

God helps brothers make up after Jacob cheats Esau – Genesis 27,32



AT1H

Aim: to see how God can bring peace and love into difficult family situations



Abraham and Sarah's son, Isaac and his wife, Rebekah, had twin boys - Esau and Jacob. Though they were twins they were very different, Esau was the outdoor type who enjoyed hunting, but Jacob was happier staying close to home. The custom was that the eldest son Esau would receive the family inheritance, but he cared little for it, preferring to swap the future promise for a tasty bean stew. When father Isaac was very old and his eyesight failing, Jacob and Rebekah conspired to trick him into blessing the younger son. The deceit worked and Esau was extremely angry to have been cheated but did nothing until his dad died. Jacob was no fool and knowing what would happen fled. As he rested on his journey he had a dream in which God promised that he would be with him wherever he went. Nevertheless it took some time, and a lot of grace and courage for the brothers to be reunited. God was working out his plan and brought about peace and forgiveness between the two brothers



Ask whether anyone has ever felt cross with someone in their family. Talk about what it feels like when someone we love does something to upset us or make us angry.

God longs for families to at peace with each other. In today's story we are going to find out how he helped brothers find forgiveness and friendship



Read 'Jacob and Esau' (p30)

Read 'God speaks to Jacob' (p31) leaving out the first sentence.

Read 'Jacob goes back home' (p32)

Print the pictures of Jacob and Esau. Fold them around a lolly stick or wooden spoon so that they have a happy side and a sad side. Use these 'puppets' to tell the story. Print the sheep and stick them to a lollystick/wooden spoon each so that when Jacob gives Esau the present, each puppet can have their own flock!

It is not always easy to forgive someone who has hurt us, but God promises he will help us



- *I wonder how Esau felt when he knew that Jacob had come back.*
- *I wonder how Jacob felt while he waited to see if Esau had forgiven him.*
- *I wonder if there is anyone that God wants me to forgive*



Read 'Jacob's Journey' page 23 in Bob Hartman's Play Along Bible

Make up a tray of cornflour mixed with water to the consistency where when you run your finger through it, it leaves a temporary line. Encourage everyone to prayerfully write things or names as they seek Gods forgiveness or the power to forgive



- Decorate large pebbles with felt tips and or stickers like those used for the prayer activity
- Talk about how when we are angry and hurt or feeling guilty for hurting someone else we can feel yucky in our tummy. Teach each other the Makaton sign for 'sorry' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bo5bXFxUjXl> and think about how the sign shows those feelings that can get better when we say sorry or forgive someone else
- Have lots of cuddly or toy sheep available for imaginative play
- Provide sheets, tunics, etc. for dressing up like Jacob and Esau



Place a clear plastic container in a deep tray and pour water in to it up to the brim. Explain that Jesus says he is the living water which all the goodness and happiness in the world.

Take some large pebbles (you could paint sad or angry faces on them) and ask everyone to come up with things that people do that upset or annoy us. As each thing is described (have your own list ready just in case) put a pebble in the water.

As the water slops over the edge explain that when we hold on to anger and hurt and don't say sorry or forgive someone else it leaves little room for goodness and happiness.

Jesus, help us to say sorry when we have hurt others or done things we shouldn't. Help us also to forgive those that have hurt or upset us. Amen.



- Big Thumbs
- Bananaman
- Jesus love is very wonderful



Give everyone a pebble to take home and encourage them to use it as a reminder to say sorry or to forgive others



