**Esau Forgives Jacob**

**Bible Story**
Genesis 32:3-21; 33:1-11

**Teacher Challenge**
When Jacob returned home after many years away, he was afraid of the reception he might receive from his brother because of the way he had deceived and cheated him. Yet when they met again, Esau threw his arms around Jacob and kissed him. Esau’s actions spoke of his complete forgiveness. One who deserved no forgiveness at all was completely and freely forgiven by the one who had every right to condemn him.

→ Who in your life have you forgiven?
→ How did you show that forgiveness?

Esau surprised Jacob by forgiving him, but God’s forgiveness for us is so much greater. When we had no way to appease God, Jesus’ actions provided a means for forgiveness. God asks us now to walk in gratitude for His grace and to let our forgiveness flow freely to others.

**Teacher’s Planning**
1. Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them. For tips on schedule planning, see page 9.
2. Plan who will lead each center, making sure to have one adult for approximately every six children. For staffing tips and ideas, see page 12.
Play to Learn

Active Game Center:
Line Up

Collect
Bible, yarn or masking tape, toy animals.

Prepare
Place a wiggly line of yarn or masking tape along the floor in an open area of your classroom. Place toy animals at regular intervals along the line.

Do
1. Children take turns hopping along the line, picking up animals as they go. Children turn around at the end of the line and return in the same manner, replacing animals as they go.
2. Next child in line hops down the line, collecting and then returning animals. Repeat until all children have had a turn.

Talk About
- In today’s Bible story, Jacob walked down a long road. He took animals to give as a gift to his brother, Esau. Let’s collect animals as we move down this path.
- Jacob gave Esau the animals to show he was sorry for being unkind to Esau. Esau forgave Jacob. The Bible says, “Forgive each other.” To forgive means to be kind to someone who has been unkind to you. When someone has been unkind, we can say “I forgive you.”
- Sometimes it’s hard to forgive someone who has been unkind. We can ask God to help us forgive others. Pray briefly, Dear God, help us to forgive others when they are unkind.

For Younger Children
Children walk along line collecting beanbags. Teacher returns beanbags to line.

For Older Children
Vary the way children move along the line (heel-to-toe, skipping, hopping on one leg, backwards, etc.). Children count animals as they pick them up.
Play to Learn

Art Center:
Family Greetings

Collect
Bible, discarded greeting cards, 9x12-inch (23x30.5-cm) construction paper, glue, art supplies (markers, stickers, stamp pads and stamps, etc.); optional—copies of Lesson 43 Greeting Card Patterns from Discovering God’s Love CD-ROM.

Prepare
Remove backs from discarded greeting cards. Fold construction paper in half.

Do
1. Children glue greeting card fronts onto front of folded construction paper. (Optional: Children cut and glue Greeting Card Patterns from CD-ROM onto fronts of folded construction paper.)
2. Children use art materials provided to decorate cards for family members.

Talk About
- The Bible tells about a time when Jacob gave gifts to his brother Esau to show his love. What are ways we show love to people in our families? Sometimes we send cards. Let’s make cards to give to our families.
- The Bible says, “Forgive each other.” When we forgive others, it means we are kind, even when others have not been kind. We show love when we forgive others. We can forgive the people in our families!
- Who are the people in your family? If your brother breaks one of your toys, you might feel sad or angry. You can ask God to help you be kind to your brother, even though he made you feel sad or angry.
- Pray briefly, Thank You, God, for loving us. Help us to show Your love by being kind and forgiving others.

For Younger Children
Glue greeting card or Greeting Card Pattern to folded construction paper before class. Children decorate cards.

For Older Children
Children write the names of family members inside the card. If a child needs help spelling a name, print it on a Post-it Note and hand it to the child to copy.
Play to Learn

Block Center: Road of Forgiveness

Collect
Bible, blocks, toy people, toy animals or cotton balls to represent sheep.

Do
1. Children use blocks to build a long and winding road.
2. Using toy people, toy animals or cotton balls, children act out traveling down the road.

Talk About
- In our Bible story, Esau walked down a long road. When he saw his brother, Jacob, Esau forgave him, even though Jacob had not been kind to him. Let’s make a road to remind us of Esau’s actions!
- The Bible says, “Forgive each other.” To forgive means to be kind to someone who has done wrong things or been unkind to you.
- Forgiving the people in our families shows God’s love. Micaela, what can you say to your brother when he says “I’m sorry”? (“I forgive you.” “I love you.”)
- Pray briefly, Thank You, God, for the people in our families. Help us to show Your love. Help us be kind and forgive them.

For Younger Children
Use yarn to make a road wide enough for children to walk along. Children place blocks on yarn to outline road and then walk along it.

For Older Children
Children outline a road wide enough to walk along. Then children decide which character they want to be from the story before they walk down road. Children who decide to be Jacob bow as they walk along the road. Children who decide to be Esau walk down road and hug someone at the end of the road. Children may also wish to walk down road pretending to be one of the animals Jacob gave Esau: sheep, goat, camel, cow or donkey.
Play to Learn

Science Center: Animal Graph

Collect
Bible, animal crackers, large bowl, large sheet of paper, glue, marker; optional—premoistened towelettes.

Prepare
Place animal crackers in large bowl. Select one of each type of animal and glue crackers across the top of large sheet of paper. Using marker, draw lines down the paper between each animal cracker to make a graph.

Do
1. Children wash hands. (Optional: If you do not have a sink nearby, distribute premoistened towelettes with which children clean their hands.)
2. Children each select an animal cracker from the bowl and then place it in the appropriate column on the graph you prepared. When a column fills up, children eat crackers, freeing up more space to place crackers.

Talk About
- In today’s Bible story, Jacob gave his brother, Esau, lots and lots of animals. Jacob was sorry he had been unkind to Esau. Esau loved Jacob and forgave his brother! Let’s sort some different kinds of animals.
- The Bible says, “Forgive each other.” We can show love and forgive the people in our families. Forgiving means being kind to people who have been unkind to us. Pray briefly, Dear God, help us forgive the people in our families when they have been unkind.

For Younger Children
On table, lay out one of each type of cracker. Instead of asking children to sort crackers, after each child has selected a cracker, point to two crackers—one that matches and one that doesn’t. Ask child to identify which of the crackers matches the one he or she selected.

For Older Children
As children place their crackers, they count the total number of crackers in that row. As children eat crackers from a filled row, make a note of the number of crackers and add to the total.
Lesson 43
God’s Word
“Forgive each other.”
(See Colossians 3:13.)

God’s Word and Me
I can show love and forgive the people in my family.

Listen to Learn
Genesis 32:3-21; 33:1-11

Collect
Bible, Bible Story 4 pictures from God’s Story for Me Poster Pack #1, Preschool Music #1 CD and player, toy animal.

Greet Each Other
Children sit in a circle on the floor. If you are a son, stand up and clap your hands. Children with stated characteristic respond. Children sit down again. Repeat using daughter, brother, sister, grandchild, cousin, etc. Vary the motion for each statement (hop up and down, place hands on head, touch toes, wiggle hands, etc.).

Tell the Story
Open your Bible to Genesis 32. Tell the story the pictured motions (keywords in bold) or show Bible Story 4 pictures.

What is a gift you would like to get? Listen to hear about gifts Jacob gave to his brother, Esau.

Jacob and Esau grew up together as brothers. But Jacob told lies. He tricked their father, Isaac. He stole important things from Esau. Jacob was afraid Esau would hurt him! So Jacob ran away.

Jacob went to live with his uncle for many, many years. He got married and had many children.

But one day, God told Jacob to go back home.

Jacob and his family packed their belongings and got ready for the long journey home. Jacob sent some of his helpers to tell Esau that Jacob wanted to come home. The helpers came back and told Jacob, “We went to see Esau. He is coming to meet you. He has 400 men with him!”

Jacob was afraid. Four hundred men sounded like an army! So Jacob prayed. He asked God to keep him and his family safe.

Jacob decided to send Esau some gifts. He sent out a herd of goats. He sent out a flock of sheep and then a herd of camels. He also sent a herd of cattle and a herd of donkeys! Jacob thought if he sent Esau gifts, maybe Esau wouldn’t be so mad. Jacob and his family walked far behind the animals. Finally they could see Esau and his 400 men coming!

Jacob went ahead of his family. As he walked toward Esau, Jacob bowed low, over and over again, to show he was sorry for the wrong things he had done. Esau began to run toward Jacob. Is Esau going to hurt me? Jacob must have wondered. Esau came up to Jacob and grabbed him and HUGGED him! Esau had forgiven Jacob!
Talk About the Story
What did Esau do to show he forgave Jacob? (Ran to meet him. Hugged him.) To forgive means to be kind to someone, even after that person has been unkind. Forgiving the people in our families is a way to show we love them. How can you show love to your family today? (Tell them “I love you.” Forgive them when they are unkind. Do kind things for them.)

Sing to God
Let’s sing a song about loving others. Lead children in singing “Let Us Love” (track 11 on CD). One way to love is to forgive others. Forgiving means being kind to people, even though they have not been kind to you. Who are the people in your family? You show love to the people in your family when you forgive them!

Hear and Say God’s Word
Holding your Bible open to Colossians 3:13, say verse aloud. Has anyone ever done an unkind thing to you? Listen carefully to children’s responses. To forgive means to be kind to someone who has been unkind to you. You might say “I forgive you.” Lead children in repeating the verse while doing the following motions: “Forgive,” stomp one foot on each syllable; “each,” clap hands; “other,” wiggle fingers in air. Repeat verse and motions several times.

Pray to God
Lead children in repeating the following prayer, phrase by phrase: Dear God, . . . help us to remember . . . to forgive . . . and show love to . . . the people in our families . . . In Jesus’ name, amen.

Praise to God
Children sit in a circle and pass a toy animal around the circle. After 10 to 20 seconds say, “Stop!” Child holding the toy animal names one person in his or her family (may include extended family). Continue passing the toy animal around the circle until all children have named at least one family member. God is good to give us families to love and care for us. We can show love to our families by forgiving them!
Talk to Learn

Bible Story Activity Pages Center

Collect
A copy of Activity 4 from *The Big Book of Bible Story Activity Pages #1* for yourself and each child, crayons or markers; optional—small strips of sandpaper, glue.

Do
Lead children to complete pages following the instructions. (Optional: Children glue sandpaper strips to page.) Use the conversation suggestions as children complete their pages and retell the story.

Preschool Puzzle Center

Collect
Copies of Puzzles 85 and 86 (p. 177 and p. 179 from *The Big Book of Kindergarten Puzzles*) for each child; pencils, crayons or markers.

Do
Children complete the puzzles and color pages. Use the conversation suggestions on the pages.

Read-Aloud Story Center

Collect
A copy of Story Picture 43 from *The Big Book of Read-Aloud Stories #1* for yourself and each child, crayons or markers.

Do
Read the story and distribute pictures. Use the conversation suggestions as children complete their pages.