Genesis 25:19-26 – Scene 1: Birth of Esau & Jacob

19a	Now these [*are*] the generations of Isaac, = Abraham's son. 19b Abraham fathered Isaac.	▪

20	Now Isaac was forty years old
	  when he took Rebekah,
	    = [*who was*] the daughter of Bethuel,
	      = the Aramean from Paddan-aram,
	    = [*and*] the sister of Laban,
	      = the Aramean,
	  to [*be*] a wife to him.
		▪ Isaac: 40 years old at marriage

21a	And Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife,
	  because she [*was*] barren.
	
	21b And the LORD granted his prayer,
	  and Rebekah his wife conceived.
		▪

22a	The children struggled together within her,
	and she said,
	  "If it is thus,
	  why is this happening to me?"
	
	22b So she went to inquire of the LORD.
		▪

23a
 	
23b
	And the LORD said to her,
	  "Two nations are in your womb,
	  and two peoples from within you shall be divided;
	  the one shall be stronger than the other,
	  the older shall serve the younger."
		▪ Greater serves the smaller, younger.

24	And her days to give birth were completed, and look, there [*were*] twins in her womb.	▪ NET: Look! = The narrator invites the audience to view the scene as if they were actually present at the birth. ▪

Genesis 25:19-26 – Scene 1: Birth of Esau & Jacob

25	The first came out red, 　　　　all his body like a hairy cloak, so they called his name Esau.	▪ "Reddish" forms a wordplay on Edomites, Esau's descendants. The writer sees in Esau's appearance at birth a sign of what was to come.
26a	Then after this, his brother came out 　　　　with his hand grasping Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob.	▪ NET: The name probably means something like "may he protect," that is, as a rearguard, dogging the heels. It did not have a negative connotation until Esau redefined it.
26b	Now Isaac was sixty years old 　　　　when she bore them.	▪ NET: This name was probably chosen because of the immediate association with the incident of grabbing the heel. ▪ Isaac: 60 years old when twins were born.
		▪

Literature Type: ➢ Story	▪
Main Character: ➢ Isaac: This section begins the "account of Isaac."	▪
Other Characters: ➢ YHWH (The LORD): He answers Isaac's prayer and speaks to Rabekah. ➢ Rabekah: God answers her question about the twins. ➢ Esau: He is born first and typically would receive a double inheritance. ➢ Jacob: He grasped his brother's heel as he was born.	▪
Story Obstacles (*new tensions*): (1) Scene #1, Obstacle #1: 　➢ How will YHWH establish his covenant with Isaac's offspring, if Rabekah is barren? (See Genesis 17:19.) (2) Scene #1, Obstacle #2: 　➢ Why are the twins struggling inside Rabekah's womb? (3) Scene #1, Obstacle #3: 　➢ How will it play out if the older serves the younger? [*This is extremely counter-cultural*.] ❑ Foreshadowing: 　▪ Laban is introduced (25:20). 　▪ Conflict between Esau and Jacob is predicted (25:23, 26].	▪

Genesis 25:19-26 – Scene 1: Birth of Esau & Jacob

Tension Direction:
(1) Scene #1, Obstacle #1:
    ➢ Tension resolved: Isaac prays. YHWH grants his prayer. Rabekah conceives.
(2) Scene #1, Obstacle #2:
    ➢ Tension simmers: Rebekah inquires of YHWH. Will YHWH answer? What will be his answer?
(3) Scene #1, Obstacle #3:
    ➢ Tension Increases: There are twins that will become two nations. The older will serve the younger. How will this play out?
	▪

Theme (*to original audience*):
    ➢ YHWH continues his everlasting covenant (Genesis 17:19)
        ▪ By answering Isaac's prayer for offspring
        ▪ And by prescribing that the older twin (Esau) will serve the younger, stronger one (Jacob).
	▪

Theology (*for all audiences*):
    ➢ God keeps his promises, even in bleak circumstances.
    ➢ God answers prayer and questions.
    ➢ God sometimes speaks to his people.
    ➢ God knows his people and has a plan for them…
        ▪ Even from the womb.
    ➢ Life begins at conception.
	▪ *This is not a complete list.*

Big Idea (*for our audience*):
    ➢ Trust God for your future (*for a high school youth group*).
    ➢ Trust God's plan, when life's a mess (*for a young couples' study*).
    ➢ Seek God when you don't understand (*for a grief support class*).
	▪ *These are just examples.*