

Additional notes for teachers:

Many of the notes comprise deeper matters which have arisen in the course of preparation of the Students Notes. Other material has been appended for the purpose of providing background, explanations or interesting detail.

LESSON 11**1. THE CANAANITES**

The Canaanites were descended from Ham – the people of the curse (Gen 9:18,2). Abraham himself had had trouble with Hagar, a descendant of Ham (though not of Canaan, Gen. 10:6) and did not wish Isaac to make a worse mistake. (We can only suppose then that Abraham's later wife Keturah was beyond reproach).

Abraham's people were to be the agents of divine judgement against the various tribes of Canaanites (Gen. 15:18-21, 16 cp. 10:15-18). It was undesirable then that there should be any affinity between the two peoples (Deut. 7:1-6). Intermarriage no doubt had some bearing on the corrupting of God's way before the flood and the Canaanites themselves recognised that by such means they might become one people (Gen. 34:20-23); See also Balaam's advice, Num 25:1; 31:16).

2. REBEKAH'S BACKGROUND

Abraham had known Nahor, Rebekah's grandfather many years previously (Gen. 11:27-29). He had at least once, perhaps regularly, received family news (Gen. 22:20-24) and so probably knew of Rebekah. Nahor had left Ur (see next note) and his family shown spiritual qualities, although we may wonder why they travelled no further with Abraham. The "separateness" of this family seems to be indicated by their knowledge of the promises (Gen. 24:60).

Abraham showed insight for the woman to whom the approach would be made must show herself willing to leave her country, kindred, father's house, travel to an unknown land, and share a pilgrimage with an unknown man. In faith she would inherit with him promises of future blessedness (Gen. 24:6). Rebekah was equal to this test.

We must also bear in mind that all was overruled by God which all parties recognised (Gen. 24:7, 12, 26-27, 50). The outcome was eminently successful.

3. MESOPOTAMIA, UNTO THE CITY OF NAHOR GEN. 24:10

The city of Nahor, i.e. the city where Nahor dwelt, was probably the same as Haran. Padan-aram (Gen. 25:20) corresponds to Haran (Gen. 28:2; 29:4-5). "Mesopotamia" – Heb Aram-Naharaim, meaning Aram of the two rivers (Gen. 24:10, RV mg.).

As Aram corresponds to Syria, the suggestion is made that the "two rivers" are no Tigris and Euphrates, but Abana and Pharpar, and that Haran is not northwest of Ur but is situated only a few miles from Damascus. This would make the time involved for some later journeys more reasonable. Notice that Laban is repeatedly called "the Syrian" (Gen. 25:20; 28:5; 31:20, 24; See also Deut 26:5; Hos 12:12). However, there can be no certainty about the location of Haran.

TEACHING METHODS

1. Recall the responsibilities of parents and the principles on which marriage is based as demonstrated in the lessons on Adam and Eve and Noah.
2. Describe how God guided Eliezer's extensive mission and made it fruitful.
3. Examine the attributes of Rebekah and the reasons for her successful marriage contract with Isaac
4. Summarise the life of Abraham, his family influence and responsibilities which God so clearly endorsed.