

YEAR 2, EPIPHANY 6, THURSDAY: MORNING PRAYER

The First Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from Genesis

Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Se'ir, the country of Edom, instructing them, "Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, 'I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed until now; and I have oxen, asses, flocks, menservants, and maidservants; and I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.'" And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men with him." Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies, thinking, "If Esau comes to the one company and destroys it, then the company which is left will escape." And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD who didst say to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will do you good,' I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness which thou hast shown to thy

servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan; and now I have become two companies. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he come and slay us all, the mothers with the children. But thou didst say, ‘I will do you good, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.’” So he lodged there that night, and took from what he had with him a present for his brother Esau, two hundred she-goats and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milch camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten he-asses. These he delivered into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, “Pass on before me, and put a space between drove and drove.” He instructed the foremost, “When Esau my brother meets you, and asks you, ‘To whom do you belong? Where are you going? And whose are these before you?’ then you shall say, ‘They belong to your servant Jacob; they are a present sent to my lord Esau; and moreover he is behind us.’” He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves, “You shall say the same thing to Esau when you meet him, and you shall say, ‘Moreover your servant Jacob is behind us.’” For he thought, “I may appease him with the present

that goes before me, and afterwards I shall see his face; perhaps he will accept me.” So the present passed on before him; and he himself lodged that night in the camp.

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.

The Second Lesson. The Reader begins

A Reading from the Gospel according to John

There was again a division among the Jews because of the words of Jesus. Many of them said, “He has a demon, and he is mad; why listen to him?” Others said, “These are not the sayings of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?” It was the feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem; it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. So the Jews gathered round him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness to me; but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has

given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”

The Reader concludes The Word of the Lord.