

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Genesis

JACOB AND ESAU REUNITED

Genesis 32-33

Elementary Lesson

Year One, Quarter Two, Lesson Two

[0150]

AIM: to use the story of the reuniting of Jacob and Esau to teach my students the importance of getting along with family members.

OBJECTS TO HAVE: A picture of your loved ones
 A map showing the distance
 A picture of Jacob and Esau separated
 A picture of Jacob and Esau reunited
 Your Bible

POINT OF CONTACT: Can I show you some special pictures? These are pictures of my family. Let me tell you about them.

How many of you have a brother or a sister? What are their names?

How many of you have cousins? What are their names?

Our family members are the most special people in our lives. They are a special gift from God.

But what is very sad is that, sometimes we forget how important our family members are. Sometimes we let our feelings, or money, or things get in the way of our relationship with our family members. We should work very hard to make sure we do not let things that don't matter separate us from the people who really DO matter.

Today I am going to tell you about two people who had been separated from each other for many years. And I am going to tell you about how they got back together.

STORY: For several weeks now I have told you about twin brothers named Jacob and Esau. Jacob and Esau had had some disagreements. These disagreements caused them to have hard feelings toward each other. It had even caused Jacob to move many miles away from his brother Esau. Jacob lived far away from Esau for over 20 years. Remember, there were no phones and no mail in those days. So for over 20 years these two brothers were many miles apart, with angry feelings toward each other, and with no way to talk to each other.

One day Jacob decided it was time to move back home where Esau lived. Of course, many things had changed in Jacob's life now. When Jacob left home, he was single. Now Jacob had two wives. (That was customary in those days.) When Jacob left home, he had no children. Now Jacob had many children. When Jacob left home, he had very few possessions. Now Jacob was a very successful man, with many flocks and herds. And, when Jacob left home he was inexperienced in life. Now Jacob was an older and wiser man.

Jacob got his family together, packed up and moved back to Canaan, the place that he had left over 20 years before. But as Jacob traveled home he began to wonder: "Is Esau going to want to see me? Is he going to forgive me for the way I treated him? Are we ever going to get along with each other again? Will we be like brothers? Or will we be like strangers?" Jacob really began to worry that things were never going to be like they were before.

Kids, we need to work hard to get along with the people that we love. When we argue and fight, we are telling the people that we love, "You're not very important to me." You should love your brother, your sister, your mom and your dad. You should work hard to make sure that silly arguments do not come between you. And you must remember that your relationships with your family members are going to matter to you some day. Some day in the future you will regret that you did not work harder to get along with your family members when you were young.

Jacob and Esau had allowed an argument to come between them. Now, twenty years later, they weren't even like brothers. They were more like strangers.

Jacob did several things to prepare to meet his brother Esau.

First, Jacob began to pray, “God, I am going to see my brother Esau. I pray that he will welcome me, and that things will be good between us.” Jacob didn’t just pray a little bit. Jacob prayed all night long for God to make things right between him and his brother.

Then Jacob sent a messenger to go find his brother Esau. He told the messenger, “Tell my brother Esau that I really want to see him.”

Then Jacob divided his family into groups. Jacob said, “In case my brother is mad and wants to fight, I want to make sure that some of us get away safely.”

Then Jacob took a bunch of presents and sent them to Esau before they met.

Everything was in place. As Jacob looked across the land, he saw his brother coming with hundreds of people. Jacob thought, “I wonder what is going to happen!”

Jacob bowed himself to the ground to let Esau know that he was humbling himself before his brother.

What was going to happen? Was Esau still going to be mad? Was Esau going to hurt Jacob? Was Jacob’s family going to be safe?

Jacob stayed bowed on the ground as Esau walked up. Jacob stood to his feet and waited. Esau walked towards Jacob very slowly. Jacob looked at Esau and noticed that the years had changed him. He waited to see what Esau was going to do.

Then, all of a sudden, Esau started running to Jacob. He reached out both of his hands, then he threw his arms around Jacob, and crying he said, “Oh, Jacob, Jacob, it’s so good to see you! I’ve missed you so much! Welcome home!”

Jacob was so happy! He was back home, and everything was alright with his twin brother Esau! And from that day forward Jacob and Esau got along well together.

It might not matter to you today how well you get along with your mom, your dad, your brother, or your sister. But some day it will matter to you. You will be very happy if you work to make sure that nothing ever comes between you, nothing ever pulls you away from the people that you love.

How can you do this? What can you do to make sure that you stay close to the people you love?

1. **Pray for them.** Every day ask God to bless every member of your family.
2. **Say, “I love you.”** You ought to tell your mom, your dad, your brother, and your sister, “I love you,” even if they don’t say it to you. This will show them that you care.
3. Make sure they know that **they** are more important to you than **things** are. Don’t let a toy or a game cause a fight that drives you apart. They ought to know that they are more important to you than any toy could ever be.
4. When you have a disagreement, make things right as soon as possible. The Bible says, “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” That means, don’t go to bed without making up with those you love. This prevents arguments from lasting years and years. Don’t be afraid to say, “I’m sorry.”
5. Do things to show your love. Buy something for them that they really like. Do their chores for them some time.

Don’t become angry or bitter toward the people you love. Be kind to them, and care about them.

Let’s learn our memory verse. **Ephesians 4:32 - *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.***

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Teen and Adult Lesson

Year One, Quarter Two, Lesson Two

[0150]

Teacher, choose one of the following truths to expand upon in teaching this portion of Scripture to your teen/adult class. Teach and apply the truth that you choose using statements and illustrations that are most helpful and applicable to your students.

- I. **DON'T LET DISAGREEMENTS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS GO UNSETTLED.** Jacob's reunion with Esau was one of the most fearful events of his life. Jacob feared for his life and for the lives of his family members. 32:11. This kind of fear is the result of years of hatred, with no communication. This kind of fear can be avoided, or at least greatly diminished, if you will refuse to let conflicts go unsettled. Force yourself to deal with them as quickly and thoroughly as possible.
- II. **WHEN YOU SEEK TO FIX THINGS WITH A BROTHER OR SISTER IN CHRIST, GOD IS WITH YOU.** 32:1-2. God is in the reconciliation business. You can be sure that when you sincerely seek to set things right, God is going with you. Seek God's face about the matter, and then go in faith to meet with your brother.
- III. **SEEK GOD'S FACE REGARDING RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS.** 32:9-12, 24-32. No one is without relationship struggles and conflicts. Whether or not you successfully overcome them will be determined by whether or not you take them to God. Seek God's way, His answers, His solutions. He will take you through your relationship struggles. He will show you the way; but you must seek His face. Notice that the time came when Esau knew that he must move away. Genesis 32:6-8. He knew that the birthright and the blessing belonged to Jacob, and that he and his family must leave. What happened to the angry, hateful man of Genesis 27:41? God had been working on Esau for 20 years, just as He had been working on Jacob. When you seek God's face with your relationship problems, he works on all sides of the problem.
- IV. **ALWAYS APPROACH HUMAN CONFLICTS WITH SINCERE HUMILITY.** 33:3-4. Jacob bowed seven times as Esau approached, which was a demonstration of his humility and his submission. This resulted in great tears of both joy and regret by Jacob and Esau. You will be surprised at how conflicts are resolved when you approach people with open humility instead of rage and pride.
- V. **DURING SOME OF YOUR SCARIEST DAYS YOU WILL HAVE SOME OF THE SWEETEST EXPERIENCES WITH GOD.** 32:24-32. As Jacob contemplated how to face Esau, he was left alone. He spent the whole night wrestling with an angel. It was that night that God gave Jacob a new identity: instead of Jacob, the cheater, he was now Israel, prince with God. Jacob received a large piece of his legacy that night, during a time of great sorrow and soul-searching. The burdens that keep you up all night in prayer are often the tools that God uses to help you see His face as you've never seen it before.

Jacob and Esau Reunited

Genesis 32-33

[0150]

Jacob Moves His Family to Canaan

- I. GENESIS 32:1-8 Jacob Journeys with His Family
 - 1-2 God's angels meet with Jacob
 - 3-5 Jacob sends messengers to Esau
 - 6-8 Jacob fears that Esau is angry
- II. GENESIS 32:9-12 Jacob Prays for God's Protection
 - 9-10 He praises God for His blessings
 - 11 He asks God for deliverance
 - 12 He reminds God of His promise
- III. GENESIS 32:13-23 Jacob Prepares to Meet Esau
 - 13-21 He prepares gifts for Esau
 - 22-23 He prepares his family
- IV. GENESIS 32:24-32 Jacob Wrestles with the Angel
 - 24-26 Jacob wrestles all night with a man
 - 27-30 The man gives Jacob the name "Israel"
 - 31-32 Jacob walks with a limp
- V. GENESIS 33:1-3 Jacob Approaches Esau
 - 1-2 Jacob prepares his family
 - 3 Jacob demonstrates his humility
- VI. GENESIS 33:4-11 Jacob and Esau are Reunited
 - 4 Jacob and Esau hug and weep
 - 5-7 Esau meets Jacob's family
 - 8-11 Esau receives Jacob's gifts
- VII. GENESIS 33:12-20 Jacob Settles in Shechem
 - 12-15 Jacob's and Esau's people travel the rest of the way together
 - 16-19 Jacob buys land
 - 20 Jacob prepares a place to worship God

Ephesians 4:32

*And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

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Circle the letter next to the correct answer to each question from today's Bible story.

1. The twins in today's Bible story were named Jacob and _____.
a. Eli b. Esau c. Enoch
2. The twins' disagreements forced Jacob to do what?
a. move far away b. file a lawsuit c. post some angry words on Facebook
3. For about how long were Jacob and Esau apart?
a. 20 days b. 20 weeks c. 20 years
4. After 20 years, Jacob decided it was time to do what?
a. move back home b. buy a new car c. get some life insurance
5. What is one thing that had changed about Jacob since he left home?
a. he had dyed his hair b. he was a foot taller c. he had gotten married
6. What was Jacob worried about as he travelled home with his family?
a. "Where will we live?" b. "Will people remember me?" c. "Will Esau still be mad at me?"
7. What was the first thing that Jacob did to prepare to meet Esau?
a. He texted him b. He prayed c. He sent him flowers
8. What did Jacob do to show Esau that he was coming to him humbly?
a. He bowed himself to the ground b. He waved c. He sang
9. What did Jacob and Esau do when they met each other?
a. the hugged and cried b. they got in a fight c. they refused to talk to each other
10. What three words should we say to our family members often?
a. "What's for supper?" b. "Gimme the remote!" c. "I love you!"

***And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.***

EPHESIANS 4:32

