

A Critical Prayer Key Many Believers Neglect

Over the past few weeks, I have been studying a lot about prayer. Last week in my article, I wrote about Daniel and the importance and power of consistent prayer.

Today's blog shares another key biblical lesson about prayer, which we find as we read Genesis chapter 24. Surprisingly, this lesson is not taught by any of the principal characters, such as Abraham, Isaac or even Sarah. It is actually taught to us by Abraham's servant.

Many believe this servant to be Eliezer, but the Bible does not provide his name anywhere in this narrative. Instead of providing a name, we read only about Abraham's instruction to his servant about where to go to choose a wife for Isaac. We then read about the servant's arrival in Aram-Naharaim, and the interactions that took place between the servant and Rebekah's family. The chapter ends with our reading about the introduction of Isaac to Rebekah and their marriage.

Through the entire story, not once is the servant's name provided. Be assured the name isn't left out because the servant isn't important. The importance of the servant is demonstrated by Abraham's trust and is stated early in the chapter in Genesis 24:2a (TLV): "Then Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who managed everything that belonged to him ..."

The reason the servant remains unnamed is because the lesson we are to learn is so important that providing the name might detract from the powerful lesson that speaks to us through thousands of years.

In Genesis 24:12, we read the beginning of the prayer that the servant prays: "*Adonai*, the God of Abraham my master," he

said, “please make something happen before me today, and show loyalty to Abraham my master.”

Some would try to say that the servant calling on “Ad-nai, the G-D of Abraham” was a way for the Bible to tell us that servant really didn’t know Ad-nai and was praying to the G-D that Abraham knew, but that he himself didn’t.

The reality is that this prayer and the continuation of the prayer that follows doesn’t show us that the servant was praying to a G-D he didn’t have a relationship with. These prayers actually demonstrate the powerful relationship with G-D that the servant did have. The servant understood the covenant relationship that G-D had with Abraham and, as such, called upon that covenant relationship in his prayers. In other words, the servant knew G-D so well that he knew that G-D would always keep His covenant promises.

We learn more about how well the servant knew G-D as we continue to read his prayer in Genesis 24:14:

“Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, ‘Please tip your jar so that I may drink,’ and she will say, ‘Drink—and I’ll also water your camels’—let her be the one You have appointed for your servant Isaac. So by this I’ll know that You have shown graciousness to my master.”

Notice that the servant asks G-D to do the unusual and unexpected. He knows Him so well that he knows to expect the unusual and even the miraculous to be the way G-D would answer prayer. The servant ends his prayer by reminding G-D that he was depending on Him to keep his covenant promise to Abraham. Notice also that He expected the covenant to be kept as an example of G-D’s grace toward Abraham.

The servant’s name is left out because the prayer and its fulfillment had nothing to do with who the servant was, and it really didn’t have anything to do with who Abraham was. The servant knew that G-D was a miracle-working, prayer-answering

G-D who kept His covenant promises simply because that is who He is.

In a real sense, all of us can pray in any situation with the same confidence in G-D that Abraham's servant demonstrated. Remembering our prayers are not answered because of who we are; they are answered because of who G-D is, period. {eo}

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