

Genesis 24:55-61

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Laban and his mother ask the servant to let Rebekah stay in Haran for another ten days before leaving, but the servant does not want to delay. They ask Rebekah what she wants, and she decides to leave that very day. Her family gives her a blessing.

Since the marriage between Rebekah and Isaac was agreed upon, Abraham's servant wished to return to his master right away. He is anxious to see his mission fulfilled, given the passion his master had for the task to be completed. The servant has shown significant wisdom, and probably reasoned that it was one thing to say yes, and another to watch your daughter ride away, knowing she would never return. There was an agreement made, and the longer they delayed, the further they would be from the miraculous sign, and the more reluctant they might become to part with their daughter. Plus the servant was burdened with bringing home a wife for Isaac from among his family so that Abraham would live to see the marriage, and to know his line would continue.

But Rebekah's brother Laban and her mother said, Let the girl stay with us a few days, say ten; afterward she may go. They understandably asked for some time to prepare her, and to say goodbye to her. It was unlikely they would ever see her again. The *brother* speaks because he seems to be the primary negotiator for the dowry and marriage, as was the custom. The *mother* interjects here as well, possibly because she has affection for her daughter and hates to see her go. This might signal danger to the shrewd and capable servant. The servant remains adamant, perhaps all the more so now that the mother is involved.

The servant's commitment to complete the task is unshakeable. He answers: *Do not delay me, since the Lord has prospered my way.* The servant reminds those present of the divine sign. The implication is, "If you stop me, you will have to deal with this mighty God who has ordained this to be." The servant implores them to *Send me away that I may go to my master.*

This errand has enormous importance. Abraham was "old, advanced in age" (v. 1) and Isaac did not have a wife through whom the promises of God could be delivered. (Abraham was 100 when Isaac was born ([Gen. 17:1](#), [21](#)), Isaac

was 40 when he married Rebekah ([Genesis 25:20](#)), and Abraham passed away when he was 175 ([Genesis 25:7](#)).

Laban and his mother reply, *We will call the girl and consult her wishes*. This is now the real moment of truth. We can imagine that the servant has a lump in his throat. The girl will now be consulted; she will make the decision. It seems reasonable to presume that Laban and Rebekah's mother would expect Rebekah to desire to hang around her home as long as possible before leaving it forever to marry someone she'd never met.

Then they called Rebekah and said to her, Will you go with this man? Meaning that very day, since the marriage betrothal was already established. It's worth pausing here to take a look at this question through the eyes of the girl. She had watered ten camels. Next thing she knows, she finds out this man represents her Uncle Abraham, and at dinner that night her marriage is arranged. The distance from Haran to Canaan is about 400 miles. So she is looking forward to about a month long journey with a camel caravan. She is going to a place she has never seen, to marry a man she has never met. But she agrees to depart immediately. We are not told her reasoning. Perhaps it could be that she does not desire an extended time to say goodbye, and prefers to "get it over with" and start this new chapter in her life.

Rebekah's answer undoubtedly surprised her brother and mother: *I will go*. Rebekah was ready. She was ready to meet her husband and begin her new life in Canaan. This sure answer seems to indicate a level of confidence, her faith that it was a good thing she was doing. Perhaps it was because God had orchestrated it, and that there was no sense in delaying what God had ordained. Perhaps her father had spoken highly of her Uncle Abraham, and she saw this as a great opportunity.

True to their word, Laban and his mother *sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse with Abraham's servant and his men*.

Laban and his mother *blessed Rebekah* before she departed:
*May you, our sister,
Become thousands of ten thousands,*

*And may your descendants possess
The gate of those who hate them.*

This blessing meant two things. That Rebekah should *Become thousands of ten thousands*, meant that they hoped she would have many *descendants*,

enough to populate a nation. This came true. The nation of Israel was born from the twelve children/tribes of Jacob, the son who Rebekah will conceive with Isaac. This blessing is also consistent with the promise God made to Abraham that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the heavens ([Genesis 15:5](#)).

The second part of the blessing, *may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them*, means that it is hoped that the nation of her descendants will prevail over their enemies, and will conquer *those who hate them*. This echoes God's blessing on Abraham after he passed the test at Mt. Moriah, that his descendants "shall possess the gate of their enemies" ([Genesis 22:17](#)). The gate is the seat of power in a city; it controls access, it was the place where business was conducted, where judgments were made ([Genesis 23](#)). To possess the gates of one's enemy meant you had dominion over them, that you ruled them. You were victorious. The implication therefore is that the nation that possessed the gate of its enemy would endure, while its enemies would disappear.

Having said farewell to her family, *Rebekah arose with her maids*, young female servants, and *they mounted the camels and followed* Abraham's servant. That Rebekah had *maids* to serve her indicates that her family had prospered as well.

So the servant took Rebekah and departed. The caravan departs Haran, and heads for Canaan. Rebekah would never see her family again, or Haran. But her son Jacob will come to Haran as he flees for his life, and work for his uncle Laban, and fall in love with Laban's daughter, Rachel ([Genesis 29](#)).

Biblical Text:

⁵⁵ But her brother and her mother said, "Let the girl stay with us a few days, say ten; afterward she may go."⁵⁶ He said to them, "Do not delay me, since the Lord has prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master."⁵⁷ And they said, "We will call the girl and consult her wishes."⁵⁸ Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go."⁵⁹ Thus they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse with Abraham's servant and his men.

⁶⁰ They blessed Rebekah and said to her,

"May you, our sister,

Become thousands of ten thousands,

And may your descendants possess

The gate of those who hate them.”

⁶¹ Then Rebekah arose with her maids, and they mounted the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.