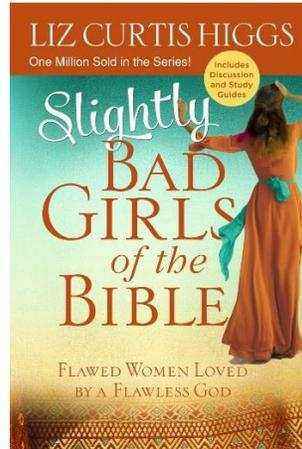


Word by Word with Liz Curtis Higgs on the Faith Radio Network

Bible Study Guide for August 11-12, 2018 | Rebekah

from *Slightly Bad Girls of the Bible* by Liz Curtis Higgs



1. Rebekah’s courageous statement in Genesis 24:58, “I will go,” echoed Abram’s actions a generation earlier in Genesis 12:4, “So Abram left, as the Lord had told him.” What other similarities between Abraham and his future daughter-in-law—either in temperament or behavior—can you find? How might Rebekah have seen her relocation to a distant land as a calling from God? We sense no hesitation in Rebekah; in fact, she seemed eager to leave. Was it the servant’s manners? Her own bold personality? The gifts? The family connection? The wealth to come? Make a case for whatever explanation you find most compelling.
2. According to Genesis 35:28, Isaac lived one hundred and eighty years, so he was still relatively young when he married Rebekah at age forty. One scholar described Isaac as having “a sedate, contemplative, and yielding disposition.” An interesting match for Rebekah, who appears to have none of those qualities. However reticent his personality, Isaac apparently wasted no time in marrying Rebekah, as Genesis 24:67 suggests. What are the pluses of marrying someone who is your opposite? And what are the minuses? We read in Genesis 24:67 that his marriage to Rebekah comforted Isaac. How and why might that have been the case?
3. Sarah’s barren state comes up repeatedly in Scripture, yet Rebekah’s twenty years of barrenness get only a passing mention. Genesis 25:21 gives us a clue why: “Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was childless. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.” What can we learn from the following passages about approaching God with our needs, as Isaac did: 1 John 5:14–15, Matthew 7:7–11, and John 16:24? Rebekah’s pregnancy was both an answer to prayer and a source of despair. With a battle raging in her womb, Genesis 25:22 tells us “she went to inquire of the Lord.” If the Lord was her first resort, what does that tell us about her?

4. The first woman in the biblical record to give birth to twins, Rebekah understandably wanted to know the reason for her agony. Was God's response in Genesis 25:23 assuring her "the older will serve the younger" sufficient justification for Rebekah to love Jacob (and, it would seem, not love Esau)? Why or why not? When the boys were older, we sense Rebekah's frustration building from the moment she overheard Isaac's plans to bless Esau, described in Genesis 27:4. The saga continues in Genesis 27:42–46. In the space of a few verses, we find Rebekah controlling both Jacob and Isaac. First, she mapped out Jacob's life for him. Did she ask her son's opinion, give him a choice, or define a time line? Without missing a beat, Rebekah turned her attention to Isaac, speaking ill of Esau and insisting Jacob needed a wife. Why do you think both Jacob and Isaac succumbed to her manipulations?
5. How do you envision Rebekah's relationship with Isaac after Jacob left? Do you think Isaac knew about her involvement behind the scenes, or was her husband truly in the dark? Do you imagine she confessed the part she played in the deception, then asked his forgiveness? Why or why not? Rebekah's last recorded speech in Genesis 27:46 is quite telling. What significance might there be in the fact that this manipulative statement closes the book on Rebekah's life as far as Scripture is concerned?
6. Read Genesis 27:1-46 once more. What's the most important lesson you learned from Rebekah, a wife and mother who seemed to care only about the end, not the means?