

GOD'S PROVISION FOR ISAAC

CORE PASSAGE: GENESIS 24:37-50

CONTEXT

By Genesis 24, Abraham was much older, and Sarah had died. But Isaac was unmarried. Wanting to get his family affairs in order and ensure the covenant promises lived on to another generation, Abraham sought to find Isaac a wife. Not wanting Isaac to marry one of the pagan Canaanites, Abraham sent one of his servants in Isaac's stead to his old homeland. The servant, trusting in the Lord's faithfulness to his master, went to Abraham's homeland and did exactly as Abraham said, bringing Rebekah home to her new husband.

KEY CONCEPT

God's people trust in God's providence in every aspect of our lives.

As you examine Genesis 24:37-50:

- Note the servant's reliance on prayer and God's providence to help him be successful in his mission.
- Reflect on how God orchestrated the events in the servant's journey to bring Rebekah to Canaan for Isaac.



TIMELINE

God Tests Abraham's Obedience with a Command to Sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22)

SESSION STUDY: Abraham Finds a Wife for Isaac (Genesis 24)

Isaac and Rebekah Give Birth to Twins: Esau and Jacob (Genesis 25)

Sarah Dies and Is Buried (Genesis 23)

Isaac Marries Rebekah (Genesis 24)

Abraham Dies and Is Buried (Genesis 25)

Daily Readings

- Day 1:** Genesis 22:20–23:20
- Day 2:** Genesis 24:1-9
- Day 3:** Genesis 24:10-27
- Day 4:** Genesis 24:28-67
- Day 5:** Genesis 25:1-18
- Day 6:** Psalm 111



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

GENESIS 24:37-44

OUR TRUST IN GOD INFLUENCES OTHERS TO TRUST IN HIM TOO.

Circle the statements of faith made by Abraham and Abraham's servant.

37 “My master put me under this oath: ‘You will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites in whose land I live **38** but will go to my father’s family and to my clan to take a wife for my son.’ **39** But I said to my master, ‘Suppose the woman will not come back with me?’ **40** He said to me, ‘The LORD before whom I have walked will send his angel with you and make your journey a success, and you will take a wife for my son from my clan and from my father’s family. **41** Then you will be free from my oath if you go to my family and they do not give her to you—you will be free from my oath.’ **42** Today when I came to the spring, I prayed: LORD, God of my master Abraham, if only you will make my journey successful! **43** I am standing here at a spring. Let the young woman who comes out to draw water, and I say to her, ‘Please let me drink a little water from your jug,’ **44** and who responds to me, ‘Drink, and I’ll draw water for your camels also’—let her be the woman the LORD has appointed for my master’s son.”

VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

“Let us, before we engage in actual service, see the Master’s face, talk with him, and tell to him any difficulties which occur to our minds. Before we get to work, let us know what we are at, and on what footing we stand. Let us hear from our Lord’s own mouth what he expects us to do, and how far he will help us in the doing of it. I charge you, my fellow-servants, never to go forth to plead with men for God until you have first pleaded with God for men.”¹

—Charles Spurgeon (1834–1892)

Key Concept: God's people trust in God's providence in every aspect of our lives.

God had promised to make out of Abraham a great nation (Genesis 12:2). After years of waiting, the first domino fell with the birth of Isaac. As Abraham aged and Sarah died, however, Isaac remained unmarried. One small family does not make a nation. Isaac needed a wife, and Abraham wanted to do his part to provide for his son. After years of living by faith, Abraham trusted God to provide once again.

As Abraham considered the task, another problem arose. Isaac could not marry among the Canaanites around him. This became a long-standing prohibition for God's people in the Old Testament due to the Canaanites' paganism. Isaac's wife had to be from Abraham's people, but to send Isaac to Haran could mean that Isaac—in love with a young woman and surrounded by his relatives—might decide to stay instead of returning to the promised land. Abraham found a solution in his faithful servant, who not only obeyed Abraham's command but became a model of faith as well. No doubt drawing inspiration from his master's walk with God all those years, the servant followed in Abraham's footsteps and trusted God to provide even when the prospects seemed slim.

How have you been influenced by the faith of others?

The servant's faith was not complete, however. He voiced some doubt (24:5,39). Many believe doubt to be in conflict with true faith, but the problem isn't the doubt itself. The issue is where we take our doubts. Doubts taken to God in prayer are opportunities for deeper faith as God meets those doubts with His Word by His Spirit. Faith does not shy away from doubts; faith engages God with the doubts. God will meet us where we are. He has answers for us if we are willing to seek and accept them. He may not give us all the details, but He will assure us that we can trust Him.

Abraham's servant is a model of the journey of faith. Played out through his physical journey from Canaan to Haran, through the servant, we see what it is to trust God with the details of our lives. The servant teaches us to pray to God as we go about our days, putting our situations in God's hands to provide a solution. There is no better way to live. And in this passage, the influence of faith comes full-circle, as the servant here was telling of God's faithfulness in his situation to an audience of Abraham's family.

What are some ways God has used your testimony of faith to influence others?



PERSONAL PREPARATION

GENESIS 24:45-50

GOD'S PROVIDENCE IS ALWAYS FOR HIS GLORY AND OUR GOOD.

Highlight evidence of the providence of God in this passage.

45 “Before I had finished praying silently, there was Rebekah coming with her jug on her shoulder, and she went down to the spring and drew water. So I said to her, ‘Please let me have a drink.’ **46** She quickly lowered her jug from her shoulder and said, ‘Drink, and I’ll water your camels also.’ So I drank, and she also watered the camels. **47** Then I asked her, ‘Whose daughter are you?’ She responded, ‘The daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor, whom Milcah bore to him.’ So I put the ring on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists. **48** Then I knelt low, worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who guided me on the right way to take the granddaughter of my master’s brother for his son. **49** Now, if you are going to show kindness and faithfulness to my master, tell me; if not, tell me, and I will go elsewhere.” **50** Laban and Bethuel answered, “This is from the LORD; we have no choice in the matter.”

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

GOD'S PROVIDENCE: Providence refers to God’s continuing work and involvement in His creation. This includes, in various degrees, God’s preservation of the created order, His governance, and His care for His people (Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3; Genesis 8:21-22). Christians believe the world, and even the cosmos itself, is contingent upon God, incapable of existing apart from Him. Christians also believe in God’s personal and direct intervention in the world—as opposed to a hands-off approach to creation—that affects not only the natural order but also the individuals and events within human history.

Key Concept: God's people trust in God's providence in every aspect of our lives.



The servant's recounting of his story was filled with the reality of God's providence. God directed. God led. God orchestrated. By His sovereign hand, according to His purposes, and through His faithful servant, God provided the right wife for Isaac. Rebekah was kind and open to the Lord's calling on her life. And her family approved and let her go. All the details were put together like a jigsaw puzzle in which the completed image reflects God's glory.

While God's providence is seen clearly in this passage, the truth is that this same providence underlies the entirety of the Bible. All we need to do is look for it. Providence underlies our lives as well. Everything that happens is prepared by God's loving hands. Nothing is left to chance. He is working all things to a glorious end (Romans 8:28-30), and He not only works in our lives but also uses us to bring His purposes to pass. Looking at the model the servant offers us, we see that by God's grace and for His glory, His providence and our prayers go together.

How can we learn to see the providence of God in our own faith journey?

The response from Laban and Bethuel was just as crucial as the servant's faithful prayers and actions. They too recognized

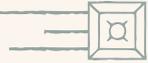
God's providence (Genesis 24:50). They could have refused to send Rebekah, but they felt if they opposed the marriage, they would be opposing God. In this way, they too are our teachers about the openness required when God's providence appears.

Without God's providence, we are left in a world without a plan. Thankfully, God is on His throne. His providence is His working in this world for His glory, but it is also His working in this world for our good. Glory and goodness go together.

What barriers keep you from accepting God's plan, and how can you break those barriers down?

GOSPEL CONNECTION

By providing for Isaac, God revealed His faithfulness in continuing to fulfill His covenant promises to Abraham in building him into a great nation. This faithfulness would continue to the birth of Jesus, who would establish God's family as those who trust in Him for salvation.



FAITH IN GOD'S PROMISES

How do we see each person or group acknowledging, submitting to, and acting in light of God's providence in Genesis 24:37-50?

ABRAHAM

THE SERVANT

REBEKAH'S FAMILY

What are some ways you can testify to or distract from God's providence through your words and actions?



Key Concept: God's people trust in God's providence in every aspect of our lives.



HEAD

How does the doctrine of God's providence change the way you see your life?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Read Psalm 111. Thank God for His providence. Praise Him for His great works. And ask Him for the faith to believe His gracious hand is in everything so that your life might be filled with the fullness of His glory.

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HEART

How does the gospel help you see the tenderness and care of God's providence?



HANDS

How will you use God's providence in the gospel and in your life to share about Jesus with others this week?