

Jacob Gets a New Name

A Bible Story for Kids

Find it in the Bible: Genesis 32:22-32

Characters: Jacob, The Angel of the Lord

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JACOB WAS GOING home after twenty years away. But he was scared. His brother Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men! Would Esau still be angry? Would he attack?

Jacob prayed. He sent gifts ahead for Esau. He sent his family across the river. Then Jacob was all alone in the dark.

Suddenly, a man appeared! He grabbed Jacob and they started wrestling. They wrestled ALL night long! Jacob wouldn't give up.

As the sun started to come up, the man touched Jacob's hip and hurt it. But still Jacob held on!

'Let me go!' said the man.

'No!' said Jacob. 'Not until you bless me!'

'What is your name?' the man asked.

'Jacob.' That name meant 'tricky one.'

'Not anymore,' said the man. 'Your new name is ISRAEL. It means you struggled with God and won! You didn't give up.'

Then Jacob understood. He had been wrestling with GOD! 'I saw God face to face!' Jacob said in amazement.

The sun came up and Jacob walked away with a limp. His hip hurt from the wrestling. But he had a new name and a new life.

Jacob used to get things by tricking people. But that night, he learned to hold on to God and not let go. God changed him from Jacob the trickster into Israel, the father of a whole nation!