

Jacob Returns to Canaan

Genesis 32, 33, 35



Jacob Makes a Plan

God told Jacob to leave his Uncle Laban's home. God said, "Go back to your family in Canaan. I will take care of you." Jacob wanted to obey God, but he was afraid. He was afraid because he had made his brother, Esau, very angry. What if Esau was still angry? What if he wanted to kill Jacob? What if he hurt Jacob's family?

Jacob needed a plan. He liked to make plans. Sometimes Jacob prayed to God for help with his plans, but sometimes he forgot to wait for God's help. This time Jacob was in a hurry. He prayed, but he did not wait for God's help.

Quickly, he divided his family into two groups. If Esau hurt one group, the other group would be safe. Next Jacob decided to give Esau a present. He thought a present would make Esau happy. What kind of present would make you happy? [Allow several responses.] Jacob decided animals would make Esau happy. He sent the animals to Esau in five groups. The first group had hundreds of goats. The second group had hundreds of sheep. The third group had thirty camels. The fourth group had fifty cattle, and the fifth group had thirty donkeys. What a big present that was! It took a long time to get that big present ready. When Jacob finished, it was time to camp for the night.

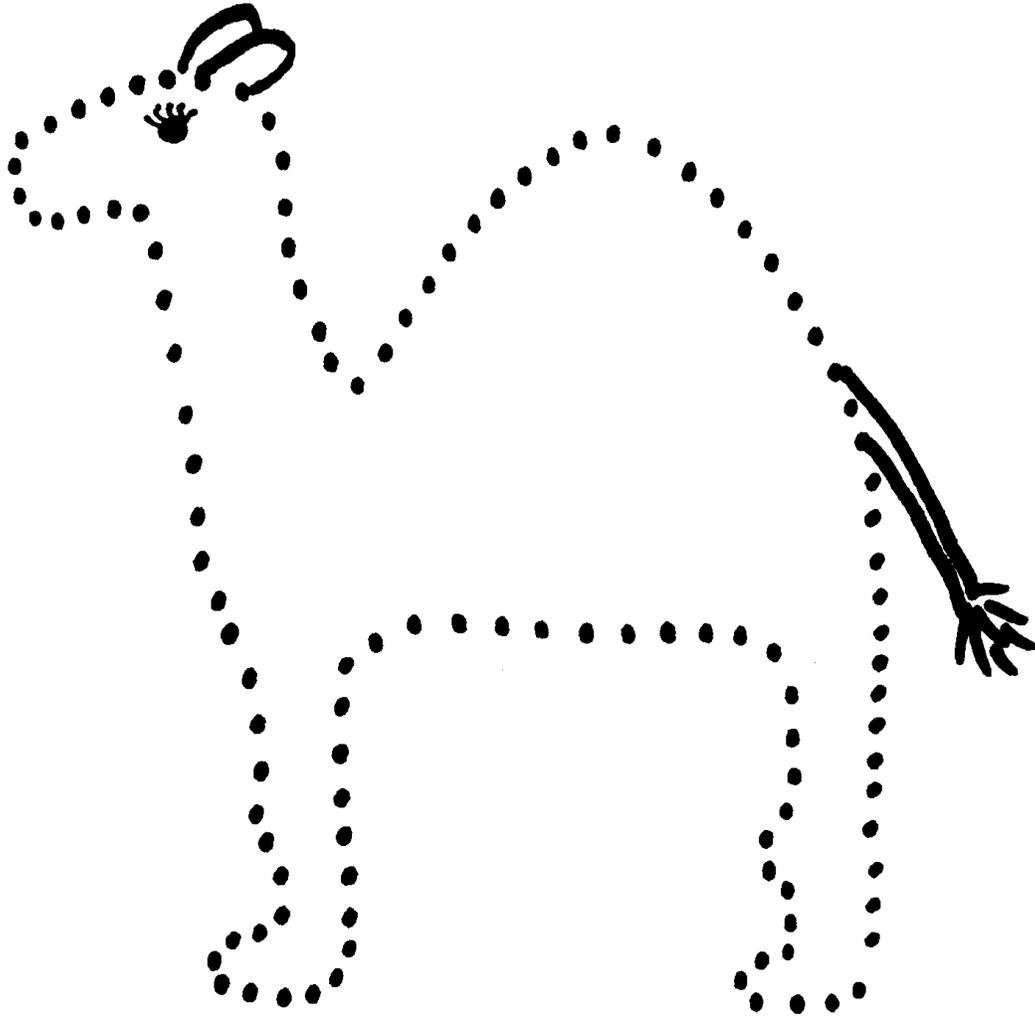
During the night a Man came and wrestled with Jacob. The Man was not Esau. Jacob did not know who the

Man was. They wrestled all night. Just before morning the Man hurt Jacob's hip. The Man said, "Let Me go." But Jacob said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" The Man gave Jacob a new name: Israel. Then Jacob knew that the Man was really God. He knew God would take care of him.

In the morning Esau came to Jacob's camp. He was not angry any more. He was happy to see Jacob. Esau was happy Jacob and his family were coming back to Canaan. God was happy, too. He reminded Jacob about two special promises. God promised to take care of Jacob in Canaan. God also promised that Jesus would be Jacob's great, great... grandson. Jacob thanked God for taking such good care of him.

God helps Jacob realize that it is He who has preserved and blessed him.

Activity One - Connect the dots to make a picture of an animal Jacob gave to Esau.



Activity Two - Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down Game Point your thumb up if the sentence is right. Point your thumb down if the sentence is wrong. (Optional activity - make the false sentences true.)

1. Jacob was afraid of his brother, Esau.
2. Jacob did not like to make plans.
3. Jacob thought a present would make Esau happy.
4. Jacob decided to give Esau a new car.

5. Esau wrestled with Jacob all night.
6. Jacob wrestled with God all night.
7. Jacob's new name was Laban.
8. Esau was not happy to see Jacob.
9. God promised to take care of Jacob.
10. God promised Jesus would be Jacob's great, great ... grandson.

God helps us realize He preserves and blesses us.

Passage

1 Peter 5:7 - Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Hymn - TLH #428 v.1, 6

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
Trusting only Thee;
Trusting Thee for full salvation,
Great and free.

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;
Never let me fall.
I am trusting Thee forever
And for all.

Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for taking care of Jacob when he was afraid. Help me to remember Your promise to take care of me when I am afraid. Amen.

Jacob Returns to Canaan

Genesis 32, 33, 35



The Story

Jacob lived with his Uncle Laban for many years. He worked for his uncle to earn a wife and livestock. Jacob left his Uncle Laban's home. Jacob took Leah and Rachel, all his children, servants, and animals. They had to travel a long way back to Canaan. To get to Canaan, they would have to travel through the country where his brother Esau lived. It had been a long time since Jacob had seen Esau. The last time they were together, Esau wanted to harm Jacob.

Before seeing Esau, Jacob wanted to find out if his brother still wanted to kill him. He sent messengers to tell Esau he was coming with his family. The messengers returned and reported that Esau was coming to meet Jacob with 400 men. Jacob became afraid. He did not ask the Lord what he should do, but made his own plan to divide his family into two groups. Jacob thought that if Esau attacked one group, the other group would escape. Then Jacob prayed and asked the Lord to be with him. Jacob also got a large present of livestock ready for Esau.

That night, Jacob took his whole family and two female servants across the Jabok River. Jacob slept away from his family. During the night, the Lord came and wrestled with Jacob all night long. The Lord gave Jacob a sore hip as a reminder of the time that they wrestled. Jacob realized that he was wrestling with the Lord and asked for a blessing. The Lord gave Jacob a new name, Israel, and a blessing.

The day came for Jacob to meet his brother Esau. Jacob forgot to trust in the

Lord and followed the plan he had made to divide his family. Jacob's servants and their children went first, then Leah and her children, and last Rachel and her children. When Jacob was close to Esau, he bowed seven times. He wanted to show Esau that he was sorry for cheating and stealing the birthright from him. Esau was so happy to see his brother again. He did not want to kill Jacob anymore. Esau wanted to travel with Jacob, but Jacob was still not sure that he could trust Esau even after the Lord had promised to be with him. Jacob tried to get Esau to leave his family to travel alone. So Esau went to his home and Jacob went in the opposite direction to Canaan.

After living in Canaan for a time, God wanted Jacob to move to a place called Bethel. While in Bethel, God came to bless Jacob and remind him that his family would become a mighty nation. Jacob and his family moved from Bethel to Bethlehem. In Bethlehem, Rachel died while having a baby. This was Jacob's last son, named Benjamin. Jacob then went to visit his father, Isaac. Isaac was very old and he died at age 180. Esau and Jacob buried their father.

God helps Jacob realize that it is He who has preserved and blessed him.

God helps us realize that He preserves and blesses us.

Activity One - Circle the words in the word-find puzzle below. All letters will only be used once. Talk about why the words belong to today's story.

BETHEL
CANAAN
DIED
ESAU
GIFT
GROUPS
HIP
ISAAC
JACOB
LORD
MESSENGERS
PRAYER
RACHEL
TWO
WRESTLED

S	G	J	E	E	J	H	B	W	D	N	P
I	M	R	A	S	B	I	E	R	I	W	R
I	W	E	O	C	A	P	T	E	E	H	A
D	L	V	S	U	O	U	H	S	D	X	Y
E	E	O	F	S	P	B	E	T	Y	G	E
J	T	T	O	K	E	S	L	L	G	R	R
C	A	N	A	A	N	N	V	E	U	Q	C
R	R	A	C	H	E	L	G	D	X	A	E
V	N	L	O	R	D	T	O	E	A	T	O
G	S	Q	K	F	F	W	J	S	R	M	W
A	T	H	W	I	T	J	I	A	U	R	Y
N	W	U	G	X	Z	O	U	B	L	U	R

Activity Two - Discuss the following questions.

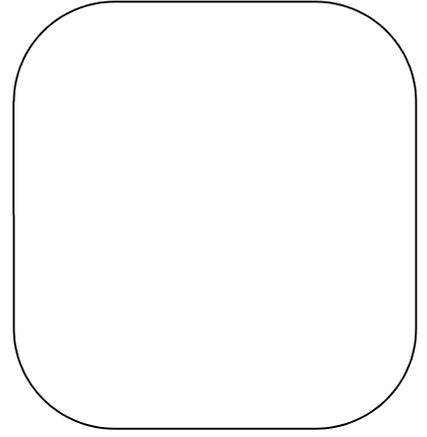
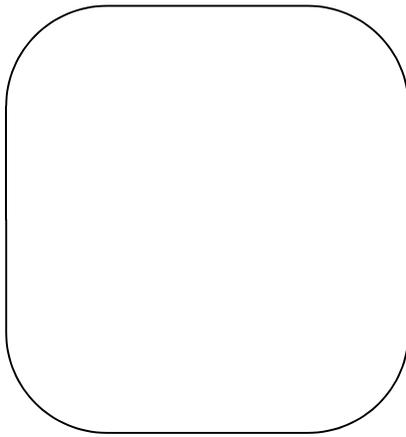
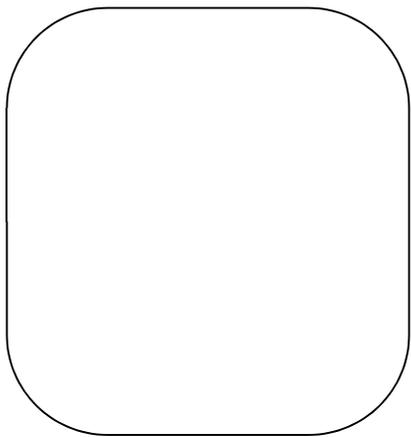
1. Why didn't Jacob want to see Esau?
2. What did Jacob's messengers find out about Esau? How did this make Jacob feel?
3. Who came to visit Jacob the night before he was to meet Esau? What happened to Jacob?
4. Why did the Lord wrestle with Jacob?
5. How did Jacob decide to go to see Esau? Why did he divide his family into groups?
6. Why do you think Jacob took a very large gift to Esau?
7. Who died at the end of the story?

Passages

Psalm 50:15 Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.

God tells us in the Bible that we are to pray to Him when we are in trouble. In our story, Jacob prayed when he was troubled over meeting his brother again. Jacob remembered that Esau wanted to kill him and he was afraid.

Draw three pictures of times when you are in trouble and could pray to the Lord for help.



Hymn - TLH #428 v.1, 6

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
Trusting only Thee;
Trusting Thee for full salvation,
Great and free.

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;
Never let me fall.
I am trusting Thee forever
And for all.

What should Jacob have trusted in the Lord to do for him?

What should you trust the Lord to do for you?

Talk about things that you trust the Lord to do for you. Don't forget the most important thing that the Lord did for you.

Prayer

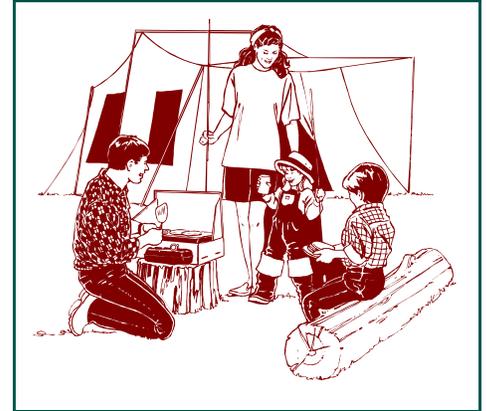
Dear Jesus,
Thank You for giving us Your Word. Please help us to remember to trust that You will always be with us. Help us to remember that we should pray when we have a problem because You promise to hear us and help us. In Your name we pray, Amen.

Jacob Returns to Canaan

Genesis 32, 33, 35

Have you gone on a vacation? Were you excited to pack your belongings and start out on a trip to a favorite vacation spot or quiet cabin for a few days away from home? Imagine being gone from home for more than a few days or even weeks. Imagine being gone for years from family and friends. What had changed? Who is new? How is the family?

In today's story, we are going to learn that Jacob is going home. He has stayed with his uncle Laban for years waiting for his mother to send word that he should come home. No word has been received, yet, Jacob is going home.



Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, we know that You care for us better than we could ever care for ourselves, You alone know what is best for us. We ask You now to give each of us the unshakable confidence in You as our Protector and Provider. Grant that through the study of this lesson we might come to realize that just as You were with Jacob and brought him safely through many adversities, so You will always protect and provide for each one of Your children. Bless our study of this truth, in Jesus' Name. Amen.

The Story - Genesis 32, 33, 35

Jacob makes the final preparation for returning home. The Lord reassured Jacob that this was the right thing by sending angels to meet Jacob. When Jacob left home, he was fleeing from Esau, his brother. Still unsure how his brother Esau would accept Jacob's return special preparation needed to be made. First Jacob sent messengers ahead to inform Esau that he was coming home. The messengers returned to Jacob and told him that Esau, along with 400 men, was coming to meet Jacob. This news caused Jacob to be afraid. Why 400 men? Was Esau still upset with his brother?

Looking to his human understanding

Jacob divided his family and possessions into two groups. If Esau destroyed the first group than the second group could escape. Then he turned to the Lord in prayer requesting that the Lord grant Jacob a safe home coming. Jacob reminded the Lord of the promises that God had given to him, such as the promise of becoming a great nation. Jacob, trusting in knowledge that it was the Lord's will that he return home, sent the first group of animals and servants to his brother Esau. Jacob instructed the servants to tell Esau that these were gifts from his brother. After the first group left Jacob moved his two wives, their servants, and his eleven sons



over a brook to protect them in case Esau did not accept Jacob's gifts.

That night, while waiting to learn of Esau's response to Jacob's gifts, Jacob wrestled with a Man until the breaking of day. The Man was the Lord. As morning was waking, Jacob would not let go of the Man. Jacob requested a blessing from the Man. The Lord blessed Jacob by changing his name to Israel because he had struggled with God and with men, and prevailed.

As the sun rose Jacob saw Esau coming. Scared by the vision of his powerful brother and his 400 men, Jacob quickly divided his children and servants putting the maidservants first, then Leah and her children, finally Rachel and Joseph. Then Jacob went out to greet his brother by bowing to the ground seven times. Esau ran to meet Jacob, embraced him, and they wept in joy together. Esau was impressed with Jacob's family. It was a wonderful family reunion blessed by the Lord.

Esau did not wish to accept the gifts that Jacob had given him, however, Jacob insisted. Esau wanted everyone to return home together. Jacob, concerned for his family, encouraged Esau to go on ahead. He and his family would follow. Esau went on home.

Jacob and his family safely made their way back to Succoth in Canaan where he purchased some land, built a house and provided for his livestock. The Lord

directed Jacob to move to Bethel and dwell there. Before moving, Jacob knew that some of the servants and family members still believed in false gods and were carrying idols with them. Jacob asked that these gods be put away. Jacob buried these idols and the family moved on. The Lord protected Jacob's family as they moved from place to place in Canaan. At Bethel, Jacob built an altar to the Lord. It was here that the Lord first appeared to Jacob when he was fleeing his brother. The promise of the Lord then was fulfilled; God had been and was with Jacob. It was here that the Lord repeated His promises to Jacob again.

Shortly after their stop in Bethel, Rachel gave birth to her second son. However, while in childbirth, Rachel died. Jacob named the child Benjamin and buried his wife at Bethlehem.

Jacob finally returned to his home and to his father Isaac. Shortly after Jacob's return, Isaac died at the age of 180 years. Esau and Jacob buried their father together.

Like returning home from a vacation, Jacob returned to his homeland. He had to be kind not only to his brother and his family but to all those who inhabited the land of Canaan. The Lord continued to bless Jacob, Israel, and Jacob showed his love in return by building altars and praising God.

Outer Aim - God helps Jacob realize that it is He who has preserved and blessed him.

What the Story Tells Us - If the statement is true circle the "T". If the statement is false circle the "F".

- T or F 1. As Jacob started back to Canaan, God appeared to him.
- T or F 2. Esau sent messengers to greet his brother Jacob.
- T or F 3. Jacob was sorry for his sin against his brother; he wanted Esau's forgiveness.
- T or F 4. It was God's idea that Jacob return to Canaan.
- T or F 5. Jacob was poor when he left Canaan; now he was returning home rich.
- T or F 6. Jacob tried to buy his forgiveness from Esau.
- T or F 7. When Jacob wrestled with the Lord, Jacob's hip was injured.
- T or F 8. The Lord blessed Jacob with a new name: Israel.
- T or F 9. Esau was not happy that his brother had returned.
- T or F 10. The Lord assured Jacob about his return home and blessed him.

What the Bible Tells Us - Look up the following Bible references and match it with one of the following statements. You will use each passage once.

Psalms 145:15

1 Peter 5:7

Psalms 33:18

Philippians 4:19

Psalms 37:5

Psalms 50:15

1. Which passage tells us to cast all our cares on the Lord because He cares for us?
2. Jacob knew that he could look to the Lord for guidance. Name the passage that tells us to commit our way to Lord, like Jacob did, knowing that the Lord will bless us.
3. In this passage we are reminded that all our food for every season comes from the Lord. Name the passage.
4. Lord either directly or through His angels reassured Jacob that returning to Canaan was the correct thing to do. Which passage reminds us to look to the Lord and know that He will take care of us?
5. It is by Jesus Christ that we know that our Heavenly Father loves and guides us here on earth. Name the passage that reminds of this.
6. Jacob was taught by his parents to look to the Lord. Israel passed this lesson on to his children. One of the passages above gives us the command from God to turn to Him all the time, especially when we are in trouble. Name that passage.

Passages

Psalm 145:15 - The eyes of all look expectantly to You, and You give them their food in due season.

Psalm 37:5 - Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.

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Hymn - TLH #428 v.1, 2, 4, 6 Where should you be looking for your strength today?

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
Trusting only Thee;
Trusting Thee for full salvation,
Great and free.

I am trusting Thee for pardon;
At Thy feet I bow,
For Thy grace and tender mercy
Trusting now.

I am trusting Thee to guide me;
Thou alone shalt lead,
Ev'ry day and hour supplying
All my need.

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;
Never let me fall.
I am trusting Thee forever
And for all.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, whenever I am tempted to put my trust in myself remind me always to put my trust in You. Let me never forget that You are my strength and that You are always with me and will never leave me. Apart from You I can accomplish no good thing. Strengthen the faith with which You have blessed me and help me to always trust in You as my Savior and Provider. In Jesus' name I ask this. Amen.

Jacob Returns to Canaan

Genesis 32, 33, 35

Teenagers today are under a lot of pressure from their peers. The world tries very hard to force them to make split-second decisions whether they understand the consequences or not. Have you ever felt that pressure? Friends may try to encourage you smoke, do drugs, steal, and worse. We make mistakes; we are sinners. But that does not make it right. The Lord reminds us to face up to faults and mistakes; to look to Him for guidance and love but above all for forgiveness.



In today's lesson, Jacob is ready to return home. He left home in a hurry because he was pressured into doing something that was not right. Jacob was not pressured by his friends to lie and cheat his father and brother but by his own mother. Now he feels the need to return home, ask for forgiveness, and raise his family in the land of Canaan.

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, we know that You care for us better than we could ever care for ourselves, You alone know what is best for us. We ask You now to give each of us the unshakable confidence in You as our Protector and Provider. Grant that through the study of this lesson we might come to realize that just as You were with Jacob and brought him safely through many adversities, so You will always protect and provide for each one of Your children. Bless our study of this truth, in Jesus' Name. Amen.

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home-coming. Jacob reminded the Lord of the promises that God had given to him, such as the promise of becoming a great nation. Jacob, trusting in the knowledge that it was the Lord's will that he return home, sent the first group of animals and servants to his brother Esau. Jacob instructed the servants to tell Esau that these were gifts from his brother. After the first group left Jacob moved his two wives, their servants, and his eleven sons over a brook to protect them in case Esau did not accept Jacob's gifts.

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What the Bible Tells Us - Look up the following Bible references and explain how you can apply them to your life today.

1. Psalm 121. _____

2. Psalms 18:2. _____

3. James 1:7. _____

Inner Aim - God helps us realize He preserves and blesses us.

Passages

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STORY

Jacob returns to Canaan - Genesis Chapters 32, 33 & 35

TEACHER PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, I know that You care for me better than I could ever care for myself, for You alone know what is best for me. I ask You now to give me the ability to teach this truth to my students and to create in their hearts an unshakable confidence in You as their Protector and Provider. Grant that through the teaching of this lesson they might come to realize that just as You were with Jacob and brought him safely through many adversities, so You will always protect and provide for each one of Your children. Bless my presentation of this truth, in Jesus' Name I ask. Amen.

VOCABULARY

Edom - means "red"; a name given both to Esau and to the country he inhabited. Esau was called "red" both because he was covered with reddish hair and because he sold his birthright for some red stew. The land known as Edom (also called *Idumea*) is so named for its unusual red sandstone formations. It is located southeast of Israel.

Sojourn - to stay as a temporary resident

Staff - a walking stick used in the Middle East for shepherding and for defense

Appease - to calm or pacify; to bring to a state of peace

Ford of the Jabbok - a popular point at which to cross the Jabbok River. The Jabbok winds some 60 miles through the country east of the Jordan River and eventually empties into the Jordan about halfway between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea.

Socket of the hip - the area disabled on Jacob - either the joint of the hip itself, the sciatic muscle located near the hip, or the corresponding tendons in that area.

Israel - Name given to Jacob and later to all of his descendants. It is variously translated as "*struggles with God*," "*having power with God*," "*God's fighter*," "*ruling with God*," and "*prince with God*."

Succoth - means "booths." A city east of Shechem and the Jordan River and north of the Jabbok. So named because Jacob erected booths for his animals there. Later also the site of Solomon's copper mining and smelting operations. (Not to be confused with the Succoth near Egypt where the Israelites camped the first night after the Exodus.)

Terebinth tree - a small tree of the sumac family, known for producing turpentine.

OUTER AIM

Jacob returns to Canaan and is reunited with his brother Esau.

INNER AIM

God makes Jacob realize that it is He who has preserved and blessed him.

BACKGROUND

When Rebekah first sent Jacob to Laban, she told him to remain there until she sent for him (Genesis 27:45). Jacob is now returning without having received word from his mother and is therefore uncertain and fearful of how his brother Esau might receive him. Scheming and manipulating have been part of his entire life and he is afraid the sins of his past are about to catch up with him. With this



Story Name

OT

Teacher's Notes

God's Hand in our Lives

fear in his heart he prepares to meet Esau, the twin brother he had once cheated and exploited.

Chapter 32

- Jacob has had many years to contemplate how he might appease his brother. As always he comes to rely on subtle scheming, resolving first to send messengers ahead to test the waters and prepare Esau for his arrival. In a subtle way he seeks to let Esau know that he is not powerless against an attack, instructing his messengers to tell Esau that he has male and female servants. He also calls Esau "lord" and himself "your servant Jacob." His words intend to indicate strength, but humble submission and non-aggression.
- Jacob expected his messengers to be gone many days, for the trip to Esau's home was long. He was terrified when they returned well before the appointed time to tell him that Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men. His first reaction was to plan and scheme, dividing his possessions and family into two camps. He must have quickly recognized the futility of the move, and for the first time (recorded) since leaving his homeland he approaches God in prayer. In that prayer he holds God to the promise He had made to him.
- Although his prayer certainly was heartfelt and genuine, Jacob still cannot resist the temptation to take matters into his own hands and seek to finesse. He sends herd upon herd and flock upon flock ahead of him in an attempt to pacify his brother. He strategically spaces each herd and flock to multiply the effect in Esau's eyes, again instructing his messengers to call Jacob "servant" and Esau "lord."
- The account of the wrestling with "a Man" is difficult to fully comprehend and has been explained in many different ways. Jacob obviously believed that the man with whom he wrestled was God in human form. We have no reason to doubt that it was. Luther said that God probably shrouded the event in mystery because mystery invites further reflection. The best explanation is that God wanted to teach Jacob a valuable lesson. Jacob had been "wrestling" his entire life. God here demonstrated that wrestling *against* God is futile. Man cannot prevail *against* God, but can only succeed *with* God.
- The fact that "the Man saw that he did not prevail" is not a sign of God's lack of power. Instead God came in a form that could be challenged, but demonstrated his power by a single touch. This was all a sign that God has bound himself to be affected by the faithful who wrestle with Him in prayer. He draws a distinction between the physical and spiritual by ending the physical struggle with a touch that dislocated Jacob's hip. Perhaps also the muscle was permanently affected, leaving Jacob with a reminder that his struggle is with God and can be successful only through faith and prayer. No man by force of his own will or strength can oppose God. This lesson Jacob needed to learn. God held his future in his hands.
- The "man" renames Jacob to Israel (see note above), yet he will not tell Jacob his name. This, to Luther, further deepens the mystery and invites our continued contemplation. Some suggest that "the Man" thus indicates that Jacob should have already known who He was from what He had said and done.
- The limp remains as a reminder, at least for a time. We don't know for how long.

Chapter 33

- Again Jacob demonstrates his shameless favoritism by ranking his children according to his affection - the least favorable placed forward in the greatest danger. Certainly his conduct must have had a profound effect on the less favored women and children and may well have contributed to future jealousies and the resultant selling and enslavement of Joseph.
- Jacob demonstrated rare courage and forthrightness by going on ahead of the women and children to meet Esau alone. He demonstrates his utter humility in Oriental fashion by bowing seven times to the ground, but Esau had been blessed by God and demonstrates no ill will

whatsoever toward the brother. All Jacob's scheming and his lavish gifts had been unnecessary. God had been at work in Esau's heart. Note that though Jacob called Esau "lord," Esau called Jacob "brother."

- Whether out of guilt or joy, or perhaps as an attempt to prevent Esau from changing his mind and making a claim against him in the future, Jacob insisted that Esau accept the lavish gift offered to him. What he gave to him was something of a fortune, perhaps a payment for the blessing and birthright he had stolen and extorted.
- Jacob still did not trust Esau and again demonstrated some of his old scheming. He refused to travel with Esau (using the excuse that Esau would travel too fast for the young ones) and urged him to go on ahead. He even refused Esau's offer of some of his armed men as an escort, indicating that Jacob probably had no intention of ever going to Esau's homeland, Seir. Finally Jacob lied to his brother, promising that he would come to him in Seir. Instead he traveled in almost the opposite direction and lived for a time in Succoth—a makeshift town of booths he built east of the Jordan.
- Some time later Jacob crossed the Jordan River and settled near Shechem in Canaan. There he bought a parcel of land and erected an altar there. He called the place, literally translated, "*God, the God of Israel.*" This is the first indication in the Bible where Jacob referred to God as *his* God. Prior to this time he had always referred to Him as the God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac.

Chapter 35

- After the incident with Dinah and Shechem, Jacob was told by God to move to Bethel (where Jacob first saw God when he fled from Esau). This Jacob did, but why he moved from Bethel, where God had told to live, and settled in Ephrath (Bethlehem) is not known.
- Before he made the trip to Bethel, Jacob commanded that all idols be put away and that his household purify both their bodies and their clothes. A significant spiritual change had obviously come over Jacob. Why he had allowed the foreign gods up until this point is not known. Certainly from this point on, however, the God of his fathers is now also *his* God.
- God appeared to Jacob yet again in Bethel and renewed the promise He had made to Abraham and Isaac. There God promised Jacob that "kings would come from his body." The greatest king, of course, was the King of kings and Lord of lords - our Savior Jesus Christ, who was born of the Tribe of Judah.
- In Verse 13 we read that "*God went up from him in the place where He talked with him.*" This was in keeping with God's original promise to Jacob in Genesis 28:15, "*I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.*" Though God surely kept watch over Jacob in the years to come, we have no other record that he ever appeared to him as He had done at Bethel and at the Ford of the Jabbok.
- Jacob's beloved Rachel died in childbirth near Bethlehem and was buried there. In death she gave birth to Jacob's final son, Benjamin.
- By sleeping with Jacob's concubine, Reuben was attempting to lay premature claim to his inheritance as firstborn. This was an insolent, prideful sin and it later cost Reuben his rights as firstborn (cf. Genesis 49:3-4).
- Good and faithful Isaac was reunited with his son Jacob before he died. Isaac lived 180 years and was buried by his sons, Jacob and Esau. It is not known if Jacob and Esau kept in contact, other than when they buried their father Isaac. Though Esau's descendants bore hostility toward the Children of Israel, we have no record that Esau himself held a grudge toward his brother.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Jesus, whenever I am tempted to put my trust in myself remind me always to put my trust in You. Let me never forget that You are my strength and that You are always with me and will never leave me. Apart from You I can accomplish no good thing. Strengthen the faith with which You have blessed me and help me to always trust in You as my Savior and Provider. In Jesus Name I ask this. Amen.

PRESENTATION

This account is much too long to read in class. It would be wise to assign the reading of this section to the older students a week ahead of time. Parents should also be encouraged to read these chapters to the younger children during the week prior. During class-time tell the story in your own words, making notes of the special points you want to be sure to include. It might be easiest to skip any mention of Chapter 34, as well as 35:22.

APPLICATIONS

1. All of man's scheming and planning will always come to naught unless the Lord is working for us. Make the student see that Jacob was only successful because God had determined that he should be successful. Above all stress the role Jacob played in God's master plan for our salvation. God preserved and blessed Jacob because He had promised to send the Promised Savior through the family of Jacob's son, Judah. Note how long-suffering and patient God was with Jacob because of His promise.
2. It is a mistake to try to justify the conduct of Jacob. Jacob was often a deceitful manipulator. It is to God's praise and glory that He makes use of such raw human material to accomplish His goals. It should be a great comfort to each of us to know that God does not cast us away because of our weakness and sin. Have the students list examples both of how they have sinned and also of how God has nevertheless blessed them day by day. We are no better than Jacob.
3. God surely wants us to work, and work hard, but lead the children to see that it is God, not our own strength and intelligence, Who provides all that we have.
4. Jacob's hip reminds us that God sometimes leaves us with painful reminders of lessons He wants us to remember. Have the children think of examples (e.g., someone who drinks and drives may sustain permanent injuries in a crash, etc.).
5. God wants us to "wrestle" with Him in prayer and, like Jacob, will bless us for it.
6. The effect of sins often lives on for many years. Note how the sins Jacob committed against his brother Esau came back to haunt him after many years had passed. In the same way the pain and sorrow we cause by our words and actions today can linger in the hearts and lives of our neighbor for many years.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

Matthew 6:11 - *Give us this day our daily bread.*

1 Peter 5:7 - *Cast all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

Psalms 37:5 - *Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.*

Psalms 50:15 - *Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.*

Middle any of the above and...

Philippians 4:19 - *And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

Psalms 145:15 - *The eyes of all look expectantly to You, And You give them their food in due season.*

Psalms 33:18 - *Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy.*

Psalms 37:5 - *Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.*

Upper any of the above and...

Psalms 121:1-2 - *I will lift up my eyes to the hills; From whence comes my help? My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.*

Psalms 18:2 - *The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.*

James 1:17 - *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*

HYMN CHOICES

"All Depends On Our Possessing" TLH #425:1 & 5

"I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus" TLH #428:1, 4, 6

"Jesus, My Truth, My Way" TLH #433:1, 4-6