

GLENVIEW NEW CHURCH SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAM
Primary Lessons: Phase 3 – Lesson 8
Jacob's Return (Genesis 32:3-15; 33:1-16; 35:9-15)

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The Lord and His angels are constantly caring for us and leading us toward heaven.
- B. Obedience to the Lord is rewarded; evil is punished.
- C. The Lord cannot lead us to heaven unless we try to do what is right.
- D. The Lord spoke aloud to Jacob several times, but He speaks to us in His Word.
- E. Jacob submits himself to Esau when he returns because Esau now represents the new will which, unlike the natural will, does not need the understanding to lead the way.

II. Story Circle

A. Introduction

1. Jacob stayed with Laban, his uncle, for 20 years. He took good care of Laban's goats and sheep. At first Jacob worked to have Rachel and Leah for his wives. Later, Laban let Jacob have some of the goats and sheep. Jacob was allowed to keep all the speckled and spotted goats and all the black sheep. Soon he had large flocks because the Lord was with him.
2. Jacob also had a large family. He had eleven sons and one daughter. His sons were: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulon, and Joseph. (He had a twelfth son, Benjamin, after he returned to the Holy Land.) His daughter was named Dinah.
3. Jacob wanted to go back to his own country, but Laban didn't want him to leave. (Laban knew that the Lord was taking care of Jacob, and this helped Laban, also.) Then the Lord told Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers to your kindred [family], and I will be with you."
4. Jacob consulted his wives about leaving Laban. Then he set his sons and wives on camels and took all his possessions with him, including his many animals. While Laban was away shearing sheep, Jacob left to go back to the land of Canaan. Laban hurried after him, but the Lord warned Laban not to hurt Jacob, so they parted company peacefully.

Primary Sunday School Lessons: Phase 3 – Lesson 8

5. So Jacob was on his way back to the Holy Land at last! His father, Isaac, was there. (His mother, Rebekah, had died.) Esau was there, also. Do you remember why Jacob had left home in the first place, and why he was worried about seeing Esau again? (Because Esau's anger with him had caused him to leave home; Jacob had stolen Esau's blessing and birthright.) What do you think Esau will do when Jacob returns? Let's hear the story of Jacob's return.

B. Tell/Read the Story

1. Read Genesis 32:3-15.
 - a. Tell children that Jacob staggered his gifts to Esau, and tell them what his servants were to say to Esau. (Gen. 32:16-21)
2. Read Genesis 33:1-16.
 - a. Tell children that after Jacob came into the land of Canaan, God said, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother." (Gen. 35:1) And Jacob did as he was told because he knew the Lord had been with him all along.
3. Read Genesis 35:9-15.
 - a. Tell children that Rachel gave birth to Benjamin as they journeyed away from Bethel, and she died there. Then Jacob went to see his father, Isaac. After Jacob saw him, Isaac died, and his sons, Esau and Jacob, buried him.

C. Ideas to Discuss

1. Why did Jacob send messengers to Esau? (To tell him that he was returning home, and he wanted to be friendly with Esau.)
2. Why was Jacob worried when he heard that Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men? (Jacob was afraid that Esau was planning to fight against him.)
3. Jacob did three things to prepare for meeting Esau. One was to divide his family so they weren't all together. What were the other two things? (He prayed to the Lord, and he sent gifts to Esau.)
4. What kinds of animals did Jacob send to Esau for gifts? (Goats, sheep, camels, cattle, and donkeys)
5. Why did Jacob send Esau the gifts? (Jacob wanted to show respect for Esau. He wanted to assure Esau that he wanted to make peace.)
6. What did Jacob do when he saw Esau? (He bowed himself to the ground seven times.)
7. What did Esau do when he saw Jacob? (He ran to meet him, embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they both wept.)
8. Was Esau willing to have Jacob return to the land of Canaan? (Yes)
9. Where did the Lord tell Jacob to make an altar? (Bethel. That is where Jacob had his dream.)

Primary Sunday School Lessons: Phase 3 – Lesson 8

10. What new name did the Lord give to Jacob? (Israel. That's why his descendants were called the children of Israel.)
11. Did Jacob see his father, Isaac? (Yes)
12. Can you remember the names of Jacob's twelve sons? (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin)

F. Further Ideas

1. When Jacob returned to the land of Canaan, he was afraid that Esau would try to kill him.
 - a. He approached Esau very humbly because he knew that he shouldn't have stolen his brother's blessing and birthright.
 - b. But Esau had forgiven Jacob. They were both happy to be at peace with each other.
2. Do you remember what the Lord promised Jacob in his wonderful dream? (That He would be with him, protecting and helping him; that He would bring Jacob back to the Holy Land; and that Jacob's many descendants would live there.) Did the Lord keep His promises? (Yes!)
 - a. The Lord was with Jacob, helping him to grow wealthy and have a fine family.
 - b. The Lord kept Jacob from harm, such as the time when He warned Laban to leave him alone.
 - c. And the Lord brought Jacob back to the Holy Land. The Lord took good of Jacob!
3. The Lord takes good care of us, too. But we have to do our part, just as Jacob did. What are some things Jacob had to do so the Lord could be with him?
 - a. Jacob worked hard taking care of the sheep and goats; he didn't sit around just waiting for the Lord to do all the work and make him wealthy.
 - b. Jacob was careful not to steal anything from Laban. He knew the Lord would not protect him from punishment if he did evil things.
 - c. Jacob obeyed the Lord, journeying back to the Holy Land and making an altar at Bethel.
 - d. And, most importantly, Jacob worshiped the Lord and realized that the Lord is where all good comes from.

Primary Sunday School Lessons: Phase 3 – Lesson 8

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "Father in heaven, watch o'er Thy children," Hymnal #152 (The Lord is always watching over us)
2. "All that the Lord hath spoken," Hymnal #245
3. LORI'S SONGS II (Side Two)

B. Activities: Practice reciting the names of the 12 sons of Jacob in birth order: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulon, Joseph, and Benjamin.

C. Project

1. Jacob's Twelve Sons (Paper Doll Chain)
 - a. Make a template for a paper doll, and create a chain of twelve sons. (*Sunday School Activity Book* lesson 23 provides a template.)
2. An Action Picture of Jacob Meeting Esau
 - a. Make Jacob and Esau on construction paper and cut them out. Attach Esau to a background sheet with glue, but fasten Jacob with a paper fastener in such a way that he can bow to Esau. Children can add further details to the picture if they like: Rachel and Leah, Jacob's children, sheep and goats, some of Esau's 400 men, etc.
3. A Jacob Story Book
 - a. Each child makes a simple book of the Jacob story. The following pages are suggested:
 - Page 1 - Jacob and Esau as children. (Remember that Esau had red hair!)
 - Page 2 - Show Jacob's dream. (White, yellow and orange oil pastels or crayons on black, dark blue, or gray paper would be effective.)
 - Page 3 - Jacob caring for Laban's flocks. (One possibility is to surround Jacob with pieces of cotton balls to represent sheep.)
 - Page 4 - Jacob with Leah and Rachel and twelve children (11 boys and 1 girl; Benjamin is born later)
 - Page 5 - Jacob meeting Esau.
 - Page 6 - Jacob at Bethel, setting up a pillar of stone and pouring oil upon it to mark the place where the Lord spoke with him.

Primary Sunday School Lessons: Phase 3 – Lesson 8

- b. Staple 9 x 12 sheets together or fold the sheets and staple through the fold for a smaller book. It might be nice to make a title for each page, such as "Jacob and Esau," "Jacob's Ladder," "Jacob the Shepherd," etc. Children may well have to finish their books at home.

IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Pictures of Jacob story, especially Jacob with his family or meeting Esau.

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. The Sower, Vol. I, pp. 129-132, 137-145.
- B. Dole's Bible Study Notes, Vol. I, pp. 362-375.