Opening

Gathering: Tell of a situation that appeared to be random at the time, but God’s hand is evident when looking back.

Today’s Focus: To recognize that God is in control of everything that happens in our lives and even works in what we might call coincidences or random occurrences.

Key Verses: *This is from the Lord; we can say nothing to you one way or the other.* Genesis 24:50

*For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.* Genesis 2:24

*Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.* Galatians 4:28

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Sarah Dies  *(Genesis 23:1-9)*

What happened when Isaac was 37 years old?

Genesis 23:1-2 = His mother Sarah died

Besides losing his lifetime partner, what problem did this present for Abraham?

Genesis 23:3-4 = He didn’t own any property, so he was unable to bury her

How did the Hittites respond to his request to buy a burial site?

Genesis 23:5-6 = They happily welcomed Abraham to name the site of his choosing

Did Abraham have a site in mind?

Genesis 23:7-9 = Yes, a nearby cave that could serve as a tomb

Ephron’s Field  *(Genesis 23:10-20)*

How did Ephron respond to this request?

Genesis 23:10-11 = He was present and offered to GIVE not only the cave but also the field

Note: Hittite laws said that a landowner remained liable for all dues if he sold only a part of a property. If an entire tract of property was passed on, the new owner was responsible for the dues

How did Abraham respond to this generous offer by Ephron?

Genesis 23:12-13 = He wanted to pay the full price for it, Didn’t want it as a gift

Where have we seen a similar reaction by Abraham before, and why did he respond this way?

Genesis 14:21-23 = He limited his income to gifts from God, not from men

Did Ephron accept Abraham’s money? = (contrast with field sold for 17 shekels in Jeremiah 32:9)

Genesis 23:14-16 = Yes, and named a very steep price (20 shekels for Joseph in Gen. 37:28)

Did Ephron deed over the entire field or only the cave that Abraham requested?

Genesis 23:17-20 = The whole field - Doing so removed Ephron from all liabilities
Bible Stories for Adults
Isaac Marries Rebekah
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Abraham Puts His House In Order  (Genesis 24:1-9)

What did the death of Sarah prompt Abraham to take care of before he died?
   Genesis 24:1-4  =  Get a wife for Isaac from his relatives
Why was it important that Isaac marry from within the family?
   Genesis 17:7-10,14  =  God had commanded Abraham to be a separate people

Who was this chief servant to whom Abraham entrusted the mission?
   Genesis 15:2  =  Possibly Eliezer of Damascus
What concerns did the servant have?
   Genesis 24:5-6  =  What if the woman doesn't come?  Should Isaac go?
Why didn't Abraham want Isaac to go to Haran?  =  Abraham didn't know when or where slavery waited
   Genesis 15:13, 18  =  He was in the promised land, Descendants to be slaves in another land
Why wasn't Abraham concerned that the woman wouldn't come?
   Genesis 24:7-8  =  God would send His angel ahead to get a wife
How did Abraham make sure this would be done, even if he died first?
   Genesis 24:9  =  He made the servant swear an oath

At The Well  (Genesis 24:10-14)

How far was the servant's journey?  =  Aram Naharaim - Aram of the rivers  (Mesopotamia)
   Genesis 24:10  =  Hebron to Haran, 500 miles, Around a month's journey
What tactic did the servant use to meet local girls?  =  God would bring the right one
   Genesis 24:11  =  Waited at well when women would come for water
What other wives did God bring to the well?
   Genesis 29:1-2, 9  =  Jacob met Rachel
   Exodus 2:15-16, 21  =  Moses met Zipporah
What did the servant do as soon as he arrived at the well?
   Genesis 24:12-14  =  He prayed for God's guidance & success

God Brings Rebekah  (Genesis 24:15-27)

How long did it take God to respond to the servant's prayer?
   Genesis 24:15  =  Before he had finished praying
What was Rebekah's relation to Isaac?  =  Draw family tree on board
   Genesis 11:27-29 (22:20-24)  =  Rebekah was daughter of Isaac's cousin, Bethuel
What requirements had Abraham given his servant for his son's wife?
   Genesis 24:4  =  From my own relatives
What bonuses did God throw in?  =  ... energetic, kind, hospitable, industrious, decisive  (rest of story)
   Genesis 24:16  =  Very beautiful, a virgin
How much did the servant coax Rebekah to complete the sign from God?
   Genesis 24:17-21  =  Without saying a word, the man watched to see
What did the servant do when it appeared that Rebekah might be the one?
   Genesis 24:22  =  Gave her a gold nose ring and gold bracelets
What was the final proof that Rebekah was the one God had sent?
   Genesis 24:23-25  =  She was of Abraham's family
How did the servant respond to this proof?
   Genesis 24:26-27  =  He bowed down and praised God
Brother Laban  *(Genesis 24:28-32)*

How did Rebekah’s brother Laban respond when he saw the expensive gifts Rebekah received?

*Genesis 24:28-31*  =  He ran to invite the man into his house

What character traits does this indicate of Laban that are confirmed later?

*Genesis 29:20-23*  =  Laban substituted Leah for Rachel after Jacob’s 7 yrs

*Genesis 31:19*  =  Laban kept household gods

*Genesis 31:43, 29*  =  Claimed ownership of Jacob's family & possessions

The Servant's Mission  *(Genesis 24:33-52)*

How did the servant respond to the lavish hospitality?

*Genesis 24:32-33*  =  He was anxious to fulfill his calling & refused to eat first

**NOTE:** It was bad manners to decline a host's food & to raise issues before casual meal talk

Did the servant say he would force Rebekah to return with him?  =  Put matters in God's hands

*Genesis 24:34-41*  =  His oath was complete. She wouldn't be forced to go

What was the underlying message of the servant's recounting of events?

*Genesis 24:42-48*  =  God had selected Rebekah to be Isaac's wife - God provides

Did Laban and Bethuel recognize this message?

*Genesis 24:49-51*  =  Yes ...  *This is from the Lord*

How did the servant respond when his mission met success?

*Genesis 24:52*  =  He praised God

Marriage Customs in Patriarchal Times  *(Genesis 24:53-67)*

Parents of the man would choose the woman their son would marry

Was this custom followed for Isaac’s marriage?

*Genesis 24:3-4*  =  Abraham sent servant to get a wife for Isaac

Was this custom followed in the next generation?

*Genesis 26:34-35*  =  Esau took Hittite wives for himself; *source of grief to Is and Reb*

*Genesis 27:46-28:2*  =  Isaac sent Jacob to marry a cousin

The father of the woman would give his daughter to the future husband

Was this custom followed for Isaac's marriage?

*Genesis 24:50-51*  =  Bethuel gave Rebekah to Isaac

A purchase price (*bride price*) was paid to the bride's father

Was this custom followed for Isaac's marriage?

*Genesis 24:53*  =  The servant gave costly gifts

The bride's father gave his daughter a gift of property or a maid (*dowry*)

Was this custom followed for Isaac's marriage?

*Genesis 24:59*  =  They sent Rebekah off with her nurse

The *betrothal* was an engagement period that was legally binding  =  Reversible only by divorce

Was this custom followed for Isaac's marriage?

*Genesis 24:54-58*  =  Servant was in a hurry to return & begin the marriage

What was significant about the blessing Rebekah's family gave her?

*Genesis 24:60*  =  Not knowing, they stated God's covenant thru Isaac

After the betrothal, the bride was brought to her husband's home

Was this custom followed for Isaac's marriage?

*Genesis 24:61-66*  =  Rebekah was brought to Isaac's house

In this process, people would marry first, then love

Did this occur in Isaac's marriage?

*Genesis 24:67*  =  *she became his wife, and he loved her*
God Passes Covenant Promises to Isaac  
*(Genesis 26:1-5)*

Where did Isaac go during a time of famine, and why didn’t he go to Egypt as his father had?
- Genesis 26:1-2 = He went to Gerar in Philistia; God told him not to go to Egypt
What else did God say to Isaac, and why? = Because of the faithfulness of his father Abraham
- Genesis 26:3-5 = He gave promises of blessings, land & descendants He’d made to Abraham

Who Is She?  
*(Genesis 26:6-11)*

How had Abraham displayed a lack of trust in God when living in other nations?
- Genesis 12:11-13; 20:1-2 = He said Sarah was his sister, not his wife
Did Isaac learn from the mistakes of his father?
- Genesis 26:6-7 = No, he took the same tactic
How did Isaac’s situation turn out?
- Genesis 26:8-11 = He was scolded by Abimelech, then given protection

God Blesses Isaac  
*(Genesis 26:12-33)*

How did God bless Isaac in Philistia?
- Genesis 26:12-13 = He made him very wealthy with crops, flocks, herds and servants
How did this become a problem?
- Genesis 26:14-16 = He grew too large and wealthy to be a welcome visitor in Philistia
Did Isaac take offense at Abimelech’s request for him to leave?
- Genesis 26:17-18 = No, he moved to the valley and reopened his father’s wells
How did wells in this dry land become a problem for Isaac?
- Genesis 26:19-22 = Philistines kept disputing water rights, finally found a place he could stay
Where did Isaac move next and what happened there?
- Genesis 26:23-25 = Beersheba; God appeared to him & restated promise; Isaac worshipped
Why did the Philistine leaders track him down all the way to Beersheba?
- Genesis 26:26-29 = They saw God was with him and wanted a treaty for protection
Abraham made a similar treaty at the same place with an earlier Abimelech (Genesis 21:22-34)
Did Isaac accept or refuse this request for a treaty?
- Genesis 26:30-31 = He accepted it and made an oath just like his father had
How did this story reinforce the name of this place given earlier by Abraham?
- Genesis 26:32-33 = They dug another well and named it Well of the Oath - Beersheba

Closing Prayer

**Response**

1. Do I deal honestly with everyone, even when it is easy to take advantage of someone?  
   *(Genesis 23:12-16; 2 Kings 12:15; Jeremiah 5:1; Luke 19:8; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12)*
2. Do I look for and recognize God’s guiding hand in my daily life?  
3. If I am married, do I submit to and love my spouse as God desires?  
   *(Genesis 24:67; 29:20; Proverbs 5:15-20; Song of Songs; Ephesians 5:21-33)*
4. Are there sins that my family has passed among generations? How can I stop them?  
   *(Genesis 26:7-10; Deuteronomy 5:9-10; 1 Kings 15:25-26; Psalm 78:8; Ezekiel 18; Joel 1:3)*
5. Do I praise God when he showers me with His blessings?  
   *(Genesis 24:26-27, 52; 26:22-25; Psalm 69:30; 100:4-5; 105:1; Ezekiel 34:25-31; Luke 17:12-19; 2 Cor. 9:15; 1 Thess. 5:18)*