

JACOB'S new name is Israel

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God gave Jacob a new name because he wanted God's blessing so badly that he held on to God even when he was tired and it was hard.



Jacob was worried that his brother Esau would still be angry with him and sent his two wives with their two servants and his 11 sons across the river, but he stayed to pray.



Jacob loved God and wanted God to bless him and keep his family safe from his angry brother Esau. "God forgive me and bless me," he prayed.



A man passed by and Jacob realised that he was sent by God. He caught hold of the man before he could go. "Give me God's blessing," he cried out.



The man tried to get away, but Jacob wrestled with him all night, determined to get God's blessing. In the struggle, his hip went out of joint, but he held on.



As the sun rose, the man blessed Jacob saying, "You didn't give up easily. You held on until you got a blessing from God. From now on you shall be called Israel."



Jacob crossed over the river to join his family. "I have seen God face to face," he said. "He blessed me and gave me a new name. God said that now I shall be called Israel."



Since that day the children of Israel never ate the sinew in a joint of meat, because the angel touched Jacob's thigh and caused him to always walk with a limp.