

# Genesis 24: The Son's Bride (Part 2)

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Did you finish your homework?

master (*adown*): 23 occurrences

servant (*ebed*): 16 occurrences

When Abraham dies (Gen 25:7), Isaac's children are **fifteen** years old. Yet Abraham is never mentioned in connection with them. The transition from the life of Abraham to Isaac is nearly complete at the end of chapter 24.

God could have called Rebekah in the same way that He called Abraham (i.e., directly). What secondary means did He use in her case?

The servant was mindful of his role in seeking a wife for Isaac—he demonstrated his conviction that success would not be a matter of **human effort**.

The success of the servant's mission is entirely bound up in God's **promises**.

In chapter 22, we see Abraham offering up Isaac as a shadow of God offering up Christ. In chapter 24, we see Abraham's servant seeking a wife for Isaac as a type for the Spirit calling a bride for Christ.

Abraham is the "father"—exalted father (*abram*); father of a multitude (*abraham*):

- Abraham has one son who is the heir of his possessions and heir of the promises
- Isaac is a miraculous child—born not by the power of the flesh, but the power of the Spirit
- Isaac is the son that Abraham loves (his "only" son)
- Abraham is willing to offer his beloved son as a sacrifice

So . . . if Abraham is the type for *God*, and Isaac is the type for *Christ*, then Abraham's servant is the type for the *Holy Spirit*, and Rebekah is the type for the *Church*.

Notice the relationship structure:

- Abraham is the servant's master (Gen 24:2)
- Isaac is the servant's master (Gen 24:65)
- the servant is in charge of all Abraham's possessions, but Isaac is the heir (Gen 24:2, 36)
- the servant is in charge of all the other servants (Gen 24:59)
- Rebekah is under the authority of her husband Isaac (Gen 24:65)

This chapter points to a tendency seen in almost every English translation of the Bible: substituting the word "servant" for **slave**. This is particularly evident in the New Testament where the Greek word *doulos* has only one meaning, but is translated "servant" in all but a few instances.

As Americans, we have a particularly strong negative reaction to the use of "slave" language. The Bible states it as **matter-of-fact**. There is no condemnation, and no apology.

The reason we are squeamish about "slave" language is that we have bought a lie: inequality of rank implies inequality of **worth**. Biblically, there is no conflict between the two (especially in the Godhead, where the authority structure is quite clear).

In fact, the Bible only acknowledges two categories: slaves of sin and slaves of righteousness. Either way, we are slaves. (Rom 6:16)

Slaves can still exercise a degree of autonomy and authority. This was illustrated by the Roman centurion. (Luke 7:8)

Abraham's servant shows that he has more concern for doing his master's will than seeing to his own physical needs. The servant's sole purpose in life is to please his master. (Gen 24:33, 56)

Notice:

- the servant is *sent out* by his master
- the servant must find the bride who is *divinely appointed* for the beloved son
- the servant verbally *calls* the bride
- the bride verbally *consents* to marriage
- the servant *prepares* the bride for marriage with jewelry and clothes
- the gifts to the bride *overflow* to her family
- the servant *takes* the bride and presents her to the groom
- the bride *humbles* herself in submission to her groom
- the groom *takes* the bride to himself and *loves* her

The grammar is interesting at this point:

- Rebekah agrees to *go* (*halak*) (Gen 24:58)
- Rebekah is *sent* by her family (*shalach*) (Gen 24:59)
- the servant *takes* Rebekah (*laqach*) (Gen 24:61)

Agreeing to "go" is only reasonable if God is trustworthy.

Did God sovereignly appoint Rebekah to be Isaac's wife, or did she go of her own free will?