



Genesis 24:1-28

GUIDANCE ACCORDING TO GOD

It is our privilege to talk with God about everything in life. The minutest things are not too small for Him who numbers the hairs of our heads. No day can we afford to spend without asking that He should send us good speed. Well would it be for us, as we stand by the well in the morning or in the evening, to commit our way to the Lord, trusting that He should bring it to pass. And if this is true of ordinary days, how much more of those days that decide destiny, that are the watershed of life, and in which plans are concluded that may affect every year for the rest of our life! Nor is it wrong to ask a sign from God, if by this we mean that He would permit the circumstances of our daily experience to indicate His will, confirming that which He has already impressed upon our own conscience. We have no right to ask for signs for the satisfaction of a morbid curiosity, but we are justified in asking for the concurrence of outward providence indicating the will of God.

—F. B. Meyer (1847-1929)

Genesis 23-25 form a transition in the narrative from Abraham and Sarah to Isaac and Rebekah. In these three chapters, we will see the deaths of Sarah and Abraham and the marriage of Isaac to Rebekah.

- A Abraham Is Blessed by the Lord in All Things (24:1)
- B The Servant Receives His Task from Abraham (24:2-9)
 - C The Servant Journeys to Mesopotamia for Isaac's Wife (24:10-11)
 - D The Servant Prays at the Well (24:12-14)
 - E Rebekah Willingly Serves (24:15-21)
 - F The Servant Gives Praise and Gifts (24:22-28)
 - G Laban Greedily Offers Hospitality (24:29-31)
 - H THE SERVANT TELLS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS (24:32-49)
 - G Laban Hesitantly Offers Rebekah (24:50-51)
 - F The Servant Gives Praise and Gifts (24:52-53)
 - E Rebekah Willingly Goes (24:54-61)
 - D Isaac Prays in the Field (24:62-63)
 - C The Servant Returns to Canaan with Rebekah (24:64-65)
- B The Servant Reports on His Task to Isaac (24:66)
- A Isaac Is Blessed by the Lord with a Wife (24:67)

The focus of Genesis 24 is on God's faithfulness to fulfill His covenant promises to Abraham. Yet this chapter also highlights the faithfulness of the servant and the willingness of Rebekah to go to Canaan (cf. 12:1). Both divine sovereignty and human obedience work together to accomplish God's *good, acceptable, and perfect will* (Rom 12:1-2).

HOW DO WE DISCOVER THE WILL OF GOD FOR OUR LIVES?

1. _____ what really matters (24:1-9).
- Abraham acknowledged God's blessings, submitted to His sovereignty, and embraced His covenant in every aspect of his life.

Gen 24 is the most pleasant and charming of all the patriarchal stories.

—Gerhard von Rad

This lively story of the search for Isaac's bride can be taken at first blush as a lovely romance but absent theological importance... The length of the chapter as the longest in the book implies otherwise. As part of the epilogue to the Abraham story, its value lies in transitioning to the heirs of the promise, Isaac-Rebekah.

—Kenneth A. Mathews

We are trying not so much to make God listen to us as to make ourselves listen to Him; we are trying not to persuade God to do what we want, but to find out what he wants us to do. So often in prayer we are really saying, "Thy will be changed," when we ought to be saying, "Thy will be done."

—William Barclay

I can say from experience that 95% of knowing the will of God consists in being prepared to do it before you know what it is.

—Donald Grey Barnhouse

- To know God’s will, we must be willing to submit to Him in all things and make glorifying Him the priority of our lives.

What are your true priorities in life? What holds your devotion?

2. _____ **God for His guidance** (24:10-14).

- The servant makes his 500-mile trek (on camels) to Mesopotamia and the first thing he does when he arrives is pray to God.
 - He acknowledges God’s power and faithful love.
 - He asks God to grant him success.
 - He appeals to God for a confirming sign.
- To know God’s will, we must pray daily for His guidance.

3. _____ **all things with discernment** (24:15-25).

- Rebekah is a young, beautiful, attractive woman.
- But the servant is focused on her character—her willingness and eagerness to serve and show hospitality (cf. Prov. 11:22; 31:30).
- The servant waits and watches to discern the Lord’s will.
- To know God’s will, we must be willing to wait and to watch.

4. _____ **God in all that happens** (24:26-28).

- The servant bows his head and worships the Lord.
- The servant expresses thankfulness for the Lord’s steadfast love and His true faithfulness (Hebrew, *chesed* and *emet/aman*).
- To know God’s will, we must always be ready to worship the Lord and give thanks for His love and faithfulness, His grace and truth!

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths.*

Proverbs 3:5-6

It is a most lamentable thing to see how most people spend their time and their energy for trifles, while God is cast aside. He who is all seems to them as nothing, and that which is nothing seems to them as good as all... Were it but possible for us to see this business as the all-seeing God does and see what most men and women in the world are interested in and what they are doing every day, it would be the saddest sight imaginable.

—Richard Baxter (1615-91)

The Hebrew term for prayer [in 24:12] is actually the nontechnical term “said,” often used of petition. Such ordinary terms introducing prayer reflected their conversational tone. —Kenneth Mathews

In a number of ancient civilizations, hospitality was viewed as a pillar on which all morality rested.

—Christine D. Pohl

The servant devises a shrewd character test. What touchstone could be more appropriate than the reception of a wayfarer to determine a woman’s fitness to marry into the family of the paragon of hospitality? And it is a stiff test, too, since it would require far more than common civility to volunteer to water ten thirsty camels.

—Meir Sternberg

Kindness. Hebrew, *chesed*, “love, grace, mercy, compassion, zeal for someone” (24:12, 14, 27, 49).

Faithfulness. Hebrew, *emet*, from verb *aman*, “firmness, reliability, stability, truth” (24:27, 48, 49).

*The heart of the story is about the providence of God in the lives of faithful people... Verse 27 records the theme clearly: **He has led me.***

—Allen Ross