

16. Esau Forgives Jacob

The Word of the Lord: The Old Testament for Young Children

Notes for Parents & Teachers

16. Esau Forgives Jacob

- a. First, the Lord helped Jacob to become rich. So he came home with a large family, and many flocks and herds.
- b. Even though it was twenty years later, he remembered how he had cheated his brother and was afraid his brother was coming to take revenge on him. So he prayed to the Lord for help. He heard that Esau had 400 men with him. That made him very afraid.
- c. Note how he bowed down to Esau, and then Esau ran to him and hugged him, and they both wept for joy because Esau had forgiven him.
- d. Clearly a great lesson—how good you feel when you forgive a brother or sister or friend if they have done something wrong to you. Note also that Jacob was a changed man. He wasn't cheating people any more.



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The Lord Teaches Brothers to Forgive Each Other

And the Lord blessed Jacob while he was staying at Laban's house, and Jacob became very rich. Then Jacob saw that Laban and his sons were jealous of his riches. The Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers. Do not be afraid, I will be with you." Then Jacob called all his family together and set them on camels, and he took all his cattle and all his goods. And he left to go back to his father and mother.

As he drew near he sent messages to his brother Esau to say that he wanted to come home. And the messengers returned to Jacob saying, "Your brother comes to meet you with four hundred men." Then Jacob was greatly afraid. That night he prayed to the Lord and said, "Please save me from my brother Esau. I am afraid that he will come and kill me and all my family."

The next day Jacob sent a present to Esau, his brother, of hundreds of goats, sheep, camels, donkeys, horses and bulls. He told the servants who took the present to say to Esau, "These are for Esau from his servant Jacob." And they did so.

And Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming and with him the four hundred men. Then Jacob went ahead of his family, and bowed himself to the ground seven times until he came near to his brother. Esau ran to meet him and hugged him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.

Then Esau saw the women and the children and said, "Who are these with you?" And Jacob said, "These are the children which God has given to me." Then Jacob's family came and they bowed themselves to the ground in front of Esau.

And Esau said, "What are all these animals which I have met on the way?" And Jacob said, "These are a gift to help you forgive me." Esau said, "I have enough, my brother, you must keep these for yourself." Jacob said, "No, if you have forgiven me, then take this present from me."

And so Esau took it.

Genesis 31, 33

