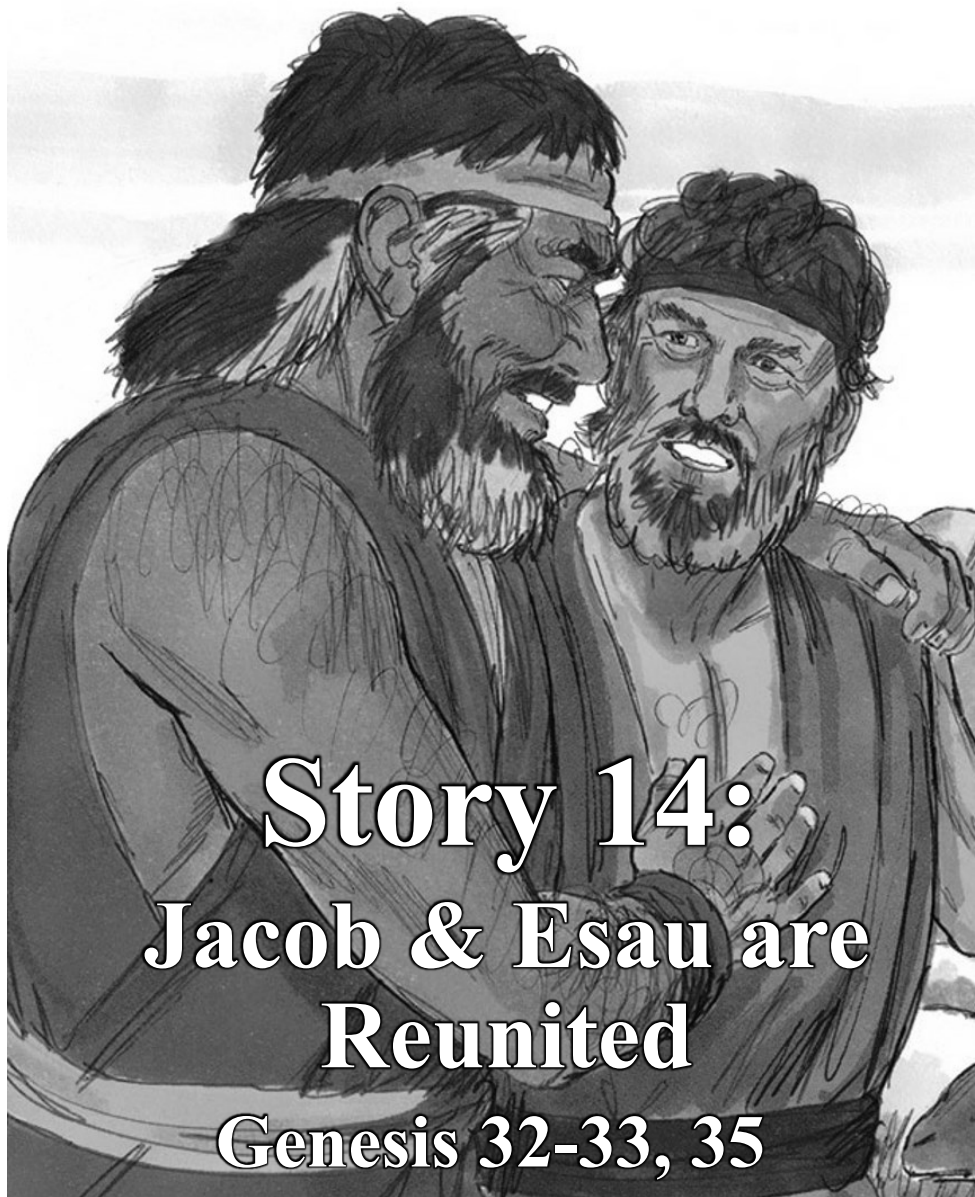
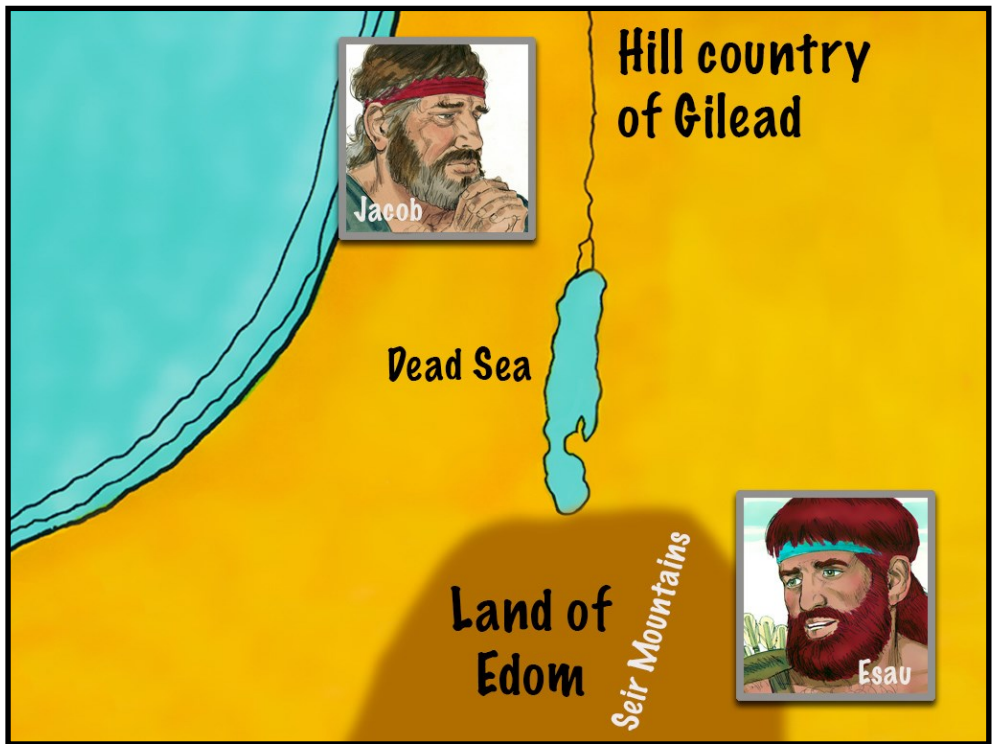


**Story 14:**  
**Jacob & Esau are Reunited**  
**Genesis 32-33, 35**

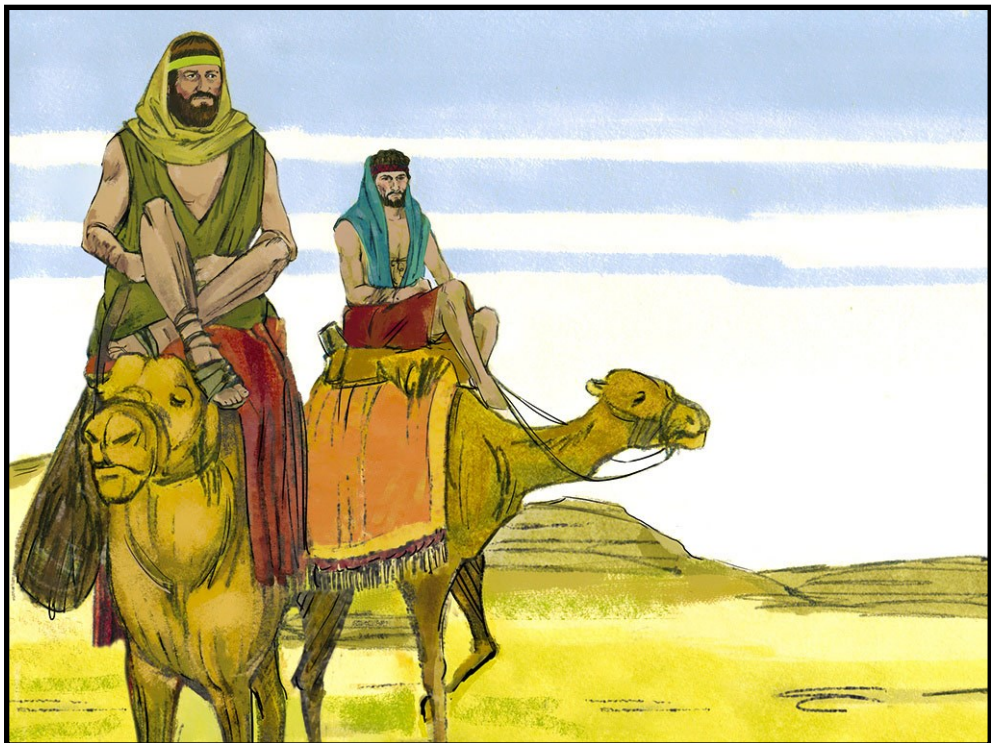


**Story 14:**  
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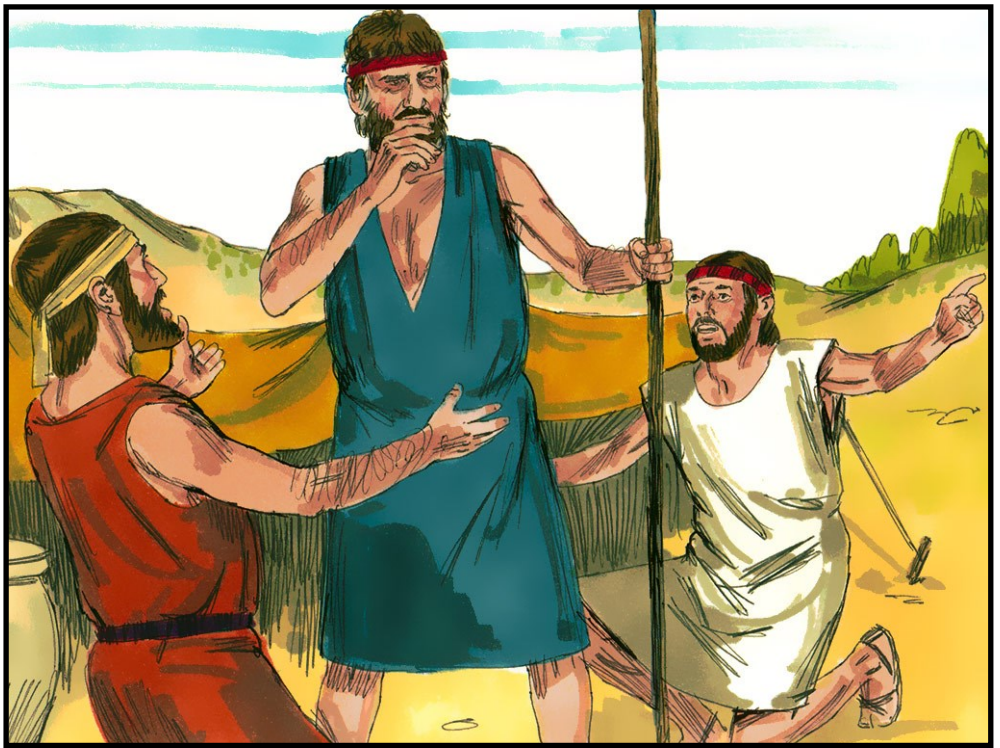


After Jacob's father-in-law Laban departed from him in the hill country of Gilead, Jacob began making preparations to meet up with his twin brother Esau whom he hadn't seen for twenty years.

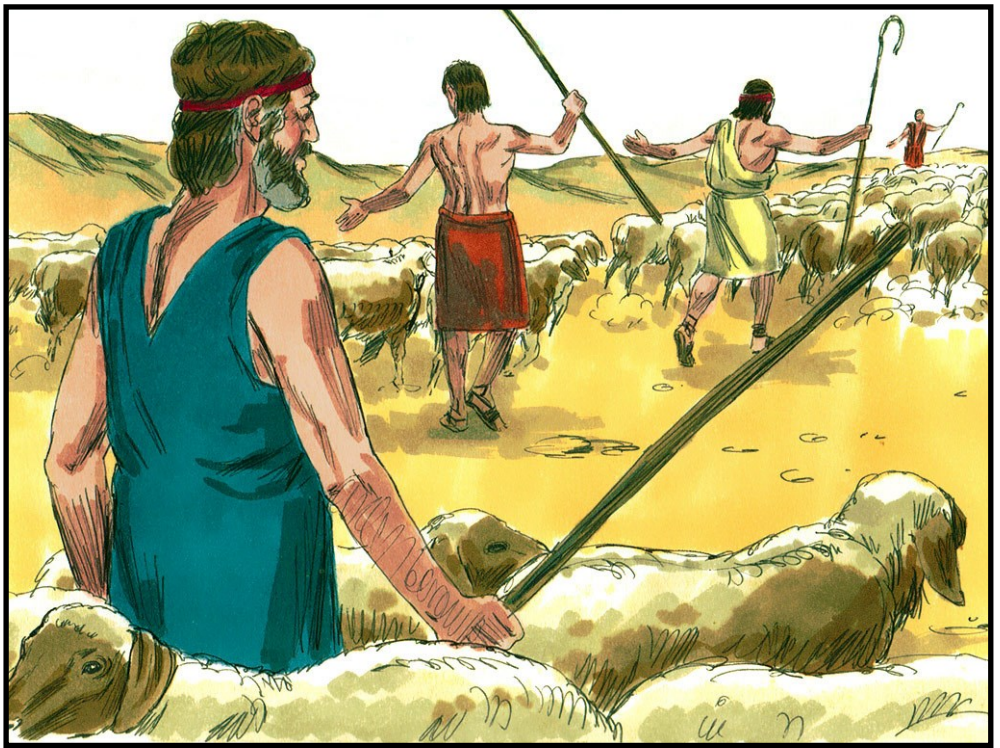
Years earlier, Jacob and Esau had left on bad terms. Jacob had deceived their father Isaac into giving him the family blessing that was originally due Esau. Esau had wanted to kill Jacob for doing this, but Jacob had run away to Harran.



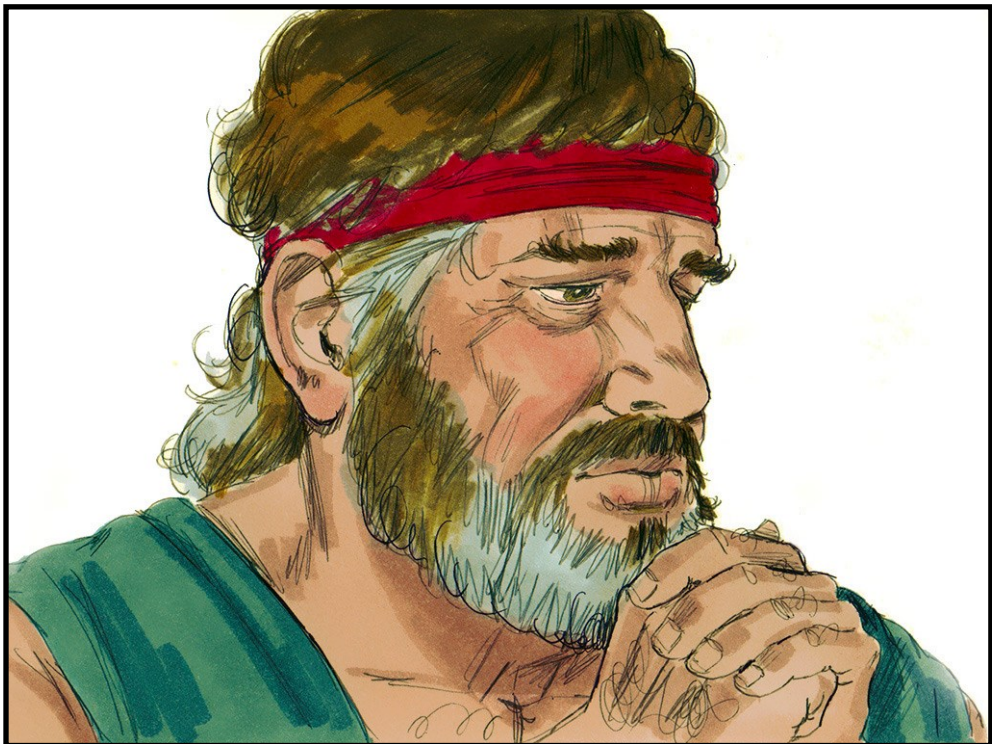
Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to try to win Esau's favor. They said to Esau, "Jacob wants you to know that he's been staying with Laban and has been delayed until now. He has gained oxen, donkeys, flocks, and servants. Please accept him as he returns to this land."



When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, “We went to your brother Esau. He is coming to meet you, and he is bringing 400 men with him.”



Jacob was very afraid because of this news. He thought that his brother was coming with all the men in order to attack him, so he divided all the people and animals that were with him into two groups. He thought to himself, “If Esau comes to one of the groups and attacks it, perhaps the other one can escape.”



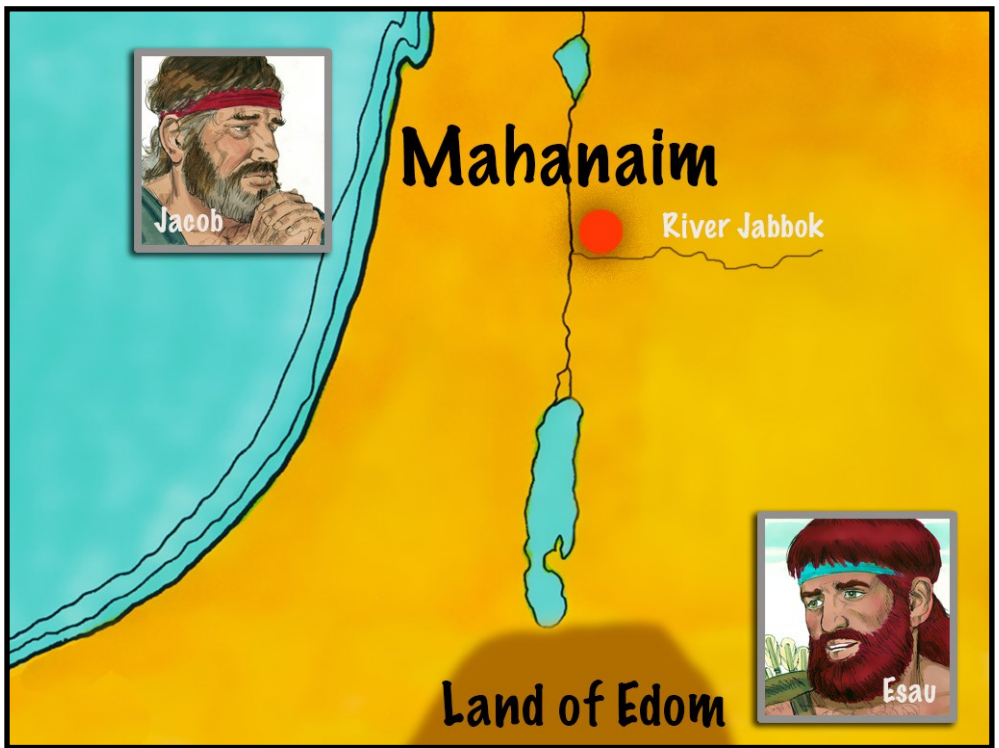
Then Jacob prayed, “God, you are the God of my grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac. You spoke to me and told me to come back to this land and I would prosper. I am so unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown to me. I left my home years ago with just the staff in my hand. Now, I am returning with my family, servants, and livestock. Please rescue me from my brother Esau, for I am afraid of him.”



Jacob chose some animals from his herds to give as a gift to Esau. He sent 220 goats, 220 rams, 30 camels, 40 cows, 10 bulls, and 30 donkeys all at different times. As each different set of animals arrived, the servants were to say, “These animals are a gift from your brother Jacob. He is coming behind us.”

Jacob thought to himself, “Perhaps my brother will like these gifts and forgive me.”





After sending these things to Esau, Jacob stayed back with his family. During the night, he got up and sent his wives, his eleven sons, and the rest of his things across the Jabbok River to keep them safe.

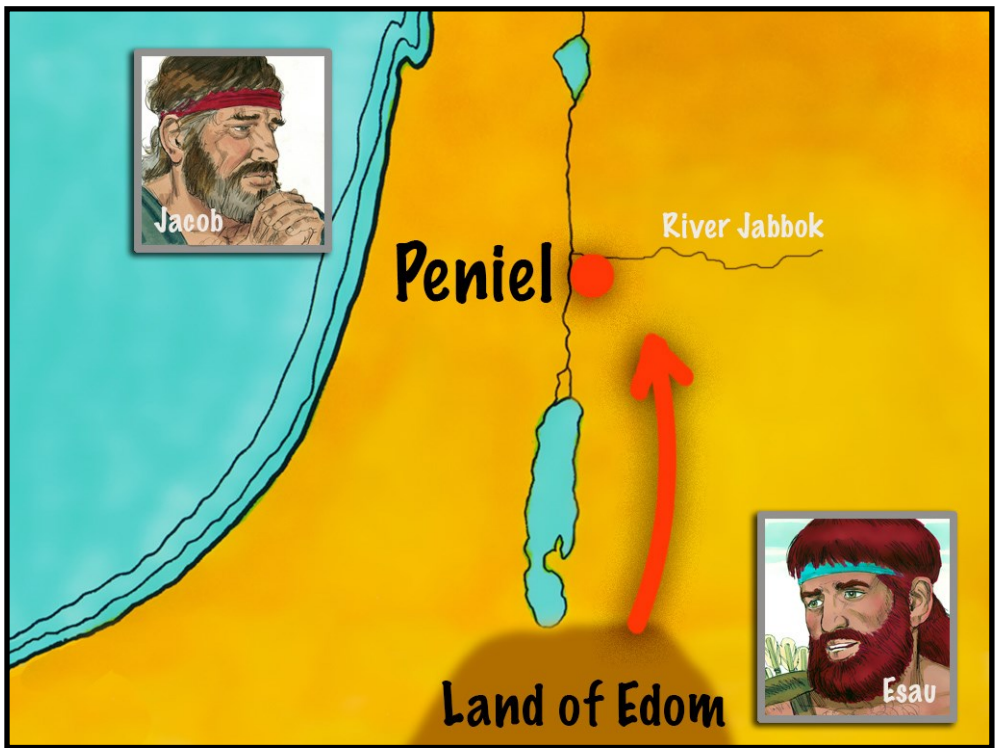


When Jacob was left all by himself, a man came to him that night and they wrestled. Jacob held the man tight, so the man touched his hip and it came out of joint. Though Jacob was wounded, he would not let the man go. The man said, “Let me go, for it is almost daylight.”

Jacob replied, “Not until you bless me.”

“What is your name?” the man asked.

“Jacob,” he replied. So the man blessed him and gave him a new name—“Israel.”

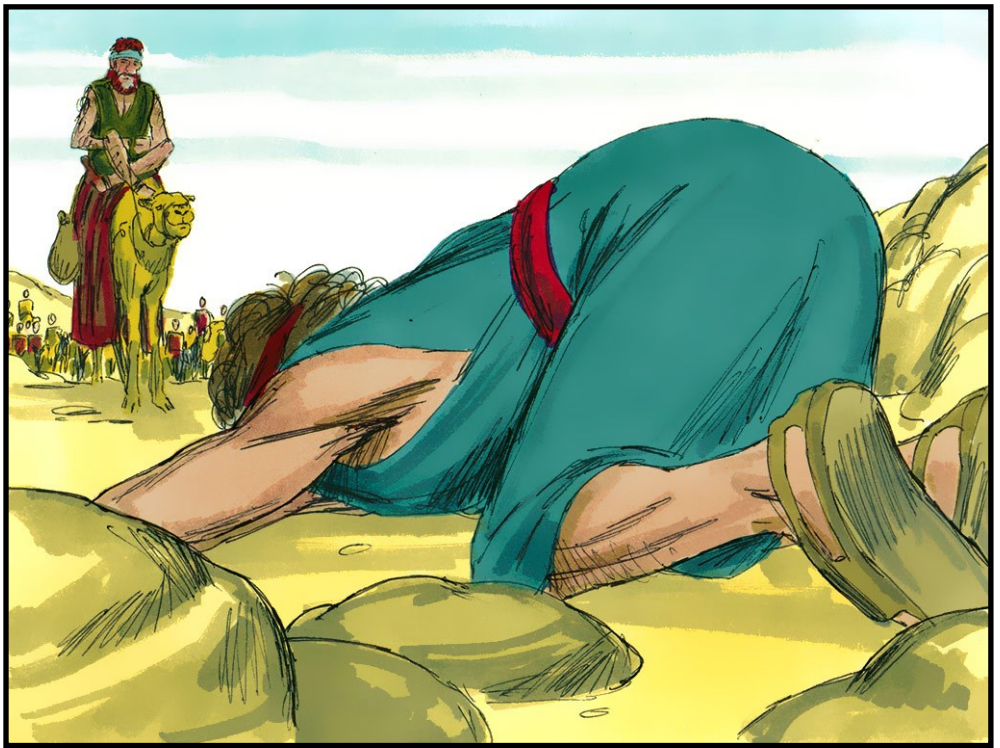


The next day, Jacob named the place “Peniel,” which means “the face of God.” Jacob realized that the man that he wrestled with was really God. He had seen God face to face and lived. The name he was given, “Israel,” actually means, “wrestles with God.”

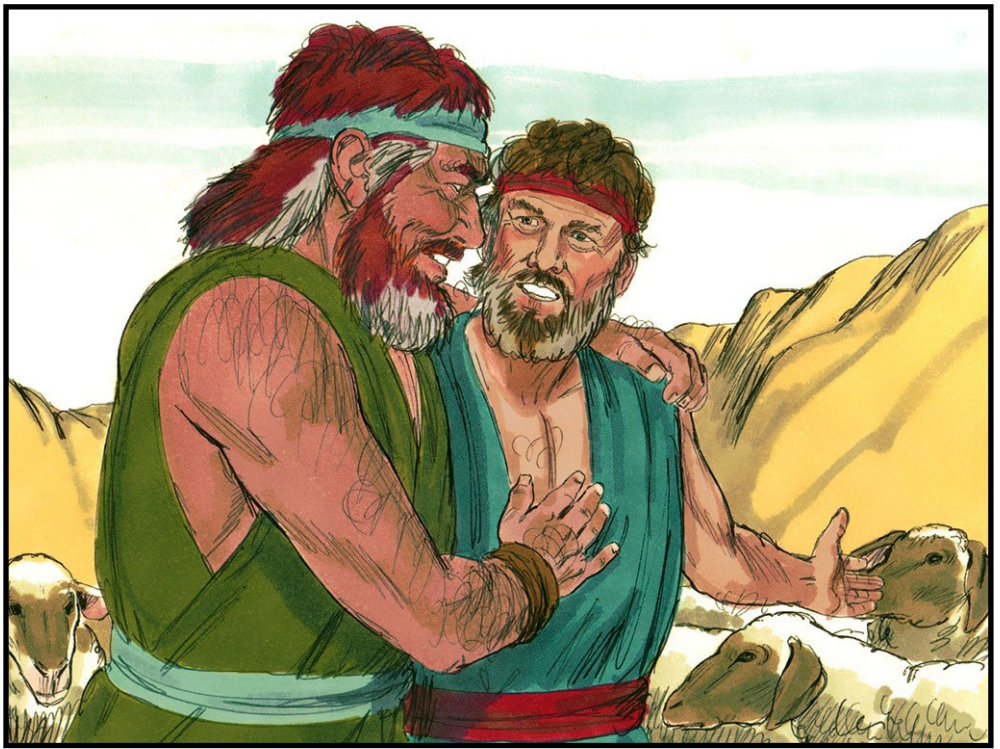
Jacob began walking with a limp because the man had dislocated his hip. He looked up and saw Esau and the 400 men coming toward him.



Jacob made sure that all of his servants were in the front part of his group, that Leah and her sons were behind them, and that Rachel and Joseph were behind them.



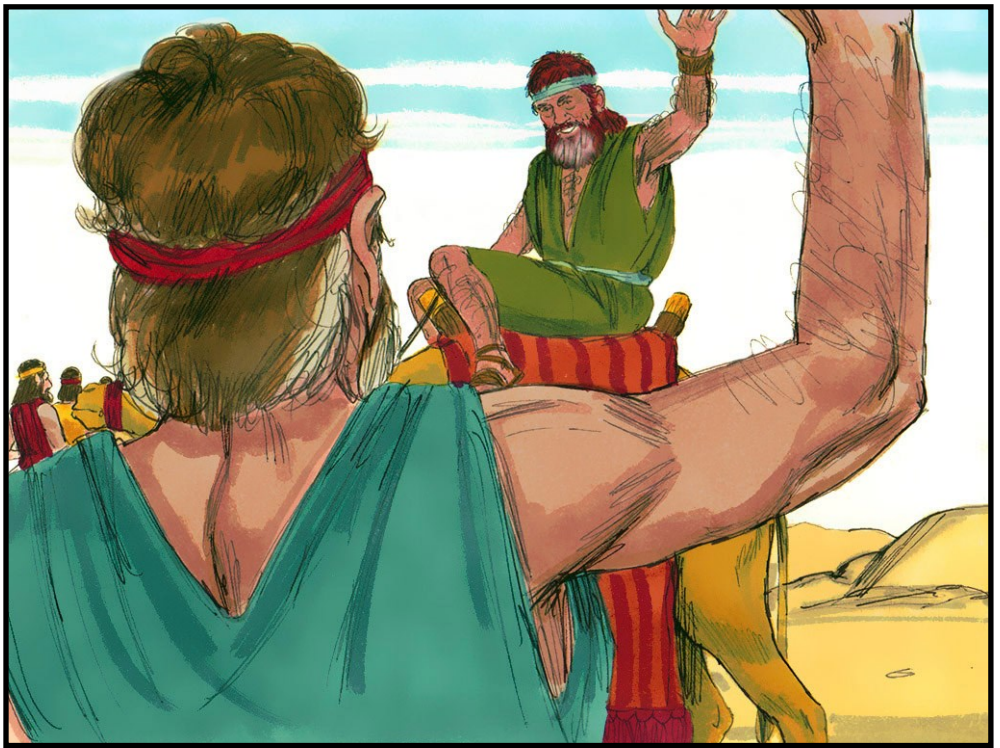
Jacob went on ahead and bowed to the ground seven times as he approached his brother.



But, Esau ran to meet Jacob. He threw his arms around him and hugged him. Then, they both wept for it had been so long since they had seen each another.

Esau asked, “Who are all these people with you?”

Jacob introduced his wives and children to Esau saying, “These are the children God has graciously given to your servant.”

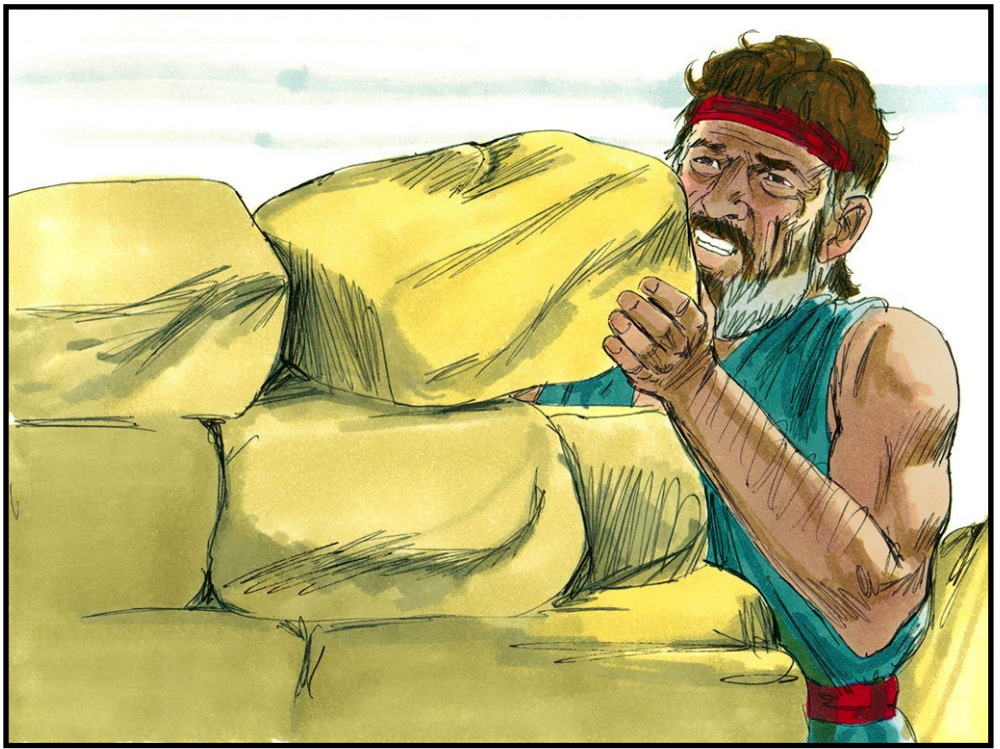


Esau asked, “What’s the meaning of all these flocks and herds that I met along the way when I was coming to you?”

Jacob replied, “They were meant to find your favor, my lord.”

“But, I already have enough,” Esau said. “Please keep them for yourself,” but Jacob insisted that Esau keep them as gifts.

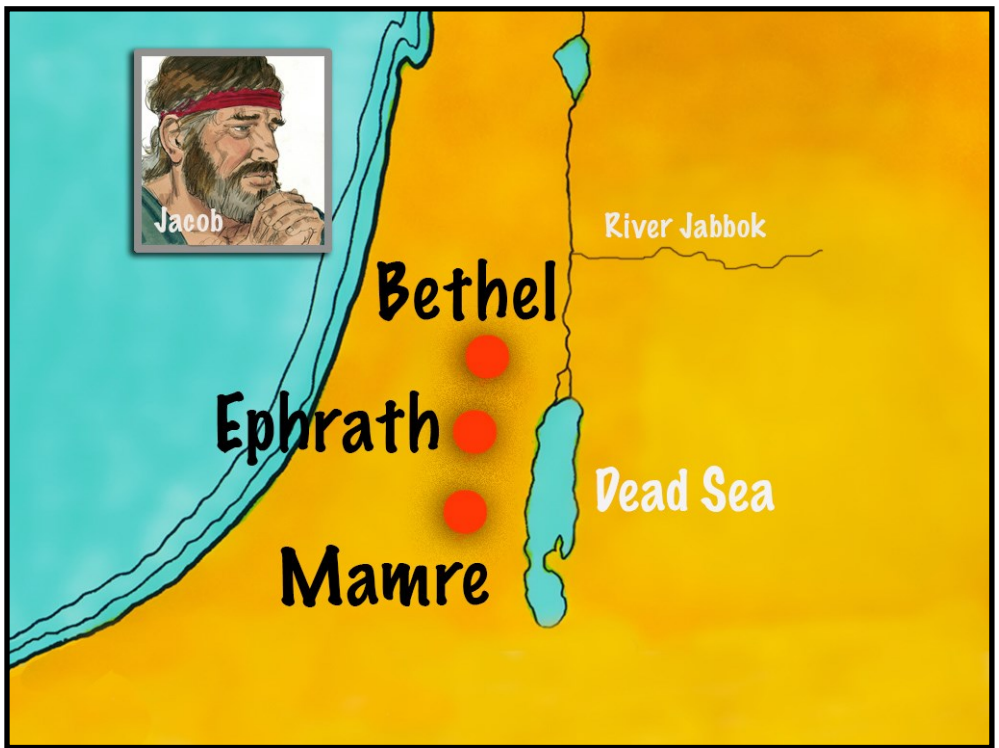
Later, Esau departed and went back to Edom.



In time, God said to Jacob, “Get up! Go to Bethel, settle there, and build an altar to me. For it was there that I first appeared to you—when you were running away from Esau all those years ago.” So, Jacob told everyone in his family to get rid of any idols that they had. The Lord was their God.

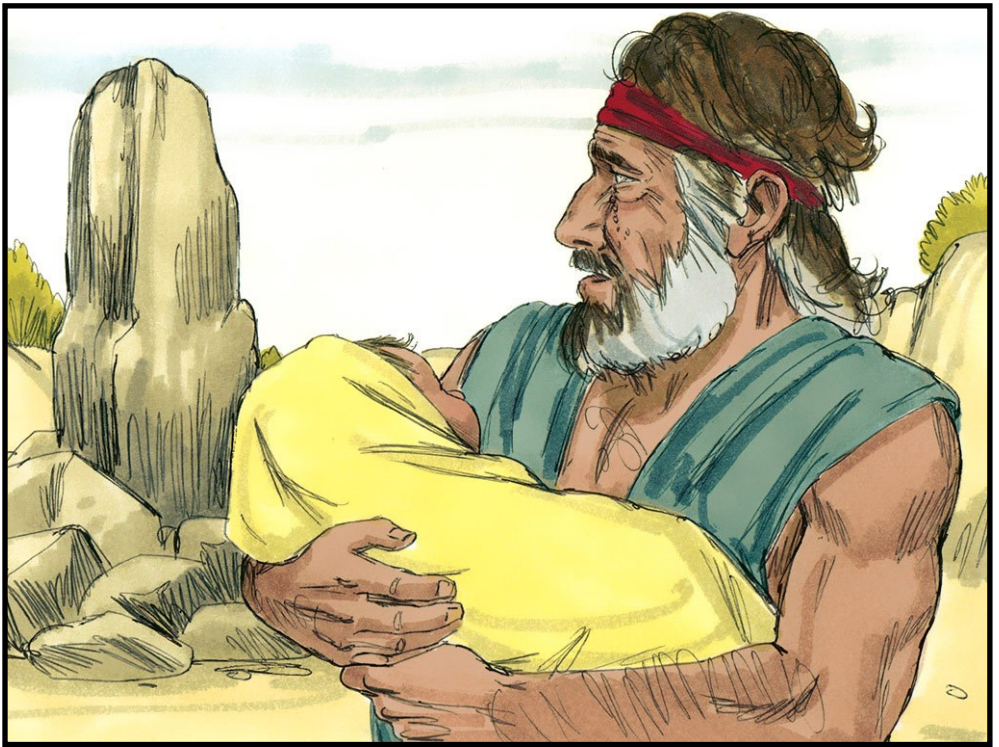
God came to him a second time and said, “Remember, your name is no longer Jacob, it is Israel. May your family multiply greatly here.”



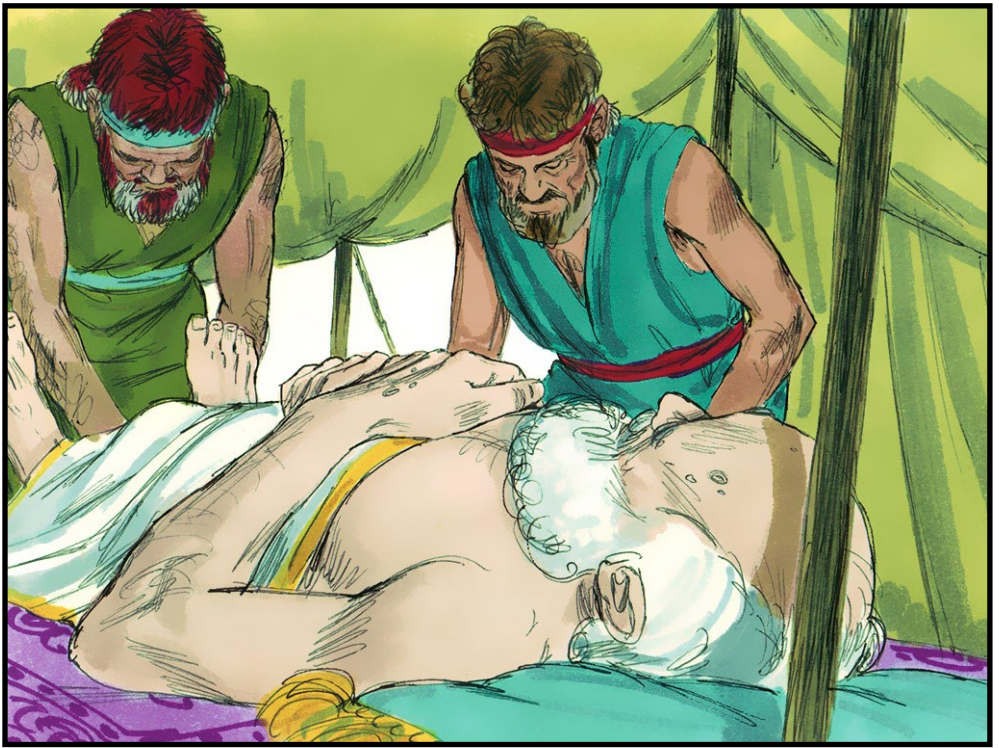


Later, they set out from Bethel. Rachel was pregnant with her second child during the journey. When they arrived at Ephrath, which would later become Bethlehem, she had the baby.

Rachel had complications during the birth. But, the midwife said, “Don’t be afraid. It’s a boy.” Rachel realized that she was dying, so she tried to name the baby Ben-oni (son of my sorrow), but Israel named him Benjamin (son of my right hand).



Rachel died and was buried there at Ephrath. Israel buried her and set up a stone in the place over her grave. With the birth of Benjamin, Israel now had twelve sons.



Jacob then traveled to the place called Mamre where his father Isaac was still living. Isaac lived to be 180 years old. When he died both Esau and Israel buried him.

M

kids

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