



## Understanding the Parsha Genesis 24:1 - 24:67

**Objective**— Learn how to

- 1) Understand the main theme of a Parsha (Scripture portion),
- 2) Make thematic connections to that Parsha and
- 3) Learn how to get a greater understanding of the Parsha we are learning through its thematic connections to other portions of Scripture.

## Finding a Wife for Isaac

**I. Read Genesis 24:1-67.** Note that there are no other parsha divisions in this story. We know this means that this whole story contains one unique and primary theme.

**After reading the parsha all the way through, what would you say is its primary theme?** Circle the correct answer

Looking for Avraham's family

Finding a wife for Isaac

*Finding a wife for Isaac*

A. Have you noticed anything strange about how the Torah speaks of Abraham's servant? Fill in the blank:

He has no \_\_\_\_\_.

Name

That's right. Remember to always take note of instances when the Torah leaves out details we should expect to find like names and places.

**B. Read Genesis 24:15-25.** How is Rivka (Rebecca) described in Genesis 24:15-16?

Circle all the sentences that describe Rivka:

Offspring of Nahor, Avraham's brother

Very funny to look at

Very beautiful

Offspring of Nahor, Avraham's brother, very beautiful

Her family tree is obviously important because Abraham made the servant promise to only take a wife for Isaac from his relatives. Now normally, we may not pay close attention to her description of being beautiful. But, in the past we have learned that if we can make thematic connections to other portions of Scripture, we will see more of Adonai's wisdom unfold before us. Can you think of any passages thematically related to the statement that Rivka was beautiful? Fill in the blank

Read Genesis 12:11, what does it say: \_\_\_\_\_ was beautiful.  
Sarah

So what connection is the Torah making between these two women? Circle the right word

Happiness

Beauty

Strong

Hardworking

Beauty

The Torah makes this one statement in hopes that you will see the connection between Sarah and Rivka. Because the Torah wants you to see that Rivka has the same outward beauty as Sarah.

**C. Now lets read Genesis 24:17-25.** Is there any common theme related to Rivka's actions in these few verses? Draw a line to match up what she did:

Quickly

to empty her jug

Kept running

lowered her jug

Hurried

to the well to draw water

Quickly lowered her jug, hurried to the well to draw water, kept running to empty her jug

As you can see, the Torah keeps pointing out how quickly she acted. Can you think of any passage thematically related to Rivka's actions, someone else who was quick to help and serve?

Write in the missing letters A \_\_\_\_\_ m !

Abraham

That's right. In the description of Abraham's actions when he entertained the three men (Genesis 18:4-8), remember the Scriptures say Abraham: "...Avraham hastened...Hurry!...ran...hurried..."

Now you can see, both Rivka and Abraham had an opportunity to show hospitality to a stranger! Both of them moved with quickness, humility and servanthood to look to the needs of the visitors.

Do you think it is a coincidence that the Torah describes Abraham and Rivka's actions with the same terms? Do you think it's a coincidence that both of them had an opportunity to display hospitality to a stranger? Of course not.

**D. Let's look back for a moment. Read Genesis 24:12-14** to understand the test the servant proposed so that he could decide whom Isaac's bride should be. The test the servant proposed may seem silly until you realize that

1) the servant brought **ten camels** and

2) a thirsty camel can drink up to **twenty five-gallons of water!**  $10 \times 25 = 250$  gallons!

**Imagine your mom asked you to bring in the house, 250 1 gallon milk jugs, from the car to the refrigerator!**

Now can you understand how huge Rivka's act of hospitality were?  
**Remember, she continued to run and fill the jugs until all the camels had finished drinking!** And think about this, she did this for a complete stranger!  
Now that's hospitality!

So why does the Torah thematically connect Rivka and Abraham through their acts of hospitality? Because, the Torah is teaching us that Rivka has the same **inner beauty** of character as did Abraham. Through the obvious thematic connections to Abraham, we see that these few verses are actually teaching us about the lovely character of Rivka. She is walking in the steps of Our Father Abraham. How appropriate that she should be the mother of the future nation.



**II. Read Genesis 24:50-61.** Which type of verb is being used over and over?

A form of the verb \_\_\_\_\_  
To

Notice how many times the words go, send, proceed, went, etc., are used!

**A. Where is the servant trying to get Rivka to go?**

Circle the right place

- Egypt      Mesopotamia      Canaan the Promised Land

Canaan the promised land

**From where is he trying to get her to leave?**

Circle the right place

- Canaan the promised Land      Egypt      Mesopotamia, her father's house

Mesopotamia, her father's house

**Read Genesis 24:60 pay attention to the blessing Rivka's family gives her before she leaves.**

Do you think the family understood the promise given to Abraham? YES      NO

Yes they do

Do you understand the importance of the answers to these last three questions? YES      NO

Think about this for a minute, Rivka is following in the footsteps of Abraham who also left his family and land/home to go to a Promised land where his descendants would become a multitude (LOTS OF PEOPLE!)

Now why do you think the Torah has thematically connected Rivka and Abraham concerning their willingness to leave all behind to obtain a promise?

The Torah is teaching us that \_\_\_\_\_ has the faith of \_\_\_\_\_ as well as his hospitality!  
Rivka      Abraham

Most of the time, the Torah does not say anything directly about a person's character. Many times, we learn about a person's character through the thematic connections made to them through the stories of the Torah.

**B. Can you think of a descendant of Terach who chose not to stay with Avraham?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lot

That's right. Lot did not choose to stay with Abraham. He didn't want to wait patiently for the fulfillment of the promises; however, Rivka is showing the faith of Abraham by leaving her family to go to a land she's never seen before so that she can fulfill her Divine destiny.

**C. How is the fact that Abraham's act of hospitality resulted in the blessing of childbirth thematically related to Rivka's life?**

In Genesis 24:60 we read the Rivka's family said a blessing over her to become a mother of thousands and tens of thousands! (That's a lot of children!)

But she would not have been chosen to be the mother of all these children (descendants) and a wife to Isaac, if she had not acted toward the servant with such generous hospitality. The test the servant put before YHVH was for her to have the same hospitality as Abraham!

### **III. How does the test of hospitality, asked of YHVH by Abraham's servant, show us his great wisdom?**

It shows that he was well aware of Avraham's character strength of hospitality. He had seen it in action for years. He knew that Isaac's future bride needed to be of the same character in order to build the nation Adonai wanted. Therefore, he chose a test of extreme hospitality as the basis for choosing a bride for Isaac. And on looking back, we can see that the test he proposed was truly an extremely wise choice.

**In summary**, although this parsha is mainly concerned with finding Isaac a wife, we see, through thematic connections that it has **lots to say about the character of Rivka.**

