

# The Aardsma Weekly

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## Matthew: The Great Deer Hunter



For most people, November 16 is not a very important day. But for people like Matthew, it means the beginning of deer hunting season.

Matthew is 16, and is finally old enough to go deer hunting. He has been planning for the day when he could go deer hunting for months. He started his 'education' by reading and watching everything about deer hunting that he could get his hands on. He talked to some local farmers who hunted deer, and found one who was more than willing to help him get his first deer.

Matthew bought all the supplies: scents, calls, clothes... if it was necessary for deer hunting, he had it. He even had Mom wash his hunting clothes in a special scent-killing detergent!

Matthew was given a deer stand, which saved him time and money. The camouflaged seat-coverings were ripped in a few places, so he had Mom sew them up for him.

And finally, after months of planning, target practice, and anticipation, November 16 arrived.

Matthew told us the whole story when he got home:

He got up at 4:15 a.m., since deer like it best in the early morning. He went to a local farmer's house, whose name is Mr. Ehman. Mr. Ehman, Matthew, and Luke, Mr. Ehman's son, were all going deer hunting.

They got into Mr. Ehman's truck, and started out towards the hunting spots.

Their hunt started rather dramatically, as they almost hit a skunk, but they luckily missed it, and continued on their way.

Matthew's tree stand was in a forest, and there were at least 15 well-worn deer trails all around him. Matthew got positioned, and waited.

It was 5:00 when a huge herd of deer came by, but they were too far away for Matthew to get a shot.

Another half hour passed before Matthew saw another deer, and this one was a huge 13-point buck! Unfortunately, the buck was behind some bushes and also on someone else's property. The big buck caught wind of Matthew and left.

Soon after Matthew saw a 7-point buck, but that one was behind some trees, so Matthew could not get a good shot.

Matthew heard shots, and figured that Luke must have shot the big 13 pointer. Finally, at 6:00, a 6-point buck walked by, and this time Matthew could get a clear shot, and did. The buck took off, and Matthew watched it disappear into the trees, confident that he had gotten his deer.

Matthew didn't get out of his stand immediately, as he knew he had a good chance of scaring away deer that Luke or Mr. Ehman might try to shoot, so he stayed put for another hour.

When Matthew came down from his stand, he called us at home to let us know he had shot a deer. When the phone rang, I heard Matthew's voice saying, "I'm just calling to let you know that the deer population is now minus one 6-point buck." Mom picked up, and at her excited "You got one!" all the rest of us dashed to the phone to hear the news.

When Matthew got off the phone, he found Luke and Mr. Ehman. They confirmed that Luke had shot the 13-pointer. Matthew helped them locate Luke's deer. They found the big buck in a three-foot river. It took them two hours to lug the deer out of the river. After finding Matthew's deer, they went back to the Ehman's home.

Luke had to go somewhere, but soon after he left he called Mr. Ehman up on his cell-phone. Luke said there was a coyote heading straight for their property. Mr. Ehman and Matthew hid behind a truck and waited. In five minutes, Matthew spotted the coyote dashing across a nearby field. Mr. Ehman got out his big muzzle-loader, and tried rather unsuccessfully to load it. His fingers were numb with cold, which made the process difficult!

When the coyote was close enough to get a good shot, a truck drove by. The terrified coyote dashed right in front of it. Mr. Ehman could not shoot, and the coyote ran away.

When Matthew got home, Rebekah and Timmy helped him skin and prepare his deer. Then they lugged two huge sides of deer into the kitchen, and we worked until 9:00 that night cutting, washing, and grinding up deer meat.

After a delicious lunch of venison steak for lunch today, we all agreed that Matthew's hunt paid off.

## **The Weekly Bible Verse**

Romans 8:28: And we know that all that happens to us is working for our good if we love God and are fitting into his plans.

# **David: A Man After God's Own Heart**

By Rachel Aardsma

### **Part 10.**

David felt the excitement mounting inside him as he neared King Saul's camp. He was still far away, but he could see the soldiers and tents.

David did not have time to get any closer before a man appeared at the door of one of tents and shouted something. David could not hear what he said, but the all the soldiers in the camp were forming the ranks. David watched in admiration as the mighty army of Israel assembled.

David continued towards the group, lugging the provisions his father had sent for Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah, his three brothers who were fighting with King Saul.

By the time David reached the camp, the men had marched away, leaving the camp quiet and still, except for the guards. David spotted an armored man standing in the doorway of a tent and leaving the sack of food with him, set out to find his brothers.

As David neared the top of the hill the army had disappeared over, he heard a mighty shout and could see the Philistine and Israelite armies nearing for a battle. David was undecided whether to join his brothers in the army, or wait on the hill until the battle was over, but it turned out he had a chance to do neither. For no sooner had the armies gotten close enough to begin a battle, then the largest, ugliest, meanest looking man David had ever seen stepped out of the ranks of the Philistines. David stared in astonishment. That man was a giant!

"Today I defy the ranks of Israel!" thundered the giant, raising a huge sword in the air. "Give me a man, that we may fight together!" The giant gave an ugly laugh. David watched in surprise as the Israelite army turned and fled. He had expected someone to accept the giant's challenge, and fight the man who would dare defy Israel.

David stopped the first soldier to reach the hill where he stood.

"Who is that man?" David asked.

"They call him Goliath. He is a monster! He shall surely kill any who tries to fight him." The soldier turned and fled back to the camp, and David watched him go.

## **A Word About The Weather**

It has been very cold this week, with lots of rain as well. The whole yard is just mud, and the pigs are having a wonderful time in their pen. But the weather shows signs of clearing up soon, so we keep hoping.



## **Bits and Pieces**

This week we acquired three new animals: sheep. The sheep are all ewes, and their names are Polly, Molly, and Dolly. We hope to get a ram, which we plan to name Wally, soon after Thanksgiving. The sheep are big, brownish animals. They are shy,

quiet, and tame. Timothy, their proud keeper, announces each morning that 'his' animals like him better every day.

With Thanksgiving just around the corner, we are busy each afternoon doing up our organic, homegrown turkeys to sell to friends and neighbors. It has been bitterly cold and rainy lately, so we all work in our cramped, but warm, pantry. Mom isn't too happy with this arrangement, as it brings muck, grime, and mire into her nice, clean pantry. She keeps trying to clean up, but I think she has finally given up.

We recently bought an electric meat grinder, and tried it out for the first time this week. One of the turkeys we had done up did not turn out well enough for selling, so Beka set up the meat grinder and ground away. The big pan full of turkey burger Beka had when she was finished was made into meatloaf the same day, and it tasted delicious. We plan to use the meat grinder to make sausage when we do up our four pigs later this fall.

We also used our new grinder for Matthew's deer. The mounds of deer burger made Mom really happy, and Mom keeps saying that the 100 dollars she spent on the grinder has already been paid off.



## **A Word of Wisdom**



"Just the knowledge that a good book is awaiting one at the end of a long day makes that day happier." (Kathleen Norris. *Hands Full of Living*. 1931.)