



Date: _____

Series: Even in Tough Times
Fall Year 2, Lesson 24

Esau Forgives Jacob

Bible Event: Genesis 32:1, 17-18, 33:1-9

Take Home Point: *EVEN IN TOUGH TIMES – *God helps me forgive.*

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson. The leader will say the first part of the phrase (CAPS). The children respond with the second part of the phrase (*italics*).

Jesus Link: We can forgive others because Jesus forgives US.

What kids will learn about God in this worship experience:

- Children will learn that forgiveness means not wanting to get even. When we forgive someone, we show them love instead. That is what God has done for us. Instead of giving us what we deserve as sinners, God shows us love and forgiveness instead. Since God does that for us, we should do the same for others. Kids will take home the point: ***EVEN IN TOUGH TIMES – *God helps me forgive.***
- Children will respond to God's love as they pray to him, thanking him for loving them and giving them Jesus. They will offer him their songs of worship, their offerings, and their actions of love as they actively learn God's word.



Welcome Zone: (15-20 minutes)

Purpose: While kids arrive, give them a simple learning readiness activity that requires minimal supervision. This might include a video, games, blocks, or puzzles.

Video Suggestion: Your choice of video

Activity Suggestion: Blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons.



Opening Worship: (10-15 minutes)

Children can bring forward the cross, candles, Bible, offering plate, and treasure box. The treasure box contains the props used to tell or dramatize the Bible event. Open with a simple prayer, having the children repeat after you. Collect offering and talk about how God will use it.

Praise Songs:

Choose two or three songs and list them here.

Bible Event: A Visit From The Traveler

The traveler is a character costumed in traveling gear: backpack, walking stick, hiking hat, and shoes. He explains that he has traveled all around the world discovering wonderful deeds that God has done. He tells of an adventure he just discovered in God's Word as he pulls the Bible out of his backpack. As he tells the Bible event, he pulls out objects from his backpack that illustrate the story.

Here is a true event from the Bible. You have been talking about Jacob and how he stole his brother Esau's special blessing. Jacob then had to run away because he was afraid his brother might kill him! (Show a bow and arrow or rock or other prop to represent Esau's anger.) Today's event is about Jacob coming back home to see his brother. Do you think Esau could forgive Jacob for stealing something like that? Let's see.

Jacob knew that he needed to go home, but he was still afraid of Esau. But God sent some angels down to Jacob to tell him he didn't need to be afraid. That made Jacob feel a little better. So Jacob started on his journey and took everything he owned with him. He took all of his animals and servants and his family. He sent the animals first. There were cows and sheep and camels and donkeys in great big herds. (Show stuffed animals or animal puppets.) After the animals, Jacob sent his servants. In the very back of the group, Jacob kept his family and all of his children. They walked and walked to get back home to see Esau.

Finally Esau saw all of these animals coming! He didn't know whose they were! When the animals passed, Esau saw the servants coming. He stopped them and asked, "Whose animals are these?" The servants said, "They belong to your brother Jacob, and he wants to give them all to you as a gift." Esau could not believe it!

Then, in the distance, Jacob was coming. He could see Esau! Esau had four hundred men with him! Jacob was very afraid. They were getting closer and closer! Finally they saw each other. Jacob got on the ground and bowed down seven times in front of his brother. (Bow down seven times.) He wanted Esau to know that he was sorry. And do you know what happened next? Esau dropped his bow and arrow (Throw bow and arrow on the ground.) and went running up to Jacob. Then he gave him a huge hug and kiss! It had been many, many years since they had seen each other, and Esau had forgiven Jacob for stealing his blessing. He was just glad to have his brother back again!

Jacob kept trying to give Esau gifts, (Show small gift-wrapped box.) but Esau didn't want them. When you forgive someone, you don't want to get even, and you don't want a bunch of special gifts either. You just want to be happy that everything is forgiven and to get along again. Esau forgave Jacob! God forgives us! We should forgive others, too. Remember: *EVEN IN TOUGH TIMES – *God helps me forgive.*



Action Zones: (20-30 minutes)

Purpose: Children move at their leisure to the activities according to their interest. Adults are assigned to oversee each of the zones, watching for safety, assisting any activity, and helping the children connect to the lesson of the day. All zones are introduced at the beginning of Zone Time. Some suggested zones are included below. It is usually best to have all children go to the Snack Zone first. Sing a blessing song or say a snack prayer together before dismissing to the zones.

During the Zone Time, children may arrive from mid-service dismissal. If this is an option at your church, be prepared to welcome the children and invite them to choose a zone.

Snack Zone: Provide animal crackers (to represent the animals Jacob passed on his journey home) and Hershey's Hugs and Kisses candies (to represent how Esau greeted Jacob after so many years).

HEALTHY SNACK OPTION: Use a lemon to represent the unpleasant sourness of Jacob and Esau's relationship before forgiveness. Then use strawberries or peaches or any sweet fruit to represent their relationship after forgiveness.

Drama Zone: Provide costumes and have children re-enact the scene.

Puppet Zone: Let the children use puppets to explain to each other what it means to forgive.

Felt Zone: Use felt board materials to show the story of Esau forgiving Jacob from today's Bible event. (For example, use Lesson #19 "Jacob Returns Home" from *Betty Lukens Through the Bible in Felt*.)

Craft Zone: Give each child a small paper sack (or other small container of your choice) to decorate. Oriental Trading Company has inexpensive foam shapes of all kinds that could be used for decorating. Otherwise, use crayons, markers, glue, glitter, stickers, etc. Attach a pre-made label saying "The gift of forgiveness is sweet." Give each child several candy corn or other seasonal candies to put in the bag. The purpose of the bag is to spread 'forgiveness' to others over the next several days by giving out candy, rather than being angry at someone.

Play Zone: Split kids into two teams and have simple relay competitions. Have a small object, like a small ball, that the children have to pass to one another. The ball represents passing 'forgiveness' on to others.

Quiet Reading Zone: Basket of books. Include any that feature the story of Esau and Jacob.

Music Zone: Your choice of music.

Coloring Zone: “Esau forgives Jacob” coloring page

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Closing Worship: (20 minutes)

***Purpose:** As you empty the zones and clean up, begin the music so the children can start wandering over.*

Worship Songs:

Choose one or two songs and list them here.

Bible Application with Puppet Presentation:

***Purpose:** The puppet demonstrates the need that will be met in today's lesson. The scripts are not written verbatim, but give a story line in which the group leader can interact with the puppet.*

Bubba comes out on stage to say, "hi" and notices that the large group presenter looks kind of sad. Bubba asks what is wrong. The large group presenter tells Bubba that a friend of his said something mean to him and hurt his feelings and borrowed his favorite fishing pole and didn't bring it back. He feels really upset and he doesn't know what to do. The large group presenter asks Bubba what he would do.

Bubba thinks about it for a second and then remembers that today's Kids Church has been talking about forgiveness. He explains that forgiveness means not wanting to get even or hurt someone back, but to show them love instead. The large group presenter doesn't understand. Even though his friend did all of those mean things to him, he is still supposed to forgive him? Bubba thinks that's right. He asks the kids to help explain to the large group presenter if that's how forgiveness works.

After the kids help explain about forgiveness, the large group presenter wraps up. He knows that he will forgive his friend. He explains that even adults need to forgive others. The reason that we forgive is because God forgives us. He sent Jesus to die on the cross so our sins would be forgiven. That is how much God loves us. One way that we show God how much we love him back is by loving others. When we forgive others, we show God that we love him. Remember: ***EVEN IN TOUGH TIMES – God helps me forgive.**

Prayer Time:

***Purpose:** Allow children to contribute their own prayers. This will teach them to turn to God in both good times and in times of trouble. End with the Lord's Prayer.*

"Children Pray" Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Train Option:** Children line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone and speak their brief prayers of thanksgiving.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Children stand in a circle around one child sitting on a chair in the middle. All children in the circle will lay a hand on the child sitting in the chair as they say a prayer together.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and taps children on the head to stand and speak their prayer.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

Blessing:

May God, who is all around you,
pour his love upon you.

(Beginning at the bottom of the circle, slowly make a large circle with your hands. Finish by bringing your hands down and wiggling your fingers to resemble rain.)

And Jesus, his life a sacrifice,
walk right there beside you.

(Slowly make a large sign of the cross. Then move your hands out to the sides.)

And may God's Holy Spirit,
the one who lives inside you,

(Cross hands over your heart)

keep you strong,
comfort, lead and guide you!

(Move to a "strong man" position. Then cross your arms with your hands on corresponding upper arms to communicate comfort. Bring one hand forward with "lead" and the other with "guide" to complete the blessing.)

Song of Sending:

Choose one song and list it here.



Closing Zones:

Purpose: Children go to an activity zone such as, the coloring zone, quiet reading zone, and children's Christian music video zone, as they wait for their parents.

Supplies:

Welcome Zone:

- blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons

Opening Worship:

- Bible
- fake bow and arrow and/or rock
- stuffed animals or puppets (cows, donkeys, sheep, etc.)
- small gift-wrapped box

Action Zones:

Snack:

- animal crackers
- Hershey's Hugs and Kisses
- option: lemons and peaches and strawberries

Drama:

- costumes for Jacob, Esau
- headbands for Jacob's family

Craft:

- small paper sack for each child
- glue
- markers, crayons
- glue, glitter, stickers, etc
- *optional:* Oriental Trading Company foam shapes
- pre-made label "The gift of forgiveness is sweet"
- seasonal candy

Play:

- small balls

Quiet Reading:

- basket of books

Music:

- Your choice of music

Puppet:

- assorted puppets

Felt:

- materials to re-enact story

Closing Worship:

- Bubba, the puppet

Closing Zones:

- colored pencils
- paper
- basket of books