

GOD CALLED OUR FATHERS

UNIT TWO: Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

Lesson 3:**Jacob is Sorry**

CONTENT:

1. Jacob lived for many years with his relative, Laban (*pronounced lay-ban*). He married Laban's daughters, Leah and Rachel and had many children. God blessed him and soon he had many animals and servants.
2. Then God told him it was time to go back home and make friends with his brother. Jacob set off with his family, flocks and servants. On the way he became afraid and prayed, "Lord, I am not worthy of your love, but please help me." He sent gifts to his brother to show that he was sorry and wanted to be friends. The two brothers became friends again.
3. Once an important officer asked Jesus to come and heal his servant. But later he sent a message saying, 'Lord I am not worthy, but just say a word, and my servant will be healed.' Jesus was happy with this man's prayer and healed his servant.
4. God wants us to be sorry for the wrong we have done and to realise that we are not worthy (that we are sinners). That is why Jesus taught us to pray, "Forgive us our sins!" At Mass, we pray the in same words of the officer, but we say 'soul' instead of 'servant'.



REFERENCES: Genesis 29-33 (in short); Luke 7:1-10, Matthew 8:5-13. CCC 2839, 1386.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts.

HOME ASSIGNMENT: Ask your family if they know when we say the same prayer that the army officer said, and which word we say instead of 'SERVANT'. Write the answers in the spaces.

I. STARTER:

- Did it ever happen that you felt sad and then someone made you happy? Maybe it was your mother who cheered you up, or a friend, or your dad. *[Allow children to share their experiences.]*
- Jacob also felt like you. After he ran away from home he felt sad, and lonely and afraid. But after God met him in his dream, he felt happy again. He knew that God was with him, even if he could not see him.

II. DEVELOPMENT:**[Story of Jacob and Rachel, and his reunion with Esau]**

Let's find out what happened to Jacob after his dream.

Jacob kept walking and walking for many days. One day he saw a well in a field and many sheep lying down on the grass near it. There was a big stone over the well.

Jacob asked the shepherds there, "Where are you from?" They answered, "We are from Haran" Jacob shouted, "Haran! That is where my mother Rebekah came from! Do you know a man called Laban?" (*Laban was his mother's brother.*)

Just then a beautiful girl came towards the well with a flock of sheep.

The men said, "Yes, we know Laban. Look! There is his daughter, Rachel!"

Jacob's heart leaped inside him. He remembered his mother's stories and how she met Abraham's servant at the well. He thought, "This is the wife for me!" He quickly rolled away the stone over the well and helped Rachel to pour water for her sheep. Then he went home with her to meet her father, Laban.

Jacob lived for many years with Laban and worked for him. Laban gave him Rachel to be his wife, and also Leah, her sister. (In those days rich people sometimes had more than one wife.) God blessed him with many children. He also helped him to become rich. He soon had hundreds of sheep, cows, goats, camels and donkeys.

One day, God spoke to Jacob again. He said, “Jacob! It’s time to go back home and make friends with your brother.”

Jacob told his family and servants to get ready, and then they set off. But as they came near home, he heard some scary news: His brother Esau was coming towards him with 300 soldiers. Jacob was afraid. He remembered how he had tricked his father and got Esau’s blessing. He knew he had not done right. He went off on his own and knelt down and prayed.

“Lord, I am not worthy of your love! (‘I am not worthy’ means, ‘I am a sinner’) But please will you forgive me and help me. Don’t let my brother be angry and kill me and my family.”

As Jacob prayed he realised he should say sorry to his brother also. He got an idea. “I know what I’ll do!” he said, “I’ll send him a sorry present!... Not only one, I’ll send him many sorry presents.”

So Jacob made groups of animals, goats and camels, donkeys and cows. He told his servants to go ahead and meet Esau and say, “These are presents for you from Jacob.”

At last the two brothers met. Jacob bowed down to his brother. Esau hugged him and said, “There’s no need for you to give me so many presents. I am so happy to see you. We can be friends again.”

[Children could enact the story they have just heard. Distribute the parts of Jacob, the shepherds, Rachel, Laban, Leah, God, Esau and Jacob’s children, animals and servants. If any child is capable he/she could narrate the story while the others act.]

NEXT CLASS:

- Last time we heard how Jacob got married and became rich. Then God told him to go back home. But on the way Jacob got scared. Can you remember what he said to God? [*He said, ‘I am not worthy. But please help me.’*]
- Why did he say ‘I am not worthy’? What does it mean? [*Jacob had done wrong. He knew he had done wrong and that he was a sinner. That’s why he said, I am not worthy.*].

Once someone said the same thing to Jesus. One day some important men came and told Jesus, “There is an army officer who wants your help. His servant is very sick and is about to die. Will you come with us to his house and make him well? This officer is a very good man. He has helped us a lot.”

Jesus started walking to the officer’s house. But as they came close to the house, the officer came running out of his house. He bowed down to Jesus and said,

“Lord, I am not worthy. I am a sinner, so it is not right for you to come into my house. But I know that you are very powerful. If you only say a word, my servant will get well.”

Jesus was very happy with the officer’s words. He smiled at him and said, “Go home! Your servant is well.” When the man went home, he found his servant was fine.

[Give out handouts and read aloud. The children could colour the pictures.]

III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- Jesus wants us to be like Jacob and the army officer. He wants us to realise we are sinners and to be sorry for our sins. He taught us to say to our Father God, “Forgive us our sins.”
- Let’s sit quietly now and think of the wrong things we have done... Think of the things you should have done but didn’t do them... [*Allow the children to think silently.*] Let’s say sorry and ask God to forgive us.

[Children say together after teacher:] Father in Heaven, forgive us our sins.

Home assignment: Ask your family if they know when we say the same prayer that the army officer said, and which word we say instead of ‘SERVANT’. Write the answers in the spaces.