

Church of God Sunday School

JACOB AWAY FROM HOME

Genesis 28-29; 31-33:1-4; 35



Jacob and Esau were twin brothers. Through deception, Jacob—the younger brother—received the birthright and the blessing that belonged to the oldest son, Esau. Because of this, Esau was angry, and he threatened to kill Jacob. When Rebekah and Isaac heard of Esau's plans, they both told Jacob to go to Padanaram to live with Rebekah's family until Esau was over his anger. Isaac also urged Jacob to find a wife in Rebekah's family (Genesis 27:41-45).

As Jacob was preparing to leave, Isaac gave him a blessing that God would make him fruitful and multiply his possessions and family. When Isaac passed on the blessing of Abraham to Jacob, Jacob could then inherit the land that God had given Abraham and Isaac.

So Jacob left the home of his parents, Beersheeba, and set out for Padanaram and the home of his Uncle Laban. One night, on his journey, Jacob stopped to rest. He took a stone to use as a pillow and lay down to sleep. As Jacob was sleeping, he had a dream. In his dream he saw a ladder reaching from earth to Heaven. Angels were going up and down the ladder. The Lord was at the top of the ladder.

The Lord said to Jacob, "I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed [children]; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee . . . ; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

God confirmed Isaac's blessing to Jacob. God had blessed Abraham and Isaac in the past. He would bless Jacob and take him back to his homeland.

When Jacob awoke from his dream, he knew that he was not alone. God was there. Jacob took the stone that he had used for a pillow, poured oil on it, and called the place Bethel. Jacob made a vow to God. If God would keep him as he traveled, clothe him, feed

him, and allow him to return to his father's house in peace, then he would serve the Lord and return a tenth of what he had unto Him.

Jacob continued on to his uncle's land. One day he stopped at a well for water and asked the men there about the land. He learned that he was in Haran. As he talked with the men, Rachel, Laban's daughter, came to the well to water the sheep. When Rachel and Jacob met, they were happy to know that they were relatives. Rachel took Jacob home to meet Laban.



In the following days, Jacob agreed to work for his uncle. For wages, Jacob asked only that he might marry Rachel. Jacob agreed to work seven years first. In the seven years, Jacob worked hard, and Laban prospered. At the end of that time, there was a wedding. Later, Jacob found that he had married Leah, Rachel's older sister, instead of Rachel! (Because of the customs, Jacob had not known that he was marrying Leah until they were already wed.)

Jacob was upset at being deceived. (But hadn't he



deceived Esau?) Jacob went to Laban. His uncle told him that it was the custom for the older daughter to marry first, but he could still marry Rachel and then work another seven years for him. (In early Bible times some men had

more than one wife, but this was a departure from God's law, which was, and still is, one man and one woman.) Jacob's family and possessions multiplied through the years; but Rachel bore Jacob only one child, Joseph, during all that time (Genesis 30:22-24).

Jacob went to see Laban because he wanted to go back home. They talked of how God had blessed Laban because of Jacob. Laban agreed to give Jacob a share

of the sheep, goats, and cattle. Jacob took his share and set up camp for himself, but he did not leave for his father's home in Canaan yet. God blessed Jacob with still more material possessions and servants.

When Laban's sons saw Jacob's prosperity, they grew jealous and complained to their father. Jacob knew that trouble was in store for him. God told Jacob



to gather his family and possessions and return to the land of Canaan. God spoke to Jacob in a dream and said He would go with him. So Jacob and his family left. They were gone three days before Laban knew of it.

When Laban learned that Jacob had left without telling him, he was angry. He went after Jacob. On the way, God spoke to Laban in a dream and told him to speak kindly to Jacob. When Laban caught up with Jacob, they settled their differences and made a covenant that they would not harm each other. Laban kissed and blessed his daughters and grandchildren; then he returned to his own land.

Jacob knew God had certainly helped him, but he had one more fear: he was afraid of meeting Esau, his brother! Jacob sent out messengers to find Esau so that he could make peace with him. The messengers returned, telling Jacob that Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men! Fearing that Esau was still angry, Jacob prepared a present for him and divided the camp to protect his family.

That night, as Jacob was left alone, a man wrestled with him until dawn. Jacob kept a firm hold on the man, even when he pulled Jacob's thigh out of joint, making him lame. The man kept asking Jacob to let him go, but Jacob said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

The man asked Jacob for his name. When Jacob told him, the man said he would not be called *Jacob* (a supplanter, one who tricks another) anymore but *Israel* (one who prevails with God), because he had power with God and had prevailed. Jacob knew he had come face to face with God then.

In the morning Jacob saw Esau and his men coming. Jacob wanted to make sure that Esau knew he wanted to make peace, so he bowed himself seven different times to Esau. Esau ran to meet Jacob, fell on his neck, and kissed him. Esau had many possessions, but he still accepted Jacob's present of animals as a blessing and peace offering.



God appeared to Jacob later and told him to go back to Bethel to make an altar to Him; so Jacob went back to Bethel and built an altar to God. God confirmed His promises to Jacob again; then, as they journeyed from Bethel, Rachel died, after giving birth to her second child, Benjamin.

Jacob finally came to Mamre, where Isaac lived. Isaac was a very old man by this time, but Jacob and Isaac were glad to be together again.

MEMORY VERSE:

"I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places . . ."

Genesis 28:15

Jacob Married Leah and Rachel



Draw lines to match the puzzle pieces.

1 Jacob worked for Laban

2 Laban asked Jacob

3 Jacob said he would work

4 Laban

5 After 7 years Laban had a feast

6 That evening he gave Joseph

7 Jacob found in the morning

8 Jacob went to Laban

9 Laban said he couldn't

10 He agreed to give Rachel

11 In a week Laban

12 Jacob worked

7 more years

13 Jacob loved

for a month with no pay.

for 7 more years' service.

Rachel more than Leah.

7 years without pay if he could marry Rachel.

he had been deceived.

give his younger daughter first.

Leah, not Rachel.

to ask why.

and gave his daughter to Jacob.

gave Rachel to Jacob.

accepted this.

to name his wage for working.



Esau Forgives Jacob