



The Book of Genesis

Lesson Number 36



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literary Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

----- GREEK LEXICON LEGEND -----

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT = Liddell Scott Lexicon, THAYER = Thayer's Greek Lexicon, LEH = LEH Lexicon, GINGRICH = Gingrich Lexicon

THE INSPIRED RECORD OF THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS: THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, MANKIND, SIN, THE FIRST CHOSEN AND BLESSED NATION, THE FIRST CURSE, THE FIRST PROMISE, AND THE FIRST FAITH.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

A WIFE FOR ISAAC, #2

Gen 24:22 ²²And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold; ²³And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? ²⁴And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. ²⁵She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in. ²⁶And the man bowed down his head, and worshiped the LORD. ²⁷And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of His mercy and His truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren. ²⁸And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things. ²⁹And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well. ³⁰And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well. ³¹And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels. ³²And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him. ³³And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on. ³⁴And he said, I am Abraham's servant. ³⁵And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. ³⁶And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath. ³⁷And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell. ³⁸But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son. ³⁹And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me. ⁴⁰And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house: ⁴¹Then shalt thou be clear from this my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear from my oath. ⁴²And I came this day unto the well, and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go: ⁴³Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw water, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink; ⁴⁴And she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: let the same be the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son. ⁴⁵And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew water: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. ⁴⁶And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also. ⁴⁷And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands. ⁴⁸And I bowed down my head, and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son."

(Genesis 24:22-48)

Following watering the camels, and giving gifts, the servant inquires if there is room for him and his servants in her father's house – Given O. Blakely

INTRODUCTION

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A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

Following the watering of the camels, Abraham's servant gave Rebekah a golden earring and two gold bracelets. In order to ensure she met the qualification of being Abraham's kindred, he inquired whose daughter she was, and if there was room enough in her father's house for the servant and those with him to lodge. Rebekah quickly gave him assurance that there was sufficient room and provisions for them. In response, the servant blessed the Lord, confessing He had led him to this place, and in so doing had not left

his master Abraham "*destitute of His mercy and truth.*" God had "*led*" him, he confessed, **while he was in the way** to the house of Abraham's brethren. Rebekah then ran and told her mother of these things. Her brother, Laban, ran out to meet the servant, and found him standing by the camels at the well. He then urged him to come into his house. Having entered the house, the servant then told them of the mission on which his master, Abraham, had sent him.

THE MANNER OF DIVINE WORKING

The Scriptures are clear about God working with and among men. It is important that this never be clouded by an inappropriate emphasis upon men and what they are to be doing. Here are some things God does.

- ▶ DELIVERS MEN. "*He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man.*" (Job 33:27-29)
- ▶ LEADS. "*He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*" (Psa 23:3)
- ▶ TEACHES. "*Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will He teach*

▶ GUIDES IN JUDGMENT AND TEACHES HIS WAY. "*The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.*" (Psa 25:9; Isa 49:10)

▶ HIS DOINGS TOWARD MEN. "*Come and see the works of God: He is terrible in His doing toward the children of men.*" (Psa 66:5)

▶ WORKING SALVATION. "*For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.*" (Psa 74:12)

▶ WONDERFUL WORKS TO MEN. "*Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!*" (Psa 107:8,15,21,31)

▶ LIFTS UP. "*The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground.*" (Psa 147:6)

▶ DOES HIS WILL AMONG EARTH'S INHABITANTS. "*And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*" (Dan 4:35)

▶ DELIVERS AND RESCUES. "*He delivereth and rescueth, and He worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the*

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power of the lions." (Dan 6:27)

▶ WORKS WITH MEN. "*And they went*

forth, and preached every where, **the Lord working with them**, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." (Mark 16:20)

➔ TAKES AWAY REPROACH. *"Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein **He looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.**"* (Luke 1:25)

➔ JESUS SAID HIS FATHER DID THE WORKS. *"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but **the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.**"* (John 14:10)

➔ WORKS ALL IN ALL. *"And there are diversities of operations, but it is **the same God which worketh all in all.**"* (1 Cor 12:6)

➔ WORKS ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT IS TOWARD THE SAVED. *"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, **according to the working of His mighty power.**"* (Eph 1:19)

➔ WORKS TO WILL AND TO DO. *"For **it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.**"* (Phil 2:13)

➔ DIRECTS. *"Now **God Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.**"* (1 Thess 3:11)

As simplistic as this may seem intellectually, Satan tempts men to think and reason **without factoring in the working of the Lord**. He does not always do this on an individual basis. His army of spirits also invent doctrines that indirectly lead men to think in this manner – *"doctrines of devils"* [demons] (1 Tim 4:1). **These corrupt**

doctrines include ideas of God, Christ, the Spirit, and even salvation – but they are woven together with phrases and concepts that are spiritual poison. They leave the person who receives them thinking and living just as though there really was no God.

On the other hand, the Scriptures always lead us to consider God Himself as the ultimate Worker. Every other worker, even the devil himself, is under the authority of God.

GOD'S WORKING WITH ABRAHAM

Thus far, the record has testified of the working of God in and with Abraham.

Abraham's Shield and Exceeding great reward (Gen 15:1).

➔ God **enabled** him to beget Isaac (Gen 17:17; 21:5; Rom 4:19).

➔ God **blessed** Ishmael because of Abraham (Gen 21:12-13).

➔ God **orchestrated** the events related to the offering of Isaac (Gen 22:1-18).

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➔ God called Him (Gen 12:1-3).

➔ God **brought** him out of Ur of the Chaldees (Gen 15:7).

➔ God **led** him out of Haran (Gen 12:4).

➔ God **delivered** him from the will of Pharaoh (Gen 12:15-20).

➔ God **prospered** him (Gen 24:56).

➔ God **delivered** him from the will of Abimelech (Gen 20:2-18).

➔ God **caused** him to triumph over his enemies (Gen 14:20).

➔ God **promised** He would be

to this when he wrote to the Thessalonians, *"Wherefore also we pray always for you, **that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power**"* (2 Thess 1:11).

I say these words by way of introduction because, within the framework of contemporary Christianity, it is exceedingly difficult to arrive at these conclusions. Even serious people are prone to overlook the records of the working of the Lord that, for the sensitive soul, are very prevalent in the Scriptures. For those with honest and good hearts, God has, in his working with men, left a lot of evidence of His character and manners.

WHEN THE CAMELS WERE DONE DRINKING

Gen 24:22 *"And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the*

man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for

her hands of ten shekels weight of gold."

Following watering the camels, and giving gifts, the servant inquires if there is room for him and his servants in her father's house – Given O. Blakely

Just as Abraham had told his servant, an angel had been dispatched to bring him safely to the proper place. Although it was a considerable distance, and he had a ten-camel caravan with gold and other valuable commodities, **no thieves were apparently attracted to him.** I do not doubt that travels of this sort put a person, as Paul wrote it, *"in perils of robbers"* (2 Cor 11:26). However, God has the power to cause otherwise hostile people not to even consider robbing the people He is protecting.

DIVINE PROTECTION

- ➔ Another example of Divine protection is seen in Israel. There were three times a year when all of the men went to a Divinely designated place, leaving the women and children vulnerable. Of that situation the Lord said, *"For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: **neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year**"* (Ex 34:24).
- ➔ Another example is found in the travel's of Jacob and his household: *"And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, **and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob**"* (Gen 35:5).
- ➔ In the reign of Jehosaphat we have another example. *"And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, **so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat**"* (2 Chron 17:10).
- ➔ Prior to his trial, initiated and managed from heaven, Job was protected much in the same way. Satan said, *"**Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land**"* (Job 1:10).
- ➔ Solomon wrote, *"When a man's*

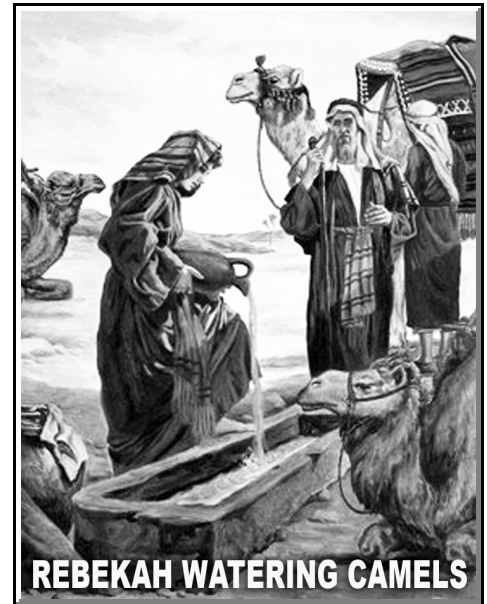
*ways please the LORD, **He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him**"* (Prov 16:7).

- ➔ When directing Paul to remain in Corinth, the glorified Christ told him, *"For I am with thee, and **no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city**"* (Acts 18:10).
- ➔ Confirming that God can, and is so inclined, to grant safety to His people, the Lord made mention of safety under the First Covenant. Like other promises of the Old Covenant, it was conditioned upon their perfect obedience. **However, at this point I am only establishing that God is fully capable of granting safety to His people, and is further inclined to do so.** The Lord promised Israel *"Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety"* (Lev 25:18-19).
- ➔ When they prepared to cross over Jordan and possess the land of Canaan, Moses told them, *"But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, **so that ye dwell in safety**"* (Deut 12:10).
- ➔ Moses also said to Benjamin, *"The beloved of the LORD **shall dwell in safety by Him**"* (Deut 33:12).
- ➔ David wrote, *"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: **for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety**"* (Psa 4:8).
- ➔ Solomon wrote, *"**Safety is of the Lord**"* (Prov 21:31).
- ➔ Through Hosea, the Lord promised His people safety from both man and beast. *"And in that day **will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things***

of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely" (Hosea 2:18).

This is the kind of God that has saved us. Safety is not to be taken for granted, and when it is experienced, God is to be thanked.

WHEN THE CAMELS WERE DONE DRINKING



"And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking . . ."

We have already pointed out that drawing water for ten camels that had just completed a journey of several hundred miles, was a formidable task. It would have required from 200-500 gallons of water, carrying it up and down a flight of stairs in a pitcher of about 2-½ gallons. Rebekah kept bringing the water until the camels were finished drinking, storing a fresh supply of water in their humps.

A Type of Spiritual Satisfaction

The drinking of these camels was a vivid picture of spiritual satisfaction. It is experienced by drinking the water of life. This is not a nebulous exercise, but is associated with taking in the Word and promises of God. **The ingestion of the Word of God becomes the means of survival, like the water**

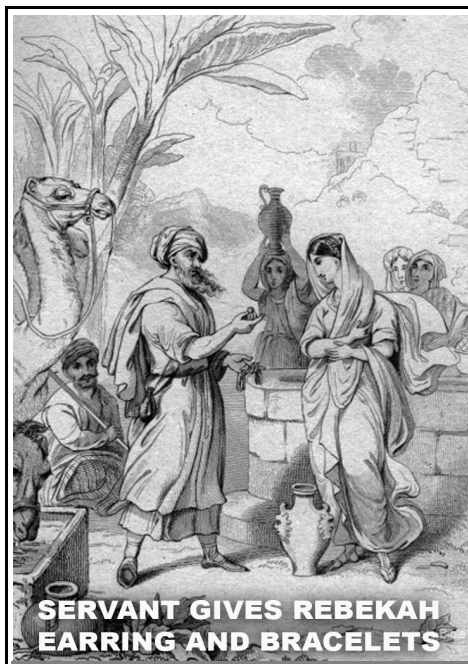
stored in the camel's hump.

It is imperative that believers learn to drink until they are filled, or satisfied. It is possible for a person to grow accustomed to never really being assuaged, satisfied, or filled. Spiritual appetite is only handed a few delicacies to reduce the pangs of hunger, but is never offered a rich and satisfying fare. Of course, salvation is not designed to be realized in such a manner. **God has prepared a rich and abundant table for His people.** It is described as *"a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined"* (Isa 25:6). The call has gone out from heaven, *"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness"* (Isa 55:1-2).

Those who learn to live on meager portions will find their appetite for the things of God shrinking. This is because salvation is not calculated to be effective where little of its nourishing fare is eaten.

GIFTS FOR REBEKAH

" . . . that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold." Other versions read, *"a golden nose ring . . . and two bracelets for her wrists,"* ^{NKJV} *"a gold ring . . . and two bracelets,"* ^{NASB} *"a gold nose-ring . . . two bracelets for her arms,"* ^{NRSV} *"a gold nose-ring and two ornaments for her arms,"* ^{BBE} *"golden earrings . . . and as many bracelets,"* ^{DOUAY} *"a golden nose ring weighing a fifth of an ounce and two bracelets weighing four ounces,"* ^{GWN} *"a gold ring weighing half a shekel, which he fastened on her nose, and two gold bracelets weighing ten shekels, which he put on her wrist,"* ^{NAB} and *"a quarter-ounce gold earring and two five-ounce gold bracelets for her wrists."* ^{LIVING}



The various versions are inconsistent in their presentation of this rather simplistic verses.

"A Golden earring" (KJV)

- ➔ *"A golden nose ring"* ^{NKJV}
- ➔ *"A gold ring"* ^{NASB}
- ➔ *"a gold ring . . . which he fastened on her nose"* ^{NAB}

"Half A Shekel Weight" (KJV)

- ➔ *"Fifth of an ounce"* ^{GWN}
- ➔ *"Quarter ounce"* ^{LIVING}

"Two Bracelets for Her Hands" (KJV)

- ➔ *"Two bracelets for her wrists"* ^{NKJV}
- ➔ *"Two bracelets"* ^{GWN}
- ➔ *"Two bracelets for her arms"* ^{NRSV}
- ➔ *"Two ornaments for her arms"* ^{BBE}
- ➔ *"Two gold bracelets weighing ten shekels, which he put on her wrist"* ^{NAB}

"Of Ten Shekels Weight" (KJV)

- ➔ *"Weighing four ounces"* ^{GWN}
- ➔ *"Two five ounce"* ^{LIVING}

Seeing no reason to do otherwise, I will proceed with the assumption that an golden earring of half a shekel amounted to one 1/5-1/4 of an ounce, and two bracelets of ten shekels each amounted to 4-5 ounces. At today's price of 24K gold (\$1,622.50 per ounce), that would give the earring a

current value of \$324.50-\$405.50, and the bracelets \$12,980-\$15,225.00. A small initial gift, in today's currency, worth \$13,304.50-\$14,927.00. **Compared to what Isaac's wife would receive, this was a mere token.** Yet, it was a significant gift, indeed, confirming the seriousness of the mission of Abraham's servant. This was not a mere gesture of politeness. Further, it was the kind of gift that would not lose its value – like food, an animal, or a piece of clothing.

THE TYPE

The type here should be readily apparent. **In salvation, something of great worth is immediately granted in the Gospel message.** The grace attending that message is laden with an abundance of faith and love. As it is written, *"And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus"* (1 Tim 1:14). **Those were initial tokens that verified to the heart the seriousness of the offer of salvation.**

Hear Peter on the day of Pentecost as he hands some precious things to the listener – before they have made a commitment. *"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel . . . I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh . . . For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call"* (Acts 2:16,17,39).

When telling the people what to do, he handed them some precious jewels: *"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"* (Acts 2:38).

It was also the manner of Jesus to give some precious things to those who gave earth Him. He gave some gifts of **knowledge** to Nicodemus (John 3:1-21), and as well to the Samaritan woman who met him at the well (John 4:10-26).

The point is that it is necessary to establish the seriousness of the message of salvation before a response

to it can be expected. For Peter, that meant establishing the need for it, the basis of that salvation, and the announcement of its availability.

The effectiveness of the salvation is seen in the promises attending it – promises of the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit – according

the prophetic word (Acts 2:38-39). What the people were offered is what God had promised, and there was no way to put a worldly value on it.

THE SERVANT QUESTIONS REBEKAH

"²³ And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?"

WHOSE DAUGHTER ART THOU?

"And said, Whose daughter art thou?"

In this questioning the servant is establishing the qualification of Rebekah. She must be of the kindred of Abraham.

The servant has not forgotten his mission, as specified by Abraham.

➔ *"But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac"* (Gen 24:4)

➔ *"Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again"* (Gen 24:6).

➔ *"And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again"* (Gen 24:8).

He has now found a woman who qualifies outwardly, is from Abraham's homeland of Mesopotamia, and is chaste. That, however, is not sufficient. Now, he must establish that she is of the kindred of Abraham. Therefore he asks, *"Whose daughter art thou?"*

If the servant is Eliezer, and has been with Abraham from the time he was called of God, he will recognize any legitimate name identifying Rebekah's father and mother. If the servant became associated with Abraham at a later time, Abraham no doubt made known his relatives, so His servant could readily identify a legitimate woman for Isaac's wife.

The Power of Focus

There is a certain moral power that comes from a proper focus. Focus, stress, centrality, or concenter, strips away many needless things from the area of consideration. In this case, the servant is facing an attractive woman, who is a hard worker, willing, and chaste. However, while those are all essential, if she is a Canaanite, or is not numbered among the kindred of Abraham, she is disqualified.

There is a sense in which the servant must overcome attractiveness, willing to be hard worker, kindness, etc. – everything that is outward. **He must concentrate on the bottom line – a wife for Isaac from among Abraham's kind, and from Abraham's homeland.**

knowing that in this world they face an aggressive and relentless enemy.

Good preaching and teaching, coupled with a godly and profitable fellowship assist in sharpening our focus. We are, in such a case, less apt to make wrong choices, and more apt to *"walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God"* (Col 1:10).

IS THERE ROOM FOR US?

"... tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?" Other versions read, *"Please tell me, is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?"* ^{NIV} *"Would your father have any room to*

The servant does not intend to spend a lot of time here. He has not been sent out to get acquainted with the family of the prospective wife, but to identify her and bring her back.

The Lethal Nature of Distraction

Many a soul has lost their way in life by becoming distracted from the main thing. They have forgotten that they will die, and must prepare for it. They have not duly considered the coming day of judgment, and that they will give an account for all they have said and done (Heb 9:27). They have allowed the world to lay hold of their affection, even though they were warned not to love the world, or the things that are in it (1 John 2:15-17). They have not directed their lives toward the One who died for them and rose again (2 Cor 5:15). They did not put on the whole armor of God,

put us up for the night?" ^{LIVING} *"Announce to me if there is by your father a place for us to rest up!"* ^{ABP}

The word *"lodge,"* as used here, has the following lexical meaning: *"TO LODGE, STOP OVER, PASS THE NIGHT . . . (USUALLY OVER NIGHT)."* ^{STRONG'S}

The servant does not intend to spend a lot of time here. He has not been sent out to get acquainted with the family of the prospective wife, but to identify her and bring her back. He knows that once he is among the people, he will be able to confirm the qualification the woman, and ensure

that she is willing to come back to Canaan. If this is not known immediately, there is no need to stay.

I suppose there was also the possibility that spending an inordinate amount of time might cause a desire to stay there. Perhaps the accommodations were better, and the kindness of the people might tempt him to stay for a longer time than was necessary. Therefore, he frames his words so it will be clear he has no intention of spending a lot of time there.

I'M A PILGRIM

BY MARY DANA SHINDLER

1. I'M A PILGRIM, AND I'M A STRANGER;
I CAN TARRY, I CAN TARRY BUT A NIGHT;
DO NOT DETAIN ME, FOR I AM GOING
TO WHERE THE FOUNTAINS ARE EVER FLOWING,
I'M A PILGRIM, AND I'M A STRANGER;
I CAN TARRY, I CAN TARRY BUT A NIGHT.
2. THERE THE GLORY IS EVER SHINING;
O MY LONGING HEART, MY LONGING HEART IS THERE;
HERE IS THIS COUNTRY, SO DARK AND DREARY,
I LONG HAVE WANDERED FORLORN AND WEARY.

and their confession was duly noted in heaven (Heb 1:13). It is being away from the land for which they long that creates this posture.

The older and ancient hymns of the church were filled with songs about the pilgrimage of the saints. They are not as plentiful these days because the awareness of pilgrimage is sparse.

IN EXILE

Author Unknown

1. I am an exile, a sojourner
A citizen of some other place
All I've seen is just a glimmer in just a shadowy mirror
But I know one day we'll see face to face
2. I am a nomad, a wanderer
I have nowhere to lay my head down
There's no point in putting roots to deep when I'm
moving on
Not settling for this unsettling town
3. My heart is filled with songs of forever
A city that endures, where all is made new
And no I don't belong here
I'll never call this place my home
I'm just passing through
4. I am a pilgrim, a voyager
I won't rest until my lips touch the shore
Of the land that I've been longing for as long as I've
lived
Where there'll be no pain or tears anymore
5. My heart is filled with songs of forever
The city that endures when all is made new
I know I don't belong here, I'll never
Call this place my home, I'm just passing through

In this we see yet another type of spiritual life. The saints do not intend to remain for lengthy periods in the place that is not their "long home" (Eccl 12:5). They will spend as much time as is necessary to conduct their business as unto the Lord, and no more.

ANOTHER TYPE

In this we see yet another type of spiritual life. **The saints do not intend to remain for lengthy periods in the place that is not their "long home" (Eccl 12:5).** They will spend as much time as is necessary to conduct their business as unto the Lord, **and no more.**

I well remember a song we used to sing in Indiana – a song that speaks of our pilgrimage.

I'M A PILGRIM, AND I'M A STRANGER;
I CAN TARRY, I CAN TARRY BUT A NIGHT.

3. THERE'S THE CITY TO WHICH I JOURNEY;
MY REDEEMER, MY REDEEMER, IS ITS LIGHT;
THERE IS NO SINNING, NOR ANY SIGHING,
NOR ANY TEARS THERE, NOR ANY DYING.
I'M A PILGRIM, AND I'M A STRANGER;
I CAN TARRY, I CAN TARRY BUT A NIGHT.

Throughout the centuries the people of God have confessed to being strangers and pilgrims in the earth –

A CONFIRMING ANSWER

"²⁴ And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. ²⁵ She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in."

I AM THE DAUGHTER

"And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor . . ."

Abraham had journeyed to the land of Moriah where he was commanded to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering to God. An angel from heaven stopped Abraham from slaying Isaac, at which time he saw a ram hung in a thicket near him. He offered up the ram in the place of Isaac, and returned home with Isaac and the two young men who had accompanied him (Gen 22).

Upon his return, news was brought to him: *"Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor; Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram, and Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother; And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and*

Thahash, and Maachah" (Gen 22:20-24).

- ➔ Huz (**son** of Nahor, wife, Milcah)
- ➔ Buz (**son** of Nahor, wife Milcah)
- ➔ Kemuel (**son** of Nahor, wife, Milcah)
- ➔ Chesed (**son** of Nahor, wife Milcah)
- ➔ Hazo (**son** of Nahor, wife Milcah)
- ➔ Pildash (**son** of Nahor, wife Milcah)
- ➔ Jidlaph (**son** of Nahor, wife Milcah)
- ➔ Bethuel (**son** of Nahor, wife Milcah)
- ➔ Rebekah (daughter of Bethuel, son of Nahor)
- ➔ Tebah (**son** of Nahor, concubine Reumah)
- ➔ Gaham (**son** of Nahor, concubine Reumah)
- ➔ Thahash (**son** of Nahor, concubine Reumah)
- ➔ Maachah (**son** of Nahor, concubine Reumah, father of Achish, king of Gath).

Commencing with the twelfth chapter of Genesis, there are daughters mentioned.

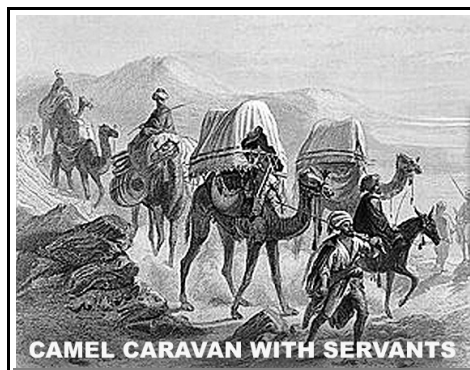
- ➔ Lot's two daughters (unnamed – Gen 19:8,12,14-16;30,36)
- ➔ Sarah, daughter of Abraham's father, Terah (Gen 20:12).
- ➔ The "*daughters of the Canaanites*," from whom the servant was not to take a wife for Isaac (Gen 24:3).
- ➔ The "*daughters of men*," who came to draw water from the well at which Abraham's servant waited (Gen 24:13).
- ➔ Rebekah, "*the daughter of Bethuel, son of Milcah, which she bare to Nahor*" (Gen 24:23-24).

In his dialog with Abraham, the prospective wife is referred to as "*the woman*" (Gen 24:5,8,39,44). Rebekah referred to herself as "*the daughter of Bethuel*" (Gen 24:24,47). Couple that with the fact that only one daughter is mentioned in the report of the progeny of Nahor – Rebekah.

This suggests that the Divine focus was upon Rebekah, and it was only the confirmation of that choice that was required. Either there were no other women actually available, or the record is tailored to reflect Divine choice. This would account for Abraham's word to his servant: "*And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again*" (Gen 24:8).

WE HAVE BOTH STRAW AND PROVENDER

"... She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in." Other versions read, "*straw and feed*," ^{NKJV} "*straw and fodder, as well as room for you to spend the night*" ^{NIV} "*dry grass and cattle food, and there is room for you*" ^{BBE} "*good store of both straw and hay, and a large place to lodge in.*" ^{DOUAY}



Notice that Rebekah is informed about the state of things at home. There will be no problem in housing and caring for ten camels, as well as the servant and those who came with him.

Camels can eat up to nine pounds of hay and dry grains a day. With ten camels, that would be ninety pounds of "*provender*," or "*stray and food*." That could be viewed as a difficult task.

We do not know for sure how many men accompanied Abraham's servant in his trip. It was sufficient to care for and direct ten camels. Men were responsible for unloading the camels when they knelt down, and loading them after they stood up. It is surmised there was at least one man per camel, possibly more. At a minimum, there was a need to entertain at least ten guests, and possibly as high as twenty.

Yet, Rebekah reports there is plenty of room and food for ten camels, the servant, and all of the men who came with him. **The household was ready to entertain strangers.**

BELIEVERS AND HOSPITALITY

Believers are admonished to also be in a state of readiness: "*Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares*" (Heb 13:2). An elder is to be "*given to hospitality*" and "*a lover of hospitality*" (1 Tim 3:2; Tit 1:8). All saints are to be "*given to hospitality*" (Rom 12:13), and are to "*use hospitality one to another*" (1 Pet 4:9). A widow who is supported by the church must have "*lodged strangers*" (1 Tim 5:9).

Of course, it is one thing to read of the obligation to be hospitable; it is quite another matter to read of those who practiced it. **Those in Christ are to be exhibits of hospitality.** Several of these are mentioned in Scripture.

Examples of Hospitality After the Coming of Jesus

- ➔ **MARTHA.** "*Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.*" (Luke 10:38)
- ➔ **ZACCHAEUS.** "*And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.*" (Luke 19:5-6)
- ➔ **SIMON THE TANNER.** "*He lodgeth with*

one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." (Acts 10:6)

➔ **LYDIA.** "And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, **come into my house, and abide there.** And she constrained us." (Acts 16:15)

➔ **PHILIP THE EVANGELIST.** "And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the

house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; **and abode with him.** And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus." (Acts 21:8-10)

➔ **THE BARBARIANS OF MELITA.** "And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and **received us every one**, because of the present rain, and because of the cold." (Acts 28:2)

➔ **PHEBE.** "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye **receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints**, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for **she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.**" (Rom 16:1-2)

➔ **GAIUS.** "The elder unto the well beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. . . . Beloved, **thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers.**" (3 John 1:1-5)

AN INSIGHTFUL RESPONSE

"²⁶ **And the man bowed down his head, and worshiped the LORD.** ²⁷ **And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren.**"

Much can be known about an individual by noting their immediate response to circumstances and sayings. The reaction of Abraham's servant to the response of Rebekah indicates the level of both his insight and sensitivity.

THE MAN BOWED HIS HEAD

"And the man bowed down his head, and worshiped the LORD. . ."

This is the first example in Scripture of a person bowing down his head and worshiping.

The bowing of the head is a form of bringing the body in subjection to the spirit of a person. It is an act of humility, wherein the greatness of God is acknowledged, together with the comparative lowliness of man.

The servant does not have to reflect on what Rebekah has said, but immediately associates it with his mission and the direction of the Lord.

The more sensitive the heart, the more rapidly such associations can be made. Those who are "slow of heart" (Lk 24:25) require reminders, and sometimes they never do make the association. This is a seriously deficient condition, and ought not to be ignored. This condition is owing to the influence of the world and the things that are in the world, which tend to dull spiritual sensibilities.

It should not surprise us that in a self-centered age this is a rare type of reaction. However, where it is found, women often cover their heads, and men uncover their heads – unfortunately, a rapidly decreasing custom of duly honoring others.

BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD

"And he said, **Blessed be the LORD God . . .**" Other versions read, "Praise be to the Lord," ^{NIV} "Blessed be Jehovah," ^{ASV} "Praise the Lord," ^{CSB} "Praised be the Lord," ^{NET} "Thank you, Lord God," ^{LIVING} and "being blessed Yahwah." ^{INTERLINEAR}

The lexical meaning of the word "bless" only confirms the poverty of etymology: "A PRIMITIVE ROOT; TO KNEEL; BY IMPLICATION TO BLESS GOD (AS AN ACT OF ADORATION), AND (VICE-VERSA) MAN (AS A BENEFIT); ALSO (BY EUPHEMISM) TO CURSE (GOD OR THE KING, AS TREASON):

— ABUNDANTLY, ALTOGETHER, AT ALL, BLASPHEME, BLESS, CONGRATULATE, CURSE, GREATLY, INDEED, KNEEL (DOWN), PRAISE, SALUTE, STILL, THANK." ^{STRONG'S}

The phrase "bless the Lord" is found eighteen times in Scripture (Deut 8:10; 1 Chron 29:20; Neh 9:5; Psa 16:7; 26:12; 34:1; 103:1,2,20,22; 34:1; 103:1,2,20,22; 104:1; 115:18; 134:2; 135:19,10). The expression "blessed the Lord" is found six times (Gen 24:18; 1 Chron 29:10,20; 2 Chron 20:26; 31:8; Neh 8:6).

What does it mean to "bless the

AN ACADEMIC DEFINITION OF BLESSING THE LORD

"WHEN MEN ARE SAID TO BLESS GOD, AS IN PSALM 103:1, 2; 145:1-3. WE ARE NOT, THEN, TO SUPPOSE THE DIVINE BEING, WHO IS OVER ALL, AND IN HIMSELF BLESSED FOREVERMORE, IS CAPABLE OF RECEIVING ANY AUGMENTATION OF HIS HAPPINESS FROM ANY OF THE CREATURES WHICH HE HAS MADE: SUCH A SUPPOSITION, AS IT WOULD IMPLY SOMETHING OF IMPERFECTION IN THE DIVINE NATURE, MUST EVER BE REJECTED WITH ABHORRENCE; AND THEREFORE, WHEN CREATURES BLESS THE ADORABLE CREATOR, THEY ONLY ASCRIBE TO HIM THAT PRAISE AND DOMINION, AND HONOR, AND GLORY, AND BLESSING WHICH IT IS EQUALLY THE DUTY AND JOY OF HIS CREATURES TO RENDER. SO THAT BLESSING ON THE PART OF MAN IS AN ACT OF THANKSGIVING TO GOD FOR HIS MERCIES, OR RATHER FOR THAT SPECIAL MERCY WHICH, AT THE TIME, OCCASIONS THE ACT OF BLESSING; AS FOR FOOD, FOR WHICH THANKS ARE RENDERED TO GOD, OR FOR ANY OTHER GOOD. . . ."

..... ^{WILLIAMS & STRONG'S}

Lord?" and, what have people done when they have *"blessed the Lord?"*

Not only is the word *"bless"* most difficult to explain academically, it is further complicated when men are said to *"bless God."* Because *"blessing"* suggests granting some benefit, or bringing some advantage, observations such as the academic definition from McClintok and Strong's Cyclopedia are given. For myself, this is not an adequate explanation, nor can one be found in any lexicon or academic aid that I have found. Further, it seems to me that if men are **admonished** to *"bless the Lord"* (Deut 8:10; Psa 103:22; 134:2), and holy men have resolved to *"bless the Lord"* (Psa 16:7; 34:1), **there must be some understanding of what that involves.**

The Revelation states that God is *"worthy"* to *"receive"* **blessing** (Rev 5:12). Further, *"every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them,"* were heard *"saying, **Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever"*** (Rev 5:13). Then there was the amalgamation of *"all the angels" that "stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, Saying, Amen: **Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen"*** (Rev 7:11-12).

Arriving at a satisfactory explanation of what is involved in blessing God is not easy. Nevertheless, I will make an effort to do so.

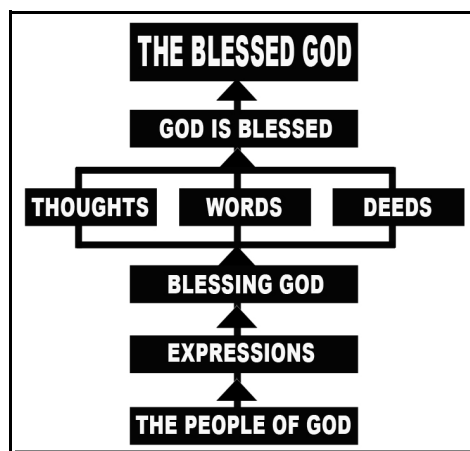
THE IMPACT OF CERTAIN THINGS UPON THE LORD

There are certain people and things that bring delight and joy to the Lord – things that *"bless"* Him, so to speak.

- ➔ *"For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, **so shall thy God rejoice over thee."*** (Isa

62:5)

- ➔ *"**And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying."*** (Isa 65:19)
- ➔ *"**The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, He will joy over thee with singing.**"* (Zep 3:17)
- ➔ *"**And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance"*** (Luke 15:6-7).
- ➔ *"**If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey."*** (Num 14:8)
- ➔ *"**Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day."*** (Deut 10:15)



- ➔ *"**For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."*** (Prov 3:12)
- ➔ *"**They that are of a froward heart***

*are abomination to the LORD: but such as are upright in their way **are His delight.**"* (Prov 11:20)

- ➔ *"**Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."*** (Isa 62:4)
- ➔ *"**But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."*** (Jer 9:24)

What Is Involved in Blessing God?

Men *"bless God"* when they offer praise, whether by word or life, that consists of things in which He delights. God is *"blessed"* in the sense of rejoicing in His people, joying over them, and finding delight in them. In the case of Abraham's servant, he *"blessed God"* by rehearsing what he had perceived – the working of the Lord.

OF MY MASTER

"... of my master Abraham ..." Technically, the God of heaven was the master of the servant as well. However, He had not pledged to bless the world through that servant, and His promises to Abraham were not automatically conferred upon the servant. **Here was a man who knew that any benefits he received from God were strictly owing to the status of his master Abraham.**

A TYPE OF THE SAINTS AND CHRIST

In this, the servant is an excellent type of the saints. They know full well that God is their God – is over them, and is the One who blesses them. However, this is owing to the fact that He is really *"the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (2 Cor 11:31; Eph 1:3; 4:6; 1 Pet 1:3). **It is God's attitude toward Christ that saves us.** His love for us is secondary, being experienced only through Jesus Christ.

Technically, any benefits we

receive are because God has received Christ – just as the benefits the servant was receiving was because of his master, Abraham.

There are eighty-six texts that use the following phrases: “through Christ,” “by Christ” and “in Christ.” And, there are thirty-one more that use the expressions “in Jesus,” and “through Jesus,” and “by Jesus.” Additionally, there are six texts that use the phrases “by the Lord Jesus,” or “in the Lord Jesus.” That are at least one hundred and twenty-three reminders that Christ Jesus is the real cause for blessing and benefit! Glorifying after the flesh (2 Cor 11:18), and glorying in appearance (2 cor 5:12), are therefore unacceptable.

NOT LEFT DESTITUTE

“ . . . who hath not left destitute my master . . .” Other versions read, “has not forsaken,” ^{NKJV} “has not abandoned,” ^{NIV} “has not forsaken,” ^{NRSV} “has given a sign,” ^{BBE} “has not withheld,” ^{CSB} “has not withdrawn,” ^{DARBY} “has not taken away,” ^{DOUAY} “hasn't failed to Be,” ^{GWN} “hath not left

man, of himself, is impotent. It is no different with us than it was with Abraham. **When God promised him a son, he had to reckon on God enabling him, else the son would never be born due to the impotence of the flesh.** Also, God directed the servant, but he had to get ten camels, obtain some helpers, load the camels, and go from Hebron to Nahor. **However, when he met with success, he gave all of the glory to the Lord God - the God of his master, Abraham.** He knew that if at any time God withdrew His presence, His mercy, or His truth, the whole project would have fallen to the ground.

Thus, David insightfully wrote, “**If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say; If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.**” (Psa 124:1-5).

LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of Thine own hands” (Psa 138:8).

- ➡ Peter wrote, “*But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, **make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you***” (1 Pet 5:10).
- ➡ Of the overall work of God in redemption it is written, “*For **He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth***” (Rom 9:28).

It is important that the saints recognize the Lord’s working, as the servant did, and bless Him for His mercy and truth, His kindness and faithfulness.


HIS MERCY AND TRUTH

“ . . . of His mercy and His truth...” Other versions read, “lovingkindness and His truth,” ^{NIV} “steadfast love and faithfulness,” ^{NRSV} “He is good and true,” ^{BBE} “faithful love,” ^{CJB} “righteousness . . . truth,” ^{SEPTUAGINT} “constant kindness,” ^{NAB} “faithful love,” ^{NET} “steadfast faithfulness,” ^{TNK} and “loving-kindness and steadfastness.” ^{AMPLIFIED}

The servant prays as one who recognized the glorious blending of mercy and truth – something that was articulated by the Psalmist hundreds of years later: “*Mercy and truth are met together . . .*” (Psa 85:10).

Beholding this circumstance, the servant does not attribute his success to his own diligence, or to happenstance. He rightly traces it back to God being merciful and truthful – being kind and good, yet true to His own character and promises.

Mercy

The lexical definition of mercy is as follows:  ^{CHECED} {KHEH'-SED} **MEANING:**
1) GOODNESS, KINDNESS, FAITHFULNESS. **USAGE:** KJV - MERCY-149^{TIMES}, KINDNESS-40, LOVINGKINDNESS-30, GOODNESS-12, KINDLY-5, MERCIFUL-4, FAVOR-3,

It is important that the saints recognize the Lord’s working, as the servant did, and bless Him for His mercy and truth, His kindness and faithfulness.

off,” ^{YLT} and “not left my master bereft and destitute.” ^{AMPLIFIED}

The point here is that it was apparent to the servant that God had been faithful to his promise, and had not left Abraham on his own – even though appearance may at first have suggested that to be the case. **Abraham was required to do something, but that by no means suggested he was on his own, or that the Lord was no longer working with him.**

Man Cannot Do the Will of God on His Own

It is important to recognize that, when it comes to doing the will of God,

Blessed is the person who sees this, and is able to reason upon it, and not forget it!

What God Starts, God Must Finish

There is yet another thing to be seen here. **God must finish the work He starts.**

- ➡ This is why Paul wrote, “*Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you **will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ***” (Phil 1:6).
- ➡ The Psalmist also wrote, “*The **LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O***

GOOD—1, GOODLINESS—1, PITY—1. STRONG'S

This is an aspect of God's character that has now been more fully expressed in Christ Jesus. It involves Him being good, kind, and loving, without compromising any aspect of His character. **He is merciful even though there is no foundational cause for showing it found in those receiving it.** He has shown it because of who He is, not because of who men are.

Truth

The lexical definition of "truth" is as follows: *"/ / // 𐤕 'EMETH {EH'-METH}* **MEANING:** N F 1) FIRMNESS, FAITHFULNESS, TRUTH 1A) SURENESS, RELIABILITY 1B) STABILITY, CONTINUANCE 1C) FAITHFULNESS, RELIABLENESS 1D) TRUTH 1D1) AS SPOKEN 1D2) OF TESTIMONY AND JUDGMENT 1D3) OF DIVINE INSTRUCTION 1D4) TRUTH AS A BODY OF ETHICAL OR RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE 1D5) TRUE DOCTRINE ADV 2) IN TRUTH, TRULY. **USAGE:** AV - TRUTH 92, TRUE 18, TRULY 7, RIGHT 3, FAITHFULLY 2, ASSURED 1, ASSUREDLY 1, ESTABLISHMENT 1, FAITHFUL 1, SURE 1, VERITY.

The idea here is that God faithfully acts in strict accord with His Person and promises. James states the same thing from another point of view: "... the Father of lights, **with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning**" (James 1:17).

I BEING IN THE WAY

"... *I being in the way*..." Other versions read, "*being on the way*," NKJV "*the Lord has guided me in the way*," NASB "*the Lord has led me in the way*," RSV "*guiding me straight to the house*," BBE "*the Lord has led me on the journey*," CSB "*when I was in the way, the Lord brought me*," GENEVA "*I being in the way, Jehovah hath led me*," YLT/LITV and "*going on the way [of obedience and faith] the Lord led me*," AMPLIFIED

Here again, the versions present two differing views.

➔ **That the servant was in the way, and was therefore led by God.** In this view, the point was the means of arriving at the destination. In this, the Lord led him because he was faithful and obedient, remaining in the proper path.

➔ **That God led him on his journey.** In this view, the point was the destination, and that the Lord faithfully brought him there.

There is certainly a sense in which both of these are true. The **Interlinear** has the following literal translation: "*I in the way He guided me*."

Although I am not willing to make an issue of it, I prefer the reading, "*I being in the way, the Lord led me*." Versions presenting this view are KJV, NKJV, GENEVA, WEBSTER, REVISED WEBSTER, YOUNG'S LITERAL, LITV, AMPLIFIED.

The sentence seems to flow better, because it is preceded by the words, "*As for me*." The literal rendering of the sentence is "*I in the way*." ^{INTERLINEAR}

➔ "*Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared*" (Ex 23:20).

➔ And again, "*And I will send an angel before thee*" (Ex 33:2).

➔ And again, "*For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off*" (Ex 23:23).

➔ And again, "*Mine Angel shall go before thee*" (Ex 32:34).

➔ In assessing the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, Moses told

The concept of being "in" on "on" the way perfectly comports with the rest of Scripture. Much is made of being on the proper way, of path. The prophet Isaiah referred to road on which men travel to glory as "the way of holiness"

THE LORD LED ME

"... the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren."

I have before noted that the servant of Abraham was no doubt directed by the Lord as Abraham was – **while he was on the way**. Later, this will be the manner in which Israel will be directed from Egypt to Canaan (Ex 13:17-18; Deut 8:2).

Also, Abraham told the servant the Lord would "*send his angel before*" him, to bring him to the proper house (Gen 24:7).

This is also what the Lord said concerning the direction of Israel in their trip to Canaan.

them, "*And when we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border*" (Num 20:16).

This kind of direction is doubtless included in that salient word concerning the ministry of angels: "*But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*" (Heb 1:13-14).

IN OR ON THE WAY

The concept of being "in" or "on" the way perfectly comports with the rest of Scripture. **Much is made of being**

on the proper way, of path. The prophet Isaiah referred to road on which men travel to glory as “**the way of holiness**” (Isa 35:8). Jesus referred to the way to eternal life as the “**narrow way**” (Matt 7:13-14). The epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the “**new and living way**” that has been opened by the Lord (Heb 10:20).

This is the “way” on which men are led by the Lord, just as the servant

was led to the right house as he was on the proper “way,” or road. There is a way that is improper, and does not lead to the appointed destination of the godly. Solomon referred to it as “*a way that seemeth right unto a man*” (Prov 14:12; 16:25). That false way equates to the “**broad**” way that leads “**to destruction.**” of which Jesus spoke (Matt 7:13).

Some have said there are many

roads that lead to heaven, but this is no more true than that there were many ways to get to the house in which Rachel resided. **The person who takes the wrong road will find it does not lead to life.** In matters pertaining to the Lord, there are no exceptions to this rule.

No person has a right to expect Divine direction who is not walking on the appointed way – that is the “*highway of holiness*” (Isa 35:8).

REBEKAH TELLS HER MOTHER’ HOUSE

“²⁸ **And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother’s house these things.**”

THE DAMSEL RAN

“*And the damsel ran . . .*”

Upon hearing the servant pray, Rebekah made haste, and ran to tell her mother’s household what had

➔ When watering the camels, Rebekah “**hasted**, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels” (Gen 24:20).

➔ Now, it is written that Rebekah “**ran**, and told them of her mother’s house these things” (Gen 24:28).

16:9).

➔ “*And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand . . .*” (Mat 15:16-17)

➔ “*Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me*” (Matt 17:17).

➔ “*. . . perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?*” (Mark 8:17)

Wherever there is slowness of heart and response, a major work of God is needed.

happened.

There is an element of haste throughout this account.

➔ The servant ran to meet Rebekah. “*And the servant **ran** to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher*” (Gen 24:17). (Gen 24:17).

➔ When asked for a drink, Rebekah “**hasted**” to let down her pitcher and give him one. “*And she said, Drink, my lord: and she **hasted**, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink*” (Gen 24:28).

➔ A little later “*Laban **ran** out unto the man, unto the well*” (Gen 24:29).

I am reminded of a word said by David when he was in flight from king Saul: “*The king’s business required haste.*”

Slowness of Response

Wherever there is slowness of heart and response, a major work of God is needed. Understanding that, following His ascension, and knowing they were yet to be instructed more fully in the ways of the Lord, Jesus chided His disciples for their slowness.

➔ “*Do ye not yet understand?*” (Matt

There were other times, when Jesus gave a significant discourse concerning his approaching death, yet “*they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him*” (Mark 9:32). Luke writes of that occasion, “*But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying*” (Luke 9:45).

The slowness of the disciples occurred “**at the first**,” but that was not true of them after Pentecost. In explanation John writes, “*These things understood not his disciples **at the first**: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him*” (John 12:16).

HER MOTHER’S HOUSEHOLD

“ . . . and told them of her mother's house these things.” Other versions read, “her mother's house,” ^{ASV} “the house of her mother,” ^{YLT} “her folks,” ^{LIVING} and “her family.” ^{CEV}

The versions that read, “her folks” and “her family,” are wholly inappropriate. The Hebrew text clearly identifies that the people were related to her mother, not Rebekah. It was “her mother's household.”

This is not strange language. Solomon spoke of a virtuous woman. She was married, and “her household” is mentioned three times in the 31st Proverb (Prov 31:21-27). The household is also said to belong to the man (Gen 18:19; 35:2; Ex 1:1; Acts 10:7, etc). The household belonged to the man so far as provision and care was

concerned (1 Tim 5:8). It belongs to the woman as it related to the daily duties and management: “guide the house” (1 Tim 5:14)–“manage the house,” ^{NKJV} “manage their households.” ^{NRSV}

For Rebekah, this was an appropriate action. She had been approached by an unknown man, and given some valuable gifts. At this point she does not know why all of this has happened, yet feels compelled to relate the events to her mother, and probably those who were immediately attending her. She also would have to alert responsible parties in the household that a visitor, his servants, and ten camels would be spending the night there. Preparations would involve:

➔ Water for washing for the men.

- ➔ Unloading the camels.
- ➔ Food for the camels.
- ➔ A meal for the servant and those with him.
- ➔ Sleeping accommodations.

All of this would have to be done on short notice. This gives further significance to the statements, “prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim 2:21), “ready to distribute” (1 Tim 5:18), and “be ready to every good work” (Tit 3:1).

To this point, Abraham's servant has not given the vaguest hint as to why he is there. Apparently, in the presence of Rebekah, he has thanked the Lord for leading him to the house of his “master's brethren.” That is the extent of what is known to this point.

REBEKAH'S BROTHER LABAN

“ ²⁹ And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well. ³⁰ And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well.”

REBEKAH HAD A BROTHER

“And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban . . .”

Laban, being Rebekah's brother, was also the son of Bethuel. Genesis 28:5 refers to him as “Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.” Rebekah is also called “the sister to Laban, the Syrian” (Gen 25:20). He was a grandson to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

Laban will prove to be one of the key figures in the development of Abraham's offspring, being mentioned fifty times in Genesis. His father, Bethuel, son of Nahor, is only

mentioned nine times in the Genesis record.

A Scriptural Pattern

Laban is not mentioned more because he was of himself more significant. Rather, it was because of

with the birth of the Son of God, this pattern continues. **There were a number of wicked people who were mentioned only because of their involvement in the purpose of God**—i.e. Caesar Augustus, Herod, Pilate, Herod, Caiaphas, Gamaliel, etc.

When it comes to the era beginning with the birth of the Son of God, this pattern continues. There were a number of wicked people who were mentioned only because of their involvement in the purpose of God.

his involvements with Rachel, Isaac, and Jacob. This follows a pattern that is seen throughout Scripture. **Those who are directly associated with the working of God are mentioned more frequently – even when they are people like Pharaoh, Abimelech, and others who were outside the lineage of Abraham.**

When it comes to the era beginning

We learn from this to take due note of those who become involved in the purpose of God, whether friend or foe, loving or hostile. Our response should be appropriate to the kind of people they are.

LABAN RAN OUT TO THE MAN

“ . . . and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well . . .” Other versions

Following watering the camels, and giving gifts, the servant inquires if there is room for him and his servants in her father's house – Given O. Blakely

read, “hurried out,” ^{NIV} “came out quickly,” ^{BBE} “went out in haste,” ^{DOUAY} “rushed out,” ^{NET} and “ran outside.” ^{GNB}

This is a summary statement, with the details being supplied in the following verse. Or, it could be viewed as a heading for the information that follows.

LABAN HEARD

“And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister’s hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man . . .” Other versions read, “**FOR** when he had seen,” GENEVA/AMPLIFIED

This is the explanation of why Laban was prompted to move so quickly to meet the man of whom Rebekah had spoken. **He saw her earring, and the bracelets on her hands.** Coupled with the hearing of the words she had to say, he was prompted to act immediately. Therefore, he ran out to go to the man. All of this suggests their home was situated very close to the well, where it could be seen.

A Precious Type

Here again, there is a precious type of what takes place in Christ Jesus. When, for example, the saved bear witness of what has happened to them, or give a reason for the hope that is in them, the hearer ought to be able to behold some precious gift in us. Much can be seen through our joy, exuberance, confidence, gentleness, or some other portion of “*the fruit of the Spirit.*” **A witness without confirming evidence would be like Rebekah telling story of someone who had benefitted her, yet having no proof of it.**

A lot of purported “*evangelism*” and “*missions*” is greatly hindered by the lack of confirming evidence in the ones engaged in those activities. The primary evidence, of course, is the unequivocal power that is associated with the Gospel of Christ (Rom 1:16). Wherever it is preached, it brings out of the listeners things that are not otherwise known – whether in favorable or unfavorable responses.

This is confirmed by the experience Paul and Barnabas had in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia. When delivering a powerful word, and multitudes of people came to hear, “*when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, **contradicting and blaspheming***” (Acts 13:45). However, a different response was found among the Gentiles who were there. “*And when the Gentiles heard this, **they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord:** and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed*” (Acts 13:48).

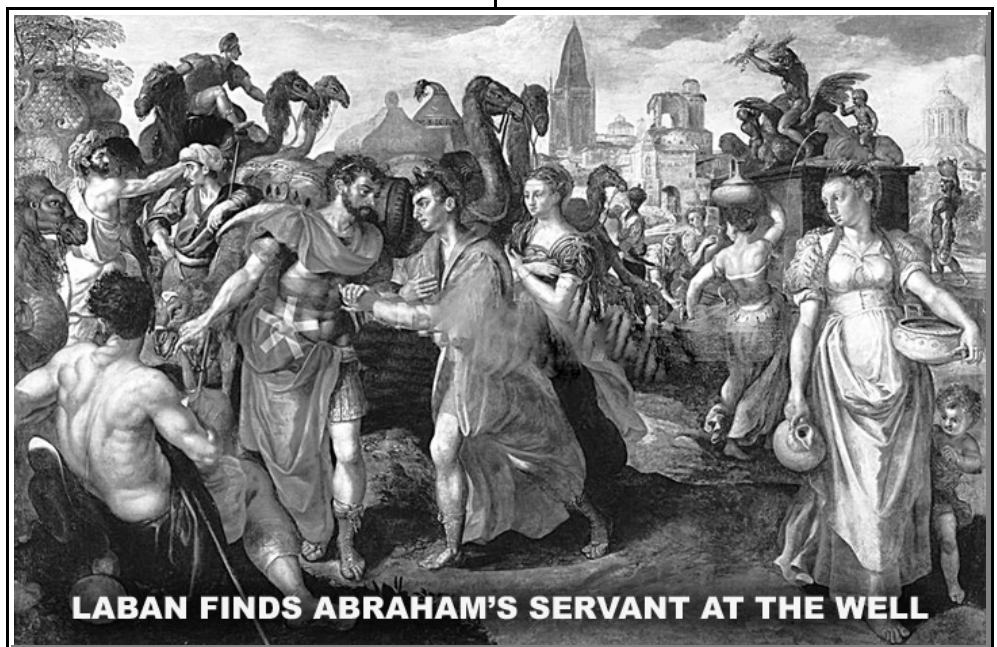
Until the Gospel was preached, neither of these responses could have been predicted. They were caused when, so to speak, the gift of God was shown.

the women came to draw water, and where passers by probably obtained water for themselves and their camels. The text does not say whether Abraham’s servant was readily apparent or not. Laban might have made some inquiries to find the man. There is also the possibility that he had seen Rachel talking with the man, and thus could easily identify him. If this is the case, he had seen the servant give Rachel the earring gold bracelets.

The sight immediately confirmed everything Rebekah had said. **There was a man, he had some camels, and he was standing by the well where Rebekah had met him.** Things were precisely as his sister had reported.

Something to Learn

We learn from this incident that what we say about the Lord ought be



HE STOOD BY THE WELL
“. . . and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well.” Other versions read, “*and there he stood by the camels at the well,*” ^{NKJV} “*he was standing by the camels at the spring,*” ^{NASB} and “*he was standing by the camels at the fountain.*” ^{ASV}

There were probably a lot of people around that well. It was a place where

able to confirmed immediately by inquiring souls. He should be found where we say we found Him, and he should be doing what we say He did. What we say must be verifiable to the fullest extent possible. This means that we should not embellish the facts, or slant them so they will appear more palatable. **Our testimony should reflect what we have actually experienced.**

I do not want to spend an inordinate amount of time on this matter, but there is, in my judgment, an enormous amount of ambiguity associated with contemporary efforts to

deliver the Gospel. Things that seem to lack clarity are as follows.

- ➡ The true identity of Christ.
- ➡ The reason why His death was

necessary.

- ➡ Why men need salvation.
- ➡ The benefits of being saved.
- ➡ How to receive remission of sins.
- ➡ The expectations of God.

LABAN WELCOMES THE SERVANT

"³¹ And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels. ³² And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him."

COME IN

"And he said, Come in . . ." Other versions read, "Come,"^{NIV} "come on in,"^{CJB} "come in hither,"^{SEPTUAGINT} "Come and stay with us, friend,"^{LIVING} "come home with me,"^{CEV} "Sir, you are welcome to come in,"^{ERV} and "He cried, Come in."^{AMPLIFIED}

This again suggests that the residence was close by the well, and that Rachel had not traveled a long distance to draw water.

THOU BLESSED OF THE LORD

" . . . thou blessed of the LORD..." Other versions read, "O blessed of the Lord,"^{NKJV} "you, who are blessed by the Lord,"^{NIV} "you on whom is the blessing of the Lord,"^{BBE} "you whom^{ADONAI} has

concluded that this servant had been blessed by the lord. This was indicated by the following.

- ➡ The number of camels he had.
- ➡ The number of servants attending him.
- ➡ The nature of the loads the camels were carrying.
- ➡ The nature of the gifts that he had given to Rebekah.

Laban did not conclude that the servant had simply worked hard to gain these things. Assuming his integrity, he traced these things back to "the Lord."

It is apparent that Laban had some understanding of the true God, doubtless obtained from his grandfather Nahor, and later his father Bethuel. Even though Nahor did not journey with Abraham to Canaan, he had apparently not remained in Ur of the Chaldees. Further, some elementary knowledge of God was obtained by him because of Abraham, for there is no record that God ever spoke to Nahor.

Years later, when Jacob was

agreement with Jacob, Laban said, *"The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us."* The response of Jacob indicated he had more extensive knowledge of God's dealings with Abraham. *"And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac"* (Gen 31:53). The word "Fear," as used here, denoted God Himself. Some versions indicate this by capitalizing "Fear" (NKJV, NIV, RSV, NRSV). The Amplified Bible reads, *"But Jacob swore [only] by [the one true God] the Dread and Fear of his father Isaac."*

So far as the covenant of God with Abraham was concerned, Nahor was in the same category as Ishmael. God would use his daughter, but the promise would come through her son Isaac, not her. Even in those days, flesh and blood was not the basis of the blessing.

WHEREFORE STANDEST THOU WITHOUT

" . . . wherefore standest thou without? . . ." Other versions read, "Why do you stand outside?"^{NKJV} "why are you standing out there?"^{NIV}

It appears that Laban knew Rachel had told the servant there was plenty of room and food in the house. Why had he not acted on her word?

For one thing, the servant had not made a formal request to stay with them. What he had asked was, *"I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?"* (Gen 24:23). For another thing, he had not been formally invited to spend the night. He was no doubt awaiting a word upon which he could act with confidence.

I HAVE PREPARED

So far as the covenant of God with Abraham was concerned, Nahor was in the same category as Ishmael. God would use his daughter, but the promise would come through her son Isaac, not her.

blessed,"^{CJB} "blessed of Jehovah!"^{DARBY} and "blessed of Yahweh."^{NJB}

This being a true saying, Laban had observed the circumstance and

having dealings with Laban, while the knowledge of Nahor was not as acute as that of Abraham, he apparently gained some acquaintance with God through Abraham. In making an

“ . . . for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels. . . .” Other versions read, *“I have made room in the house and prepared a place for the camels,”* ^{CJB} *“I have made the house ready for you, as well as a place for the camels,”* ^{NAB} *we have a room all ready for you, and a place prepared for the camels!”* ^{LIVING} *“I have prepared a room for you to sleep in and a place for your camels,”* ^{ERV} *and “I’ve prepared some space in the house and a place for the camels.”* ^{ISV}

This involved clearing things not needed, and providing things needed for the servant and those traveling with him. Some have suggested Laban may have removed some idols that could have been in the house. This is based upon the later record of Rachel, who, when leaving, had *“stolen the images that were her father’s”* (Gen 31:19). Her father referred to them as *“my gods”* (Gen 31:30). Laban had referred to *“Jehovah”* when he said to the servant, *“thou blessed of the LORD,”* for the word *“LORD”* comes from the Hebrew word *“Yehovah.”* It is so translated in the American Standard Version, Darby’s, and Young’s Literal Translation. No idol was so named. It is therefore clearly possible that the removing of some idols was involved in preparing the house for this servant, who was a worshiper of Jehovah.

Keep in mind that we are speaking of from 10-20 men and ten camels being housed.

THE MAN CAME INTO THE HOUSE

“And the man came into the house . . .” Other versions read *“lodging,”* ^{DOUAY} *and “the residence.”* ^{ABP}

The precise nature of this *“house”* is not known – whether it was a

structure, cave, or extensive network of tents. The word used here is a general one, with the following lexical definition: *“A HOUSE (IN THE GREATEST VARIATION OF APPLICATIONS, ESPECIALLY FAMILY, ETC.): — COURT. . . DUNGEON . . . GREAT AS WOULD CONTAIN, HANGINGS, HOME, (WINTER) HOUSE, PALACE, PLACE . . . TEMPLE.”* ^{STRONG’S}

I am going to assume the residence was a more firm structure, and of considerable size.

HE UNGIRDLED THE CAMELS

“ . . . and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels . . . ” Other versions read, *“Then Laban unloaded the camels, and he gave straw,”* ^{NASB/NRSV} *“the camels were unloaded. Straw and fodder were*

“ . . . and water to wash his feet, and the men’s feet that were with him.” Other versions read *“and water for him and his men to wash their feet,”* ^{NIV} *“water was brought for him to wash his feet and the feet of the men with him.”* ^{CJB}

Laban himself did not wash the feet of the servant and the men who were with them, but he provided water for them to do so. This was the customary way to entertain visitors. This is how Abraham entertained the three messengers that came to him in Mamre: *“Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree”* ^{NKJV} (Gen 18:4).

Once again, we see that true hospitality involves considerable effort and, what might be interpreted as, inconvenience.

brought,” ^{NIV} *“took their cords off the camels and gave them dry grass and fodder,”* ^{BBE} *and “and [Laban] ungirded his camels and gave straw and provender for the camels.”* ^{AMPLIFIED}

The *“he”* of this verse is Laban, not Abraham’s servant. It certainly would not be in keeping with the nature of hospitality to have a traveler come into your house after a long journey, and have to unload and feed his own camels.

Once again, we see that true hospitality involves considerable effort and, what might be interpreted as, inconvenience.

WATER TO WASH HIS FEET

You may recall when, in the house of Simon, a certain woman who was a *“sinner”* washed Jesus feet with her tears. When Simon said within himself, *“This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner”* (Luke 7:39). After delivering a word about the woman’s good deed, Jesus said to Simon, *“I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head”* (Luke 7:44). You see, then, how that Laban conducted himself in keeping with the ordinary practice of providing quests for the washing of their feet. There is no evidence that this was tedious for him.

I WILL NOT EAT UNTIL . . .

“³³ And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on.”

THERE WAS SET MEAT BEFORE HIM

“And there was set meat before him to eat . . .” Other versions read, *“food was set before him to eat,”* ^{NKJV}

“A meal,” ^{CJB} *“bread,”* ^{DOUAY} *and “the table was set.”* ^{NAB}

In Scripture, the word *“meat”* does

not always refer to animal flesh. In Hebrew, “*flesh*” mean is generally translated “*savory meat*” [a single word] (Gen 27:4,7,9,14,17,31). Ordinarily the word “*mean*” means “*food*,” as compared with “*milk*” (1 Cor 3:2; 5:12). In this text, it refers to a food, with a variety of things to eat.

Setting the Spiritual Table

Here we ought to say something about spiritual food. When the Scriptures compare milk with meat, they are drawing a comparison between what is given to babies, and what is given to adults. In our parlance, a bottle or a plate of food.

case, relates to the Persons of God and Christ, what They are doing, and Divine purpose. Blessed is the person who knows this, and proceeds accordingly by distributing and eating solid spiritual food. This is very rare in our day.

I WILL NOT EAT UNTIL . . .

“ . . . but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said . . .” Other versions read, “until I have told my business,” ^{NASB} “I have told you wh I have to say,” ^{NIV} and “until I have said my message.” ^{GENEVA}

The servant refuses to eat until he has stated the reason for coming. That, to him, was more important than the nourishment of the body. **That is being**

read, “Then tell us,” ^{NIV} “Do so,” ^{BBE} “Speak,” ^{DOUAY} and “speak then.” ^{TNK} Most versions read, “speak on.”

The word “*speak on*” are translated from a single word. Here it is distinguished from having a discussion, asking a question, answering a question, etc.–i.e. something that involved a two-way conversation. This was an invitation to divulge his mission without being interrupted.

An Observation

There are messages that are intended to be delivered in their relative totality – without discussion and frequent questions. **The reason for this is that such words cannot be understood in bits and pieces.** They must be declared so the whole can be grasped. There is a spiritual logic that requires comprehending the inter-relationship of its various facets – a form of reasoning that requires a conclusion rather than the understanding of this part, then that part. Examples of this kind of speaking are as follows.

- ➡ Peter’s declaration on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36).
- ➡ Peter’s message in the Temple (Acts 3:12-26).
- ➡ Stephens defense before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:1-53).
- ➡ Paul’s message in the synagogue of Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:16-47).
- ➡ All of the epistles are examples of this kind of communication.

It is necessary for the people of God to be subjected to this kind of speaking. Purported messages that are interspersed with humorous anecdotes, illustrations, and the likes, will not produce thinking believers – people whose thoughts are “*established*” (Prov 16:3). That only happens when there are sound words and productive thinking.

Those who have grown up in to Christ cannot be sustained by the continual rehearsal of the kind of spiritual food given to novices and beginners. They must have some nourishing fare that does not coddle or encourage infancy.

“*Milk*” is not elemental teachings, while “*meat*” is viewed as the deeper aspects, or implications of the truth. “*Meat*” is a well rounded meal, with nutrients for an adult. There is a variety of food that is suitable for a mature person.

Those who, like the Corinthians and Hebrews, must be fed with “*milk*,” cannot be given solid spiritual food. They are, because of carnality, incapable of digesting it. They cannot see the implications of the truth, reason upon it, or adapt their lives to it. On the other hand, those who have grown up in to Christ cannot be sustained by the continual rehearsal of the kind of spiritual food given to novices and beginners. They must have some nourishing fare that does not coddle or encourage infancy. Meat, in such a

driven by a purpose larger than his own benefit or comfort.

The novice might ask why he could not divulge his mission while they were eating. After all, people communicate during mealtimes. **However, at this time, the full attention of the people must belong to the servant, for he has not come to visit, make friends, or hold interesting personal conversation.**

I have found when we are delivering the message of the Gospel and its implications, or expounding on some aspect of God’s “*eternal purpose*,” it is necessary to have the full and undivided attention of the people.

SPEAK ON

“ . . . *Speak on.*” Other versions

THE LORD HATH BLESSED MY MASTER GREATLY

“³⁴ And he said, I am Abraham’s servant. ³⁵ And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses.”

I AM ABRAHAM’S SERVANT

“And he said, I am Abraham’s servant. . . .” Other versions read, “slave.” ^{LITV} Of the forty-eight versions of Scripture in my possession, only the Literal Translation of the Bible does not use the word “servant.”

There were at least two kinds of servants: “bondservants” (Lev 25:39), “bond man” (Gen 24:33), or “bondwoman” (Gen 21:10), and “servants.”

Distinguishing between a bondservant and a servant

I take care to point out that these are general observations.

The words “bondservant” (Lev 25:39), “bondman” (Deut 24:22) and “bondwoman” (Gen 21:10) are terms relating to ordinary slaves. The emphasis is put on them being in a form of bondage (“bond”), **strictly serving the interests of someone other than themselves.** These would be the opposite of “freemen” (1 Cor 7:22), who were not, in a social sense, bound to carry out the will of someone else.

The term “servant” often implies an element of freedom, where one is free to do the will of his master as a steward. In this capacity, the servant would be given broad instructions, then charged with the responsibility of carrying them out with discretion, much like Abraham’s servant.

Joshua, for example, was Moses “servant” (Ex 33:11) – but not in the sense of a bondman. Abraham’s servant could be given a mission that took him away from home, involving the selection of a caravan of camels, gifts to be dispensed, and servants to

assist him in the journey. He is described as a servant who “ruled over all” that Abraham had (Gen 24:2).

Jesus was God’s Servant

The prophet Isaiah foretold the Christ, declaring that He would be God’s “Servant” – “Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My spirit upon Him: He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth” (Isa 42:1-3).

Yet, Jesus was not like a bondservant. God gave all things into the hands of His Servant, Jesus: “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand” (John 3:35).

In this regard, Abraham’s “servant” was a type of Christ, being one “that ruled Over all” that Abraham had

And again, “Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God” (John 13:3).

In this regard, Abraham’s “servant” was a type of Christ, being one “that ruled Over all” that Abraham had (Gen 24:2).

Jesus’ Word About Servants

Jesus distinguished between the ordinary “servant” and His disciples – who technically were His servants also (John 15:20; Rom 1:1; Gal 1:10; Phil 1:1). Jesus said to His apostles, “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you” (John 15:15).

However, being ruler over all of Abraham’s house, this servant executed

the will of Abraham, not his own.

THE LORD HATH BLESSED MY MASTER

“ . . . And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses.”

God had blessed Abraham, as he promised (Gen 12:2; 22:17).

- ➡ **FLOCKS.** These were generally sheep and/or goats.
- ➡ **HERDS.** These were generally cattle. Abraham’s cattle were so numerous that the land could not sustain his herds and those of Lot, his nephew (Gen 13:6-7).

- ➡ **SILVER.** Abraham is said to have been “very rich in silver” (Gen 13:2).
- ➡ **GOLD.** Abraham was “very rich in gold” (Gen 13:2).
- ➡ **MENSERVANTS.** Both Pharaoh and Abimelech added to Abraham’s “menservants” (Gen 12:16; 20:14). Abraham had three hundred and eighteen trained servants, capable of military action (Gen 14:14).
- ➡ **MAIDSERVANTS.** Both Pharaoh and Abimelech added to Abraham’s “maidservants,” or “womenservants” (Gen 12:16; 20:14).
- ➡ **CAMELS.** Pharaoh gave Abraham a number of camels (Gen 12:16). These were long-distance burden-bearing animals, that could also be ridden.

➡ **ASSES.** Pharaoh gave Abraham “*he asses*” and “*she asses*” (Gen 12:16). These animals were known for their sure-footedness and swiftness. They also could carry heavy burdens.

So it was that the blessing of the Lord was confirmed by what Abraham possessed. Part of this could be seen in the caravan and servants that had traveled to Nahor. This is the kind of covenant God made with Abraham – to bless his seed and give him a land.

Blessing Is attested by Possession

As with Abraham, when God blesses a person, it is confirmed in the possessions of that person. Prior to the time of Christ, this was largely in the matter of outward possessions. Whereas, with the exception of his faith and hope, this was largely revealed in earthly possessions with Abraham,

there are spiritual benefits that come to one being blessed by God. Here is a brief sampling of them.

- ➡ Peace (Psa 119:165)
- ➡ Contentment (Phil 4:11; Heb 13:5)
- ➡ The fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-24)
- ➡ Old things passing away (2 Cor 5:17)
- ➡ All things becoming new (2 Cor 5:17)
- ➡ A purged conscience (Heb 9:14; Heb 10:22)
- ➡ Confidence before God (Heb 3:14; 1 John 3:21)
- ➡ The full assurance of faith (Heb 10:22)

- ➡ The full assurance of hope (Heb 5:11)
- ➡ The full assurance of understanding (Col 2:2)
- ➡ The love of the brethren (1 John 3:14)
- ➡ Living by every Word of God (Lk 4:4)
- ➡ Perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 7:1)
- ➡ Not touching the unclean thing (2 Cor 6:17)
- ➡ Being holy (1 Pet 1:15-16)
- ➡ Being willing (Psa 11:3)
- ➡ Overcoming the world (1 John 5:4-5)

SARAH BARE A SON

“³⁶ And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath.”

Sarah was barren when she first married Abraham (Gen 11:30), and this was no doubt generally known at the time. However, as the servant testified, she bare a son to Abraham “*when she was old.*” Other versions read, “*in her old age,*” ^{NASB} “*after she had grown old,*” ^{DARBY} “*bore one son to my master after he had grown old,*” ^{SEPTUAGINT} “*in her {Or his} old age,*” ^{NIB} “*in his old age,*” ^{NJB} “*after she hath been aged,*” ^{YLT} “*was very old,*” ^{LIVING} “*after his growing old,*”

ABP “after he had grown old.” BRENTON

As you can see, a number of the versions refer the old age to Abraham rather than Sarah. **However, the subject being developed is what Sarah had done, not what Abraham had accomplished.** It is quite true that the patriarch was in old age when Isaac was conceived. In fact, his body was “*now dead,*” or “*as good as dead*” ^{NIV} (Rom 4:19).

However, the accent here is clearly upon Sarah herself. Not only had she been “*barren*” from the beginning of her marriage, but she had lived to an age when bearing children was biologically

impossible. The birth of Isaac involved a two-fold miracle. First, the Divine empowerment of Abraham to beget seed, and second, the Divine enablement of Sarah to conceive seed.

The emphasis here is on Sarah delivering the son begotten by Abraham. In the context of the servant's account, the age of Abraham was not the point, but his wealth.

Concerning Sarah, the point was her age. This would also emphasize the fact that she would have no further sons that could possibly receive the inheritance.

MY MASTER MADE ME SWEAR

“³⁷ And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the

Canaanites, in whose land I dwell: ³⁸ But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a

wife unto my son. ³⁹ And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me.”

Following watering the camels, and giving gifts, the servant inquires if there is room for him and his servants in her father's house – Given O. Blakely

We will note through the testimony of the servant, that he is very precise in his report. Here is the first comparison with the earlier text of the instruction of Abraham to his servant.

It is important to pick up on the manner in which reports and

testimonies are to be given. There must be a zealous avoidance of fleshly embellishments, which focus on the one giving the testimony, rather than the testimony itself.

God is the “*God of truth*” (Deut 32:4; Isa 65:16). As such, “*in Him is no darkness at all*” (1 John 1:5).

Because of this circumstance, He cannot possibly be glorified by glowing, but inaccurate reports and testimonies. He will not dignify exaggerated reports by working favorable through them. If a person chooses to flavor a report with fleshly additions, it will be powerless.

HE SAID THE LORD WOULD SEND HIS ANGEL

COMPARISON OF THE TEXTS, #2

“... He shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.”
..... (Gen 24:7-8)

“The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father’s house ... and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear from my oath.”
..... (Gen 24:40-41)

“⁴⁰ And he said unto me, *The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father’s house:* ⁴¹ *Then shalt thou be clear from this my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear from my oath.*”

The servant summarizes the report without taking anything away from the facts. Abraham had referred to taking a wife from among his kindred, which assumed their willingness. The servant, now speaks to the kindred themselves, stating that their approval will determine whether he proceeds with the plan or not. This was a wise move, diffusing any possibility of viewing this as an intrusion upon their household. It emphasized that they were not only Abraham’s kindred, but that he respected their thoughts on the matter.

It also appeared that he assumed Rebekah would not hesitate to go with him if the kindred consented to it.

The servant had already received

some confirmation that this was the woman, and was therefore proceeding with confidence.

A Lesson to Be Learned

When we are examining a matter to determine if it is the will of God or not, **we should proceed without eliminating any of the evidence that has already been confirmed.** In the experience of Abraham’s servant, he had positioned himself by a well and asked the Lord for the sign of a woman coming to the well, giving him a drink of water upon request, and then volunteering to water all of the camels. All of that had happened precisely as he requested. He was proceeding with that in mind.

Our journey through this world is one of progress toward glory. From one perspective, it is like:

- ➡ Abraham leaving Ur of the Chaldees.
- ➡ Then going to Haran.
- ➡ From Haran he journeyed to the

COMPARISON OF THE TEXTS, #1

“... thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell.”
..... (Gen 24:3)

“You must not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live.”
..... (Gen 24:37)

promised land.

- ➡ Upon finding a famine, he proceeded to Egypt.

- ➡ He had to handle the incident with Pharaoh taking Sarah.
- ➡ Then he returned from, Egypt.
- ➡ He negotiated through the necessity of separating from Lot, because there was not even to sustain their flocks.
- ➡ There was a battle to be fought in order to retrieve Lot and all of his goods.
- ➡ There was the matter of handling the issue with Ishmael.
- ➡ Then the matter of offering Isaac as a burnt offering to the Lord.
- ➡ He had to handle the issue concerning Abimelech.
- ➡ He also had to pass wisely through the experience of Sarah dying.
- ➡ Now he must plan for a wife for his son Isaac.

In all of these experiences, he had to remember how he had been blessed by God, who was faithful to His promise. As his experienced multiplied, his faith increased, and his assurance grew.

Now, Abraham’s servant is going through the same process. God is directing him, answering his prayers, and making his path clear. As He does so, the confidence of the servant is growing bit by bit, so to speak. All of this is reflected in the manner in which he reports his experience to Abraham’s

kindred. He is doing so with a confidence that will surely detected.

I CAME THIS DAY TO THE WELL

"⁴² And I came this day unto the well, and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go: ⁴³ Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw water, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink; ⁴⁴ And she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: let the same be the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son."

The servant proceeds with his report, being accurate in every way. He now elaborates, providing some details he had learned after the prayer.

In the record of the prayer itself, the servant refers to *"the damsel."* In the servant's report, he refers to her as *"the virgin."* We learn from the record that when Rebekah came to the well, the servant observed she was *"a virgin, neither had any man known her"* (Gen 24:16).

The Divine Appointment

Both the record of the prayer itself, and the report of the prayer by the servant, mention the Divine appointment of the women chosen to be Isaac's wife.

- ➔ *" . . . let the same be she that Thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac . . ." (24:14).* Other versions read *"chosen,"*^{NIV} *"marked out,"*^{BBE} *"the one You intend,"*^{CJB} *"Thou hast provided,"*^{DOUAY} *"ordained,"*^{GENEVA} *"prepared,"*^{SEPTUAGINT} *"decided upon,"*^{NAB} *"decreed,"*^{NJB} *"decided for,"*^{YLT} *"prepared,"*^{ABP} *"approved,"*^{LITV} *"Picked out,"*^{MESSAGE} *"selected and appointed and indicated."*^{AMPLIFIED}
- ➔ *" . . . let the same be the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son . . ." (24:44).* All of the versions translate the

COMPARISON OF THE TEXTS, #3

"And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that Thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master."
..... (Gen 24:12-14)

"And I came this day unto the well, and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go: Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw water, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink; And she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: let the same be the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son.
..... Gen 24:42-45)

"The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord" .. (Psa 37:23)

word the same as in verse 14 (see chart above).

Here God is represented as appointing, choosing, and deciding upon, before the servant ever saw the woman. The text is plain enough, and should not require extensive elaboration. The servant was sent out to obtain a wife for Isaac. The servant knew that this involved recognizing the one that God had already chosen to be Isaac's wife. It would certainly be an uncomely trait if professing Christians could not see such a thing happening.

REVEALED DIVINE APPOINTMENTS TO THE TIME OF OUR TEXT

Genesis 5:6-11:32, 16:16; 21:1-3; 25:7

Thus far in the Genesis record, those who had been chosen by God to

be in the Messianic lineage have been selected from a number of children having the same parents: Seth, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac – and now, Rebekah. The vast number of people from whom these were selected cannot possibly be estimated.

- ➔ **Seth** – *Begotten by* Adam, who lived 930 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 800 years (Gen 5:4).
- ➔ **Enos** – *Begotten by* Seth, who lived 912 years, begetting sons and daughters for the last 807 years.
- ➔ **Cainan** – *Begotten by* Enos, who lived 905 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 815 years.
- ➔ **Mahalaleel** – *Begotten by* Cainan, who lived 910 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 840 years.
- ➔ **Jared** – *Begotten by* Mahalaleel, who lived 895 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 830 years.
- ➔ **Enoch** – *Begotten by* Jared, who lived 962 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 800 years.
- ➔ **Methuselah** – *Begotten by* Enoch, who was on earth 365 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 300 years.
- ➔ **Lamech** – *Begotten by* Methuselah, who lived 969 years begetting sons and daughters during the last 762 years.
- ➔ **Noah** – *Begotten by* Lamech, who lived 777 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 595

years

- ➔ **Shem** – *Begotten by* Noah, who lived 950 years, only three sons are listed as his progeny, of whom, Shem was the chosen one.
- ➔ **Arphaxad** – *Begotten by* Shem, who lived 602 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 500 years.
- ➔ **Salah** – *Begotten by* Arphaxad, who lived 438 years, begetting sons and daughter during the last 403 years.
- ➔ **Eber** – *Begotten by* Salah, who lived 433 years, begetting sons and daughters for the last 403 years.
- ➔ **Peleg** – *Begotten by* Eber, who lived 464 years, begetting children during the last 430 years.
- ➔ **Reu** – *Begotten by* Peleg, who lived 269 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 209 years.
- ➔ **Serug** – *Begotten by* Reu, who lived 239 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 207 years.
- ➔ **Nahor** – *Begotten by* Serug, who lived 230 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 200 years.
- ➔ **Terah** – *Begotten by* Nahor, who lived 148 years, begetting sons and daughters during the last 119 years.

COMPARISON OF THE TEXTS, #4

"And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels." (Gen 24:15-20)

"And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew water: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also." (Gen 24:45-46)

There is such a thing as a "good report," that makes the bones fat, or brings health to the inner man (Prov 15:30). There is also a "true report" (1 Kgs 10:6) that is verifiable and can be easily substantiated. This is the kind of report that is being given by Abraham's servant, with truth and integrity.

➔ **Abraham** – *Begotten by* Terah, who lived 275 years. Only three sons are listed as Terah's progeny, who Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

➔ **Isaac** – *Begotten by* Abraham, who Abraham lived 175 years, with eight sons listed as his progeny: Abram, Nahor, Haran, Zimram, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

To this point, two women have been chosen: Sarah, the appointed mother of Abraham's heir, and Rebekah, chosen by God to be Isaac's wife.

It seems to me that any person who objects to the fact of God's choosing, appointing, and selecting has unwittingly admitted to an ignorance of the Scriptures themselves. There is simply too much said on this matter for the current misunderstanding to be justified.

In Genesis, the book of beginnings, through which the minds of the people of God are being shaped, and their thoughts directed, we are faced with a choosing God. The record appears to purposefully discourage any attempts to account for the choices made – particularly in the Messianic line. Of the twenty people listed to this point, we know virtually nothing concerning sixteen of them: ¹ *Seth*, ² *Enos*, ³ *Cainan*, ⁴ *Mahalaleel*, ⁵ *Jared*, ⁶ *Methuselah*, ⁷ *Lamech*, ⁸ *Shem*, ⁹ *Arphaxad*, ¹⁰ *Salah*, ¹¹ *Eber*, ¹² *Peleg*, ¹³ *Reu*, ¹⁴ *Serug*, ¹⁵ *Nahor*, ¹⁶ *Terah*.

If, in fact, God bases His choices upon the basis of what e foresees men are going to do, just how do men account for these choices, since God has revealed hardly anything about what they did. Is such a view complimentary of a God who is noted for revelation? As for myself, I consider such conclusions a reproach to God. Men should not speak of God so loosely.

REBEKAH CAME FORTH WITH HER PITCHER

⁴⁵ *And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew water: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee.* ⁴⁶ *And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from*

her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also."

Ensuring that the household does not imagine that the servant meeting Rebekah was a chance-meeting, the

servant has related his prayer to God about this circumstance. In this way, God will get the glory for what has taken place.

REBEKAH CAME FORTH

"And before I had done speaking in

Following watering the camels, and giving gifts, the servant inquires if there is room for him and his servants in her father's house – Given O. Blakely

mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew water . . . "

Just as the inspired record said, Rebekah had shown up on the scene before the servant had finished praying. This was a matter that was orchestrated from heaven. God was working things together for the good of Abraham, and consequently for the good of the servant who was doing Abraham's will.

Note that in recounting the incident, the servant says Rebekah came forth. This is precisely what the record says: "*Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor*" (Gen 24:15). She was among the kindred of Abraham, and thus met the first qualification Abraham had given him (Gen 24:4).

The Manner of Salvation

The is also the manner of God's great salvation – God working all things together for the good of those who love Him and are the called according to His purpose (Rom 8:28). However, this does not mean that God takes random circumstances and weaves them all together in a tapestry of goodness. **It is as the individual is living "unto Him who died for us and rose again" (2 Cor 5:15), that God does this marvelous work (Rom 8:28).** That is what is involved in conforming us to the image of His Son, as is declared in Romans 8:29-30. **People who do not live for the Lord, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, ought not expect everything to be worked together for their good.** Further, this is by no means a Divine commitment toward all people. Unfortunately, there is a lot of loose thinking in this area within the professed church.

I SAID UNTO HER

" . . . and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee."

The servant has already recounted his prayer when he arrived at the well (Gen 24:13-14,42-44). This was one of

the tests that would confirm he had found the woman God had "appointed" to be Isaac's wife (Gen 24:14,44).

SHE MADE HASTE

"And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink . . . "

The servant reports the eagerness and swiftness with which she responded to his request. This served as additional confirmation that she was the woman chosen by God to be the wife of Isaac.

Knowing God's Will

By precisely carrying out the commission Abraham had given to him, **the servant had placed himself in a position where the will the Lord could, in fact, be known, or confirmed.** The servant knew he had to be correct in his assessment of the woman. His choice had to perfectly synchronize with that of God.

This too is the manner of the Kingdom which we have now "*received*" (Heb 12:28). **Our will and choice must be perfectly aligned with the will of God, else we are living in vain. No person can afford to be wrong about the will of God!** Further, it certainly is not something men can discover by guessing, or by means of

mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." **Other versions read, "be able to test and approve,"** ^{NIV} *discern,* ^{NRSV} *determine,* ^{IE} *learn by experience,* ^{WEYMOUTH} *find out and follow."* ^{WILLIAMS}

In order to recognize and know the will of God, one has to be on the narrow way, the highway of holiness – living by faith and walking in the Spirit. If this is not the posture of the individual, it simply is not possible to obtain a knowledge of the will of the Lord. That kind of knowledge is out of the reach of any and every person who is not living for the Lord.

The Kingdom of God functions in this manner, so that the casual and insincere cannot arrive at a proper understanding of the will of God, and hence cannot do the will, of the Lord. Such people are not able to see the main thing, and thus wander about in the labyrinth of spiritual confusion.

Jesus made a statement that touches on this subject. He spoke of

COMPARISON OF THE TEXTS, #4

"And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels." (Gen 24:15-20)

"And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew water: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also." (Gen 24:45-46)

There is such a thing as a "*good report*," that makes the bones fat, or brings health to the inner man (Prov 15:30). There is also a "*true report*" (1 Kgs 10:6) that is verifiable and can be easily substantiated. This is the kind of report that is being given by Abraham's servant, with truth and integrity.

the wisdom of this world.

With this account in mind, consider the word of Paul in Romans 12:1-2: "*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the*

"the doctrine," which has a great deal to do with the will of God. **"If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself"** (John 7:17).

Other versions read, *"If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know of the teaching,"* ^{NASB} and *"If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether My teaching comes from God or whether I speak on My own."* ^{NIV}

Countless numbers of professing Christians have no cogent idea concerning the will of the Lord. Consequently, they live in a state of spiritual ignorance, which gives the devil the advantage. This is why we are admonished, *"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is"* (Eph 5:15-17). This is not a casual word, but one that relates to being an overcomer rather than being overcome. It is not likely that a person without understanding will overcome.

Redeeming the time and walking circumspectly equates to Abraham's servant standing by the well, and

COMPARISON OF THE TEXTS, #5

"And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold; And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? "And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in."
..... (Gen 24:22-25).

"And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also. And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands."

..... (Gen 24:46-47)

"It was a true report" (1 Kgs 10:6)

watching for a woman that had been chosen by God to appear. It is being done at the right place, and the right time.

SHE MADE THE CAMELS DRINK ALSO

" . . . and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also."

This was the final sign by which the servant knew he had found the proper woman. It was an unusual sign – which is the factor that makes a

"sign," a "sign." Common occurrences are not likely to be signs. The existence of a sign assumes that God has worked.

If the servant had not asked for this sign, and Rebekah had said she would water his camels also, the act would have had no significant meaning, and could certainly not have served as proof of God's will. Detecting a sign from God requires an understanding of what He has said, and an alert heart.

I ASKED HER, AND SHE ANSWERED

" 47 And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I

had directly to do with his mission.

Some people never would have asked this question. They would have attempted to diagnose what was going

the earring and the bracelets. He said he placed them on her. She had not asked for them.

Notice the servant does not mention that Rebekah said there was plenty of room for the men and for the camels. That is because this was not pertinent to his mission. He confined himself to what his master had said, allowing the circumstance to play out, no doubt depending upon the Lord.

It is true that as we live unto the Lord, there are matters for which we must simply wait. Even though Rebekah had spoken for the household, the servant will let them speak for themselves. This is an excellent example being *"careful for nothing,"* or *"anxious for nothing"* (Phil 4:6). It is necessary to walk by faith (2 Cor 5:7).

COMPARISON OF THE TEXTS, #6

"And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor. She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in."
..... (Gen 24:23-25)

"And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands."

..... (Gen 24:47)

put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands."

The servant did not ask a novel question – like, "What time is it?" or "Is this the well that most of the people draw from in this area? The question

on, and arrive at some satisfactory answer. They might have asked someone from that area concerning her kindred. Instead, the servant sought an answer from the one person he was assured had the answer. Also, note how he accounted for Rebekah having

I BOWED MY HEAD AND WORSHIPED GOD

7 COMPARISON OF THE TEXTS, #7

"And the man bowed down his head, and worshiped the LORD. And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren."
..... (Gen 24:27)

"And I bowed down my head, and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son."
..... (Gen 24:48)

DIVINE GUIDANCE

"⁴⁸ And I bowed down my head, and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son."

Notice how the servant carefully crafts his words so that God receives the proper glory.

- ➔ ABRAHAM'S WORDS TO HIM. *"And he said unto me, **The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house.**"* (Gen 24:40)
- ➔ GOD OF MY MASTER. *"And I came this day unto the well, and said, **O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now Thou do prosper my way which I go.**"* (Gen 24:42)
- ➔ THE LORD APPOINTED. *"... let the same be the woman **whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son.**"* (Gen 24:44)
- ➔ I WORSHIPED THE LORD. *"And I bowed down my head, and **worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham.**"* (Gen 24:48).
- ➔ THE LORD LED ME. *"... **the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter***

unto his son." (Gen 24:48).

The servant has been with this household for only a brief time, and already he has recounted his experience in such a manner as to leave the people thinking about the Lord first, and then his master, Abraham, upon whom great blessings had been bestowed.

There is no hint of shame, or reluctance to speak of the Lord, His greatness, and blessing, and His direction.

It ought to be noted that God not only receives glory by what He does, but also by the faithful report of that doing by those who have perceived it.

I BOWED DOWN MY HEAD

"And I bowed down my head, and worshiped the LORD . . ." Other versions read, *"I bowed low and worshiped the Lord,"* NASB *"with bent head I gave worship and praise to the Lord,"* BBE *"bowed my head, prostrated myself before* ADONAI *,"* CJB *"I stooped, and bowed down before Jehovah,"* DARBY *"falling down I adored the Lord,"* DOUAY *and "I bow, and do obeisance before Jehovah."* YLT

A Posture of Humility

The bowing of the head, bowing the knee, falling down, kneeling – these are all reverent postures that perceptive people assumed when they knew they were before the Lord (Matt 17:14; Mk 1:40; 10:17; 15:19; Lk 5:8). Nine times the Gospels report people falling down in humbleness before the Lord Jesus (Matt 2:11; 18:26; Mk 5:33; Lk 5:8; 8:28; 8:41,47; 17:16; John 11:32). The Prophet Isaiah and the apostle Paul announce that *"every knee"* shall bow to the Lord (Isa 45:23; Rom 14:11; Phil 2:10).

These days, there is not a lot of bowing before the Lord. Some people boldly affirm that posture is of no consequence when coming to the Lord. However, throughout history, there have been people who were noted for

bowing before the lord, kneeling, and even prostrating themselves before Him (where the KJV uses *"falling"* or *"falling down,"* the NIV reads *"prostrate,"* or *"prostrated"* (Num 24:4; Deut 9:18,26; 1 Sam 24:8; 1 Kgs 18:39; Dan 8:17).

Bowing, bending the knee, and prostration before the Lord was not a mechanical reaction, or one of mere routine. **It was the reaction of a person who knew they were in the presence of the Lord.** It was an act of humility, that spoke of the unworthiness that is perceived within the framework of an acute consciousness of the Lord.

BLESSED THE GOD OF MY MASTER

"... and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham . . ."

Notice that the servant never forgets his subordination – **first to the Lord, and second to Abraham.** He does not refer to the Lord as his Lord, but *"the LORD God of my master Abraham."*

There Is A Strict Priority-order Here

- ➔ (1 – The Lord God
- ➔ (2 – Abraham
- ➔ (3 – The servant of Abraham.

In this record, the order cannot be changed. Any benefit that the servant received was strictly owing to Abraham, with whom the Lord had made a covenant. At no point could Abraham step outside the circumference of the will of God. Equally true, the servant could not veer from the purpose made known by Abraham.

The Order That Is In Place in Christ

As simplistic as it may seem, there is also an order within which we also must consciously live, and move, and have our being.

- ➔ God the Father.
- ➔ The Lord Jesus Christ.
- ➔ Mankind.

Just as surely as the servant received direction from Abraham, the redeemed receive direction from Christ, who is the Head of the house (Heb 3:6). Just as the servant could not establish his own agenda, so the saved are not free to establish their own order of business. Abraham did not consult with the servant concerning what was to be done, and Jesus does not consult with His people concerning is to be done in the earth.

Just as Abraham was driven by the will and revelation of God, so Jesus Christ is fulfilling the will of the Father (John 6:38), pleasing the father (John 8:29), and executing His will (John

5:30).

HE LED ME IN THE RIGHT WAY

" . . . which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son. "

No doubt Laban and Bethuel could have asked some of the servants what road they took in coming to Nahor. However, God was in this whole matter, and wherever God is at work, He is the One who is to get the attention.

The servant comes right out and states that he had been *"led"* properly, so that he could take his master's

(Abraham) brother's (Nahor), daughter (Rebekah) to Isaac, Abraham's son.

Someone might object to saying Rebekah was Abraham's brother's son, when he was technically Nahor's granddaughter. However, the word *"brother"* was often used in reference to a more distant relative. For example, Lot is called Abraham's *"brother,"* in Genesis 14:16).

Here, I gather that the use of *"brother"* is much like it is among believers. A *"brother"* was a member of the Abrahamic race. The term was used in this manner throughout the Law (Lev 19:17; 25:25,35,36,47).

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 7/13/12. We will continue our series of lessons in the book of Genesis. The thirty-seventh lesson will cover verses 49 through 67 of chapter twenty-four: "A WIFE FOR ISAAC, #3." Laban and Bethuel give their consent for Rebekah to be Isaac's wife. More gifts were given to Rebekah, her brother, and her mother. After seeking to detain the servant for an additional ten days, Rebekah consented to go with him. She and her maids followed the servant, finally arriving where Isaac was abiding. The servant reported everything to Isaac, after which he took Rebekah as his wife. He was comforted, then, after his mother's death. The meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

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THE WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP

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