

*The Sunday School Teacher's*  
**Cookbook**  
*"Recipes" for Sharing*

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**Recipe:** **Jacob Squirrel**

**Category:** Salads

**Serves:** younger classes

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**Ingredients** (key words): Jacob, Esau, Genesis, sharing, responsibility, angel, thou shalt not covet,

**Hint:** *A short story paralleling the trials and tribulations of Jacob and his brother Esau from the book of Genesis. This approach may be more suited to younger students, but it can easily be modified to address the needs of any class. Sunday School teachers are always encouraged to "plagiarize" whenever possible because there is no "new or original" thought in divine Mind.*

**Method:** Jacob Squirrel was enjoying a nice day in the garden where he loved to explore. There were lots of places to play games with his older brother Esau. Hide and seek was one of their favorites and they could play all day without interruption. They didn't even go home for lunch, because the trees had lots of nuts and seeds to snack on when they were hungry.

But adventure was around every corner and many times Jacob was distracted during the game, when something new or interesting caught his eye, or a new smell told him there was something good to eat nearby. Esau was a little bigger and quicker, so it seemed like he always found the best savory snacks or delicious treats, but today was different.

While Esau was hiding his eyes and counting to 25, Jacob was running far ahead to the cave where he liked to hide. No one had ever found him there. Then something caught his attention. He found himself in the backyard of someone's home. How interesting it was. He could hear music coming from inside the house and as he got closer to the window to explore, his nose picked up the scent of something wonderful. It smelled very familiar and yet very different.

Jacob and Esau were both used to finding peanuts in the garden, but they were raw and not very tasty. It was hard work opening the shells with their tiny fingers

just to get a little snack. But now Jacob smelled something delicious. It was like peanuts, but 100 times better. He had discovered the scent of peanut butter. Yum!

Now the people who lived in the house loved animals and they had pets living with them inside the house where they kept all the marvelous food and they could have it any time. But all Jacob could do was look inside, wishing he could taste peanut butter. It turns out Jacob was not the only one watching, because a lady who lived in the house was looking at him too. She knew how much her pets loved treats and squirrels loved peanuts, so she decided to share with Jacob.

She stepped out into the yard carrying a jar of peanut butter. Jacob watched her intently as she removed the lid and left the jar on the ground for him to enjoy. As she walked away, Jacob forgot all about the game, forgot all about Esau, forgot about being careful. All he could think about was the savory smell of peanut butter. He rushed to the jar and tasted the marvelous treat over and over again. He didn't think about sharing, just enjoying this all to himself. He didn't notice his hands and face were sticky until it was too late. Soon he was covered in peanut butter and couldn't get it off.

Of course he was completely surprised when Esau showed up, running as fast as he could. Jacob had forgotten to hide and Esau found him quickly. When Esau smelled the peanut butter and realized Jacob had tried to take it all for himself. He got very upset and the chase began. Jacob was in trouble because the peanut butter was slowing him down and all the dirt and leaves were now sticking to him. What a mess he had gotten into. Jacob knew he had done something very unloving and he wanted to say I'm sorry, but he didn't have time to explain. Esau was coming after him and he was in no mood for listening. All Jacob could do was hide in his favorite cave and hope he would be safe from his older brother.

Jacob felt terrible. He knew he would have to eventually take responsibility for his actions and face his older brother, but he was afraid. For a long time Jacob remained hidden. He was wrestling with his conscience, trying to decide if he should run away from home, or go back and say he was sorry. He loved his brother and knew his brother loved him too, but would Esau forgive him for this unloving behavior?

So he asked God what to do and God sent an angel (a heavenly thought of inspiration) to talk to Jacob. Of course Jacob was asking for his brother to change and not be angry. He was hoping the angel would speak to his brother and make him be understanding and kind. But the angel was not being very cooperative and instead of a fight with his brother, Jacob now found himself wrestling with

the angel. Neither were winning and the fight continued a long time. Finally Jacob realized that this battle was actually taking place in his own thinking. He began to realize it was not Esau that had to change, but that Jacob himself was the one who needed to be changed. Jacob recognized that he must take on a new personality by changing the thought of himself, to put off the old material characteristics and take on new spiritual characteristics. Once Jacob changed his thoughts by replacing material qualities with spiritual qualities, it was easy to see that his brother Esau would be more likely to accept him back. Soon he was ready to come out of hiding, face his brother and say he was sorry.

At first Esau was still mad that he had been tricked and it looked like the argument might continue, but just then their mother appeared. She had been watching and hoping her sons would figure this out for themselves. She knew both her sons had behaved badly. She sat them down and gently told them about the spiritual qualities they both had all along but that now the changes were becoming more apparent. She went on to explain that there was no need to fight over something material, because their needs had always been met and always would be met when they put love first. She went on to show them how their family had always lived in this garden and it constantly provided everything they needed. There was nothing to fight over because there was always an infinite supply of good for every one and this good was renewed daily. In fact it actually grew on the trees.

There is a good lesson here, for sometimes we may look at other people, their houses, all their material goods and say to ourselves, "I want that too. I deserve something good. Why shouldn't I have that for myself?" The 10th commandment tells us, "Thou shalt not covet...", which simply means that if we understand God, good as infinite, we can never run out of it. An idea of good is like the idea of a number. If someone else has the number three, that doesn't mean you can't have it too and you can have as many number threes as you want. There is an infinite supply of ideas and of good.

But what about something that looks good, yet seems to be very limited. Well anything that has limitations is material. We are not in competition with each other for something God provides. For a squirrel, peanut butter may at first seem like something wonderful, but it quickly becomes a material nuisance. You can't eat it with your hands, it sticks to your fur, you can't open the jar by yourself and what do you do when there's none left? You are completely dependent on mortal man to provide it and you always have to protect it from someone else trying to take it away from you. While squirrels are happy with peanuts, yet mortal mind

may try to convince them that the material version is better. Yet to a squirrel, peanut butter quickly becomes an attractive nuisance. Our search for "better matter" is not a solution to happiness, or a replacement for "perfect spiritual" supply. Searching for happiness in matter becomes a sticky mess.

Jacob and Esau are now great friends again. Esau is kinder and less competitive to his little brother, because he sees the changes that have come over him and he recognizes himself to be more spiritually minded and loving. Jacob is more eager to share and learn from all his family members. He always remembers the lesson the angel taught him: that if we want change, it must come from the inside and it must start with ourselves, because God, good is changeless. It is much more fun when we learn to share and play together, instead of trying to keep secrets and hide limited goodness from the very people you want to share our goodness with. Who knows when they will find something good to share with you?

Having fun is better when it is shared with others, because it leads to growth. When two people are playing together, it is impossible for one to lose fun because somebody else is having too much fun. The more fun one person is having means the more fun there is for everyone to share.

What happened to that peanut butter? Well, the raccoons got it and boy you should see what a sticky mess they are in.