



Lesson 18: Jacob returns home

Scriptural Basis:



Genesis 31-33

Overview:

In this week's story, Jacob faces strife with his father-in-law Laban, his brother Esau, and with God himself. And only because of God's grace, Jacob "prevailed." That is to say, God miraculously provided for him in ways that he didn't earn or deserve. God prospered Jacob materially with a large family (12 sons and one daughter). He also made him wealthy even though Laban repeatedly tried to cheat him. He also orchestrated forgiveness and reconciliation with both Laban and Esau. But above all, God gave Jacob His blessing, at which point, his name is changed from Jacob to Israel, which means, "He strives with God."

Things to consider:

Jacob's success and "prevailing" points to God's provision and faithfulness in the face of Jacob's many weaknesses.

- Jacob tries to do silly things to make his flocks increase, but God takes care of it for him.
- In fear, Jacob sneaks away from Laban, but God warns Laban not to quarrel with Jacob
- In fear, Jacob sent many gifts ahead to Esau to try to buy his forgiveness, but somehow Esau's heart had already been changed and he came prepared to forgive without need of any gifts.
- Jacob wrestled with God and God didn't crush him like an ant.

Bible Study for Preparation:



Read Genesis 31-33. Contemplate that God's chosen family is the opposite of a model family. Jacob's family was full of sin and strife. But even in that, God's mercy and grace shines through. Jacob prevailed because God protected and blessed him.

Teaching the lesson:

- A: Review – Jacob marries Leah and Rachel
- B: Bible verse memory activity
- C. Story
- D. Additional activity