

HEROES

OF THE

FAITH

Ordinary Men and Women . . .
Super Ordinary Power

6

JACOB WRESTLES WITH GOD

HEROES OF THE FAITH CURRICULUM—2012
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Arlington † Metroplex
Taking church to the people



JACOB WRESTLES WITH GOD

Memory Verse:

I cling to You; Your strong right hand holds me securely. Psalm 63:8 (NIV)

Lesson Goals:

#1 - Understand how ordinary Jacob was

#2 - Discover what faith led Jacob to do

#3 - Desire to let God do extraordinary things in the life of the ordinary student

Audience:

Young, un-churched learners

Adaptable for all ages, including adults (See **For more training** on Activities page)

Scripture to Study:

Genesis 25:19-33:20 (as background)

Genesis 32:22-30



JACOB WRESTLES WITH GOD

Genesis 32:22-30

Who can tell me what a hero is? A hero is someone who is courageous and brave and compassionate. There are heroes and heroines in the Bible. All of them are brave and courageous and more, but not in the way you would expect.

Our hero: Jacob

His Heroic Feat: Clings to God

Clinging to God may not sound very heroic, but let's look at the facts and see what you think when you have heard the whole story!

In our last lesson, we saw how Abraham was a hero because he believed in God. Who was Abraham's son? Isaac. The Bible tells us that Isaac married a woman named Rebekah and they had two sons, twins! While the twins were still growing inside of their mother, Rebekah, they struggled with each other. God explained to Rebekah that these two sons would be the leaders of two completely different nations and that they would be divided. One of them would be stronger than the other, but the oldest would serve the youngest. Isaac and Rebekah named their sons Esau and Jacob.

God had a plan for how the older would one day serve the younger, but Jacob, with the help of his mother, Rebekah, took matters into his own hands. Jacob traded a bowl of stew for his brother's birthright, the rights of the oldest son. Jacob also tricked his father, Isaac, into giving him the blessing due Esau. Esau was so furious that he planned to kill his brother Jacob. Rebekah overheard these plans and warned Jacob. So Jacob went far away and stayed with his mother's family.

One evening, as Jacob was traveling, God spoke to him in a dream. God reminded Jacob that His promise to Jacob's grandfather, Abraham, and his father, Isaac, was also for Jacob. The land of Canaan would be his and his descendants would be as numerous as sand in the desert. God also promised that Jacob would one day return home. Jacob woke up and set up a stone there as a reminder of God's faithfulness.

Jacob continued traveling until he arrived in the land of his mother's family. There he married and had twelve sons and a daughter. God blessed Jacob not only with children, but with animals as well. The more God blessed Jacob, the angrier his father-in-law, Laban, got. Laban mistreated Jacob. And then, God spoke to Jacob. "He said, 'Go back to your father's land and to your relatives. I will be with you.'" (Genesis 31:3 NIV) Jacob obeyed God. He left without even telling Laban.

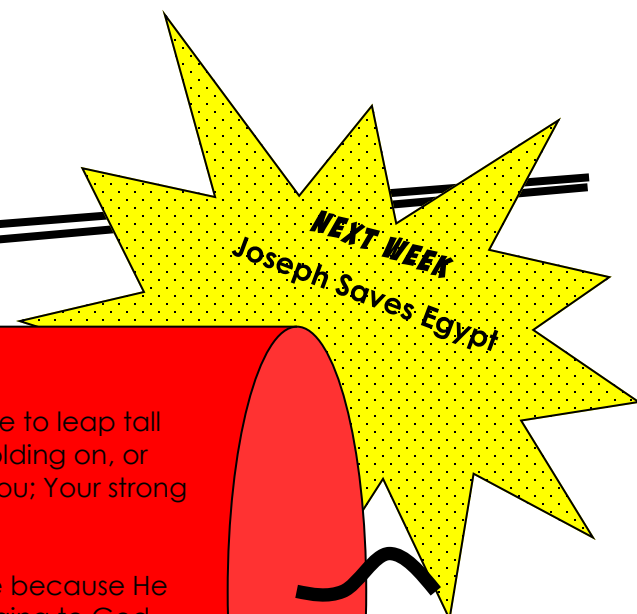
Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to speak to his brother Esau, hoping for Esau's kindness. He sent goats, sheep, camels, cows and donkeys with them as a gift for Esau. When Jacob heard that Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men, though, he expected the worse and planned for it. Jacob sent his family across the Jabbok River and spent the

rest of the night alone. Jacob worried one minute and then remembered that it was God who was sending him back home. God had promised to give him success. Then fearful Jacob prayed for God to save him from Esau and remembered that God had said, "I will certainly give you success. I will make your children as many as the grains of sand on the seashore. People will not be able to count them." (Genesis 32:12 NIV)

And then something unusual happened. "A man came and fought with Jacob until just before daybreak." (Genesis 32:24b CEV) They wrestled and struggled all night. "When the man saw that he could not win, he struck Jacob on the hip and threw it out of joint." (Genesis 32:25 CEV) The man told Jacob to let him go, but Jacob clung to him. Jacob held on, telling the man he wouldn't let go until he blessed him. The man asked Jacob his name and then told him, "Your name will not be Jacob anymore. Instead, it will be Israel. You have struggled with God and with men. And you have won." (Genesis 32:28 NIV)

Jacob asked for the man's name, but didn't get it. He did get his blessing, though. Jacob named that place Peniel, or "face of God," because he said, "I saw God face to face. But I'm still alive!" (Genesis 32:30 NIV)

Jacob limped away from that place and reunited with his brother, who was glad to see him. God was with Jacob and he blessed him and his family, and all twelve of his sons. Did you know that those twelve sons grew into a great nation? What nation is it? It was named after the new name God gave their father, Israel.



YOU CAN BE A HERO, TOO!

When you live a life of faith in Jesus Christ, you don't have to leap tall buildings to be a hero. Jacob clung to God. Are you holding on, or clinging, to God? Our memory verse says, "I cling to You; Your strong right hand holds me securely." (Psalm 63:8 NIV)

That begins with a relationship with God which is possible because He sent His one and only son, Jesus, to die for your sins. Clinging to God happens when you trust Him completely and stick close to Him.

Did you know that once you choose to follow Him, God holds on to you? Read John 10:27-30.

PRE-SCHOOL!

LESSON

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In our last lesson, we saw how Abraham was a hero because he believed in God. Who was Abraham's son? Isaac. The Bible tells us that Isaac married a woman named Rebekah and they had two sons, twins! Isaac and Rebekah named their sons Esau and Jacob.

When they grew up, Jacob traveled away from home. One evening, as Jacob was traveling, God spoke to him in a dream. God reminded Jacob that His promise to Jacob's grandfather, Abraham, and his father, Isaac, was also for Jacob. The land of Canaan would be his and his descendants would be as numerous as sand in the desert. God also promised that Jacob would one day return home.

Jacob continued traveling until he arrived in the land of his mother's family. There he married and had twelve sons and a daughter. God blessed Jacob not only with children, but with animals as well. The more God blessed Jacob, the angrier his father-in-law, Laban, got. Laban mistreated Jacob. And then, God spoke to Jacob. "He said, 'Go back to your father's land and to your relatives. I will be with you.'" (Genesis 31:3 NIV) Jacob obeyed God.

While Jacob was on his way home, something unusual happened. "A man came and fought with Jacob until just before daybreak." (Genesis 32:24b CEV) They wrestled and struggled all night. "When the man saw that he could not win, he struck Jacob on the hip and threw it out of joint." (Genesis 32:25 CEV) The man told Jacob to let him go, but Jacob clung to him. Jacob held on, telling the man he wouldn't let go until he blessed him. The man changed Jacob's name to Israel. It means, "You have struggled with God and with men. And you have won." (Genesis 32:28 NIV) The man blessed Jacob and he named that place "face of God." Jacob knew that the man he wrestled with had been God!

Jacob left that place and returned home. God was with Jacob and his family, and all twelve of his sons. Did you know that those twelve sons grew into a great nation? What nation is it? It was named after the new name God gave their father, Israel.

ACTIVITIES!

- Memory Verse Activity - Draw a large hand shape, of the right hand, on construction paper. Print the memory verse on the hand.
- Find the nation of Israel on a map or globe.
- If you haven't started a "Heroes Banner" do so. On a long strip of brown craft paper, write the heading "Heroes of the Faith." Add each hero, being sure to make note of his heroic feat. (Be sure that you allow enough space for all 52 heroes!)
- Listen to Michael Card's "Asleep on Holy Ground."
- Sing "Have Thine Thy Own Way," or other songs related to the lesson.
- **For more training:** At the end of Jacob's journey, when he bought land and settled it, he built an altar (following the example of God and Abel and Noah and his grandfather Abraham.) What did Jacob name that altar? Look up Genesis 33:18-20. El Elohe Israel means "God, the true God of Israel." Or more specifically it means "Mighty God" or "Mighty Hero." Discuss how God is our Mighty Hero!
- **For more training:** Discuss Jacob wrestling with God. Many think professional wrestlers are something. We couldn't imagine getting in the ring with them much less with God! Jacob wrestled with God. Different translations say that Jacob wrestled with a man or an angel, but Jacob's response in 32:30 makes it clear that this was no ordinary man. Many Bible scholars believe this to be Jesus in a body before He was born as a baby in Bethlehem.

I cling to You;
Your strong
right hand
holds me
securely.

Psalm 63:8

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Ordinary Men and Women . . .
Super Ordinary Power

HERO IN TRAINING

Jacob Wrestles With God

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HERO TRAINING!

Scripture: Genesis 32:22-30

Memory verse:

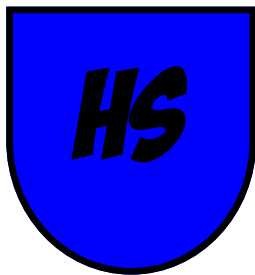
I cling to You; Your strong right hand holds me securely. Psalm 63:8 (NIV)

Our Hero: _____

What did our hero do that was so heroic? _____

What can you do to be a **Hero of the Faith**? _____

What power do Heroes of the Faith possess?



Do you have the power? _____

Jacob wrestled with the mightiest of heroes. Read Genesis 33:18-20.

When he built an altar, what did he name it? _____

HIDDEN MESSAGE!

Can you crack the code to find the Hidden Message?
 Finish numbering the code key. Then, crack the code by using the code key and entering the correct letter in each space.

26	25	24	23	22							15								6							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	

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 18 24 15 18 13 20 7 12 2 12 6

—
 2 12 6 9 8 7 9 12 13 20 9 18 20 19 7 19 26 13 23

—
 19 12 15 23 8 14 22 8 22 24 6 9 22 15 2

— — — — — 63 : 8
 11 8 26 15 14

WORD

SEARCH!

B D C N F F E R I N G H O
H O H A R A S N I A C C A
A G P B E P B E F L O U V
C E S I M O R P S U E M O
L E Y A C C A N D L A S I
I S A A C M P A T A W A D
N C J A W S I S G B D E E
G E D M R A E S D R C G D
T D E R D R D H E A O N E
O S I S W N I E V H F I V
R E L A U G H T P A O S I
T R U N T E D G I M S S L
E T X D H R R E L T I E G
F N O I T A I S R A E L C
W A L K E D W I B R G B E

- Abraham

- Isaac

- Jacob

- promise

- wrestle

- cling to

- blessing

- Israel

- limped away

HIDDEN MESSAGE!

Answer Page

Can you crack the code to find the Hidden Message?
 Finish numbering the code key. Then, crack the code by using the
 code key and entering the correct letter in each space.

26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

I C L I N G I O Y O U ;
 18 24 15 18 13 20 7 12 2 12 6

Y O U R S I R O N G R I G H I H A N D
 2 12 6 9 8 7 9 12 13 20 9 18 20 19 7 19 26 13 23

H O L D S M E S E C U R E L Y .
 19 12 15 23 8 14 22 8 22 24 6 9 22 15 2

P S A L M 63 : 8
 11 8 26 15 14

WORD

SEARCH!

Answer Page

B	D	C	N	F	F	E	R	I	N	G	H	O
H	O	H	A	R	A	S	N	I	A	C	C	A
A	G	P	B	E	P	B	E	F	L	O	U	V
C	E	S	I	M	O	R	P	S	U	E	M	O
L	E	Y	A	C	C	A	N	D	L	A	S	I
I	S	A	A	C	M	P	A	T	A	W	A	D
N	C	J	A	W	S	I	S	G	B	D	E	E
G	E	D	M	R	A	E	S	D	R	C	G	D
T	D	E	R	D	R	D	H	E	A	O	N	E
O	S	I	S	W	N	I	E	V	H	F	I	V
R	E	L	A	U	G	H	T	P	A	O	S	I
T	R	U	N	T	E	D	G	I	M	S	S	L
E	T	X	D	H	R	R	E	L	T	I	E	G
F	N	O	I	T	A	I	S	R	A	E	L	C
W	A	L	K	E	D	W	I	B	R	G	B	E

- Abraham

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- limped away