

# Explore the Bible: March 10

*Guidance Needed • Genesis 24:12-20,24-27*

*By Laura Lee Leathers*



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But we are told that Sarah lived to be 127 years old. She died at Kiriath-ara (Hebron). Abraham mourned and wept for her. As a sojourner and foreigner, Abraham went to the Hittites and asked for a piece of property for a burial site.

Abraham purchased a “cave of the field of Machpelah east of Mamre (that is Hebron)” from Ephron for four hundred shekels (Genesis 20 ESV). Later, Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah would be buried in the cave.

At the beginning of Genesis 24, we learn that “Abraham is old, well advanced in years, and the LORD has blessed Abraham in all things” (v. 1). Eliezer of Damascus (Gen. 15:2), oldest servant in Abraham’s household has been summoned to his side.

Abraham gives specific instructions regarding the process: 1) A wife must come from Abraham’s country and kindred, not the Canaanites. 2) Isaac was never to go back to that country. 3) Eliezer takes an oath but is freed from the obligation if the woman refuses to follow him back to Abraham.

Eliezer prepares for the journey with ten camels and choice gifts and then departs to Mesopotamia, the city of Nahor. After a long day of travel, around evening, Eliezer stops and has the camels kneel beside a well outside the city. Women would be drawing water from the well, their usual time.

**A Request (Genesis 24:12-14)** – Eliezer utters a beautiful prayer asking for God’s guidance. Notice the greeting, “LORD”; it’s a “Hebrew verb “to be” and denotes God as the self-existent, covenant God who acts independently of outside influences” (Lifeway).

“God of my master Abraham” shows Abraham’s influence on his servant’s life. He observed and saw God’s guidance in his master’s life. He also saw the mistakes, God’s mercy and grace, and Abraham’s faith.

But also go back to Abraham’s words in verse seven, “he will

send his angel before you" (ESV). He knew God would be faithful to provide. Abraham had experienced God's provision repeatedly.

The next request is, "Make this happen for me today." What boldness! And then comes the fleece, that the wife for Isaac would be the girl who not only offers Eliezer a drink from the spring but also offers to water the camels.

The word kindness is used twice in these verses. The English word is *hesed*, "the concepts of compassion and faithfulness to one's obligations" (Lifeway). Eliezer's request is not for himself but for God to show kindness to Abraham. Then, in verse fourteen, he said, 'By this I will know you have shown kindness to my master.'

**The Answer (Genesis 24:15-20)** – While Eliezer is praying, Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, comes to the well with a jug on her shoulder. She is the granddaughter of Abraham's brother Nahor.

Rebekah, described as being beautiful and a virgin, fills her jug from the spring. While she is coming up, Eliezer goes to meet her and asks for water from her jug. She obliges. Then, without him asking, she states she will draw water for the camels. Notice it says she drew the water and filled the trough.

How many gallons of water did she have to draw for ten camels? It would have been a lot, and we are told Rebekah hurried to the well each time to replenish the jug – no lollygagging with this young woman and the task before her.

**Place Offered (Genesis 24:24-27)** – In the earlier passage, we are told about Rebekah's genealogy from the author of Genesis. This time, Rebekah informs Eliezer that her father is Bethuel and her grandmother is Milcah (Gen. 11:29; 24:24).

She extends hospitality to Eliezer by offering him a place to

stay and food for the camels. He “knelt low, worshiped the LORD.” He bowed his head as an act of paying homage. Fifteen times, this form of the verb homage is used in the Old Testament – only.

Carefully read Eliezer’s praise prayer, “Blessed by the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not withheld his kindness and faithfulness from my master. As for me, the LORD has led me on the journey to the house of my master’s relatives.” His prayer was answered, and she did return with him to Isaac.

“This also comes from the LORD of Hosts. He gives wonderful advice; He gives great wisdom” (Isaiah 28:29, HCSB). Are you seeking guidance? You can always go to God’s Word for counsel.

*Leathers is a member of First Church, Lexington.*