

Bible Lesson # 16

1.

Genesis 32-35

Jacob and his family were heading to the land of Canaan; this was where Jacob had lived long before he had married and had children. Do you remember how many children Jacob had? By now he had 11 sons and one daughter. That's quite a big family, isn't it? How would you like to have that many brothers and sister?

Jacob had a twin brother named Esau who lived way to the south. Jacob had left home long ago because Esau had threatened to kill him. Now many years had passed and Jacob was hoping he and Esau could be friends once again. Jacob sent a messenger to tell Esau he was coming home and he hoped Esau wasn't still angry at him.

That evening Jacob and his family stopped beside a small river for the night. The animals would have green grass to eat and plenty of water and here the family set up their tents. The women could wash their clothes and the young children could play by the river and the older ones help with the herds of cattle and sheep while they waited for the messenger. Soon after they stopped the messenger returned. He had ridden very fast to tell Jacob that Esau was coming to meet him, and Esau had 400 men with him! Jacob was frightened, for why would Esau have so many men with him unless he meant to harm them. What should he do?

What do you think Jacob did? He did a very important thing. He bowed down and prayed to God. Jacob asked God to deliver him and his family from his brother Esau. Before he did anything else, Jacob turned to God for help.



He knew God would hear his prayers and answer them. Jacob set us a good example, for we should always turn to God first when we are worried or in trouble. We are told to "pray without ceasing or stopping. This doesn't mean we are to never say anything but prayers all day long, but that we should be ready to pray at any moment day or night when we want to thank God for something, or talk over a trouble with God or ask God for help. Your memory verse for this lesson is from **I Thessalonians 5:17-18:**

"Pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God"

When you've learned the verse put a check mark here _____

God is very pleased when we turn to him for help and when we thank him for all we have. We should pray often, for we can talk all kinds of problems over with God.

After Jacob prayed to God he felt much better for he knew God would be with him. Then Jacob and his older sons rounded up a large herd of sheep and cattle and donkeys and camels. These animals were to be a present to Esau. Jacob separated each herd of animals into different groups. All the sheep went in one group and then there was a space and next a large herd of cattle would be sent with a space between them. Next the donkeys would be sent and lastly the camels would arrive. As each group of animals arrived at Esau's camp, the servants were to say, "My Lord Esau, these animals belong to your servant Jacob. He has sent them for a present to you, and Jacob is coming behind us."

This would be quite an astonishing present, wouldn't it? Only very rich men had a lot of sheep and cattle and camels and Jacob had become very rich in animals. He wanted to please Esau and hoped that Esau wouldn't attack his family if he saw these gifts. That night Jacob sent the rest of his herds and flocks across the river, along with his wives and children and servants. Jacob also separated his family into different groups and put a large space between them so if Esau attacked, they wouldn't all be in one place. Jacob was very frightened but he hoped God would be with him. Sometimes we know God is with us, but we can still feel scared, can't we?

After Jacob's family was settled for the night, Jacob went back across the river to be alone, for awhile. He just couldn't sleep that night, for he knew the meeting with Esau the next day could be very serious. Suddenly a figure loomed up beside Jacob and Jacob grabbed him in fright and began to wrestle with him! When Jacob couldn't overcome this person he realized this wasn't an ordinary man, this must be an angel messenger from God. As the sun began to come up, the angel said, "let me go, for it is daybreak," but Jacob said, "not unless you bless me." The angel said, your name will no longer be called Jacob, you will now be called "ISRAEL, for you have wrestled with God and overcome." Then the angel gave Jacob God's blessing and left. Jacob said in awe, "I have seen God face to face yet my life was spared."



Jacob felt he had seen God himself, but angels are not God, the all powerful Creator. They are God's representatives and his messengers. Most of the time in the Bible they look like ordinary men but they have God's power with them and they can do whatever God tell them to.

The angel had touched Jacob on the hip as they wrestled and from then on Jacob walked with a with a limp because of that touch.

The next morning Jacob saw a cloud of dust in the distance. Esau was coming! Jacob took his servants and their children and put them in one group, then he put Leah and her children in the next group and finally he had Rachel and Joseph (his favorite) at the last of the group. Then Jacob limped to the front of everyone and started out to meet his twin brother Esau and the 400 men with him.

Meanwhile, Esau was amazed at the wonderful gift of animals that Jacob had sent. As each group of animals approached, Esau's was a little less angry. Then Esau saw his twin brother, Jacob limping toward him. Jacob bowed to the ground, not just once but seven times! Behind Jacob, Esau saw a great company of servants, women and children as well as all the rest of Jacob's flocks and herds. Esau jumped off his camel and ran toward his brother Jacob and hugged and kissed him. They both started crying as it was so wonderful to see each other again. Esau asked who all these women and children were, and Jacob replied, "these are the wives and children God has blessed me with."



All of Jacob's family came up and bowed before Esau. There was much merriment in the camp that night and the two brothers told of all that had been going on in their lives since they had last seen each other.

The next morning as the group packed up their tents to start out, Esau wanted Jacob to come to his land called Edom. Jacob wanted to head for his own home where his father was, so after traveling along for awhile, he and his family turned off the main road and headed toward the land that was then called Canaan. Later this land had a new name and the land is still called by this name. Do you know what it is called today? It's called "Israel." God had given Jacob this new name and this name has become very important, for it not only was the name of one man, but it became the name of 12 tribes of people and today it's the name of a whole nation of people as well as the name of the land they live in.

Have you ever heard the name of Israel in your school studies or at home while watching the news or heard your parents mention the name of Israel? Remember this name, for one day there will be lots of news about Israel. These are the people God has chosen to be His people and the land of Israel is the land God has chosen for His special land, His capitol city is to be Jerusalem where people will come to learn about God and about His laws. The Bible has a lot to say about Israel and about Jerusalem, the capitol of Israel.

We will call Jacob by his new name for the rest of this story, as that's the name God gave him. Israel and his family still had a long way to go before they reached his father's home. They crossed the muddy waters of the winding Jordan River and traveled to a beautiful, green valley between two hills. Here there was a deep well with plenty of water and grass for the animals. Israel decided to stay here with his family for awhile and let the animals graze on the grass. This area was called Shechem and the well was called "Jacob's well." Israel bought some of this land and the well from the people who lived nearby. Then he and his family set up their tents and settled down to rest for awhile. The first thing Israel did was make an altar of stones in order to make a sacrifice to God and pray for God to be with them. Israel tried to put God first everywhere he went which is a good idea for us as well. We should always think of what God would want us to do and if what we are doing is pleasing to him before we make decisions in our lives, shouldn't we?



Everything went well for awhile, but then one day there was trouble between Israel's sons and daughter and the young men who lived nearby.

Because of this trouble, Israel decided to move his family on toward his father's home. Long ago when Israel was just leaving his father's home he had stopped in a place called Bethel. There he had used a stone for a pillow and had a dream of a stairway between heaven and earth, do you remember that story? Now, Israel returned to Bethel and found the rock stone still standing where he had put it. Once again Israel built an altar and offered a sacrifice to God and as they slept there, Israel had many thoughts of that other time, long ago.

That night God talked to Israel in a dream and gave him a promise about his new name and about the future. God said "I am God Almighty. Your name is to no longer be called Jacob, but to be called Israel. Be fruitful and multiply for a nation and kings will be your descendants." Then God said, "The land which I gave to Abraham and to Isaac, I will also give to you and to your children after you. This very land I will give to you." This promise did not come to pass all during Israel's lifetime nor his children's life time. They were strangers in the land and owned only very little bits of it.

Do you think God will keep this promise? God always keeps his promises, doesn't he? Israel is sleeping in the grave now, but God promises a resurrection when those who are God's people will be raised to life again. When this happens, then Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants the Israelites, will inherit this land forever, just as God has promised!

Question Page

Circle the correct answer in the questions below:

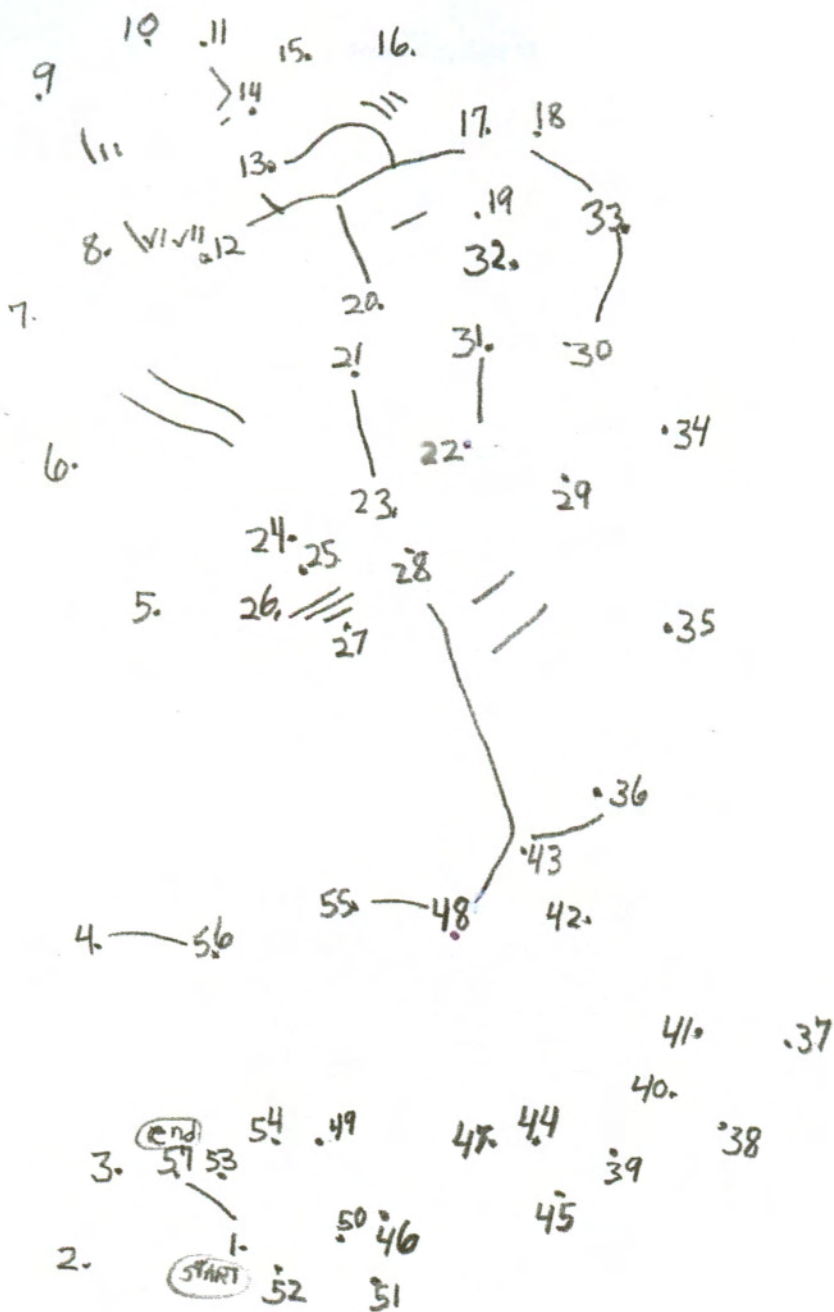
1. What did Jacob do when he heard Esau was coming to meet him?
(a) prepared his weapons (b) fled to Canaan (c) prayed to God
2. How many men did Esau bring with him? (a) 400 (b) 20 (c) 300
3. What kind of present did Jacob send to Esau? (a) gold and silver (b) grain and fruit
(c) sheep and camels (d) clothes and jewels
4. Who did Jacob wrestle during the night? (a) Esau (b) an angel (c) Laban (d) a stranger
5. What was changed after Jacob wrestled all night?
(a) his clothes were changed (b) his face was changed (c) his name was changed
6. What did God promise to Jacob when he slept at Bethel?
(a) the land forever (b) many more camels (c) a place in heaven (d) many riches
7. What is the name of the land that God calls His land and the name of the people God calls His people? (a) Shechem (b) Israel (c) Bethel

Answer the following questions in the space below each question

1. What was the new name Jacob was given?
2. How often should we pray to God?
3. What happened when Jacob met Esau?
4. If Jacob didn't receive the promise God gave him at Bethel, when will he receive it?
5. What does it mean to be resurrected?
6. When Jacob settled in Shechem for awhile, what was the well called?

16

Connect the dots to see what's happening
Draw and color a sunrise, a tree and a river nearby



Using the letters in the word "ISRAEL" see how many words you can make. We've shown an example for each letter.

Score: If you get at least three words from each letter, that's OK

If you get at least five words from each letter, that's GOOD

If you get 10 or more from each letter, that's EXCELLENT



Ice



Sun



Rest
























































Alligator









Even



Leopard

Use the code below to find the secret verse above

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

Can you write a coded sentence using these symbols (apple, cat, etc.)