

Wednesday, January 16

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**Genesis 32:13 - 34:31**

**32** **13** Jacob stayed where he was for the night. Then he selected these gifts from his possessions to present to his brother, Esau: **14** 200 female goats, 20 male goats, 200 ewes, 20 rams, **15** 30 female camels with their young, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys, and 10 male donkeys. **16** He divided these animals into herds and assigned each to different servants. Then he told his servants, "Go ahead of me with the animals, but keep some distance between the herds." **17** He gave these instructions to the men leading the first group: "When my brother, Esau, meets you, he will ask, 'Whose servants are you? Where are you going? Who owns these animals?' **18** You must reply, 'They belong to your servant Jacob, but they are a gift for his master Esau. Look, he is coming right behind us.'" **19** Jacob gave the same instructions to the second and third herdsmen and to all who followed behind the herds: "You must say the same thing to Esau when you meet him. **20** And be sure to say, 'Look, your servant Jacob is right behind us.'" Jacob thought, "I will try to appease him by sending gifts ahead of me. When I see him in person, perhaps he will be friendly to me." **21** So the gifts were sent on ahead, while Jacob himself spent that night in the camp. **22** During the night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two servant wives, and his eleven sons and crossed the Jabbok River with them. **23** After taking them to the other side, he sent over all his possessions. **24** This left Jacob all alone in the camp, and a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn began to break. **25** When the man saw that he would not win the match, he touched Jacob's hip and wrenched it out of its socket. **26** Then the man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking!" But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." **27** "What is your name?" the man asked. He replied, "Jacob." **28** "Your name will no longer be Jacob," the man told him. "From now on you will be called Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have won." **29** "Please tell me your name," Jacob said. "Why do you want to know my name?" the man replied. Then he blessed Jacob there. **30** Jacob named the place Peniel (which means "face of God"), for he said, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been spared." **31** The sun was rising as Jacob left Peniel, and he was limping because of the injury to his hip. **32** (Even today the people of Israel don't eat the tendon near the hip socket because of what happened that night when the man strained the tendon of Jacob's hip.)

**33** **1** Then Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming with his 400 men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and his two servant wives. **2** He put the servant wives and their children at the front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph last. **3** Then Jacob went on ahead. As he approached his brother, he bowed to the ground seven times before him. **4** Then Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him. And they both wept. **5** Then Esau looked at the women and children and asked, "Who are these people with you?" "These are the children God has graciously given to me, your servant," Jacob replied. **6** Then the servant wives came forward with their children and bowed before him. **7** Next came Leah with her children, and they bowed before him. Finally, Joseph and Rachel came forward and bowed before him. **8** "And what were all the flocks and herds I met as I came?" Esau asked. Jacob replied, "They are a gift, my lord, to ensure your friendship." **9** "My brother, I have plenty," Esau answered. "Keep what you have for yourself." **10** But Jacob insisted, "No, if I have found favor with you, please accept this gift from me. And what a relief to see your friendly smile. It is like seeing the face of God!" **11** Please take this gift I have brought you, for God has been very gracious to me. I have more than enough." And because Jacob insisted, Esau finally accepted the gift. **12** "Well," Esau said, "let's be going. I will lead the way." **13** But Jacob replied, "You can see, my lord, that some of the children are very young, and the flocks and herds have their young, too. If they are driven too hard, even for one day, all the animals could die. **14** Please, my lord, go ahead of your servant. We will follow slowly, at a pace that is comfortable for the livestock and the children. I will meet you at Seir." **15** "All right," Esau said, "but at least let me assign some of my men to guide and protect you." Jacob responded, "That's not necessary. It's enough that you've received me warmly, my lord!" **16** So Esau turned around and started back to Seir that same day. **17** Jacob, on the other hand, traveled on to Succoth. There he built himself a house and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place was named Succoth (which means "shelters"). **18** Later, having traveled all the way from Paddan-aram, Jacob arrived safely at the town of Shechem, in the land of Canaan. There he set up camp outside the town. **19** Jacob bought the plot of land where he camped from the family of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for 100 pieces of silver. **20** And there he built an altar and named it El-Elohe-Israel.

**34** **1** One day Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah, went to visit some of the young women who lived in the area. **2** But when the local prince, Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, saw Dinah, he seized her and raped her. **3** But then he fell in love with her, and he tried to win her affection with tender words. **4** He said to his father, Hamor, "Get me this young girl. I want to marry her." **5** Soon Jacob heard that Shechem had defiled his daughter, Dinah. But since his sons were out in the fields herding his livestock, he said nothing until they returned. **6** Hamor,

Shechem's father, came to discuss the matter with Jacob. **7** Meanwhile, Jacob's sons had come in from the field as soon as they heard what had happened. They were shocked and furious that their sister had been raped. Shechem had done a disgraceful thing against Jacob's family, something that should never be done. **8** Hamor tried to speak with Jacob and his sons. "My son Shechem is truly in love with your daughter," he said. "Please let him marry her. **9** In fact, let's arrange other marriages, too. You give us your daughters for our sons, and we will give you our daughters for your sons. **10** And you may live among us; the land is open to you! Settle here and trade with us. And feel free to buy property in the area." **11** Then Shechem himself spoke to Dinah's father and brothers. "Please be kind to me, and let me marry her," he begged. "I will give you whatever you ask. **12** No matter what dowry or gift you demand, I will gladly pay it—just give me the girl as my wife." **13** But since Shechem had defiled their sister, Dinah, Jacob's sons responded deceitfully to Shechem and his father, Hamor. **14** They said to them, "We couldn't possibly allow this, because you're not circumcised. It would be a disgrace for our sister to marry a man like you! **15** But here is a solution. If every man among you will be circumcised like we are, **16** then we will give you our daughters, and we'll take your daughters for ourselves. We will live among you and become one people. **17** But if you don't agree to be circumcised, we will take her and be on our way." **18** Hamor and his son Shechem agreed to their proposal. **19** Shechem wasted no time in acting on this request, for he wanted Jacob's daughter desperately. Shechem was a highly respected member of his family, **20** and he went with his father, Hamor, to present this proposal to the leaders at the town gate. **21** "These men are our friends," they said. "Let's invite them to live here among us and trade freely. Look, the land is large enough to hold them. We can take their daughters as wives and let them marry ours. **22** But they will consider staying here and becoming one people with us only if all of our men are circumcised, just as they are. **23** But if we do this, all their livestock and possessions will eventually be ours. Come, let's agree to their terms and let them settle here among us." **24** So all the men in the town council agreed with Hamor and Shechem, and every male in the town was circumcised. **25** But three days later, when their wounds were still sore, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, who were Dinah's full brothers, took their swords and entered the town without opposition. Then they slaughtered every male there, **26** including Hamor and his son Shechem. They killed them with their swords, then took Dinah from Shechem's house and returned to their camp. **27** Meanwhile, the rest of Jacob's sons arrived. Finding the men slaughtered, they plundered the town because their sister had been defiled there. **28** They seized all the flocks and herds and donkeys—everything they could lay their hands on, both inside the town and outside in the fields. **29** They looted all their wealth and plundered their houses. They also took all their little children and wives and led them away as captives. **30** Afterward Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have ruined me! You've made me

stink among all the people of this land—among all the Canaanites and Perizzites. We are so few that they will join forces and crush us. I will be ruined, and my entire household will be wiped out!” **31** “But why should we let him treat our sister like a prostitute?” they retorted angrily.

### **Matthew 11:7 - 30**

**11 7** As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began talking about him to the crowds. “What kind of man did you go into the wilderness to see? Was he a weak reed, swayed by every breath of wind? **8** Or were you expecting to see a man dressed in expensive clothes? No, people with expensive clothes live in palaces. **9** Were you looking for a prophet? Yes, and he is more than a prophet. **10** John is the man to whom the Scriptures refer when they say, ‘Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, and he will prepare your way before you.’ **11** “I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist. Yet even the least person in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he is! **12** And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it. **13** For before John came, all the prophets and the law of Moses looked forward to this present time. **14** And if you are willing to accept what I say, he is Elijah, the one the prophets said would come. **15** Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand! **16** “To what can I compare this generation? It is like children playing a game in the public square. They complain to their friends, **17** ‘We played wedding songs, and you didn’t dance, so we played funeral songs, and you didn’t mourn.’ **18** For John didn’t spend his time eating and drinking, and you say, ‘He’s possessed by a demon.’ **19** The Son of Man, on the other hand, feasts and drinks, and you say, ‘He’s a glutton and a drunkard, and a friend of tax collectors and other sinners!’ But wisdom is shown to be right by its results.” **20** Then Jesus began to denounce the towns where he had done so many of his miracles, because they hadn’t repented of their sins and turned to God. **21** “What sorrow awaits you, Korazin and Bethsaida! For if the miracles I did in you had been done in wicked Tyre and Sidon, their people would have repented of their sins long ago, clothing themselves in burlap and throwing ashes on their heads to show their remorse. **22** I tell you, Tyre and Sidon will be better off on judgment day than you. **23** “And you people of Capernaum, will you be honored in heaven? No, you will go down to the place of the dead. For if the miracles I did for you had been done in wicked Sodom, it would still be here today. **24** I tell you, even Sodom will be better off on judgment day than you.” **25** At that time Jesus prayed this prayer: “O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. **26** Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way! **27** “My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to

whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” **28** Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. **29** Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”

#### **Psalm 14:1 - 7**

**14 1** Only fools say in their hearts, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, and their actions are evil; not one of them does good! **2** The LORD looks down from heaven on the entire human race; he looks to see if anyone is truly wise, if anyone seeks God. **3** But no, all have turned away; all have become corrupt. No one does good, not a single one! **4** Will those who do evil never learn? They eat up my people like bread and wouldn’t think of praying to the LORD. **5** Terror will grip them, for God is with those who obey him. **6** The wicked frustrate the plans of the oppressed, but the LORD will protect his people. **7** Who will come from Mount Zion to rescue Israel? When the LORD restores his people, Jacob will shout with joy, and Israel will rejoice.

#### **Proverbs 3:19 - 20**

**3 19** By wisdom the LORD founded the earth; by understanding he created the heavens. **20** By his knowledge the deep fountains of the earth burst forth, and the dew settles beneath the night sky.