

# Main Lesson, Activity & Discussion Questions

Ages 5–11 | Scripture-Centered | Apologetics-Rich | Christ-Centered

## LESSON OVERVIEW

<b>Week #:</b>	11
<b>Date:</b>	March 15, 2026
<b>Lesson Title:</b>	Jacob: God Changes Hearts
<b>Primary Scripture:</b>	Genesis 27–32
<b>Bible Timeline:</b>	Patriarch Period – After Abraham and Isaac, before Joseph
<b>Big Idea:</b>	God keeps His promises and changes hearts.

## MEMORY VERSE

*“I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go... I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”*

**Genesis 28:15**

God spoke these words to Jacob when he was afraid and alone. God promised to stay with him and finish what He started. God always keeps His promises.

## SETTING THE SCENE (INTRODUCTION)

Before we begin today, let's remember what this book is that we are opening together.

The Bible is not just one book. It is 66 books written by more than 40 different authors. It was written over about 1,500 years. It was written across three different continents and in three different languages. And yet, even with all those different writers and times and places, it tells one unified story.

**It tells one true story about one true God.**

From the very first page to the very last page, the Bible tells us about a God who loves His people so much that He has done whatever it takes to bring them home to Himself. He created us. He made promises to rescue us. And when we sinned and wandered far from Him, He sent the Lord Jesus Himself to die on the cross for us and rise again so we could be forgiven and made new.

That is the story we are inside today.

Now let's listen carefully to what God tells us in His Word.

Before Jacob was even born, God made a promise. In Genesis 25:23, the Lord said, "The older will serve the younger." Jacob and Esau were twins, but God already knew His plan.

Remember, the Bible is one true story. God promised Abraham that through his family all nations would be blessed (Genesis 12:3). That promise would one day lead to Jesus.

Today we will see that even when people sin, God does not forget His promise.

## MAIN LESSON NARRATIVE

### The Blessing and the Deception

Isaac was old. His eyes were weak, and he could hardly see. He called for his oldest son, Esau.

*“Go out to the open country... hunt some wild game for me. Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die.” — Genesis 27:3–4*

In those days, a father’s blessing was very important. It was not just kind words. It passed on the family promise and inheritance.

But Rebekah heard this. She remembered what God had said before the boys were born — “The older will serve the younger.” She decided to take matters into her own hands instead of waiting for God.

She told Jacob to bring two goats. She cooked food just the way Isaac liked it. Then she dressed Jacob in Esau’s clothes and even covered his hands with goat skin so he would feel hairy like Esau.

Jacob went into his father’s tent.

*“My father...” “Who is it?” Isaac asked. Jacob answered, “I am Esau your firstborn.” — Genesis 27:18*

*That was not true. Jacob lied.*

Isaac felt his hands. He listened to his voice. Finally, he gave the blessing. In Genesis 27:28–29, Isaac said: “May God give you heaven’s dew and earth’s richness... May nations serve you... May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed.”

This blessing connected to God’s covenant promise that began with Abraham.

### Sin Brings Consequences

But when Esau returned and discovered what had happened, he cried out with a loud and bitter cry. Genesis 27:34 says he was deeply distressed. He planned to kill Jacob.

**Sin always brings pain. Even when we think we are helping God, disobedience brings trouble.**

Jacob had to run away. He left his home, his parents, and everything familiar. He was alone in the wilderness.

### Jacob’s Dream — God Repeats His Promise

That night, Jacob used a stone as a pillow and fell asleep. Then God gave him a dream.

*“He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.” — Genesis 28:12*

Above it stood the Lord. Listen carefully to what God said:

*“I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac... All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring... I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go... I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” — Genesis 28:13–15*

**God repeated His promise even after Jacob sinned.**

### Years of Learning

Years passed. Jacob worked for his uncle Laban. He married. He had children. But he also experienced being tricked himself. Laban deceived Jacob just as Jacob had deceived his father.

God was teaching him that sin has consequences.

Finally, God told Jacob it was time to return home. But Esau was coming to meet him.

*“In great fear and distress Jacob divided the people who were with him into two groups.” — Genesis 32:7*

This time, Jacob prayed.

*“O God of my father Abraham... You have said, ‘I will surely make you prosper.’ I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant.” — Genesis 32:9–10*

Jacob was beginning to trust God instead of his tricks.

### **Wrestling with God — A Changed Name**

That night, something incredible happened.

*“So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak.” — Genesis 32:24*

This was no ordinary wrestling match. Jacob held on, even after his hip was injured. “I will not let you go unless you bless me,” he said in Genesis 32:26.

Then the man asked, “What is your name?”

“Jacob,” he answered. His name meant “heel grabber” or “deceiver.”

Then God changed his name.

*“Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.” — Genesis 32:28*

The name Israel means “he struggles with God” or “God prevails.” It shows that Jacob’s life would no longer be marked by deception, but by depending on God.

*“I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.” — Genesis 32:30*

He walked away limping, but changed.

### **Reconciliation and God’s Faithfulness**

*“Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept.” — Genesis 33:4*

God healed a broken relationship.

**God kept His promise. God changed a heart.**

## **WHY WE CAN TRUST THIS ACCOUNT**

- The Bible honestly records Jacob’s sin. Legends usually make heroes look perfect. This honesty supports that it is real history.
- The customs described in Genesis match ancient records from that time period.
- Romans 9:10–12 confirms the same account centuries later. Scripture agrees with itself.

We believe this because God tells us in His Word.

## WHAT THIS SHOWS US ABOUT JESUS

Jacob needed a new heart. We need a new heart too.

*“If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” — 2 Corinthians 5:17*

Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose again so we can be forgiven.

- Jesus is our **Savior**.
- Jesus is our **Sanctifier** who changes us.
- Jesus is our **Healer** who restores what is broken.
- Jesus is our **Coming King** who will finish every promise.

## GOD REVEALED AS TRINITY

- The **Father** speaks covenant promises.
- The **Son** reveals God personally, pointing forward to Jesus who makes the Father known (John 1:18).
- The **Holy Spirit** changes hearts (John 16:13).

God is one God in three Persons.

## LIFE APPLICATION

Jacob tried to fix everything himself.

But when he prayed and held on to God, his heart changed.

If you have sinned, do not run from God.

**Come to Jesus. He forgives. He changes hearts.**

## DEFENDING THE TRUTH

**Did God want Jacob to lie?**

No. Exodus 20:16 teaches that lying is sin. God used Jacob despite his sin, not because of it. God's grace is greater than our failure.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### 1. Why was Isaac's blessing important?

Answer: It passed on the covenant promise and inheritance that began with Abraham.

### 2. What did Jacob do wrong?

Answer: He lied to his father and tried to get God's promise through deception.

### 3. What promise did God repeat to Jacob?

Answer: That He would bless him, be with him, and bless all nations through his family.

### 4. Why did God change Jacob's name to Israel?

Answer: Because Jacob had struggled with God and learned to depend on Him. Israel means "he struggles with God" or "God prevails."

### 5. How does Jesus change our hearts today?

Answer: When we trust in Him, He forgives our sin and makes us new creations.

### Optional Deeper Question:

#### Why does God choose imperfect people?

Answer: To show that salvation comes by grace, not by our goodness.

## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

### Activity: New Name Reminder

**Purpose:** To understand new identity in Christ.

**Supplies:** Paper and markers.

### Instructions

1. Write your name at the top of the page.
2. Under it, write words that describe who you are in Christ: *forgiven, loved, chosen, new*.
3. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 together.
4. Pray and thank Jesus for new life.

*Scripture Connection: Just as Jacob became Israel, believers become new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).*

## TEACHER CLOSING

Read Genesis 28:15 again:

*"I am with you... I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."*

God did not leave Jacob.

God kept His promise by sending Jesus.

**And God will keep every promise still to come.**