

Rebekah - Her name probably means "Loop" or "Tie"

Her Character: Hard-working and generous, her faith was so great that she left her home forever to marry a man she has never seen or met. Yet she played favorites with her sons and failed to trust God fully for the promise he had made.

Key Scriptures: **Genesis 24; 25:19-34; 26:1-28**

"When I (Abraham's servant) came to the spring today, I said, 'O Lord, God of my master Abraham, if you will, please grant success to the journey on which I have come. See, I am standing beside this spring; if a maiden comes out to draw water and I say to her, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar," and if she says to me, "Drink, and I'll draw water for your camels, too," let her be the one the Lord has chosen for my master's son (Isaac).'

"Before I finished praying in my heart, Rebekah came out, with her jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew water, and I said to her, 'Please give me a drink.'

"She quickly lowered her jar from her shoulder and said, "Drink, and I'll water your camel too.' So I drank, and she watered the camels also."

....Then the servant told Isaac all he had done. Isaac brought (Rebekah) into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebekah. So she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

Rebekah's Life and Times

Jewelry

"Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms"...Then the servant brought out gold and silver jewelry and articles of clothing and gave them to Rebekah. -Genesis 24:47,53

A nose ring! Often taken as a sign of rebellious youth today, a nose ring was an acceptable form of adornment in ancient times. When Abraham's servant realized Rebekah was the woman Isaac was to marry, he immediately got out the jewels he had brought along for the occasion. He gave her two gold bracelets and a gold nose ring. Rebekah quickly slipped the jewelry on and ran home with shining eyes to tell her family what had occurred.

A nose ring is mentioned only two other times in Scripture - Proverbs 11 and Ezekiel 16. In Ezekiel 16, God is describing in allegorical terms how much he loves the city of Jerusalem. He lovingly bathes her, then dresses

her in wonderfully rich clothing and soft leather sandals. He then tenderly adorns her with jewelry. "I put bracelets on your arms and a necklace around your neck, and I put a ring on your nose, earrings on your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. So you were adorned with gold and silver" (Ezekiel 16:11-13).

The Old Testament mentions jewels and jewelry numerous times. Women and men both wore earrings (Exodus 32:2). They also commonly wore "armlets, bracelets, signet rings, earrings and necklaces" (Numbers 31:50). The Israelites took most of their jewelry from others while at war; gold and silver and gemstones are often listed among the booty taken during a raid. Second Samuel 8:11 records the fact that David gained enormous amounts of gold and silver and bronze when he conquered the nations surrounding Israel. He dedicated all of it to the Lord, and his son Solomon used it to build the fabulous temple in Jerusalem. Believe it or not, Solomon had so much gold in his kingdom that he "made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones" (2 Chronicles 1:15).

The New Testament mentions jewelry specifically only once. Peter urges women to pay more attention to their inner beauty than their outward beauty (1 Peter 3:3-4). He wants them-and us-to remember that outer beauty fades away, but inner beauty grows more attractive with each year.

Our Life and Times

Tomorrow morning, when you put your rings on your fingers, also put on a spirit of peace. When you put your earrings on your ears, put them on with a cheerful attitude. When you clasp your necklace around your neck, clasp a sweet spirit to your heart also. The jewelry you wear won't make much difference in your day, but the spirit you wear will.

Rebekah's Legacy in Scripture

Read *Genesis* 24:12-27.

1. What does this first information about young Rebekah tell you about her looks and her character?
2. How are you like Rebekah? How are you different from her?

Read *Genesis* 24:28-58

3. In these verses Abraham's servant tells Rebekah's family how he met her, emphasizing the Lord's blessing and involvement throughout. How does Rebekah's family respond?

4. Three simple words (24:58) changed Rebekah's life forever. Who was she like in her willingness to go where she had never been before?
5. How would you react if God called you away from home and family? What would have to happen to make you obey?

Read Genesis 24:67; 25:58.

6. These are some of the sweetest words about marriage found in the Bible. In your own words, describe what you think Isaac and Rebekah's marriage was like in these early days.
7. Verse 28 expresses one of the saddest thoughts about parenting found in the Bible. Describe how you think their parents' favoritism affected Jacob and Esau and their relationship.
8. Many children grow up thinking their parents favored one sibling or another. If you have children, how can you avoid such thinking in them?

Read Genesis 27:1-28:9.

9. Why do you think Rebekah resorted to trickery to gain the promise given to her when she was pregnant?
10. Describe how you think Rebekah might have felt ten years later. Do you think she regretted her actions?
11. How are Rebekah's actions like those of her mother-in-law, Sarah?
12. The story of Rebekah is rich and colorful. In one sentence summarize what you would like to learn from her life.