

THE FAMILY OF ABRAHAM: REBEKAH

NRCOC (8, 15, 22, 29 July 2009)

Hebrew words:

- *Rivqah* (Rebekah). In the OT Greek Bible (the Septuagint [LXX]), her name is rendered *Rebekka*.
- *Berekhah* (blessing) – a near anagram of Rebekah's name. Ties in to Gen 12 and *blessing* theme.

Basic lesson:

- Her Marriage (Genesis 24)
- Pregnancy (25:20-26)
- Deceit (26:7) similar to her father-in-law's (chs. 12 and 20)
- The grand deception (27:1-28:3). Backfires! 27:44: "a few days" (NAS).

Further study ideas:

- Study the character of Laban, Rebekah's older brother (Genesis 24-25, 27-32).
- Extrabiblical: Archaeologists have discovered documents from the period (2nd millennium BC) directing that if a girl's father is deceased and another male relative is doing the negotiating, she must give her own consent before being married off. Though Bethuel is still alive (24:50), Rebekah's brother Laban seems to be doing the negotiating.)
- The New Testament:
 - Romans 9:10ff – God's choice is not made on merit, but by grace.
 - Note: She is not mentioned in Hebrews 11, the "Hall of Fame of Faith."

For kids:

- Genesis 24: the character of the girl Rebekah.
 - Was she quiet and selfish, or lively and giving?
 - How could she have "done the minimum" when she met Abraham's servant?
 - How much does a camel drink? (There were 10 camels [v.10], each able to drink up to 100 liters!) How strong do you think her arms (and back) were in order to water all the animals?
- Grown-ups do wrong things, too.
 - Later in life, Rebekah deliberately deceived her husband (and one of her sons).
 - Even people of faith do wrong things.
 - The point is to stay close to God, and not to do things because we are afraid we will not be happy.

Some things we learn about God:

- While we ought not to grow lazy or irresponsible, we do need to leave the outcomes to God. When we hold on to things too tightly, or scramble to reach what God has promised us anyway, we're likely to lose them.
- As we age, we tend to revert to patterns of thinking and interaction that characterized our families of origin. Rebekah started out vibrant, giving, and faithful; as she got older, though not relinquishing her faith, she succumbed to temptations to take matters into her own hands. We need to resist the temptation to give in to fear (1 Peter 3).
- He will often bless us even though we are not acting in full faith—even when we give in to fear.

The lesson + this handout are at the NR website. In addition, a fuller version of these lessons may be found at www.jacobypremium.com. Includes podcast (15-25 mins), notes, suggestions for advanced studies, key Hebrew words, what we learn about God and family devotional plan based on character. 10 cents/day. Please sign up!