

Jacob's New Name

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 32–33

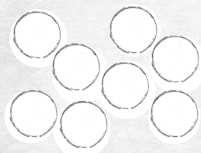
MAIN POINT: God changed Jacob's name to Israel.

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 26:24

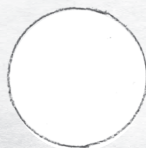
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop God's plan.

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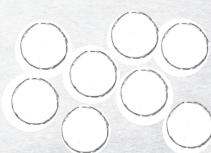
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Leader BIBLE STUDY

Jacob found himself stuck between a rock and a hard place. After stealing his older brother's blessing, he fled his home to escape Esau's anger. He spent time with his uncle Laban, got married, and fathered many children. Overall, Jacob prospered, but his time with his uncle Laban did not end well. Laban's sons accused Jacob of taking their father's wealth.

God told Jacob to leave, and Jacob did not hesitate. He gathered his family and all of his possessions and headed home to Canaan with Laban in pursuit. But uncertainty awaited Jacob in his homeland. His brother Esau was there. The last time Jacob saw Esau, Esau wanted to kill him.

God had reaffirmed to Jacob the promise He gave Abraham and Isaac, and He had promised to be with Jacob. But with Laban behind him and Esau before him, how could Jacob possibly survive?

Jacob tried to prepare for his meeting with Esau. He strategically divided his family into separate groups. He sent gifts ahead of them to appease Esau. That night, Jacob anxiously awaited word from Esau, and that is when he encountered the Lord.

Did Jacob win the wrestling match? Was he stronger than the Lord? The victory was ironic; Jacob did not win by strength (God proved His power by crippling Jacob with just a touch) but by confessing his dependence on God's blessing. Jacob had nowhere else to turn. He could not succeed by his own strength. Jacob held onto God and would not let go. God poured out His grace on Jacob. He blessed Jacob and gave him a new name, Israel. From Jacob's descendants—from the nation of Israel—God would bring into the world His Son, Jesus.

Jesus' death and resurrection provided sinful people with the way to be adopted into God's family. When we are adopted into God's family, we also receive a new name: children of God (John 1:12).



Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.

The BIBLE STORY

Jacob's New Name

Genesis 32–33

God made a covenant, or promise, with Abraham. Then He told the promise to Abraham's son, Isaac. Now God had a plan for Isaac's son, Jacob. **God wanted to bless Jacob** with the same promise.

Jacob had an older brother. His name was Esau. Esau was angry that his younger brother, Jacob, would get the blessing and not him. Jacob ran away from Esau, and he did not go home for many years. Then God said to Jacob, "It's time to go home."

Jacob began the trip home. He took with him his family and everything he owned. **Jacob was afraid to see his brother Esau again.** What if Esau was still angry? Jacob sent messengers ahead to tell Esau that he was coming home. The messengers came back. "Esau is coming to meet you!" they said. "He has a big group of people with him!"

Oh, no! Jacob was very afraid! Was Esau coming to hurt him? Would all those people hurt Jacob and his family? **Jacob made a plan to stay safe. He told part of his family to go one way, and the other part to go another way. If Esau fought one group, maybe the other group could get away.**

Then Jacob prayed. He asked God to keep His promise. "Please rescue me from my brother," he prayed.

Then Jacob sent gifts to Esau: many animals like goats, sheep, camels, cows, bulls, and donkeys. Jacob hoped Esau would be happy with the gifts. Maybe then Esau would forgive him.

That night, a man appeared to Jacob. (The man was God!) The man wrestled with Jacob all night. Jacob did

not want to give up, so the man hurt Jacob's hip.

"Let Me go. The sun is coming up," the man said.

But Jacob did not let Him go. "I will not let You go unless You bless me," Jacob said.

"Your name was Jacob," said the man, "but now your name will be Israel. You wrestled with God and with men, and you have won."

The man blessed Jacob. The sun came up, and Jacob limped because his hip was hurt.

Now Jacob saw Esau and the big group of people coming toward him. Jacob went to meet Esau. He bowed down to show respect. **Esau ran to Jacob and hugged him. Esau was not angry anymore!**

Esau went back to his home, and Jacob traveled a little farther. **Jacob** bought land for his family to live on. He **was finally home in the land God had promised to give him.**

Christ Connection: God changed Jacob's life and gave him a new name, Israel. Because Jesus died and was raised from the dead, He made the way for us to be adopted into God's family. When we are adopted into God's family, we get a new name, too—children of God. (John 1:12)



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET MORE!**

Invite preschoolers to check out this week's devotionals to discover that Jacob generously gave gifts to Esau because God had blessed Jacob and had given him grace. (Gen. 33:11) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: Jacob's New Name

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 32–33

MAIN POINT: God changed Jacob's name to Israel.

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 26:24

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop God's plan.

Welcome

- "Trustin' God" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert download
- favorite toys

Play the unit theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- "What Does Not Belong?" activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Invite preschoolers to draw an *X* over the animal in each row that is not like the others.

SAY • Good job deciding which animal did not belong.

In today's Bible story, Jacob sent animals like these as a gift to his brother Esau. Jacob was afraid to see Esau because he had taken something that belonged to Esau many years before. Let's find out if Esau was still angry.



Sing "Dem Bones"

Lead preschoolers in singing "Dem Bones" while using their hands to touch the different body parts mentioned. If you are unfamiliar with the song, search online for the lyrics and tune. Modify lyrics to fit your preschoolers.

SAY • In our Bible story today, a man appeared to Jacob

one night. The man wrestled with Jacob all night. Jacob did not want to give up, so the man hurt Jacob's hip. This was not a regular man who wrestled with Jacob. Let's find out who He was.

Play four corners

Write the numbers one through four on four separate sheets of paper and post them in the four corners of your classroom. Choose one preschooler to be *It*. *It* must close her eyes and count to 10. While she is counting, the other preschoolers must move to one of the four corners. When she reaches 10, she must call out a number between one and four before opening her eyes. The children in that corner, are no longer in the game, but join her in counting to ten. *It* is still the one who calls out the corner number. When four or less preschoolers are left, they must all go to different corners. Play until one child is left.

SAY • Playing four corners sent all of us in different directions. In today's Bible story, Jacob sent his family in different directions. He told part of his family to go one way, and the other part to go another way. Jacob did this to keep his family safe. Let's find out why Jacob was worried about his family's safety.

Transition to Bible study

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Invite preschoolers to Bible study in groups calling several children at a time.

• countdown video
(optional)

Large Group LEADER

SESSION TITLE: Jacob's New Name

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 32–33

MAIN POINT: God changed Jacob's name to Israel.

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 26:24

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop God's plan.

Introduce the Bible story

SAY • Have you ever done something wrong to someone and made him angry? When people are angry with us, sometimes we are afraid to see them. In today's Bible story, Jacob was afraid to see his brother Esau. Jacob was afraid Esau would still be mad at him for stealing Esau's blessing.

Watch or tell the Bible story

Open your Bible to Genesis 32–33.

SAY • Is there any book more important than the Bible? No, the Bible is most important because it has God's words in it. The stories in the Bible really happened. Today's Bible story comes from the first book of the Bible, Genesis.

Show the Bible story video "Jacob's New Name," or tell the Bible story in your own words using the script provided. Use the bolded version for younger preschoolers.

Talk about the Bible story

SAY • The night before Jacob saw his brother, he wrestled with God. **God changed Jacob's name to Israel.** Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline or big

- Bible
- "Jacob's New Name" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

story circle as you ask the following review questions:

1. Why was Jacob afraid to go back home? (*Esau might still be angry.*)
2. Who was the man Jacob wrestled with all night? (*God*)
3. What part of Jacob's body did God injure when they wrestled? (*his hip*)
4. What new name did God give Jacob? (*Israel*)
5. Was Esau still angry with Jacob? (*no*)

Big picture question

SAY • Many years before, God made a covenant with Jacob's grandfather Abraham. God wanted to bless Jacob with the same promise. Our big picture question is, ***What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop God's plan.*** God used everything that happened to Jacob and everything Jacob did to work out His plan.

• Big Picture Question Poster

Key passage

Open your Bible to Genesis 26:24. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song "I Am With You."

• Key Passage Poster
• "I Am With You" song

SAY • Jacob was afraid of Esau, but God was with Jacob. **God changed Jacob's name to Israel.** God gives us a new name too. Because Jesus died and was raised from the dead, He made the way for us to be adopted into God's family. When we trust in Jesus, God calls us His children.

Transition to small groups

Small Group ACTIVITIES

SESSION TITLE: Jacob's New Name

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 32–33

MAIN POINT: God changed Jacob's name to Israel.

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 26:24

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop God's plan.

Play “Jacob, Jacob, Israel”



Play this version of “Duck, Duck, Goose.” Form a circle on the floor. Select one preschooler to be *It*. *It* will walk outside the circle, gently tapping the head of each child while saying, “Jacob.” When *It* taps a child's head and says, “Israel,” that child must jump up and walk quickly around the circle trying to tag *It* before *It* reaches where he was sitting in the circle. If he is successful, *It* remains the same. If he is unsuccessful, he becomes the new *It*. Play as time allows.

SAY • God changed Jacob's name to Israel. God changed Jacob's life and gave him a new name, Israel. Jesus died and was raised from the dead to make the way for us to be adopted into God's family. When we are adopted into God's family, He calls us His children.

Play “What's their name?”



Invite preschoolers to sit as a group. Share statements that describe one of the children in your group and invite children to guess which child you are describing. When a child is ready to guess she must stand up and wait until you call on her. Then she may call out her guess. Continue calling on guessers until one is correct. The first child to

guess correctly gets to whisper to you the name of a child they would like you to describe next.

SAY • Names are important. The name Jacob meant trickster, and he was a sneaky guy! **God changed Jacob's name to Israel.** God changed Jacob's life and gave him a new name, Israel. When we turn from sin and trust in Jesus, we get a new name, too—children of God.

Thumb-wrestle

Allow preschoolers to take turns thumb-wrestling a leader. Both the preschooler and leader should place their thumbs in mid-air, facing one another. Then interlock each other's right hand fingertips. Bow thumbs to each other. Wrestle by trying to catch the other's thumb. The leader should let the preschoolers win.

SAY • Jacob wrestled with God. Jacob would not let Him go until God blessed him. **God changed Jacob's name to Israel.** God changed Jacob's life too. He wasn't afraid of Esau anymore! Because Jesus died and was raised from the dead, He made the way for us to be adopted into God's family. When we are adopted into God's family, God takes care of us too.



Spell with magnetic letters

Print *Jacob* and *Israel* on two separate strips of paper. Tape each strip to a cookie sheet. Provide magnetic letters. Encourage preschoolers to search through the letters to find those contained in the name Jacob or Israel and place them on the cookie sheet.

SAY • **God changed Jacob's name to Israel.** Because Jesus died and was raised from the dead, He made the way

- cookie sheets
- marker
- paper strips, 2
- tape
- magnetic letters

for us to be adopted into God's family. When we are adopted into God's family, we get a new name, too—children of God.

Make a “Children of God” banner

- sheet of long paper
- washable paint
- paintbrushes
- smocks
- wipes for cleanup
- marker
- tape

On a large sheet of banner paper, write *Children of God* in large letters. Place a smock on a preschooler and use paint and a paintbrush to cover her hand with her preferred color of paint. Assist her in making her handprint on the banner. Use wipes to clean up. Allow the banner to dry and display it where preschoolers may see.

SAY • When Jacob wrestled with God, Jacob said he would not let God go unless He blessed him. **God changed Jacob's name to Israel.** God changed Jacob's life and gave him a new name, Israel. God can change our lives, too. He can help us to turn away from sin and follow Him. Because Jesus died and was raised from the dead, He made the way for us to be adopted into God's family. When we are adopted into God's family, we get a new name, too—children of God.

Snack

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Serve alphabet cookies or crackers for snack. Encourage preschoolers to find a *J* and *I*. Remind preschoolers that Jacob wrestled with God, and **God changed Jacob's name to Israel**.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert download
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

Transition

When a child finishes her snack, guide her to throw away any trash. She may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page and invite preschoolers to draw a picture of themselves or write their name. Remind children that **God changed Jacob's name to Israel** and when we are adopted into God's family, He calls us children of God.

SAY • God, thank You that You are willing to change us and give us a new name just like You did for Jacob. Thank You for sending Jesus to die for our sin and be raised from the dead so we can be part of Your family.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- books and puzzles
- crayons
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschool

Journal Page

God the Covenant-Keeper

Key Passage: Genesis 26:24

Big Picture Question: What can stop God's plan?
Nothing can stop God's plan.

Session 1: The Stolen Blessing

Genesis 25:27-34; 27:1-45

Jacob took what belonged to his brother.

Session 2: Jacob's New Name

Genesis 32-33

God changed Jacob's name to Israel.

Session 3: Joseph Sent to Egypt

Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1-41:57

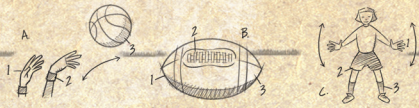
God sent Joseph to Egypt.

Session 4: Joseph's Dreams Came True

Genesis 42:1-46:34; 50:15-21

God sent Joseph to Egypt to save his family.

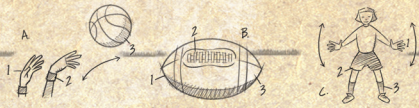




**“I am the God
of your father
Abraham. Do not
be afraid, for I am
with you.”**

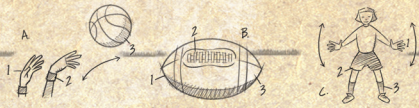
Genesis 26:24





I am the God of
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Genesis 26:24

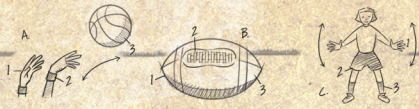




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Genesis 26:24





**“I am the God of
Abraham your
father. Fear not,
for I am with you.”**

Genesis 26:24



God changed
Jacob's name
to Israel.





What Does Not Belong?

DOWNLOAD THE
TGP FAMILY APP

INSTRUCTIONS: Jacob sent Esau animals as gifts. Draw an *X* over the animal in each row that is not like the others.



KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 26:24

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

- What can stop God's plan?
Nothing can stop God's plan.

BIBLE STORY:

JACOB'S NEW NAME

- God told Jacob it was time to go home.
- Jacob was afraid to see his brother Esau.
- Jacob wrestled with God, and God changed his name to Israel.

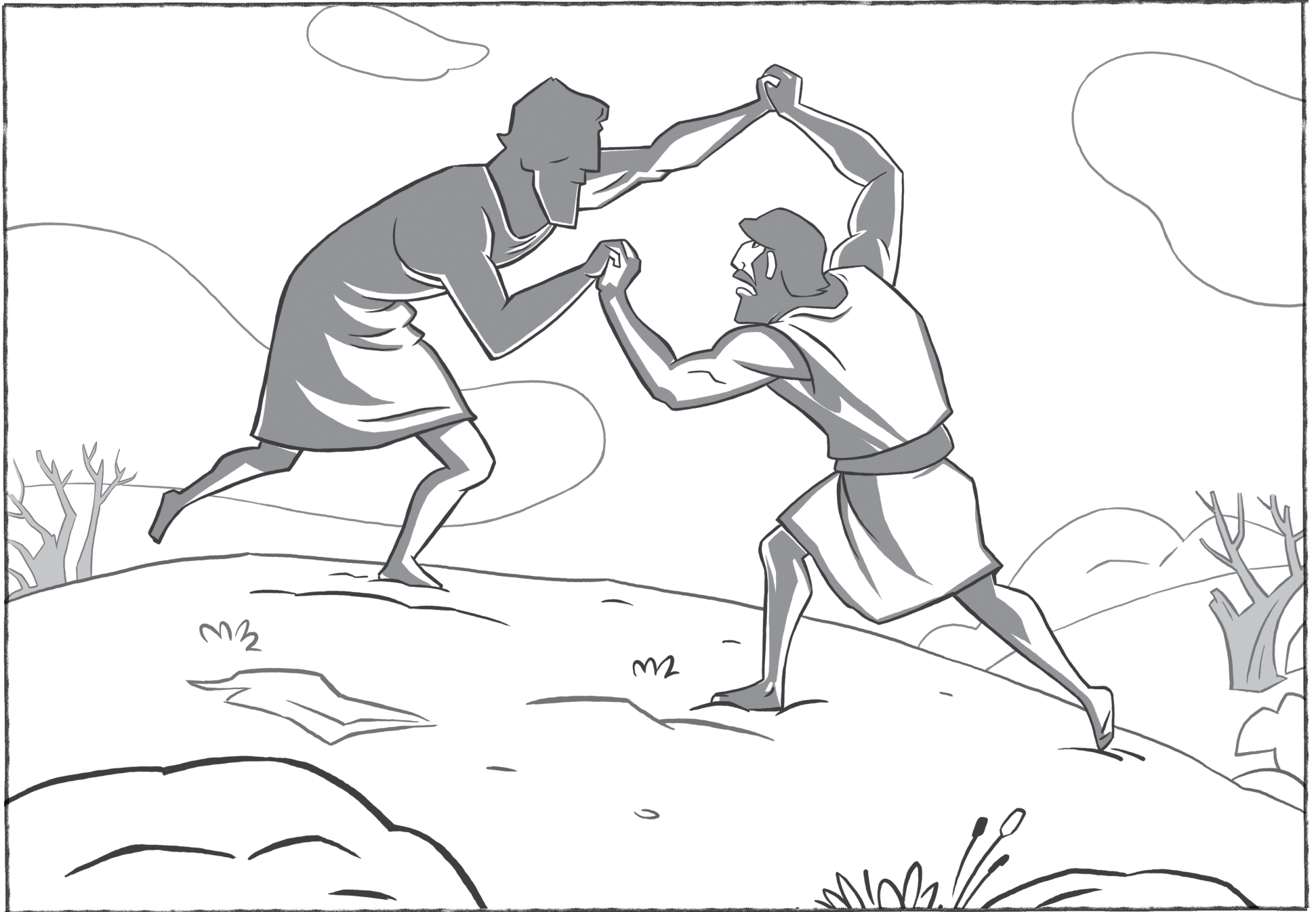
FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

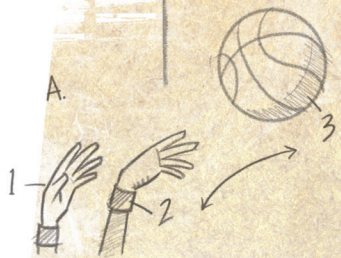
- Jacob was afraid Esau was still angry with him. Tell about a time you had a disagreement with a family member and how you forgave each other.
- Jacob prayed, asking God to rescue him from his brother. What is something that scares you? Talk to God about it.

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

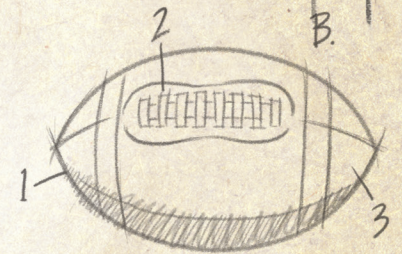
- Host a family "tickle fight" or "thumb war." Remember Jacob would not let God go unless He blessed him.
- Go further: Look online to discover the meaning of each family member's name. Discuss if the name is a good fit.

Preschool Activity Pages
Unit 3, Session 2





What can stop God's plan?



**What can stop
God's plan?**

Nothing can stop
God's plan.

