

Friday, January 11

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Genesis 24:52 - 26:16

24 52 When Abraham's servant heard their answer, he bowed down to the ground and worshiped the LORD. **53** Then he brought out silver and gold jewelry and clothing and presented them to Rebekah. He also gave expensive presents to her brother and mother. **54** Then they ate their meal, and the servant and the men with him stayed there overnight. But early the next morning, Abraham's servant said, "Send me back to my master." **55** "But we want Rebekah to stay with us at least ten days," her brother and mother said. "Then she can go." **56** But he said, "Don't delay me. The LORD has made my mission successful; now send me back so I can return to my master." **57** "Well," they said, "we'll call Rebekah and ask her what she thinks." **58** So they called Rebekah. "Are you willing to go with this man?" they asked her. And she replied, "Yes, I will go." **59** So they said good-bye to Rebekah and sent her away with Abraham's servant and his men. The woman who had been Rebekah's childhood nurse went along with her. **60** They gave her this blessing as she parted: "Our sister, may you become the mother of many millions! May your descendants be strong and conquer the cities of their enemies." **61** Then Rebekah and her servant girls mounted the camels and followed the man. So Abraham's servant took Rebekah and went on his way. **62** Meanwhile, Isaac, whose home was in the Negev, had returned from Beer-lahai-roi. **63** One evening as he was walking and meditating in the fields, he looked up and saw the camels coming. **64** When Rebekah looked up and saw Isaac, she quickly dismounted from her camel. **65** "Who is that man walking through the fields to meet us?" she asked the servant. And he replied, "It is my master." So Rebekah covered her face with her veil. **66** Then the servant told Isaac everything he had done. **67** And Isaac brought Rebekah into his mother Sarah's tent, and she became his wife. He loved her deeply, and she was a special comfort to him after the death of his mother.

25 1 Abraham married another wife, whose name was Keturah. **2** She gave birth to Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. **3** Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's descendants were the Asshurites, Letushites, and Leummites. **4** Midian's sons were Ephah, Ephraim, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. These were all descendants of Abraham through Keturah. **5** Abraham gave everything he owned to his son Isaac. **6** But before he died, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them off to a land in the east, away from

Isaac. **7** Abraham lived for 175 years, **8** and he died at a ripe old age, having lived a long and satisfying life. He breathed his last and joined his ancestors in death. **9** His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, near Mamre, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite. **10** This was the field Abraham had purchased from the Hittites and where he had buried his wife Sarah. **11** After Abraham's death, God blessed his son Isaac, who settled near Beer-lahai-roi in the Negev. **12** This is the account of the family of Ishmael, the son of Abraham through Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian servant. **13** Here is a list, by their names and clans, of Ishmael's descendants: The oldest was Nebaioth, followed by Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, **14** Mishma, Dumah, Massa, **15** Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. **16** These twelve sons of Ishmael became the founders of twelve tribes named after them, listed according to the places they settled and camped. **17** Ishmael lived for 137 years. Then he breathed his last and joined his ancestors in death. **18** Ishmael's descendants occupied the region from Havilah to Shur, which is east of Egypt in the direction of Asshur. There they lived in open hostility toward all their relatives. **19** This is the account of the family of Isaac, the son of Abraham. **20** When Isaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan-aram and the sister of Laban the Aramean. **21** Isaac pleaded with the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was unable to have children. The LORD answered Isaac's prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. **22** But the two children struggled with each other in her womb. So she went to ask the LORD about it. "Why is this happening to me?" she asked. **23** And the LORD told her, "The sons in your womb will become two nations. From the very beginning, the two nations will be rivals. One nation will be stronger than the other; and your older son will serve your younger son." **24** And when the time came to give birth, Rebekah discovered that she did indeed have twins! **25** The first one was very red at birth and covered with thick hair like a fur coat. So they named him Esau. **26** Then the other twin was born with his hand grasping Esau's heel. So they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when the twins were born. **27** As the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter. He was an outdoorsman, but Jacob had a quiet temperament, preferring to stay at home. **28** Isaac loved Esau because he enjoyed eating the wild game Esau brought home, but Rebekah loved Jacob. **29** One day when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau arrived home from the wilderness exhausted and hungry. **30** Esau said to Jacob, "I'm starved! Give me some of that red stew!" (This is how Esau got his other name, Edom, which means "red.") **31** "All right," Jacob replied, "but trade me your rights as the firstborn son." **32** "Look, I'm dying of starvation!" said Esau. "What good is my birthright to me now?" **33** But Jacob said, "First you must swear that your birthright is mine." So Esau swore an oath, thereby selling all his rights as the firstborn to his brother, Jacob. **34** Then Jacob gave

Esau some bread and lentil stew. Esau ate the meal, then got up and left. He showed contempt for his rights as the firstborn.

26 **1** A severe famine now struck the land, as had happened before in Abraham's time. So Isaac moved to Gerar, where Abimelech, king of the Philistines, lived. **2** The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt, but do as I tell you. **3** Live here as a foreigner in this land, and I will be with you and bless you. I hereby confirm that I will give all these lands to you and your descendants, just as I solemnly promised Abraham, your father. **4** I will cause your descendants to become as numerous as the stars of the sky, and I will give them all these lands. And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed. **5** I will do this because Abraham listened to me and obeyed all my requirements, commands, decrees, and instructions." **6** So Isaac stayed in Gerar. **7** When the men who lived there asked Isaac about his wife, Rebekah, he said, "She is my sister." He was afraid to say, "She is my wife." He thought, "They will kill me to get her, because she is so beautiful." **8** But some time later, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out his window and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah. **9** Immediately, Abimelech called for Isaac and exclaimed, "She is obviously your wife! Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" "Because I was afraid someone would kill me to get her from me," Isaac replied. **10** "How could you do this to us?" Abimelech exclaimed. "One of my people might easily have taken your wife and slept with her, and you would have made us guilty of great sin." **11** Then Abimelech issued a public proclamation: "Anyone who touches this man or his wife will be put to death!" **12** When Isaac planted his crops that year, he harvested a hundred times more grain than he planted, for the LORD blessed him. **13** He became a very rich man, and his wealth continued to grow. **14** He acquired so many flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and servants that the Philistines became jealous of him. **15** So the Philistines filled up all of Isaac's wells with dirt. These were the wells that had been dug by the servants of his father, Abraham. **16** Finally, Abimelech ordered Isaac to leave the country. "Go somewhere else," he said, "for you have become too powerful for us."

Matthew 8:18 - 34

8 **18** When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he instructed his disciples to cross to the other side of the lake. **19** Then one of the teachers of religious law said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." **20** But Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place even to lay his head." **21** Another of his disciples said, "Lord, first let me return home and bury my father." **22** But Jesus told him, "Follow me now. Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead." **23** Then Jesus got into the boat and started across the

lake with his disciples. **24** Suddenly, a fierce storm struck the lake, with waves breaking into the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. **25** The disciples went and woke him up, shouting, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" **26** Jesus responded, "Why are you afraid? You have so little faith!" Then he got up and rebuked the wind and waves, and suddenly there was a great calm. **27** The disciples were amazed. "Who is this man?" they asked. "Even the winds and waves obey him!" **28** When Jesus arrived on the other side of the lake, in the region of the Gadarenes, two men who were possessed by demons met him. They lived in a cemetery and were so violent that no one could go through that area. **29** They began screaming at him, "Why are you interfering with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torture us before God's appointed time?" **30** There happened to be a large herd of pigs feeding in the distance. **31** So the demons begged, "If you cast us out, send us into that herd of pigs." **32** "All right, go!" Jesus commanded them. So the demons came out of the men and entered the pigs, and the whole herd plunged down the steep hillside into the lake and drowned in the water. **33** The herdsmen fled to the nearby town, telling everyone what happened to the demon-possessed men. **34** Then the entire town came out to meet Jesus, but they begged him to go away and leave them alone.

Psalms 10:1 - 15

10 1 O LORD, why do you stand so far away? Why do you hide when I am in trouble? **2** The wicked arrogantly hunt down the poor. Let them be caught in the evil they plan for others. **3** For they brag about their evil desires; they praise the greedy and curse the LORD. **4** The wicked are too proud to seek God. They seem to think that God is dead. **5** Yet they succeed in everything they do. They do not see your punishment awaiting them. They sneer at all their enemies. **6** They think, "Nothing bad will ever happen to us! We will be free of trouble forever!" **7** Their mouths are full of cursing, lies, and threats. Trouble and evil are on the tips of their tongues. **8** They lurk in ambush in the villages, waiting to murder innocent people. They are always searching for helpless victims. **9** Like lions crouched in hiding, they wait to pounce on the helpless. Like hunters they capture the helpless and drag them away in nets. **10** Their helpless victims are crushed; they fall beneath the strength of the wicked. **11** The wicked think, "God isn't watching us! He has closed his eyes and won't even see what we do!" **12** Arise, O LORD! Punish the wicked, O God! Do not ignore the helpless! **13** Why do the wicked get away with despising God? They think, "God will never call us to account." **14** But you see the trouble and grief they cause. You take note of it and punish them. The helpless put their trust in you. You defend the orphans. **15** Break the arms of these wicked, evil people! Go after them until the last one is destroyed.

Proverbs 3:7 - 8

3 7 Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the LORD and turn away from evil. **8** Then you will have healing for your body and strength for your bones.