

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

3rd - 5th Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 10

*By Faith Jacob...*

# Jacob

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

**Objective** To model Jacob's faith by leaning on God and trusting in Him for all things.

## Key Verses

Hebrews 11:21—Main Teaching Passage

Genesis 32

Genesis 49

## Memory Verse - Psalm 20:1

"May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble!  
May the name of the God of Jacob protect you!"

## Hook

Review last week's memory verse, 2 Corinthians 5:7.

Summarize the life of Jacob for the students. Our study deals with the last hours of his life, and the students need context for how different Jacob looks here compared to his struggles with Esau and Laban.

Show them that God has grown Jacob and changed him during his life, transforming Jacob from a man who relied on his ability to swindle and deceive into a man who relied on the Lord.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

## BOOK

Hebrews 11 shows us that when it comes to Jacob's life, we should emulate the kind of faith that he showed in the last few hours of that life. It says "By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff." There are three things mentioned here: it is shown when Jacob is dying, he prayed for his sons and for their futures and he worshiped God. Jacob's faith was shown in his trusting God in all things. He trusted God to watch over his sons after he died, he trusted God to fulfill the promises that He gave to Abraham and Isaac, and He trusted God with his death, all while worshipping Him over the head of the staff that the Lord forced him to lean on.

Jacob of course carried the staff after God had wrestled him into submission, changing Jacob's life and giving him a reliance on the Lord in place of a reliance on deceit and theft. Jacob had stolen from his father (the blessing) and swindled his brother and father-in-law (the birthright from Esau, and the flocks from Laban), but Jacob could not deceive or fool the Lord. In the end, he was forced to submit to Him, and in doing so his very nature was changed. Jacob went from being deceiving to devoted, and from self-reliant, to fully leaning on God for all things.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

## LOOK

There is an old saying, "A leopard can't change his spots." It means that you are what you are, and there is no point in ever pretending to be something else. A leopard could pretend to be a zebra, but eventually it will get hungry and reveal its true nature by trying to eat one of the other zebras. When we say this about people, we are saying that there is no way that someone could ever change, and if they look different, watch out, because eventually they will start behaving the way they always have. In other words, a liar will always be a liar, or a angry, violent person will always be angry and violent.

This is a silly statement and we shouldn't believe it for one second. The whole reason that Jesus came to the earth was so that people could be reborn, so that their old ways could be done away with and they could live new, Christ-filled lives. We believe that the Gospel has the power to change the worst, most evil, most wicked heart and make it clean and filled with love. One of the reasons that we believe this is because we have seen it happen in ourselves, in other Christians that we know, and in many people in the Bible.

## LOOK (Continued)

Jacob was someone like this. He was a liar and a cheat. He cheated his brother out of his birthright. He stole the blessing by deceiving his father. Jacob even swindled his wife's father out of all of the best sheep and goats that he had on his farm and then fled. Jacob was a deceiver and he always did deceitful things. That is until the night that he wrestled with God and God won.

Did Jacob try and cheat in the wrestling match? Probably. Can you cheat God? No. In fact, Jacob would not surrender until his hip had been dislocated, and he realized that He could never win against God. So he surrendered, but he also begged for a blessing. Jacob went from being someone who would steal and cheat, who lie and deceive, to someone who relied upon the Lord for all things. Jacob gave his life over to the Lord, and the Lord blessed it. He healed the relationship between Jacob and Esau, and blessed Jacob with many sons. He even changed his name, proving that with God's help anyone can be saved.

We can look at Jacob's faith and we can learn from it. Jacob became someone who trusted in God for all things in all ways. At the very end of his life, he leaned on his staff and worshipped God, blessing his sons and trusting the Lord to watch over them and fulfill His promises through them. He showed the kind of faith that in God that skydivers put in their parachutes. Skydivers jump out of a plane trusting completely that their parachute will hold them up and keep them safe. Jacob trusted in God so completely that even when he was about to die, he was not afraid or worried. Jacob's faith was firm in life and also in death. He knew his God and trusted in Him completely.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

## TOOK

As a class, memorize Psalm 20:1.

Ask the students if there is anything that they are struggling to trust the Lord with. Pray specifically for those things with those students.

**Pray:** Thank the Lord for His faithfulness and love. Praise Him that He is worthy of receiving our trust. Ask Him to help us to lean on Him and trust in Him completely.

**Parent Question:** How did Jacob show that he trusted God?

# FURTHER STUDY

## Commentary on Genesis 49:29-32 & 32:22-32 By David Guzik

Jacob's death.

### 1. (29-32) Jacob makes his sons promise to bury him in Canaan.

Then he charged them and said to them: "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial place. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. The field and the cave that is there were purchased from the sons of Heth."

a. **I am to be gathered to my people:** Jacob was confident that his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham lived on, and that he would be **gathered** to them.

b. **Bury me with my fathers:** Though Jacob was now in Egypt, he knew he was not an Egyptian. He was a son of the promise, an heir of God's covenant with Abraham, and he asked to be buried in the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by covenant.

c. **In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah:** Egypt was filled with magnificent tombs, and because of the respect Jacob had he could have been buried like a Pharaoh. But he wanted to be buried in an obscure cave in Canaan, because Canaan was the land of promise.

### 2. (33) The death of Jacob.

And when Jacob had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

a. **Breathed his last:** This ends the life of the last of the great patriarchs, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Yet the work and plan of God did not end. It continued through men and generations to come.

b. **And was gathered to his people:** There are said to be three basic attitudes towards death. Among the ancient Greeks, they held to what can be called the **death-accepting view. Our modern world is sold out to a death-denying approach. The Biblical approach is the death-defying attitude.**

Jacob wrestles with God.

### 1. (22-23) Jacob sends all his possessions over the river.

And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed

over the ford of Jabbok. He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had.

a. **He took them, sent them over the brook:** This was a demonstration of his faith, because Jacob left himself no retreat. If Esau wanted to attack his group, they would quickly be backed up against the river.

b. **Sent over what he had:** Jacob spent the night alone. This was his last night on the east side of the Jordan, and he probably spent the night in prayer.

i. God had to get Jacob alone before He dealt with him. While all the activity of the huge entourage surrounded Jacob, he could busy himself with a thousand different tasks. Once he was alone, God commanded his attention.

ii. Think of all Jacob had to pray about: thanking God, remembering all that the LORD did for him, wondering how God would fulfill His work in him. This was a significant turning point in Jacob's life and he knew it.

## 2. (24-25) A **Man** wrestles with Jacob.

Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.

a. **A Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day:** Jacob didn't wrestle with the **Man**. Instead, **a Man wrestled with him**. Jacob didn't start out wanting anything from God; God wanted something from him. God wanted all of Jacob's proud self-reliance and fleshly scheming and came to take it, by force if necessary.

b. **A Man wrestled with him:** As the following verses show, this was no mere man. This is another special appearance of Jesus in the Old Testament before His incarnation in Bethlehem. This was God in human form.

c. **Until the breaking of the day:** We can only imagine what this scene looked like. Perhaps sometimes it looked like a barroom fight, and perhaps at other times it looked like an intense wrestling match.

i. "How did Jacob ever manage to keep up his struggle throughout the entire night? I do not know. But I do know that his determination to hang in there was no greater than our frequent determination to have our own way and eventually win out over God." (Boice)

d. **He saw that He did not prevail against him:** As the fight progressed, it seemed Jacob was pretty evenly matched against the **Man**. But the match was only even in appearance. The **Man** could have won easily at any time, using supernatural power.

i. Sometimes we feel man really *can* contend with God. A man or woman in rebellion against God might seem to do pretty well. The match seems even in appearance only. God can turn the tide at any moment, and is allows the match to go own for His own purposes.

ii. It isn't hard to imagine Jacob working so hard and feeling he is getting the best of his opponent, until finally the **Man** changed the struggle in a moment. Jacob must have felt very defeated.

## 3. (26) Jacob's plea to the **Man**.

And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"

a. **Let Me go, for the day breaks:** The **Man** let Jacob know this would not last much longer. Even though Jacob clung to him desperately, Jacob had lost. A better, greater Man defeated Jacob.

i. This is an invaluable place for everyone to come to: where God conquers us. There is something to be said for every man doing his wrestling with God, and then acknowledging God's greatness after having been defeated. We must know we serve a God who is greater than us, and we cannot conquer much of anything until He conquers us.

b. **I will not let You go unless You bless me:** This wasn't Jacob dictating terms to God as he did on previous occasions. God overcame Jacob here, and we know from Hosea 12:3-5 that Jacob sought this blessing with weeping. He knew he was defeated, yet desperately wanted a blessing from this Greater One.

i. *He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and in his strength he struggled with God. Yes, he struggled with the Angel and prevailed; he wept, and sought favor from Him. He found Him in Bethel, and there He spoke to us; that is, the LORD God of hosts. The LORD is His memorable name. (Hosea 12:3-5)*

c. **Unless You bless me:** According to his past, Jacob was always clever and sneaky enough so he never felt the need to trust in God alone. Now he could *only* rely on the blessing of God.

i. Jacob was reduced to the place where all he could do was to hold on to the LORD with everything he had. Jacob could not fight anymore, but he could hold on. That is not a bad place to be.

ii. Here, God is answered Jacob's prayer in Genesis 32:9-12. Yet before Jacob could be delivered from the hand of his brother, he had to be delivered from his own self-will and self-reliance.

iii. Jacob thought the real enemy was outside of him, being Esau. The real enemy was his own carnal, fleshly nature, which had not been conquered by God.

4. (27-29) Jacob's name is changed, and he is a blessed man.

So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there.

a. **What is your name?** Jacob must have felt a sense of shame, admitting his name was **Jacob**, with all its associations of deception and cheating. Yet, this was *who he was*, and Jacob had to admit to it.

i. We all want to name ourselves favorably. We say, "I am firm; you are obstinate; they are stubborn fools." God wouldn't allow Jacob to cover up his name, because in his case it reflected his true nature.

b. **Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel:** The name **Israel** is a compound of two words: *sarah* (meaning, *fight, struggle, or rule*) and *el* (meaning, *God*). Some take the name Israel to mean, *He who struggles with God* or *He who rules with God*. But in Hebrew names, sometimes God is not the object of the verb but the subject. *Daniel* means *God judges* not *he judges God*. This principle shows us **Israel** likely means, *God rules*.

i. From this point on, he will be called **Jacob** twice as often as he is called **Israel**. Apparently, there was still plenty of the old man left in Jacob.

c. **For you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed:** Jacob **prevailed** in the sense that he endured through his struggle until God thoroughly conquered him. When you battle with God, you only win by losing and by not giving up until you know you have lost. This is how Jacob **prevailed**.

d. **Why is it that you ask about My name?** The *Man* probably refused to tell Jacob His name because He figured Jacob should already know it, and it turned out that Jacob *did* know exactly who this was.

e. **And He blessed him there:** Surely, this was the blessing of being defeated by God. It was the blessing of the passing of the old (*Jacob*) life, and the coming of a new (*Israel*) life. It may also have had to do with the great idea of the blessing of Abraham, and meeting Jacob's immediate needs for security in the midst of fear. Whatever Jacob needed, God's blessing provided at the moment.

## 5. (30-32) Two memorials of this event.

And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Just as he crossed over Penuel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip. Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank.

a. **Jacob called the name of the place Peniel:** The first memorial was a name. Jacob named the place **Peniel** (*Face of God*), because he *did* know the name of the *Man* who wrestled with him. He was the same One who wrestled with Jacob all his life.

i. Jacob also understood it was only by God's grace and mercy he escaped from this episode with his life. No man should be allowed to wrestle with God and live, but God was gracious.

b. **He limped on his hip:** The second memorial was a perpetual limp. Jacob would remember his being conquered by God with every step he took for the rest of his life. This was a small price to pay for such a great gift.