

Genesis 24:1-67

- Longest chapter in Genesis
- Four sections:
 - 24:1-9 Abraham and his servant
 - 24:10-28 Servant and Rebekah
 - 24:29-61 Servant and Laban
 - 24:62-67 Isaac and Rebekah

Genesis 24:1

1. “The Lord HAD blessed Abraham” fulfills the promise of “I will bless”

24:2 –

1. Servant has no name here. In Genesis 15:2 it is Eliezer of Damascus

2. Put your hand under my thigh”

A. Eerdmans commentary “The Book of Genesis” from the NICOT by Hamilton says:

This is “a prelude to the servant’s act of swearing. “thigh” is undoubtedly a euphemism for genitalia, in the light of passages such as:

Genesis 46:26 –

1121 [e] bə-nē- of the sons N-mpc	802 [e] nə-sé the wives N-fpc	905 [e] mil-le-bad besides Prep-m, Prep-l N-msc	3409 [e] yə-ré-ḳōw, his loins N-fsc 3ms	3318 [e] yō-ša-’ē who came from V-Qal-Prtcl-mpc	4714 [e] miš-ray-mah to Egypt N-proper-fs 3fs	3290 [e] lə-ya-’ā-qōb with Jacob Prep-l N-proper-ms	935 [e] hab-bā-’ah the [ones] going Art V-Qal-Prtcl-fs	5315 [e] han-ne-peš the persons Art N-fs	3605 [e] kal- All N-msc
כי and Conj-w	וְנָשָׁיו and six Number-fs	מִלֵּב sixty Number-cp	וְרֵכְלִי souls [were] N-fs	וְיָצְאִי in all N-msc	מִצְרָיִם of Jacob N-proper-ms	לְיַעֲקֹב and Conj-w	הַבָּאִהָ soul N-fs	הַנֶּפֶשׁ in N-msc	כָּל- of N-proper-fs

Exodus 1:5 – “

1961 [e] hā-yah was V-Qal-Perf-3ms	3130 [e] wə-yō-w-sēp for Joseph Conj-w N-proper-ms	5315 [e] nā-peš; souls N-fs	7657 [e] šib-’īm seventy Number-cp	3290 [e] ya-’ā-qōb of Jacob N-proper-ms	3409 [e] ye-reḳ- descendants N-fsc	3318 [e] yō-ša-’ē who were V-Qal-Prtcl-mpc	5315 [e] ne-peš the souls N-fsc	3605 [e] kal- all N-msc	1961 [e] way-hī, And were Conj-w V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms
וַיְהִי was V-Qal-Perf-3ms	וַיֹּסֶף for Joseph Conj-w N-proper-ms	נַפְשׁוֹ souls N-fs	שִׁבְעִים seventy Number-cp	יַעֲקֹב of Jacob N-proper-ms	יָרְדוּ descendants N-fsc	יָצְאוּ who were V-Qal-Prtcl-mpc	נַפְשׁוֹ the souls N-fsc	כָּל- all N-msc	וַיְהִי And were Conj-w V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms

Genesis 24:2 -

7760 [e] šim- put V-Qal-imp-ms	834 [e] low; he had Prep 3ms	3605 [e] bə-ḳal that Pro-r	4910 [e] ham-mō-šél over all Prep-b N-msc	1004 [e] bē-tōw, of his house N-msc 3ms	2205 [e] ze-qan oldest Adj-msc	5650 [e] 'ab-dow the servant N-msc 3ms	413 [e] 'el- to Prep	85 [e] 'ab-rā-ham, Abraham N-proper-ms	559 [e] way-yō-mer So said Conj-w V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms
שִׁים put V-Qal-imp-ms	לֹא he had Prep 3ms	אֵשֶׁר- that Pro-r	בְּכָל- over all Prep-b N-msc	הַבֵּית of his house N-msc 3ms	זָקֵן oldest Adj-msc	עַבְדּוֹ the servant N-msc 3ms	אֶל- to Prep	אֲבִרָהָם Abraham N-proper-ms	וַיֹּאמֶר So said Conj-w V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms

3409 [e] yə-ré-ḳī. my thigh N-fsc 1cs	8478 [e] ta-hat under Prep	3027 [e] yā-də-ḳā your hand N-fsc 2ms	4994 [e] nā please Interjection
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Where a man's children are said to come from his thigh. Holding Abraham's membrum in his hand, the servant promises to carry out Abraham's wishes. The significance of this procedure is uncertain....R. D. Freedman has suggested that taking the membrum – now circumcised as a covenant sign - into the hand is a way of invoking the presence of God at this moment between master and servant.”

B. Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary, John H. Walton, General Editor: “It is possible that the oath is sworn on the genitals of Abraham, which would then be understood to be binding even if Abraham should die. None of this can be confirmed, however, because the text offers no explanation and no parallels have been found in the ancient Near East.

C. Dennis Prager commentary on Genesis, The Rational Bible:

In the ancient world, men made an oath with another man by holding that person's prized possession: his genitals. We get the English word “testify” from “testicle.” In our day, we consummate deals by signing contracts and shaking hands. While there was nothing sexual about the rite, this method might have been more effective. But I admit to a preference for handshakes and written contracts.”

3. One other time in the OT Genesis 47:29 when Jacob is dying:

3130 [e] lə-yô-w-sêp, לְיוֹסֵף Joseph Prep-l N-proper-ms	1121 [e] lib-nôw לְבִנּוֹ his son Prep-l N-msc 3ms	7121 [e] way-yiq-rā וַיִּקְרָא then he called Conj-w V-Qal-Conseclmpf-3ms	4191 [e] lā-mūt לָמוּת to die Prep-l V-Qal-Inf	3478 [e] yiś-rā-’ēl יִשְׂרָאֵל for Israel N-proper-ms	3117 [e] ye-mē- יָמָיו the time N-mpc	7126 [e] way-yiq-rē-bū וַיִּקְרָב And when drew near Conj-w V-Qal-Conseclmpf-3mp	29			
8478 [e] ta-ḥat תַּחַת under Prep	3027 [e] yā-dē-ka יָדְךָ your hand N-fsc 2ms	4994 [e] nā נָא please Interjection	7760 [e] śim- שִׁים put V-Qal-Imp-ms	5869 [e] ba-’ē-ne-ka, בְּעֵינֶיךָ in your sight Prep-b N-cdc 2ms	2580 [e] hēn חֵן favor N-ms	4672 [e] mā-ša-tī מָצָאתִי I have found V-Qal-Perf-1cs	4994 [e] nā נָא now Interjection	518 [e] ’im- אִם if Conj	low לוֹ to him Prep 3ms	559 [e] way-yô-mer וַיֹּאמֶר and said Conj-w V-Qal-Conseclmpf-3ms
4714 [e] bə-miś-rā-yim. בְּמִצְרָיִם in Egypt Prep-b N-proper-fs	6912 [e] tiq-bə-rē-nī תִּקְבְּרֵנִי do bury me V-Qal-Imperf-2ms 1cs	4994 [e] nā נָא please Interjection	408 [e] ’al- אֵל- Not Adv	571 [e] we-’ē-meṭ, וְאֶמֶת and truly Conj-w N-fs	2617 [e] hē-seḏ חֲסֵד kindly N-ms	5978 [e] ’im-mā-dī עִמָּדִי with me Prep 1cs	6213 [e] wə-’ā-sī-tā וְעָשִׂיתָ and deal Conj-w V-Qal-ConjPerf-2ms	3409 [e] ye-rē-kī; רַגְלִי my thigh N-fsc 1cs		

and, then in Genesis 49:29-33:

“Then he gave them these instructions: “I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite, the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite. There Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried, there Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried, and there I buried Leah. The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittites.” When Jacob had finished giving instructions to his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, breathed his last and was gathered to his people.”

24:3-4 –

1. Isaac's wife must NOT be from the Canaanites since they are going to be removed from the land when it is given to Abraham's descendants. If Isaac is to inherit the land he must not

marry among those destined to disinherit the land. His wife must be of the same family so as not to become part of the cursed people.

24:6-8 –

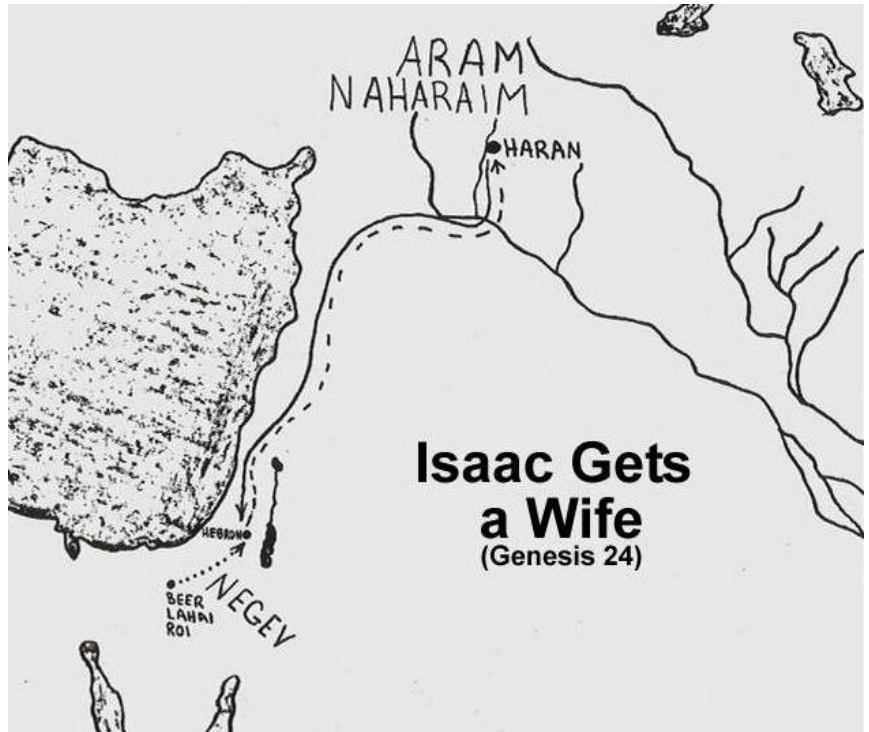
1. The future wife (daughter-in-law) is being asked to do what Abraham did – leave his land, his family and go to the Promised Land
2. “Messenger” (the angel of the Lord) will go before

SECTION TWO:

24:10-11 –

1. Ten Camels may be part of the bride-price (Jacob had ten bulls, Joseph ten donkeys, Jesse had ten loaves, Jeroboam ten loaves, Naaman ten talents of silver
2. Destination is Aram-Haharaim, or central Mesopotamia. Also, called Paddan Aram meaning “Aram of the two rivers”
 - a. “city of Nahor”
 - b. Nahuru east of the Balikh River is referred to in the Mari texts
 - c. Amarna letters during Thutmose I and later use the term NAHARINA .

3. Journey took one month



24:12-14

1. Servant prays outside Nahor
2. Two tests to find God's will

24:15 – lineage before Rebekah is identified by: appearance (16) chastity (16), sharing attitude (18) kindness to animals (19), hospitality (25)

24:17-20

1. Rebekah's speed and attentiveness is highlighted several times. Eleven verbs are used
2. Watering 10 camels is hard work
 - a. If camels had gone several days without water they could each drink 25 gallons
 - b. The standard size water vessel used by Rebekah would require 8-10 jars full for each camel
 - c. Total trips to fill the jar to water 10 camels is about 100 trips to the well which would take several hours.

24:26-27 – The servant offers his doxology possible out loud since it is general enough and not specific enough for Rebekah to gain any information other than Abraham and her father are brothers

SECTION THREE:

24:28 – Since Laban is the leader it appears Bethuel is deceased and Rebekah returns “to her mother’s household” rather than her fathers

24:29 – Laban is now the head of the house (similar to what Isaac is about to be)

24:30 – Laban is interested in the man’s possessions, but for what reason? Covetous? Trade? Surprise?

24:31-32 – Laban uses YHWH and not Elohim

24:33 – Explaining his purpose is a priority for the servant before food and shelter

24:24-36 – Servant makes sure they realize his master is wealthy.

Isaac is described without name as a miracle baby

24:37-41 –

1. One repetition – What if the woman does not come?
2. One deletion – Servant does NOT repeat that under no circumstances is Isaac to return north
3. Also avoided is any mention of Abraham being led out of Laban’s land
4. Emphasis is on Abraham being blessed and wealthy by YHWH

24:50-51 – Laban accepts YHWH is involved. Whatever the motive Laban gives YHWH credit for leading the servant to Rebekah

24:52 – third time servant worships God

24:53 – the remainder of the bride price. The two phases of the bride price:

1. 24:22 – **“a gold ring weighing a half shekel, and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels.”**
2. 24:53 – **“the servant brought out jewelry of silver and of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave to her brother and to her mother costly ornaments.”**

24:57-58 – There is no change of mind, but the issue is whether or not Rebekah is willing to leave in such a short time.

24:59 – the nurse may be a dowry gift. The nurse remains unnamed until 35:8 when her name Deborah is revealed

24:60 – Family gives Rebekah two blessings:

1. Prayer for many offspring
2. Prayer for the victory and prosperity of the offspring over their enemies

SECTION FOUR:

24:62-67

1. No mention of Abraham and the servant’s master is now Isaac (65) may indicate Abraham has died. The next chapter may be a rewind of the events that transpired while the servant was in Padan-Aram (The book of Judges opens with the death of Joshua (1:1), but in Judges 2:6-7 Joshua was alive and his death is recorded in 2:8-9.
2. The veil makes Rebekah the bride. In the Code of Hammurabi, the betrothed wears a veil.
3. In a Mari text from this time it is the one bringing the bride who veils her to present her to her husband.
4. Slave girls and prostitutes were not allowed to wear veils.