

Now Rebekah Had a Brother Named Laban

24: 28-33

DIG: Why was the servant in a hurry to meet this woman? What pace was Rebekah keeping? Why would Laban negotiate the marriage contract? Why was he welcoming this guest? Why was he in such a big hurry to go out and meet the servant? What would this reveal about him?

REFLECT: What gifts has the LORD given you? What motivates you to godly service? Is being wealthy inherently evil (First Timothy 6:6-10)? Do you keep a light touch on the things of this world?

Things continue at a rapid pace. The servant *hurried* to meet the woman by the spring and she *quickly lowered* her jar for him to drink in 24:18. Then she *quickly emptied* her jar into the trough, and *ran* back to the well to draw more water in 24:20. Now she would *run* back to her mother's household and tell her mother and her brother about the gifts that the servant had given her (24:28). But the most exciting thing was as he prayed and mentioned Abraham, the almost legendary relative in far-off Canaan, she sensed that there was something very important about his presence in Nahor. She was eagerly anticipating what he would tell her family.³⁸⁹ Rebekah had a brother named Laban, and he *hurried* out to the servant at the spring (24:29).

Rebekah returned to her mother's household rather than her father's because the women had separate quarters where they did their work, and a daughter would only tell her mother of such things. In addition, the men often had concubines and it would be quite natural that a daughter would feel closer to her mother. A woman's brother gave his sister in marriage, which could explain why Laban, Rebekah's brother, negotiates this marriage contract.³⁹⁰ Because of this, Laban represents the male head of the family and it would be his responsibility to go out to welcome the servant.

As soon as he had seen the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister's arms, and had heard Rebekah tell what the man had said to her, he went out to the servant and found him standing by the camels near the spring where Rebekah had left him. Judging him to be wealthy, he was anxious to receive rich gifts, which would foreshadow Laban's character flaw. No doubt he had heard about Abraham and his wealth from travelers. This

was supported when **he** saw the expensive gifts **the servant** had given **his sister** and the caravan that had just arrived. **He** said: **Come, you who are blessed by ADONAI. Why are you standing out here?** Then trying to impress **the servant**, **he** did some quick housecleaning, saying: **I have prepared the house and a place for the camels (24:30-31).**

So the servant went to the house, and the camels were unloaded. Straw and fodder were brought for the camels and water for his men and him to wash their feet. At first his concern had merely been a drink of water. But now, as food was set before him, the telling of his story became paramount in his mind. He said: I will not eat until I have told you what I have to say. He couldn't wait another minute because **he** was busting with excitement. And although it was customary to leave the business until after the meal, **Laban** was just as curious and said: **Then tell us (24:32-33).**