

Open Bible Stories — God Blesses Jacob

Introduction

Key Idea

The story of God blessing Jacob teaches us how God kept his promises to the next generations.

Core Belief Verse

"By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau." — Hebrew 11:20

God's Big Story

The eternal God created all things in six days.

He made a good and perfect world.

He made humans in his image to fill the earth and rule over creation.

But humans rebelled against God and ruined God's creation.

God set to restore his world through his promise.

God made a covenant with Abraham.

He promised to bless all nations through Abraham.

God kept his promises across the generations.

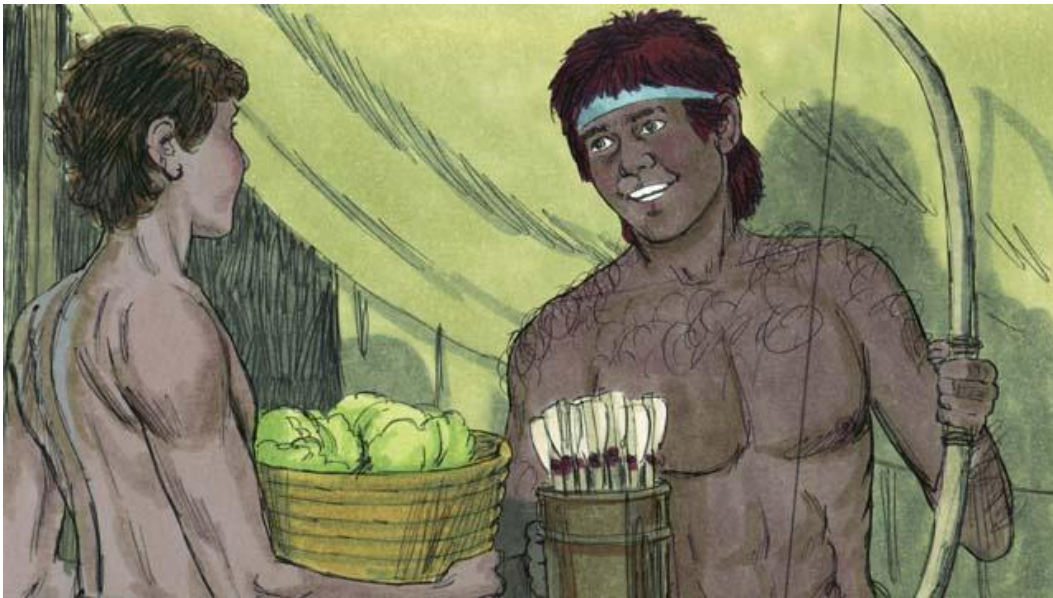
God provided Abraham with a promised child, Isaac.

God gave Isaac a wife and she bore twins, Jacob and Esau.

God blessed Jacob and his sons, and the blessing continued to the next generation.

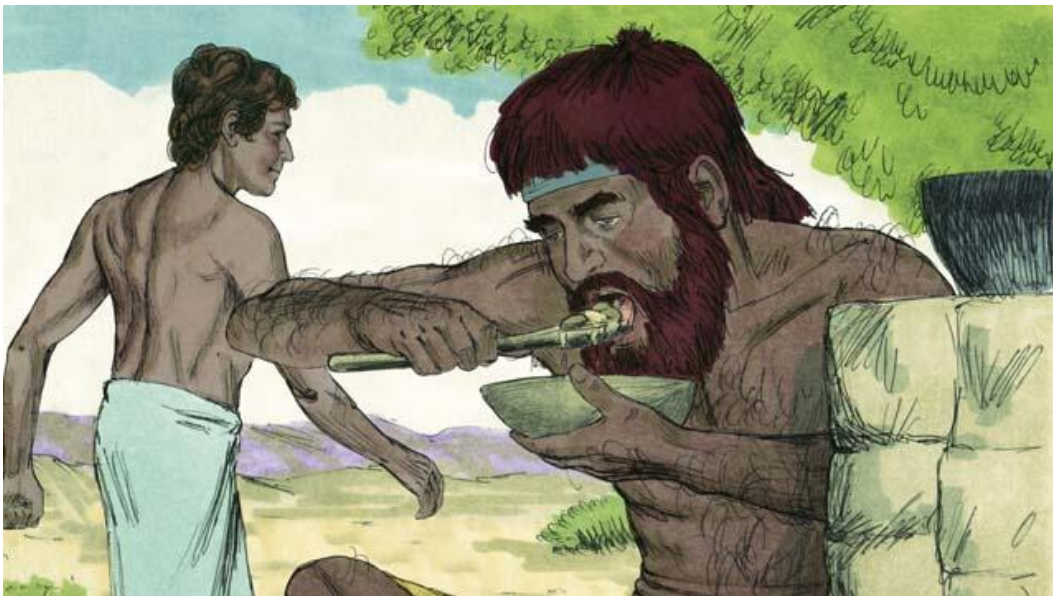
The Story: God Blesses Jacob

07-01



As the boys grew up, Jacob loved to stay at home, but Esau loved to hunt animals. Rebekah loved Jacob, but Isaac loved Esau.

07-02



One day, when Esau came back from hunting, he was very hungry. Esau said to Jacob, "Give me some of the food you have made." Jacob responded, "First, promise me that everything you should receive because you were born first, you will give it all to me." So Esau promised to give Jacob all those things. Then Jacob gave him some food.

07-03



Isaac wanted to give his blessing to Esau. But before he did, Rebekah and Jacob tricked him by having Jacob pretend to be Esau. Isaac was old and could no longer see. So Jacob put on Esau's clothes and put goatskins on his neck and hands.

07-04



Jacob came to Isaac and said, "I am Esau. I have come so that you can bless me." When Isaac felt the goat hair and smelled the clothes, he thought it was Esau and blessed him.

07-05



Esau hated Jacob because Jacob had stolen his rights as oldest son and also his blessing. So he planned to kill Jacob after their father died.

07-06



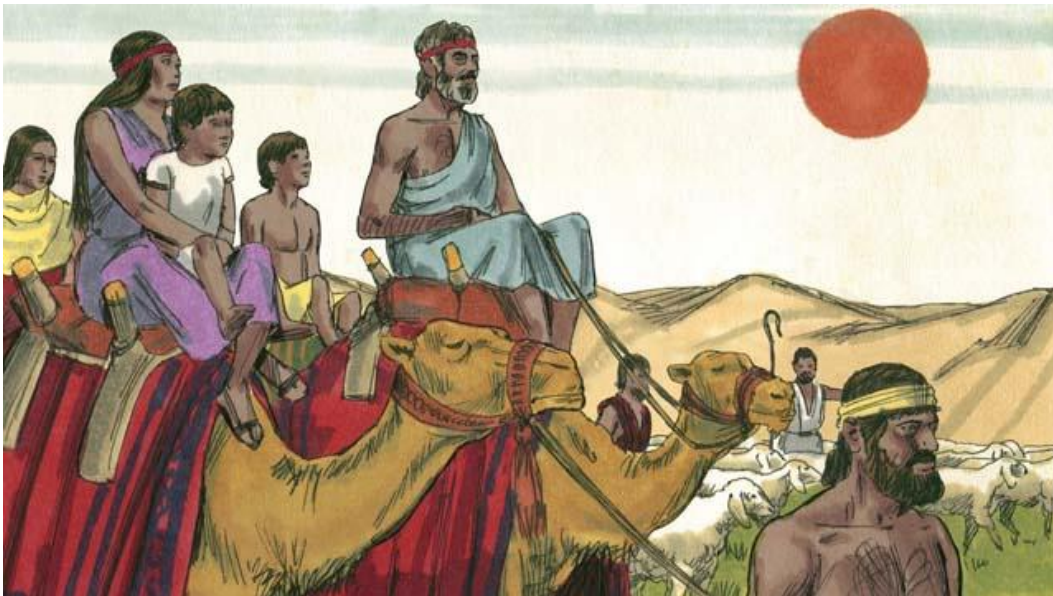
But Rebekah heard of Esau's plan. So she and Isaac sent Jacob far away to live with her relatives.

07-07



Jacob lived with Rebekah's relatives for many years. During that time he married and had 12 sons and a daughter. God made him very wealthy.

07-08



After 20 years away from his home in Canaan, Jacob returned there with his family, his servants, and all his flocks and herds of animals.

07-09



Jacob was very afraid because he thought Esau still wanted to kill him. So he sent many of his animals to Esau as a gift. The servants who brought the animals said to Esau, "Your servant, Jacob, is giving you these animals. He is coming soon."

07-10



But Esau no longer wanted to harm Jacob. Instead, he was very happy to see him again., so the brothers lived peacefully in Canaan. Then Isaac died, and Jacob and Esau buried him. The covenant promises God had made to Abraham now passed on from Isaac to Jacob.

A Bible story from: Genesis 25:27–35:29

No Divisions Among You — Guarding the Community against Disunity

- **Key Idea:** Guarding against division and disunity
- **Key Passage:** 1 Corinthians 1:10-13
- **Main Session:** OBS 7 (God Blesses Jacob)

Recite the Core Belief Verse (3–5 minutes)

The verse below summarizes the teaching of the current passage. Read the verse out loud as a community. Read it again several times as a group until the whole community can recite it from memory.

"It was also by faith about things to come that Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau. Hebrews 11:20"

Read the Passage (5 minutes)

There are many things that seek to destroy the unity of God's people. Christians need to be aware/alert that these threats exist in order to guard the community against division and disunity. In order to understand God's design of Christian community, read the passage below.

"10 Now I urge you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and that there be no divisions among you. I urge that you be joined together with the same mind and by the same purpose. 11 For it has been made clear to me, my brothers, by Chloe's people that there are factions among you. 12 I mean this: Each one of you says, "I am with Paul," or "I am with Apollos," or "I am with Cephas," or "I am with Christ." 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? — 1 Corinthians 1:10-13"

Explore the Idea (10–15 minutes)

Mature Christian community guards against division and disunity. Use the following questions to explore what it means to be a part of a unified Christian community.

1. What instructions does the above passage give us about being a Christian community?

2. How can a Christian community experience division and disunity? What are causes of disunity that can divide Christian community?
3. What is the difference between disunity/division and having different perspectives (and even disagreements) as we work together? How can we remain unified while we work through different opinions and perspectives?
4. What are the dangers of never speaking our mind/thoughts? How can we share our thoughts and opinions while we respect one another in the process?
5. How will your community guard itself against division and disunity?

Sing God's Word (5 minutes) (optional)

Work together as a community to sing or chant the following verse together in a rhythm, beat, or melody. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to live together! Psalm 133:1

Pray to God (5 minutes)

Pray as a whole community. Ask God to help guard your community against division and disunity. In this time of prayer, consider having community members get on their knees to pray as a symbol of humility before God and one another.

Sing to God (3–5 minutes)

Choose a song to sing to praise God and encourage one another.

Movement 1: Understand the Story

Read each question aloud. Give the group time to answer before sharing the answer.

Observation Questions

07-01

What did Jacob and Esau each love to do?

Jacob loved to stay at home. Esau loved to hunt animals.

Which son did Rebekah love? Which son did Isaac love?

Rebekah loved Jacob. Isaac loved Esau.

Who was the older son?

Esau was the older twin son. Jacob was the younger twin son.

07-02

How did Esau feel when he came back from hunting?

Esau came back from hunting and was very hungry.

What did Esau ask his younger brother?

Esau asked Jacob for some food.

What did Jacob have Esau promise?

Jacob told Esau to promise to give him all he would receive for being the firstborn.

Why did he give everything that he should receive to Jacob, the younger son?

Everything Esau should have received as the older son, he gave Jacob in exchange for some food.

07-03

To whom did Isaac want to give his formal blessing?

Isaac wanted to give it to Esau.

How did Jacob trick Isaac into giving him the blessing?

Jacob pretended to be Esau by wearing goatskins so that Isaac would think he was Esau.

07-04

What did Jacob say to his father, Isaac?

Jacob told his father, Isaac, he was Esau. Jacob also said that he came to receive a blessing from his father.

Who did Isaac think was speaking with him?

When Isaac felt the goat hair and smelled the clothes, Isaac thought it was Esau.

What did Isaac do to Jacob?

Isaac blessed Jacob thinking that it was Esau.

07-05

What did Esau feel toward Jacob?

Because Jacob stole Esau's blessing, Esau hated his brother, Jacob.

What did Esau plan to do to Jacob?

Esau planned to kill Jacob after Isaac died.

07-06

What did Isaac and Rebekah do when Rebekah heard of Esau's plan to kill Jacob?

They sent Jacob far away to live with Rebekah's relatives.

07-07

What happened to Jacob during the next twenty years?

Jacob married, had 12 sons and a daughter, and God made him wealthy.

07-08

How long did Jacob live away from his family in Canaan?

Jacob lived away from his family for twenty years.

What did Jacob do after these twenty years?

Jacob returned to his family with all of his servants and animals.

07-09

Why was Jacob afraid when he returned to Canaan?

Jacob thought Esau would kill him.

What did Jacob do in order to soothe Esau's anger?

Jacob sent herds of animals to Esau as a gift.

07-10

Was Esau still angry with Jacob?

No, Esau no longer wanted to harm Jacob.

Where did Jacob settle to live?

Jacob settled in Canaan and lived peacefully with his brother.

After Isaac's death, who received the covenant promises that God originally gave to Abraham?

Jacob received them.

Movement 2: Theological Questions

What Does This Story Teach Us?

1. What causes conflict in human relationships? How does the story of Jacob and Esau help us understand why human relationships can have conflict?
2. How are the promises of God's blessing undeserved (an act of grace)? How do we see God blessing Jacob despite Jacob's wrongdoing?

3. How can human relationships be restored to peace? How does the story of Jacob and Esau show us what a restored relationship looks like?

Movement 3: Live It Out

Personal Implications & Applications From The Story

Guide the group to discuss practical obedience from this story and name concrete next steps.

1. When have you been tricked or deceived by someone else? How did this feel?
2. When have you tricked or deceived others? What consequences did you experience?
3. How can trusting God help you enjoy God's blessing and a life of peace with others?
4. Think about this week. Where does "God Blesses Jacob" challenge you to obey God in a practical way?
5. How does this key idea shape one decision you need to make right now: The story of God blessing Jacob teaches us how God kept his promises to the next generations.

Movement 4: Retell the Story

Invite the group to retell the story several times until they can tell it clearly and faithfully.

1. Can someone retell "God Blesses Jacob" from beginning to end in their own words?
2. Retell this story again, but focus on what God did at each key moment.
3. Retell the story in three parts: beginning, middle, and ending. What changed in each part?
4. If you were teaching this story to your family tonight, how would you tell it simply and clearly?

Church Ministry

Reflect on how this story can edify and mature the Christian community. Design a way to minister this story to your church community.

Ministry Preparation: Take time to consider how you could minister this story to others. What setting, audience, or approach would you use? Record your ideas below.

Ministry Implementation: Minister this story to a group of believers as you had planned. Use the information in this study to help develop a teaching or lead a discussion. Record your ministry plan below.

Ministry Reflection: Think about what you learned from ministering this story to other believers. What went well? What would you do differently? Reflect on your experience below.

Movement 5: Share It

Help each person plan how they will share this story with others before the next gathering.

1. Who is one specific person you will share "God Blesses Jacob" with this week?
2. When and where will you share this story with them?
3. What is the one main truth from this story you want them to remember?

Report-back next meeting: Who did you share with, and what happened?

Mission Engagement

Consider how you will witness this story to unbelievers. Design a way to share this story and engage them in what it teaches about Christianity and the gospel.

Witness Preparation: Take time to consider how you will witness this narrative to unbelievers. What context, relationship, or opportunity will you use? Record your ideas below.

Witness Implementation: Share this story with an unbeliever. Use the information in this study to help develop a natural conversation or teaching. Record your plan below.

Witness Reflection: Think about what you learned from sharing this story with unbelievers. What did they respond to? What questions did they ask? Reflect on your experience below.