

November 17, 2019

## Morning Overview

**Lesson:** *Patriarchs: Jacob's Journey Home*

### Lesson Objective:

In today's lesson we continue to see the life of Jacob unfold. We speedily walk through his time in Haran, but slow down to see Jacob journey back home. In his journey home we discover a few instances of God, or God's representatives, meeting Jacob and finally God affirming the covenant promises to Jacob. Jacob models for us what happens when we meet God, even in fearful times; when we encounter the living God, we are always changed and always reminded of those encounters.

### Teaching Points:

- God is faithful. God keeps His promises.
- God is sovereign (or in-control).
- Man is sinful.
- Jacob, as he returns home, was fearful of his brother Esau. God promised that He would protect Jacob.
- Jacob wrestles with God and receives not only a blessing, but a name-change. Jacob's new name is Israel.
- Jacob and Esau reunite as brothers and not enemies. God's protection of Jacob remains, and we discover both Jacob and Esau have been blessed and prospered.
- Jacob makes a pillar to remember this life-changing event.

**Scripture:** Genesis 32:1-12; 22-30, 33:1-11, 20

**Story:** Vos Child's Story Bible, Pages 40-41; Gospel Story Book Bible, Pages 36-43, (main focus on Pages 42-43); The Beginner's Bible, Pages 68-72

**Scripture Memory for November:** Genesis 28:15b (ESV)

**For I will not leave you** (*shake your finger and step sideways*)

**until I have done what I have promised you** (*hold open your hands like a Bible and then point to the palm of your hand*)

**Craft:** Jacob becomes Israel

**Supplies:** Cardstock, crayons/markers

**Instructions:**

1. Have children color both sides of cardstock.
2. Fold down the middle so Jacob name covers Israel.



If child has already done craft first hour, have them work on a coloring sheet

# Story

## Review

Last week we heard the story of two brothers. Do you remember their names? (Esau and Jacob) And Jacob tricked his father, Isaac. Do you remember how Jacob tricked his father? (He cooked a stew; dressed his arms in fur to feel like Esau did – hairy arms; and he put on Esau's clothes to smell like him).

After Jacob tricked his father Isaac, Jacob was given the special blessing. The special blessing was a promise for great and wonderful things for the oldest son in the family. In our story that would be Esau. Was Esau happy or angry that Jacob got the special blessing? (Angry) Right, very angry. So, Jacob had to leave home, but even though Jacob is far from his family, God is with him every step of the way. Let's read more about Jacob's journey.

## Leaving home

Esau was very mad at his brother Jacob. Jacob tricked their father, Isaac, into giving him the special blessing! Isaac was blind and unable to see which of his sons had come asking for the special blessing. Esau was planning to hurt Jacob because he was so angry. When Jacob and Esau's mother, Rebekah, found out, she ran to tell Jacob. "Leave and go to your Uncle Laban's house far away in Haran!" she said. Their mother told Jacob, "Stay with him for a while until your brother is no longer angry with you and forgets what you did to him." Jacob had done a sinful thing to trick his father, Isaac, and to steal the special blessing.

## Working for Uncle Laban

Jacob left his parents and home quickly for Haran. Jacob traveled to Haran and there he lived with his Uncle Laban and his family. Uncle Laban was very happy to meet his nephew Jacob. The Bible tells us Jacob lived with Uncle Laban and his family for 20 years. During that time Jacob married Laban's daughter, Rachel. Jacob had a very large family (12 sons and 1 daughter!).

While Jacob stayed with Laban, God blessed him. Jacob became very, very rich. Because Jacob worked for Laban, he made Laban rich too. But one day Jacob decided he wanted to leave his Uncle Laban and Haran and go back home. Laban did not want Jacob to leave. Laban found ways to trick Jacob into staying with him in Haran instead of traveling back home.

But eventually it was time to go back home. When Rachel had a little boy named Joseph, Jacob decided it was time to leave Laban's home in Haran and go back to his own home in Canaan. In a dream God said, "Go back to your own land. I will be with you." Jacob was still worried about his brother Esau and what might happen if he went back home. But Jacob knew he should obey God. Jacob put his children on camels, and he gathered all his animals and all the other things he had gotten while he was at Laban's house in Haran and began his journey back home.

## Fearing Esau

Although 20 whole years had passed since Jacob had left his home and his brother Esau, Jacob was still afraid. Jacob was worried that Esau might try to hurt him like he wanted to so many years ago. Esau was still living near their home. Esau had grown up and had his own family too. Esau was a very powerful person in the land of Canaan.

## The Strategy

While Jacob traveled back home, he began to think about how to greet Esau. Jacob did not want to get hurt. So, Jacob decided to send messengers ahead to his brother Esau. Jacob told the messengers, "This is what you are to say to Esau: 'Your servant Jacob says, I have been staying with Laban and have remained there all this time. I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goats, and servants. I am sending this message to my lord, that I may find favor in your eyes.'" Jacob wanted Esau to be friends with him. More than that, Jacob did not want Esau to hurt him. When the messengers returned from delivering their message to Esau, Jacob was shocked. The messengers told Jacob, "We

went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and 400 men are with him!” Jacob was afraid. He might have thought Esau was bringing men to fight. And Jacob had women, children, and some of his servants, but Jacob did not have any soldiers to protect him. Jacob came up with a way to protect his family, servants, possessions, and animals. The Bible says Jacob divided the people with him into two groups. He divided the flocks and herds and camels, as well. Jacob thought, “If Esau comes and attacks one group, the group that is left can run away.”

### **The Prayer**

After Jacob divided the people and the animals, he did something very important. Jacob prayed to God.

“O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, O Lord, who said to me, ‘Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,’ I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown me, your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two groups. Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children. But you have said, ‘I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.’”

In that prayer, Jacob was worshipping the Lord and remembering what God had said, what God had promised, and what God had already done. He was also telling the Lord that he was frightened and asking Him for help. When we pray, God wants us to talk to Him just like that!

### **Gifts**

Then the Bible says Jacob decided to send a gift to Esau. Jacob chose 220 goats, 220 sheep, 30 girl camels with their babies, 40 cows, 10 bulls, and 30 donkeys. Jacob placed each herd by itself and asked a servant to take care of it. Jacob said to the servants, “Go ahead of me, and keep some space between the herds.” Jacob gave instructions to the servant that was in the very front. “When my brother Esau meets you and asks, ‘To whom do you belong and where are you going, and who owns all these animals?’ you will say to him, ‘They belong to Jacob and they are a gift sent to you from him. He is coming behind us.’”

Jacob also instructed the other servants to say the same thing to Esau. Jacob was thinking that all the gifts might cause Esau to be friendly and not to hurt with him. That night Jacob sent his wives, servants, and sons across the stream. Then he sent over all his possessions. Jacob was left all alone.

### **Wrestling with an Angel**

Jacob was all alone. The Bible says while he was all alone a man wrestled with him all night long. As the sun started to rise, Jacob realized that he had been wrestling with an angel of God. The angel said, “Let me go, for the day is breaking” (that means the sun is starting to shine). But Jacob said, “I will not let you go until you bless me.” The angel asked, “What is your name?” “My name is Jacob,” he answered. The angel then said something very strange, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel.” The angel had given Jacob a new name. When the angel saw how hard Jacob was wrestling, he touched Jacob’s hip (point to your hip). After the angel touched Jacob’s hip, he let the angel go. And ever since that moment Jacob would walk differently (or with a limp).

### **Jacob Meets Esau**

Not long after the angel had left, Jacob looked up and there was Esau coming with his 400 men. Jacob went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he came close to his brother Esau. But the Bible says Esau ran to meet Jacob and he gave him a big hug. Esau threw his arms around Jacob’s neck and kissed him. Then they both cried. Esau had forgiven Jacob. Then Esau met Jacob’s family and received all the gifts that Jacob had offered him. God had heard Jacob’s prayer and protected him. When Jacob finally reached his old home in Canaan, he bought a piece of ground and set up his tent there. Then he built an altar to the Lord.

### **Questions for Review with Younger Children**

Have the kids answer “Yes” if it is true, or “no” with the correct answer if it is false.

- Isaac and Rebekah had two sons named Jacob and Esau. (Yes)
- Jacob was the oldest, and Esau was the younger brother. (No! Esau was the oldest, Jacob the youngest.)
- Esau would have the special blessing – all the possessions and blessings for being the oldest. (Yes)
- God promised that Jacob would be the leader of the family even though he was younger. (Yes)
- Jacob left home because Esau was angry with him and might try to hurt him. (Yes)
- Jacob lived with his Uncle Laban for 20 years. (Yes)
- Jacob was very poor while living with his uncle. (No! He became very rich.)
- Jacob eventually traveled back home to Canaan. (Yes)
- Jacob was scared Esau might try to hurt him if he came back home. (Yes)
- God promised to be with Jacob. Jacob prayed to God to praise Him and ask for protection. (Yes)
- Jacob wrestled with an angel of the Lord. The angel changed Jacob’s name to Bobby. (No! Jacob’s new name was Israel.)
- When Esau finally met Jacob, Esau punched him. (No! Esau ran to Jacob and kissed and hugged him.)
- God kept His promise to Jacob to be with Him. (Yes)