also met a woman, although of a rather different reputation. This woman had been married to several different husbands. As a result of Jesus' visit the entire town believed in Him and participated in the promises of God (John 4:39-42).<sup>22</sup> Today, will you meet Jesus? Maybe you're looking for a spouse to meet your needs. Jesus would say to you, "No spouse can fully meet your needs but I can."

A second point of tension occurs in 24:21. Moses writes, "**Meanwhile, the man was gazing at her in silence, to know whether the LORD had made his journey successful or not.**"<sup>23</sup> The servant is exhibiting caution. He is no doubt in a hurry to get back, however, throughout this narrative he shows concern for seeking God's will. He is sensible, sensitive, and prayerful. He exhibits loyalty, patience, and steady, trusting devotion to God. We are to do the same and God will guide us. We are not to act impulsively or impatiently. We are to move forward in faith and depend on the Lord.<sup>24</sup>

The tension is alleviated with the inquiry and identification of Rebekah. Moses writes, "**When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring weighing a half-shekel and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels in gold, and said, 'Whose daughter are you? Please tell me, is there room for us to lodge in your father's house?' She said to him, 'I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor.' Again she said to him, 'We have plenty of both straw and feed, and room to lodge in.' Then the man bowed low and worshiped the LORD. He said, 'Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His lovingkindness and His truth toward my master; as for me, the LORD has guided me in the way to the house of my master's brothers.'"** Again, Rebekah is impressive. This time she manifests great generosity and hospitality. Verse 27 points out the obvious: God is deliberately behind the scenes, yet directing the acts. In this respect the account is very similar to the book of Ruth. The story records no word from God, no miracle, no prophetic oracle; it doesn't even restate the Abrahamic covenant. It merely evidences God sovereignly working through the circumstances of those who are acting in faith.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, Abraham's servant bows down and worships the Lord. No doubt he is overwhelmed with God's guidance. He praises God once again for His *hesed* love and also "**His truth.**" God is a God of unconditional faithfulness.

When God moves in your life do you respond like this servant? If you are physically able, I challenge you to bow before the Lord on a daily basis. Recently I was challenged by a young man (Michael Fletcher) to prostrate myself before the Lord on a daily basis just to acknowledge that He is God. I have been attempting to do this and I have found it serves to remind me of how small I am and how huge God is.

In 24:28-33, Rebekah returns home and shares everything with her family. Obviously she is excited, as any woman would be. Rebekah's brother, Laban, invites the servant in and even offers him food. But in 24:33, when food is set before him he refuses to eat until his mission is accomplished. He considers his master's business more important than his pleasure. Do you have this mindset as well? Is Christ's mission for you more important than your pleasure?

A third tension-filled episode occurs in 24:34-49 as the servant seeks to obtain the approval of Rebekah's family. Genesis 24, as a whole, is an excellent example of the ancient storyteller's art. In those days people enjoyed repetition—in fact, they preferred it—as they listened to tales or read them. Repetition served several purposes. It was used (1) to linger over sites and scenes that were especially enthralling or otherwise important; (2) to lend additional emphasis wherever necessary; and (3) to serve as a memory aid to the hearers (or reader). Far from being signs of inept editing or dual authorship, repetition and duplication were often deliberately employed as effective literary devices.<sup>26</sup>

The key themes repeated in this section are:

- God’s blessings upon Abraham
- the servant’s sensitivity and responsiveness to the Lord
- the Lord’s providential hand working behind the scenes

In 24:50-54, the tension is resolved by the family’s approval: **“Then Laban and Bethuel replied, ‘The matter comes from the LORD; so we cannot speak to you bad or good.’<sup>27</sup> Here is Rebekah before you, take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master’s son, as the LORD has spoken.’ When Abraham’s servant heard their words, he bowed himself to the ground before the LORD. The servant brought out articles of silver and articles of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother. Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night. When they arose in the morning, he said, ‘Send me away to my master.’”** Again, the servant responds appropriately by bowing to the ground in worship and gratitude (cf. 24:26).

Another severely tense moment takes place in 24:55-57: **“But her brother and her mother said, ‘Let the girl stay with us a few days, say ten; afterward she may go.’ He said to them, ‘Do not delay me, since the LORD has prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master.’ And they said, ‘We will call the girl and consult her wishes.’ Then they called Rebekah and said to her, ‘Will you go with this man?’ And she said, ‘I will go.’”** This is powerful! What relief! Rebekah demonstrates her faith in Abraham’s God by decisively choosing to leave her family to marry Isaac (cf. Ruth 1:16). His invitation to marriage is not an easy choice that she is asked to make. She is being asked to leave her family and everything familiar and to go with a man whom she has just met a day or two before, and to marry another man whom she has never seen before.

The **“I will”** statement is typical of countless marriage ceremonies. At my own marriage ceremony Lori surprised me by singing a song by Steven Curtis Chapman entitled *I Will Go There With You*. By singing this song she committed herself to me—to go wherever I felt God calling us to go. The “I will” statement is also typical of the Christian life. Indeed, marriage is the greatest illustration of the love between Jesus and His church. The Christian life is a matter of putting ourselves in the hands of Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to us and says, “Will you go with this Jesus? Will you go to Him? Will you spend the rest of your life in fellowship with Him?” And we respond and say, “I will.”<sup>28</sup> The best way to know God’s will is to say, “I will,” to God.

After Rebekah’s courageous step of faith, Moses records these words: **“Thus they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse with Abraham’s servant and his men. They blessed Rebekah and said to her, ‘May you, our sister, become thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them.’ Then Rebekah arose with her maids, and they mounted the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed”** (24:59-61). Thus the reader has been given three witnesses that these events have been the work of God: the narrator (24:15-16), the servant (24:26-27), and Laban (24:50). The final witness is Rebekah herself, who, against the wishes of her brother and her mother, returns with the servant to Isaac.<sup>29</sup>

A final episode of tension is found in 24:62-67. The question is: How will Isaac and Rebekah respond to each other? Will it be love at first sight or will there be utter disappointment? Moses gives us the play-by-play account. **“Now Isaac had come from going to Beer-lahai-roi; for he was living in the Negev. Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening; and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, camels were coming. Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from the camel. She said to the servant, ‘Who is that man walking in the field to meet us?’ And the servant said, ‘He is my master.’ Then she took her veil and covered herself. The servant told Isaac**

**all the things that he had done.”** Beer-lahai-roi, where Isaac lived and meditated, was a place where God had previously answered prayer (cf. 16:14). It is likely that Isaac was seeking God for his future wife. Rebekah dismounted out of respect for her intended husband (cf. Josh 15:18; 1 Sam 25:23). Her respect was evident in how she approached him.<sup>30</sup>

The final verse of our chapter has a hint of romance: **“Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her; thus Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.”** Isaac married Rebekah and Moses writes: **“He loved her.”** This is the first reference to marital love in the Bible. Do you notice that love came last, not first, in this chapter? Love came after marriage, not before it. Romantic love is never the basis for marriage. Instead, marriage is the basis for romantic love (Eph 5:25). Moses also states that Isaac was **“comforted after his mother’s death”** (Prov 18:22; 19:14). Rebekah had taken the place of Sarah in the line of the descendants of Abraham and she brought comfort to Isaac.

This marriage was essential to the work of God in the world. Perhaps the question that should be asked today by those seeking guidance in who to marry is: What value to God would this marriage be?<sup>31</sup> What value to God would this business venture be? How does God benefit?

Here are a few quick principles in the marriage arena:

- Don’t worry about finding the right person, become the right person yourself.
- If you are married, you are married to the right person.<sup>32</sup>
- Practice servanthood in your dating or marriage relationship.
- The root characteristic of love is commitment.
- Pray for your child’s future spouse.

Ultimately, this entire story is about God’s faithfulness. He protected and guided the servant on his journey, and He brought Rebekah along with just the right servant-spirit at just the right time. From our historical perspective, centuries later we can see how God used the remarkable obedience of a few family members to accomplish His purposes. For it was through the union of Isaac and Rebekah that the covenant and its wonderful promises were to be perpetuated.<sup>33</sup>

Several centuries ago, the wise sage, Solomon, penned a familiar passage: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight” (Prov 3:5-6). Let me quickly explain this verse. The word “trust” is used in the Old Testament in a literal, physical sense: to physically lean upon something for support. It is also used in a figurative sense: to rely upon someone or something for help or protection. The verb is often used with false securities, people trusting in things that prove to be worthless. But here the object of the secure trust is the LORD who is a reliable object of confidence. God wants you to lean and rely upon Him. He says that you are to do so with “all your heart.” The word “heart” encompasses mind, emotions, and will. He commands you not to “lean on your own understanding.” Again, the word “lean” is used in a literal, physical sense of leaning upon something for support. It is also used in a figurative sense of relying upon someone or something for help or protection. Here it functions figuratively as an implied comparison. Instead of leaning on yourself, lean upon the Lord (cf. Isa 10:20). The word “understanding” is used elsewhere in this book of insight given by God from the instructions in Proverbs (2:3; 7:4; 8:14; 9:6, 10; 23:23).<sup>34</sup>

Today, God asks a simple question: Will you trust me? When it seems like there is no way I can come through, will you look doubt and fear in the face and say, “I AM trusting the Lord”? This is God’s explicit will for you. As you seek to find God’s will, first find God and stick especially close to Him.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The length of this story and the amount of detail included suggests that this incident played an important part in the fulfillment of the author's purpose. The details show how God provided a wife and seed-bearer for Isaac and thus remained faithful to His promises to Abraham.

<sup>2</sup> Waltke writes, "The scene develops geographically, chronologically, and logically through four settings. Abraham commissions his servant in his household (24:2-9); the servant providentially meets Rebekah at a well in Nahor (24:10-27); in Bethuel's household, the family consents to the marriage (24:28-61); in the Negev, Rebekah and Isaac meet and as a married couple enter into Sarah's tent (24:62-67)." Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 323-324.

<sup>3</sup> Waltke, *Genesis*, 324.

<sup>4</sup> "The Lord" who never speaks in this chapter is nevertheless the chief actor. He is mentioned 17 times.

<sup>5</sup> Waltke, *Genesis*, 326.

<sup>6</sup> Ronald F. Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 195.

<sup>7</sup> The three-fold emphasis "his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he owned" (Gen 24:2) leads to the conclusion that this servant is Eliezer (Gen 15:2), whose name means "God of help" or "helper."

<sup>8</sup> The thigh may be a euphemism for the genitals. Waltke, *Genesis*, 327. The ancients considered it to be the source of posterity and the seat of power (cf. 47:29).

<sup>9</sup> Bill T. Arnold, *Encountering the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 112.

<sup>10</sup> John H. Sailhamer, *Genesis: EBC* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), Electronic ed

<sup>11</sup> Allen P. Ross, *Creation & Blessing* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988 [2002 ed.]), 418.

<sup>12</sup> Camels were relatively rare in this era, so the fact that Abraham owned ten of them reflects his great wealth (cf. Job 1:3). Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, Vol. 2: WBC (Waco, TX: Word, 1994), 42-43, 146.

<sup>13</sup> Ross, *Creation & Blessing*, 419.

<sup>14</sup> Heb. "Make it happen before me today." Although a number of English translations understand this as a request for success in the task (cf. NASB, NIV, NRSV) it is more likely that the servant is requesting an omen or sign from God (Gen 24:14). See NET notes: <http://www.bible.org/default.asp?scid=3>

<sup>15</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 317.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Eaton, *Preaching Through the Bible: Genesis 24-50* (Kent, England: Sovereign World, 1999), 12.

<sup>17</sup> Isa 65:24; Cf. 1 Sam 7:10; 2 Chron 20:22.

<sup>18</sup> Some argue that the Hebrew noun translated "virgin" (Bütüläh) is better understood in a general sense, "young woman" (cf. Joel 1:8), where the word appears to refer to one who is married). In this case the circumstantial clause ("and a man she had not known") would be restrictive, rather than descriptive. If the term actually means "virgin," one wonders why the circumstantial clause is necessary (cf. Jdg 21:12). Perhaps the repetition emphasizes her sexual purity as a prerequisite for her role as the mother of the covenant community. See NET notes:

<http://www.bible.org/default.asp?scid=3>

<sup>19</sup> Ed Dobson, *Abraham: The Lord Will Provide* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1993), 174.

<sup>20</sup> John H. Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 530.

<sup>21</sup> Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing*, 318.

<sup>22</sup> Paul Wright, ed., *Genesis: Shepherd's Notes* (Nashville: Broadman, 1997), 61.

<sup>23</sup> One of the greatest joys I have as a believer is to simply observe the power and works of God and to give Him praise for what He has done. Ps 115:1 "Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness."

<sup>24</sup> Eaton, *Genesis 24-50*, 14.

<sup>25</sup> Ross, *Creation & Blessing*, 415.

<sup>26</sup> Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 198.

<sup>27</sup> Although the Lord elects both Abraham and Rebekah, his mode of revelation to them is strikingly different. To Abraham he speaks (12:7) in visions and auditions, to Rebekah he communicates through answered prayer and providential acts (24:27, 48, 50). Waltke, *Genesis*, 326.

<sup>28</sup> Eaton, *Genesis 24-50*, 16.

<sup>29</sup> Sailhamer writes, "The simplicity of her response ('I will go,' v. 58) reveals the nature of her trust in the God of Abraham. The fact that Rebekah's response (*elek* 'I will go,' v. 58) is identical to Ruth's (*elek* 'I will go,' Ruth 1:16) suggests that there may be more than a mere coincidental relationship between the narratives of the two women." Sailhamer, *Genesis*, Electronic ed.

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<sup>30</sup> Her self-veiling identified her as his bride since it was customary to veil the bride in a marriage ceremony. Normally Israelite women did not wear veils (cf. Gen 12:14; 38:14).

<sup>31</sup> Ross, *Creation & Blessing*, 422.

<sup>32</sup> Socrates once said, "By all means marry; if you get a good wife, you'll become happy. If you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher."

<sup>33</sup> Arnold, *Encountering the Book of Genesis*, 113.

<sup>34</sup> See NET notes, *BDB*, and *HALOT*, Electronic eds.