

Genesis 24:50-54

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Laban says that God has ordained these events and that Rebekah should marry Isaac. Abraham's servant praises God and gives gifts to the family. In the morning he requests they return to Canaan.

Abraham's servant has finished telling his story. He believes Rebekah is chosen by God to be Isaac's wife. He puts the question to Laban whether they will deal kindly and truly with his master, the brother of Bethuel.

Laban and Bethuel replied, "The matter comes from the Lord; so we cannot speak to you bad or good. The reply now seems to be spontaneous from both brother and father. That the father *Bethuel* is included here might infer that he has interrupted the normal dowry negotiation. The brother *Laban* does not seem to bargain for a higher dowry price. There is a spontaneous affirmation. Bethuel will not be mentioned again, so his mention here seems to support this idea. It had been on the order of 65 years since Abraham had departed from Haran. Perhaps Bethuel interjected here because of his fondness for his brother Abraham.

The phrase *we cannot speak bad or good* likely means "we have nothing to say" because it is clear that this is an event that has been ordained by God. They are acknowledging that it would be foolish to step in the way of something so clearly orchestrated by God. Therefore both *Laban*, Rebekah's brother, and *Bethuel*, her father, assent immediately. They state:

"Here is Rebekah before you, take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has spoken."

The key thing appears to be their acknowledgment that *the Lord has spoken*. In this case the Lord did not speak audibly. But it is clear to them that the Lord *has spoken* through His orchestration of events.

They have assented that Rebekah will *be the wife of your master's son* Isaac. That Laban said, *Here is Rebekah before you*, indicates that Rebekah might have been present for this conversation. The family was gathered for dinner, and the servant spoke his business before eating ([Genesis 24:33](#)). She does not object to any of this. Though in those days, it was the father and brother

who decided whether his daughter should marry, and negotiated the dowry, or purchase price for the bride. In Rebekah's case, the arrangement was agreeable for multiple reasons: she would be marrying a kinsmen (important in those days, to strengthen the family), she was marrying someone who was wealthy and powerful and would take care of her, and most importantly, God seemed clearly at work in bringing about this betrothal.

When Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself to the ground before the Lord. The servant's devotion to God is put on display again. Grateful and relieved that the search for a wife for Isaac is a success, he praises God by bowing *himself to the ground*. He then stands up and retrieves more gifts sent by Abraham ([Genesis 24:10](#)). He *brought out articles of silver and articles of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah*. At this point, great and lavish gifts are given to the bride-to-be. But the servant did not stop there, *he also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother*. The gifts to the *brother* are likely a dowry payment, as was the custom of the day. The gifts to the *mother* seem to go above and beyond what was customary. What should be clear to those assembled is that Abraham is very wealthy, and intends to bless his family generously.

After distributing the gifts from Abraham, the servant *and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night*. The business of finding a bride was concluded, now was the time to celebrate and rest. However, the servant was eager to see his mission completed fully. He would not idle until the girl was safely delivered to his master.

Therefore when *they arose in the morning*, the servant said, *Send me away to my master*. He did not want to linger in Haran. His mind was now set on returning to Abraham and completing the task given to him. We know already that the servant was anxious about his mission (verse 5). But he also might have reasoned that he had full agreement, and he wanted to sweep the girl away before the passion of the moment faded and they began to have second thoughts.

Biblical Text:

⁵⁰ Then Laban and Bethuel replied, "The matter comes from the Lord; so we cannot speak to you bad or good." ⁵¹ "Here is Rebekah before you, take *her* and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has spoken." ⁵² When Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself to the ground before the Lord. ⁵³ The servant brought out articles of silver and articles of gold, and garments, and gave them to

Rebekah; he also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother. ⁵⁴ Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night. When they arose in the morning, he said, "Send me away to my master."