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July 12, 2026

Pentecost 7

Genesis 25:19-34

These are the generations of Abraham's son Isaac. Isaac was the son of Abraham. At the age of forty Isaac married Rebecca, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddanaram, and sister of Laban the Aramean. Isaac prayed to [Adonai] on behalf of Rebecca, for they had no children. God listened to the prayers and Rebecca conceived. The babies in her womb struggled with each other. Rebecca said, "If this is the way it is to be, why go on living?" She asked for divine guidance and [Adonai] said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, two tribes in your belly who will be rivals. One will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger." When the time came for her to deliver, she gave birth to twin boys. The first to enter the world was very ruddy, and had so much hair on his body that he looked as if he was wearing a fur coat. So, they named him Esau, "Rough One." When the second came out, he was grasping Esau's heel, so they named him Jacob, "HeelGrabber." Isaac was sixty years old when Rebecca delivered the twins. The children grew up. Esau became a skilled hunter and enjoyed the open country, while the quiet Jacob preferred to stay at home. Isaac, who especially enjoyed wild game, favoured Esau while Rebecca favoured Jacob. One day, when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from hunting, famished. He said to Jacob, "I'm starving – let me have some of the red stuff, that red stew." This is why he was also called Edom, "Red One." Jacob replied, "Not until you sell me the rights you own from being firstborn." Esau replied, "Here I am ravenous for food. What good is my birthright to me now?" Jacob said, "Swear to me first!" So Esau swore to Jacob and sold his birthright. Only then did Jacob give Esau some bread and the lentil stew. He ate and drank, then got up and left. This is how little Esau valued his birthright.



- Portmanteau = a word that is made up of a blend of two other words
 - newscast = news + broadcast
 - brunch = breakfast + lunch
 - sitcom = situational comedy
 - cosplay = costume + play
 - labradoodle = labrador retriever + poodle
- Hangry = hungry + angry
 - seems like a modern portmanteau (Oxford Dictionary 2018), but dates back to *at least* 1918 (in a letter by British writer Arthur Ransome)
 - Merriam-Webster: an informal adjective meaning "irritable or angry because of hunger"

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- More than a word; it is a scientifically explainable medical condition:
 - When we go too long without eating, the glucose levels in our bloodstream drop. Because the brain relies almost exclusively on glucose for energy, a dip in these levels makes it much harder to exert self-control and regulate our mood. In response to this perceived "threat" of starvation, our body triggers the release of stress hormones, particularly adrenaline and cortisol. This combination creates the perfect storm of physical hunger and physiological "fight-or-flight" anger.
- Hangry is a great word to describe *Esau ben Isaac*, the oldest of the twins born to Rebecca and Isaac.
- Today's Genesis reading paints pictures in the mind
 - The first to enter the world had so much hair on his body that he looked as if he was wearing a fur coat. They named him Esau, "Rough One."
 - When the second came out, he was grasping the first one's heel, so they named him Jacob, "HeelGrabber."
 - One day, when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from hunting and said to Jacob, *I'm starving – let me have some of that red stew!*
 - can you picture the scene?
 - Musical Theatre reference: Little Shop of Horrors - [*Feed Me, Seymour*](#)
- Esau was so hangry in the moment that he agreed to transfer his future inheritance rights as the oldest son to his younger brother.
 - *I am ravenous for food. What good is my birthright to me now?*
 - I imagine sly smile on his face as Jacob filled the bowl and handed it to him
- Aside: this is only part one of the birthright scheme
 - Years later, Jacob (with his mother's help) tricked now-blind Isaac into blessing him as the primary heir instead of Esau
 - Led to Jacob having to flee (in fear of his brother) to a distant land to work for his uncle Laban.

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- There are wonderful sermons to be preached on the way that Isaac wound up the next in line to fulfill the promise to Abraham of a nation of descendants - including the consequences he faced in light of how it all went down
 - but, for today, the motivations of Esau are my focus.
- I try not to be too hard on Esau - like in the Snickers' commercials: he's not himself when he's hungry
 - Jacob took advantage of a biological chemical imbalance his brother was experiencing
 - Esau's desire for a fulfilling meal is not the problem here

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- There is a wider truth here:
 - when a person's most basic needs are not met, they might not be in the best position to do a lot of forward thinking or planning
 - when basic needs are not met, a person is particularly vulnerable to being taken advantage of
 - and so, there is a valuable role for advocates and supporters
 - to assist society in helping meet the needs of the moments so that looking forward can happen...
 - and to check the power of and hold accountable those who would abuse the situation for their own advantage
- It is right there is Jesus' most well-known prayer: *Give us this day, our daily bread!*

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- Appropriately, we are going to share the bounty of an open table today.

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- Ad lib reflections on Communion, Eucharist, The Lord's Supper
 - Acts 2: *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. All the believers were together and had everything in common selling property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.*
 - 1 Corinthians 11: *When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord's supper. For when the time comes to eat, each of you proceeds to eat your own supper, and one goes hungry and another becomes drunk. ... For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. ... So then, my friends, when you come together to eat, **wait for one another.***
 - evolution to open table
 - variety of elements
- physical hunger and spiritual hunger
- feeding of body and soul

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- We share because no one is to be left out.

#194MV Bread of Life

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