

JACOB AND ESAU MEET

Genesis 31:1–7; 31:20–55; 32; 33



Contents

Message	God wants us to be forgiving just as He forgives us.
Learning Objectives	The children will learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Jacob and Esau reconciled.■ God wants us to reconcile with each other.
Bible Text	Genesis 31:1-7; 31:20-55; 32; 33

Jacob and Esau Meet



Jacob heard Laban's sons talking one day. They were very unhappy that Jacob took their father's herds and was becoming very wealthy. Jacob felt that things between him and Laban were not good.

God told Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family and I will be with you." Jacob called Rachel and Leah and told them what he had heard. Rachel and Leah agreed to this and they decided to leave Laban without saying goodbye because they feared him.

Three days later Laban found out that they had fled. He was very angry and chased after them with some of his men. Before he reached Jacob, God appeared to Laban in a dream one night. God said to him. "Be careful. Speak kindly to Jacob and do not threaten him in any way!"

Shortly afterwards, Laban met with Jacob. They had a long discussion about everything that happened and in the end they were reconciled.

To remember this they built a memorial. The next morning Laban said goodbye to his daughters and blessed them.

Jacob and his family continued on their journey. The angels of God met him. When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's camp." He sent messengers ahead to Esau and said, "Tell Esau I am coming and that I have lived with Laban until now. I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and servants. Tell him that I hope he no longer hates me."

The messengers returned to tell Jacob that Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men.

Jacob was afraid He divided his family and all that he owned in two so that if one was attacked the other could escape. Jacob prayed to God for help, "God of Abraham and Isaac please help me Protect my family and all my possessions Protect me from my brother Esau You told me to return to my homeland in peace." He then sent the messengers back to his brother with a number of his animals as a gift. Jacob sent his family across the river Jabbok. When he was alone, a Man wrestled with him all through the night until morning.

The Man finally said, "Let Me go!" Jacob answered, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" The Man then asked Jacob what his name was. He replied, "Jacob." Jacob wanted to know the Man's name but He would not say. The Man answered, "From now on your name shall be Israel. You have wrestled with God, and you have succeeded." Soon Jacob saw Esau and his army approaching. Esau rushed up to Jacob and the two brothers embraced each other crying.

Jacob introduced his family to Esau. When Jacob arrived in Shechem, he bought land and settled with his family. To show his appreciation he built an altar to God.

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Suggestions for the Teacher

Lead-In

Show the picture to the children. Discuss with them what they see. Ask what she/he may feel....

Let some of the children play Jacob's fight with God in a role-play. Instruct them before.

Provide disguise / fancy dress and additional materials. Use the exact key wordings of the Bible.

Lesson Instructions

Begin telling the story...

Discuss with the children...

- What does Jacob do when he is about to meet his brother? (He sends out men to ask his brother for mercy. He sends him a number of animals as a present. He prays to God.)
- Who is the man Jacob wrestles with? (God)
- What does Jacob say him? ("I will not let You go unless You bless me!")
- How do Jacob and Esau feel after not having seen each other for such a long time? (Thankful,)

Have the children repeat...

- Jacob and Esau reconciled.
- God wants us to reconcile with each other.

Real-Life Application (explain the following)

- Have you once had a disagreement with someone in the past? How did you resolve it?
- Jacob asked God for help.
- At the same time he prepared to do something himself.
- We, too, should work and pray.

Repeat the Message
God wants us to be forgiving just as He forgives us.