

THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON

LESSON #4

DATE: September 29, 2019

SUBJECT: THE FOREFATHERS OF THE CHOSEN CHILDREN OF ISRAEL—**Jacob, the Father of the Israelites**

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 25:19-34; 27:1-46; 28:1-5; 29:1-30; 30:25-43; 31-33

AIM: To introduce Isaac's son Jacob (Abraham's grandson) and his role in God's promise to Abraham.

SUGGESTED MEMORY VERSES: Genesis 28:15 (And, behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will cause you to return to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.); Romans 8:28 (And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.)

SUGGESTED SONGS: 2827 (Good Morning Lord Jesus); 23 (He's Able); 31 (Surely He will Care For You.); 171 (Whisper a Prayer); 3702 (J-A-C-O-B); 3703 (Jacob, God Is With You Now); 32 (Trust in the Lord); 6732 (Trust and Obey); *BSS Vessels Unto Honor* Song #2 (Everything We Do and Say), 11 (Oh Be Careful); 9584 (Jacob Begat Twelve Sons)

CRAFT IDEAS: Paste 12 circles on construction paper and draw in the faces and write the names of Jacob's 12 sons. Use patterned paper to cut out clothing.

BACKGROUND/REVIEW: In the last three weeks, we have learned about Abraham and Isaac, two of the forefathers of the children of Israel. In last week's lesson, we saw that Isaac took Rebekah to be his wife. This week, we will learn about Isaac's son, Jacob, the third forefather of the children of Israel and how he was part of the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that he would have many descendants.

CONTENT: Isaac and Rebekah had been married for about twenty years, but the couple still had no child. Isaac prayed to Jehovah for Rebekah to have a child. The Lord answered his prayer and Rebekah conceived and bore twins. When they were born, the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau (meaning *hairy, rough*). Then his brother came forth with his hand holding on to Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob (meaning *supplanter, heel holder*). [Note: Supplant may be defined as "to usurp, or take over through underhanded tactics, force or treachery."] When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the fields; but Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. One day, Esau returned from hunting and desired some of the lentil stew that Jacob was cooking. Jacob offered to give his brother some stew in exchange for his birthright—the special honor that Esau possessed as the older son, which gave him the right to a double portion of his father's inheritance. Esau put his temporary, physical needs over his God-given blessing and sold his birthright to Jacob.

When the time came for Isaac to bestow his blessing on his sons, Jacob and his mother contrived to deceive Isaac into blessing Jacob in Esau's place. When Esau found out that his blessing had been given to Jacob, he threatened to kill his brother. When Rebekah found out Esau's intention to kill Jacob, she instructed Jacob to flee to her brother Laban at Haran until Esau's anger subsided. She then told Isaac that she was concerned that Jacob would marry someone from Canaan. Because of Rebekah's persuasion, Isaac then told Jacob to go find a wife from the family of Laban, Rebekah's brother, and he sent Jacob away. Many years later, Jacob and Esau met and were reconciled.

While in Haran, Jacob worked for his uncle (Laban). During the twenty years that Jacob worked for Laban, Laban tricked and cheated Jacob over and over again. Finally after twenty years, the Lord appeared to Jacob and told him to return to the land of his fathers. He promised Jacob that He would be with him. Jacob took his wives, children, and possessions and secretly fled from Laban. (By now, Jacob had four wives, eleven sons, at least one daughter and many possessions.) [Note: Only if the children ask, we can explain that having many wives was not God's original intention as shown by Adam and Eve. But due to the fallen nature of man, this became customary.]

On his way back home to his father's land, Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau, his brother. The messengers returned to Jacob and told him Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men. Jacob was greatly distressed and afraid, and at this point he prayed and cried out to God to deliver him from his brother Esau. While he was alone praying, a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. When the man saw that He did not prevail against Jacob, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was dislocated as he wrestled with Him. (This man was the Lord!) Jacob refused to let go unless the Lord blessed him. It was here that Jacob's name was changed to "Israel" (meaning *one who struggles with God*). The next day Esau came with 400 men to meet Jacob. Instead of harming him, Esau embraced him and kissed him. The Lord had heard Jacob's prayer.

Jacob (Israel) had twelve sons altogether. Their names, from the oldest to the youngest, were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin. Eventually, they became the twelve tribes of Israel, also called the children of Israel. In the coming weeks, we will be learning more about the travels of the chosen children of Israel.

REVIEW QUESTION:

- **Why was it important for Isaac and Rebekah to send Jacob away to Haran?**
 - So that Jacob could marry a wife from his grandfather's (Abraham) relatives in Haran
 - To prevent Esau from killing Jacob (for Esau's anger to subside)

SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:

Note to serving ones: It is not intended that we cover all the suggested applications, but based on prayer and fellowship and the children's response, allow the Lord to lead and consider which applications to cover.

- **Being thankful for the ones placed around us.** Jacob was born after his brother Esau, and he wished he were the firstborn instead of Esau, and Esau came to hate his brother because Jacob tricked him. But all things and persons in our surroundings are arranged by the Lord. We should be thankful to the Lord and realize that God has provided just the right parents, siblings, teachers, neighbors, etc. for us to grow up in a proper way so we can be useful to Him. Whenever we are disciplined by our parents, we should not complain that "it's not fair" or that everybody else seems to get away with things except for us. We should realize this is God's great love and mercy towards us. Eventually, through all the correction and discipline, we will all be useful vessels for God! There are certain lessons we all need to learn; we are more blessed if we learn them sooner rather than later.
- **Being thankful for what the Lord has blessed us with.** Esau was given the best but did not appreciate what was given to him. We need to appreciate and value all that God has given us: parents, homes, food, toys, an opportunity for a good education, teachers, etc. For example, we should appreciate how much our parents do for us and realize how hard they work for us. We can say "Thank you" to them and express our love by helping them. We can appreciate our education by doing our homework well and without complaining. We can do our household chores without being asked to do so. We can be careful not to waste food and other things that have been given to us, etc.
- **Being aware that our actions have consequences.** Jacob may have thought that he "got away" with his cheating, tricking behavior: he would go to Haran, find a wife, and come back in a little while to enjoy his mother's presence again and claim his birthright. But he did not get away with anything. As God's children, we should never think that we would get away with any unrighteous doings. Even if our parents or teachers do not find out what we did or if we do not get in trouble right away, we should remember that God sees everything and that our God is a righteous God.

- **Trusting in God.** Jacob was clever and scheming and proud but at a certain point he became fearful for his life. At that time, Jacob knew to cry out and ask God to deliver him. When we face difficulties, or are in trouble, we need to remember that God is on our side. God is for us.

Note to Serving Ones: For additional Lesson Resources for applications and Scripture references, please read: God's Calling in the Old Testament - God Called Jacob Parts 1 to 5 (January-February 2017)

Adapted from NYC Children's Meeting Lessons: 1/16/00; 1/23/00; 1/30/00; 2/13/00; 9/21/03; 1/23/94; 1/30/94; 2/06/94; 2/27/94; 1/1/06; 1/15/06; 1/22/06; 2/5/06; 09/27/09; 09/28/14