

GENESIS 31-36

WEEK IN REVIEW + FAMILY GUIDE



WEEK IN REVIEW

We left off last week with Jacob, whose name means “deceiver,” being deceived into many years of labor with his uncle Laban. The Lord tells Jacob to return back to Canaan, which is the Promised Land. Jacob, his family, and all their flocks leave Laban without saying goodbye. Laban finds out that Jacob has left and meets him in order to confront him. Laban and Jacob make a covenant, which is a really strong promise, and they set up a pillar to be a barrier between them. Jacob hears that Esau is coming and is afraid of what might happen. Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau, as well as hundreds of animals as gifts hoping that it might help the situation. When the messengers returned back to Jacob, he was told that Esau was coming with four-hundred men. Jacob was afraid and turned to the Lord in prayer.

Jacob spent the night alone and the Lord got his attention. It says that “a man wrestled with him till daybreak.” The man was an appearance of God. The man and Jacob sparred with one another. The man “touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man” (Genesis 32:25). Jacob would not let the man go unless he blessed him. The man changed Jacob’s name to Israel because he had “struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.” Jacob named the place Peniel which means “face of God.” Jacob also limped on his hip for the rest of his life as a reminder of this encounter with God, and his dependence on Him.

Jacob then sees his brother Esau coming, but what happened was very unexpected. Esau ran to meet Jacob, hugged him, threw his arms around him, and they wept. Esau accepted Jacob’s gifts to him as a sign of his forgiveness. Esau greeted his brother with love, not hate. Despite what Jacob had done, Esau showed forgiveness. The two of them were reconciled. Forgiveness is giving up your right for revenge, and reconciliation is coming together to fix a relationship. The story of Jacob and Esau reuniting is a reflection of the gospel, which is what God has done for us through Jesus. All of us have sinned, and our sins have consequences. Our sins separate us from God. God showed his love for us, in that while we have sinned against Him, He sent His Son Jesus to pay for our sins. We can thank God today that we have forgiveness from God through Jesus!

FAMILY GUIDE

BIG IDEA:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● God is at work in reconciliation
KEY STORIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jacob's return● Wrestling with God● Making Amends: Jacob and Esau
KEY VERSES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Genesis 32:28<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome."● Genesis 33:4<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ "But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept."
WORDS TO KNOW:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Covenant<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A really strong promise● Forgiveness<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Giving up your right to revenge● Reconciliation<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Coming together to fix a relationship

Reflection Questions

1.	What does Jacob's name mean? What did God change it to?
2.	How did Esau respond when he saw Jacob?
3.	Why was Esau's response to seeing Jacob unexpected?
4.	What is forgiveness? How has God shown us forgiveness?