

# Explore It

## FOR LEADERS



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### JACOB'S STRUGGLES ARE OVER

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📖 **Genesis 32:4-13,20-28; Genesis 33:3-4** Jacob meets Esau

🎯 **Aim: To see the struggles of Jacob**

In today's session we see Jacob finally facing the moment he was dreading. It was time to return home and see his big brother Esau. Often in life we go through challenging circumstances, either of our own making or the making of others. Jacob's story is one where God is with him through his journey of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Each child will need:

- Access to a range of resources to plan out a story – see Action It section
- Pens/pencils

You will need:

- A ball (or more than one if you have a large group)
- A flip chart highlighting key plot points (optional) – see Action It section
- A large sheet of paper – see Pray It section

## Start It

🗣️ **Say:** In today's story, Jacob is worried about how his brother Esau will react when he sees him. Our starter today will see how quickly you can react to what is happening around you.

Gather the children together in a circle and place a ball in the centre. If you have a large group, you may want to divide them into smaller circles. Call out instructions for the children to follow – for example: hop on one leg, tap your head, touch your toes ... In between these instructions, shout 'ball'. The first child in each group to pick up the ball from the middle of the circle gets a point.

## Sing It

### Memory verse

🗣️ **Say:** Let's share our memory verse together.

**'Trust in the Lord with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways submit to him,  
and he will make your paths straight.'**

— (Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV)

🗣️ **Say:** Today we're going to sing a song that will help us to learn our memory verse.

'Proverbs 3:5-6 – Trust' (hand motions) by Seeds Family Worship (2 mins 56 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=teCBUFF7zvA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=teCBUFF7zvA)

# Tell It

**Say:** In today's story we find out what happened when Jacob decided to return to his homeland and see his brother Esau for the first time.

**Ask:** Why do you think Jacob was nervous about seeing Esau again? What had he done?

**Say:** Let's turn to the Bible to find out what happened next.

## Read:

'Jacob told the messengers, "Give this message to my master Esau: 'This is what Jacob, your servant, says: I have lived with Laban and have remained there until now. I have cattle, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants. I send this message to you and ask you to accept us.'"

'The messengers returned to Jacob and said, "We went to your brother Esau. He is coming to meet you. And he has 400 men with him."

'Then Jacob was very afraid and worried. He divided the people who were with him into two camps. He also divided all the flocks, herds and camels into two camps. Jacob thought, "Esau might come and destroy one camp. But the other camp can run away and be saved."

— (Genesis 32:4-8 ICB)

## Discuss:

- Why do you think Jacob called Esau his 'master'? What message was he trying to give Esau?
- What does Jacob ask Esau to do?
- How does the Bible describe Jacob's reaction when he discovered that Esau was on his way with 400 men?
- What does he do to protect the people and animals?
- Do you think Jacob is right to feel this afraid? If so, why?

## Read:

'Jacob said, "God of my father Abraham! God of my father Isaac! Lord, you told me to return to my country and my family. You said that you would do good to me. I am not worthy of the kindness and continual goodness you have shown me. The first time I travelled across the Jordan River, I had only my walking stick. But now I own enough to have two camps. Please save me from my brother Esau. I am afraid he will come and kill all of us, even the mothers with the children. You said to me, 'I will do good to you. I will make your children as many as the sand of the seashore. There will be too many to count.'"

'Jacob stayed there for the night. He prepared a gift for Esau from what he had with him.'

— (Genesis 32:9-13 ICB)

'[Jacob sent servants to meet Esau and told each of them to] say, "Your servant Jacob is coming behind us." Jacob thought, "If I send this gift ahead of me, maybe Esau will forgive me. Then when I see him, perhaps he will accept me." So Jacob sent the gift to Esau. But Jacob stayed that night in the camp.'

— (Genesis 32:20-21 ICB)

## Discuss:

- What prayer did Jacob pray to God?
- How did Jacob live out our memory verse for this month?
- Say:** Jacob stayed in the camp overnight, and a very strange thing happened. Watch the clip to recap the story and find out more.

## Video

*God's Story: Jacob Wrestles* by Crossroads Kids' Club (3 mins 49 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zIbU866z6A&t=2s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zIbU866z6A&t=2s)

💬 **Say:** Jacob wrestled with God all night as he was determined to have God's blessing. Having to face how much he let down his big brother, Jacob turned to God for forgiveness and guidance. God gave Jacob a new name – Israel. Jacob was no longer afraid and turned to be with his brother.

## Action It

💬 **Say:** Your task is to create a modern-day version of the story of Jacob and Esau. It needs to:

- describe how the two family members or friends let each other down,
- what happened while they were away, and
- how they became friends again.

💬 **Say:** In your story it is essential that you show your main character talking to God about what they are facing. You can choose to create your story however you like. It could be a storyboard or film plot, or you could even act it out. Make sure your story has a clear message of the importance of forgiveness.

Give the children time and resources to create their story, reminding them what it needs to include. You may want to jot down the main points on a flip chart for them to refer to. When they have completed their stories, they can share them together and discuss how each one tackles the topic of forgiveness.

## Pray It

💬 **Say:** We have been following Jacob's story over the past few months and we have seen him overcome many difficult circumstances. Some of these situations were caused by his own mistakes, but others were as a result of people he thought he could trust letting him down.

💬 **Say:** In today's story Jacob finally finds some peace and restores his relationship with his brother. There are lots of people in our world who face challenging circumstances, and today we are going to take some time to pray for them.

Using a large sheet of paper, ask the children to write down (or draw) people and situations that need prayer. You can play the song 'My Prayer for You' as the children jot down their prayers. Bring this time to a close by praying through the children's suggestions.

## Listen

'My Prayer for You' (official lyric video) by Alisa Turner (4 mins 4 secs)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=hj\\_OpviGkks](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hj_OpviGkks)

You may want to use the lyrics of the chorus from the song as a final prayer.

**'May God give you eyes to see he's still greater,  
Courage to rise and believe he's able.  
May God be your peace in the fire you're walking through.  
This is my prayer now,  
This is my prayer for you.'**

— Michael Farren/Jessica Campbell

## Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

# Explore It

## IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

JUNE  
SESSION 02

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## FOR ME

## TOGETHER



### Pray

Think of the people you know who are facing a difficult time. Create a prayer sheet to remind you to pray for them regularly. As you pray, listen to the song we used in our Explore It session this week.

'My Prayer for You' (official lyric video) by Alisa Turner

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=hj\\_0pvlGkks](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hj_0pvlGkks)



### Bake

Share the memory verse for this month with the people at home.

Ask the people at home to help you to make some funfetti heart biscuits to remind you to trust in God with all your heart.

[realfood.tesco.com/recipes/funfetti-heart-biscuits.html](http://realfood.tesco.com/recipes/funfetti-heart-biscuits.html)



### Song for the week

'Proverbs 3:5-6 – Trust' (hand motions)  
by Seeds Family Worship

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=teCBUFF7zvA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=teCBUFF7zvA)



### Memory verse

**'Trust in the Lord with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
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and he will make your paths straight.'**

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### KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

*Kids Alive!* The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

