

Guidance Needed  
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Genesis 22:12-20, 24-27

Opening: Show of hands – When you need directions do you use a GPS guidance app with turn-by-turn directions? Or, do you just look at a map and go? I just have to ask: who refuses to stop and ask for directions? When is using the map not sufficient and the GPS turn-by-turn directions are really helpful?

GPS guidance technology has greatly advanced. [Illustration: Walking using my Apple Watch; driving to church on Sunday and lunch after; Susan's distrust of short-cuts.] I don't need turn-by-turn to get to church or the store because I know all the routes and can easily pivot if there is a problem. On the other hand, if I'm driving to the airport to make a flight, though I know the major routes I might not know how to re-route.

Today we're talking about our need for guidance from God. The GPS is helpful when we have multiple potential routes and need to know which one is best in our situation [i.e., choosing a job or medical treatment.] We need God's guidance always but particularly when we have multiple options and need to know which is best in our current situation.

The point: Though God doesn't speak audibly, He still gives guidance to those who have trusted Jesus as Savior and Lord. He gives it through His word, His Spirit, and the counsel of godly people. If I believe that, the question is whether I have asked Him for guidance and if I am willing to follow the guidance He gives?

A little context before the text. Chapter 23 tells us about the death of Abraham's wife Sarah at age 127. Chapter 24 begins by telling us Abraham was very old (at least 137) and the Lord had "blessed him in every way." Abraham knew for his son to fulfill God's covenant to be the father of the nation of Israel, Isaac needed a wife. Abraham didn't want to risk dying without resolving this situation correctly.

In that culture, the parents selected the wife for their sons. Don't even go there! 😊 Abraham knew Isaac's wife should come from their people back in their hometown five hundred miles away. He was too old to make the journey himself so he made his most trusted servant and manager take an oath before God: "*Swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not allow my son to marry one of these local Canaanite women. <sup>4</sup> Go instead to my homeland, to my relatives, and find a wife there for my son Isaac.*" And whatever you do, don't let Isaac leave Canaan and go with you.

The servant protested, "*What if I can't find the right wife willing to leave home and come here to Canaan?*" Abraham said: "*[T]he Lord, the God of heaven who...promised to give this land to my descendants...will send his angel ahead of you, and he will see to it that you find a wife there for my son.*" Abraham trusted God for divine guidance!

So, the servant saddled up ten camels and lots of treasure and headed to Ur of the Chaldeans. When he arrived, he prayed to God for guidance:

**Genesis 24:12–20 (ESV)** — **12** And he said, “O Lord, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. **13** Behold, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. **14** Let the young woman to whom I shall say, ‘Please let down your jar that I may drink,’ and who shall say, ‘Drink, and I will water your camels’—let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master.” **15** Before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham’s brother, came out with her water jar on her shoulder. **16** The young woman was very attractive in appearance, a maiden whom no man had known. She went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. **17** Then the servant ran to meet her and said, “Please give me a little water to drink from your jar.” **18** She said, “Drink, my lord.” And she quickly let down her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink. **19** When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.” **20** So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water, and she drew for all his camels.

**Genesis 24:24–27 (ESV)** — **24** She said to him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor.” **25** She added, “We have plenty of both straw and fodder, and room to spend the night.” **26** The man bowed his head and worshiped the Lord **27** and said, “Blessed be the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his steadfast love and his faithfulness toward my master. As for me, the Lord has led me in the way to the house of my master’s kinsmen.”

- Scripture doesn’t tell us, but the servant is likely Eliezer mentioned in 15:2.
- Regarding his “test” of asking for water, what does Rebekah’s response say about her character and work ethic?
- He didn’t ask God for outward beauty but verse 16 says she was very beautiful.
- God always gives us more than we ask or expect if we will trust Him!
- For homework, read the rest of the chapter but spoiler alert, Rebekah and her family agreed that she should go with Eliezer back to Canaan and marry Isaac.
- Because our time is short this week let’s move straight to how this applies to us.
- We don’t know if Eliezer’s confidence came by trusting God personally or simply from Abraham’s example, but it’s apparent he believed God would give guidance.
- Back to our example of using the GPS for guidance. God has promised He will give guidance to those who have trusted Jesus as Savior and Lord.
- **Isaiah 58:11 (ESV)** — **11** And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.
- **Psalms 32:8 (ESV)** — **8** I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.
- What is the first place we find God’s guidance?

- **2 Timothy 3:16 (NLT) — 16** All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.
- Ever argue with the GPS because you don't like the directions and think there must be a better way? When we are stuck in life's traffic jam, God doesn't build a new road He simply points us to the map – His word.
- Should I lie in a deposition? Read the map.
- Should I cheat on my taxes? Read the map.
- Should I divorce my spouse because I found someone new. Read the map.
- Should I forgive someone who has wronged me. Read the map.
- Divine guidance will never contradict the clear commands of God's word.
- The second key to guidance from God is the fact that when we trust Christ as Savior and serve Him as Lord, He gives us his Holy Spirit to live in our hearts.
- Jesus promised in **John 16:13 (NLT) — 13** When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. [Guidance directly from God].
- The third source of guidance is trusted, godly people who are fellow followers.
- **Proverbs 12:15 (ESV) — 15** The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.
- In day-to-day life most decisions don't require seeking guidance from God but using the good sense He has given us. I don't need the Holy Spirit's direction on what to wear when I'm getting dressed (on second thought maybe some do ☺.)
- On the other hand, sometimes there are many options we could choose and it's then that we need God's specific guidance for our specific situation.
- Thoughts?

So, What's the Takeaway?

- Though God doesn't speak audibly, He still gives guidance to those who have trusted Jesus as Savior and Lord.
- He gives it through His word, His Spirit, and the counsel of godly people.
- How do I access God's guidance for important decisions?
- **James 1:5 (ESV) — 5** If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.
- Then the next two verses are VERY IMPORTANT.
- **James 1:6–7 (ESV) — 6** But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. **7** For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;
- If I believe God gives guidance, the questions are whether I have stopped to ask for guidance and when I have, if I will follow His guidance.
- Driving without asking for directions takes us way off the right path at best and at worst might just cause us to drive off a cliff in the darkness.
- This week let's commit to seeking God's guidance and doing what He directs.

<sup>i</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Ge 24:3–4). Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>ii</sup> ibid