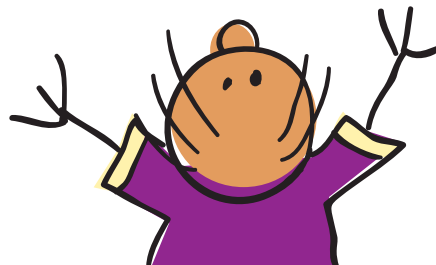


# STORIES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

## Series 2: The Family Chosen by God

*13 Different Lessons for 5 Students*

### Bible Stories for All Ages



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## National Bible Reading Campaign

## ***Have Fun Teaching Bible Histories for All Ages***

Teaching the Bible should be a fun experience for both the teacher and students. The most effective teaching takes place when all those involved enjoy themselves. That is when the students learn best and when the teacher looks forward to teaching. The Bible Stories for All Ages have been prepared to help the teacher enjoy him or herself while teaching stories from Bible history and for the students to enjoy themselves while learning from them. These materials can be used with children of all ages as well as with youth and adults.

We recommend the following eleven steps for preparing and teaching these lessons:

### ***Prepare to Teach***

1. Carefully read the printed story, the questions and the memory verse.
2. Then, read the story in the Bible itself. Use a modern version that enables you to understand most clearly the details of the story.
3. Think carefully about the story and try to imagine that you were there in that situation and write all the unmentioned details that you imagine might have filled out the story.
4. On a sheet of paper, write the principle spiritual truths that you find in the story.

### ***Teach***

5. Give each student a copy of the lesson. (Please do not photocopy the lessons. In any case, they are less expensive in their published form)
6. Tell the group the name of the story and in a few words explain why the lesson is important to them.
7. (For groups with readers) Ask the members of the group to read aloud the printed story, each person, in turn, reading only one sentence. Ask that only those who wish to read do so.
8. Tell the story in the most dramatic manner possible. Use different voices for each person in the story and use gestures to dramatize the story.
9. Read aloud the questions and encourage the class to answer carefully and sincerely.
10. Help the class to memorize the memory verse, memorizing it at first by parts. Be patient in this activity and have students recite the verse individually as soon as they have learned it. Then, have the entire class give the verse together.
11. Lead the class to color the picture illustrating the story. The teacher should set the example in this. Chat with the class during this time talking about the important truths found in the lesson. Encourage young people and adults to color the pictures carefully and to save the stories so they can teach them to others as opportunities present themselves.

## **NATIONAL BIBLE READING CAMPAIGN**

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# ① Sarah and Abram Make a Terrible Mistake



## Great Bible Truths

1. When we change God's plans for the family, sadness is the result.
2. Our God always sees and hears us.

## Genesis 16:1-16

God promised Abram and Sarah a child, but they were both very old and it looked like Sarah would never have a child. So Sarah got an idea she thought would help. She had a slave woman named Hagar, and she told Abram her husband, "Take Hagar like she were your wife and have a child by her. We will count her child like he were my child and yours." In those days, it was common for a man to have more than one wife. Abram agreed with what Sarah said, and after a while Hagar became pregnant. However, when she saw she would have Abram's baby, Hagar became proud and looked down on Sarah, whom, it seemed, could not have a baby. This caused great trouble in the family, and Sarah treated Hagar very cruelly. At last, Hagar could stand it no more and she ran away.

Hagar stopped at a spring in the desert, and an angel of God came to her. "Hagar," he asked, "where have you come from and where are you going?" "I am running away from my mistress," she answered. The angel answered, "Go back to her and be her slave. I will give you so many descendants that no one will be able to count them. You are going to have a baby boy, and you will name him Ishmael, which means 'God hears.' God has heard your weeping. Your son, when he grows up, will live like a wild donkey; he will be against everyone and everyone will be against him. But God will make a great nation out of him."

Hagar asked herself, "Have I really seen God and lived to tell about it?" So she called the Lord, "The God Who Sees." Hagar went back to Sarah and served her. Hagar had Abram's child, and he was named Ismael, "God Sees." Abram was 86 years old when this happened.

## Talk About the Story:

What was Sarah's bad idea that she thought would give her and Abram a baby? How did Hagar act when she became pregnant with Abram's baby? What did Sarah do about it? What did Hagar do to be free? What promise did the angel of the Lord give to Hagar? Why was she to name her son Ishmael?

## What Do You Say?

What do you think about Sarah's idea to help God's promise come true? How would you have felt if you were Hagar?

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***She called the Lord who had spoken to her,  
"The God Who Hears." Genesis 16:9***



②

# Sarah Laughs at God



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## Great Bible Truths

1. Being kind to others, even strangers, can bring us great blessings.
2. There is nothing too hard for God.

## Genesis 18:1-15

The Lord came to Abraham at the sacred trees of Mamre. Abraham was sitting at the entrance to his tent during the hottest part of the day. He looked up and saw what looked like three men standing there. Abraham bowed down with his face touching the ground. "Sirs, please do not pass my home without stopping and letting me serve you. Let me bring you some water to wash your feet. While you rest here beneath this tree, I will bring you some food." The men thanked him and sat down.

Abraham rushed into the tent and told Sarah, "Quick, take your best flour and bake some bread. Then he ran and picked out a fat tender calf and told a servant to kill it and to roast it for his guests. Then Abraham got some cream and milk, and brought the bread and meat to his guests, serving them himself.

The men asked, "Where is your wife, Sarah?" "She is there in the tent," he answered. One of the guests said, "When I come back nine months from now, Sarah will have a son." Sarah heard him from inside the tent. She laughed to herself saying, "Now that I am so old and my husband also, how can we have a baby?" Then the Lord asked Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say 'Can I have a baby when I am so old?' Is anything too hard for the Lord? As I said, nine months from now, I will return and Sarah will have a son."

Sarah became afraid and said, "I didn't laugh." "Yes you did," he replied, "You laughed."

## Talk About the Story:

Tell how Abraham met those who looked like three men. How did Abraham make them feel welcome? Who fixed the meal? What did one of the three say about Sarah? Why did Sarah laugh?

## What Do You Say?

What kind of man does Abraham show himself to be in this story? Do you think you would have laughed if you were Sarah? Why or why not?

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***Is anything too hard for the Lord?  
As I said, nine months from now I  
will return, and Sarah will have a  
son. Genesis 18:14***



# ③ Lot Escapes from Destruction



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## Great Bible Truths:

1. It is dangerous to have as your best friends only those who disobey God.
2. God saves his people from danger, but does not save those who oppose him.

## Genesis 19:1-29

After separating from Abraham, Lot went to live in a city called Sodom, close to another city called Gomorrah. The people from Sodom and Gomorrah were really evil and they disobeyed God in every possible way. God had received several complaints because of them so He sent two angels down to destroy both cities. But Abraham asked God to save Lot and his family.

The angels came to Sodom when the night was falling and Lot met them at the city's gate. Since it was late already, he offered them to stay at his house to have dinner and sleep. At night, Lot's neighbors had a great riot outside his house and tried to hurt him. Then, the angels brought Lot back inside the house and made everyone outside the house become blind so they would stop bothering him. Then, they said to Lot, "You must leave this city, along with your wife, your two daughters and their husbands, because we will destroy this whole place". But his daughters' husbands did not believe him and chose to stay in the city.

When the dawn was breaking, the angels told Lot to leave soon. But since Lot and his family were taking too long, the angels took them by the hand and brought them out of the city. Then, the angels told them that they could run away to a small city nearby called Zoar, but they were not to stop in the way and under no circumstances should they look back. When they reached Zoar, the sun had already risen and God rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah destroying everything there. But Lot's wife looked back and in that very moment, she became a statue of salt. The following morning, only smoke could be seen rising from where the cities had been, just like the smoke from a furnace.

## Talk About the Story:

Where did Lot live? How would you describe his neighbors? Why were his visitors coming to Sodom and Gomorrah? Who ran away with Lot? Where were they heading? What happened with Sodom and Gomorrah? What happened to Lot's wife?

## What Do You Say?

Why did God not destroy Lot and his family? Would you invite two complete strangers to have dinner and sleep at your house, as Lot did? If two strangers would come commanding you to leave your city, would you do it? Why did Lot's sons-in-law choose to stay? Why were they told not to look back as they fled?

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***So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered Abraham, and he brought Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Lot had lived.***

**Genesis 19:29**





# ④ God Tests Abraham's Faith



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## Great Bible Truths

1. There are times when God asks us to prove our love for him.
2. Abraham offered his son to God, but God saved him from being sacrificed. However, on that same hill God offered his own Son as a sacrifice for us.

## Genesis 22:1-19

God had promised Abraham that he would have a child with Sarah and He kept that promise with the birth of Isaac, when Abraham was already 100 years old. Therefore, Abraham and Sarah loved their son Isaac very much. A few years later, God spoke to Abraham saying, "Take Isaac and go to the region of Moriah. When you get there, sacrifice Isaac, your only son, to me at the mountain I'll show you".

The next morning, Abraham got everything ready and left with Isaac and two of his servants towards Moriah. After a two-day walk, Abraham saw the mountain and instructed his servants to wait for them and to take care of their belongings while he and Isaac went to worship God in the mountain. Isaac was carrying the logs and Abraham brought the fire and the knife. On the way up the mountain, Isaac asked, "Father, I see we bring everything necessary for the sacrifice, but where is the lamb?" Abraham answered, "God will give us a lamb for our sacrifice, my son."

When they finally made it to the place God had chosen, Abraham prepared the altar and placed Isaac tied on top of it. But just when Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac with the knife, God spoke to him, "Abraham! Do not do any harm to Isaac, because I know now that you love me. I know it because you didn't deny me your only and beloved son."

All of a sudden, Abraham noticed there was a lamb stuck among some branches so he took it and sacrificed it there. Then God reaffirmed his promise to Abraham about having numerous descendants, defeating all his enemies and being a blessing for the whole world.

## Talk About the Story:

How old was Abraham when Isaac was born? What did God ask Abraham to do? How long did Abraham wait before obeying? Who did Abraham sacrifice? What did God promise to Abraham?

## What Do You Say?

Do you think someone who is 100 years old could have a son these days? If you were in Abraham's shoes, what answer would you have given to God's request? How do you think Abraham felt when Isaac asked about the lamb? How did Isaac feel as he lay on the altar? Do you know about anyone who, as Abraham did, was willing to sacrifice his only and beloved son? Who?

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***“Now I know that you fear God,  
Because you have not kept back  
from me your son, your only  
son.” Genesis 22:12***



5

# God Chooses Isaac's Wife



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## Great Bible Truths

1. Those who ask for a wife or a husband from the Lord are very wise.
2. The joy of serving others is a sign of being chosen of God for great things.

## Genesis 24:1-67

After many years, Abraham became a very old and wealthy man, and Sarah died. One day, he called his oldest servant and said to him, "Swear to me that you will not let my son Isaac marry a woman from Canaan. Instead, you shall go to my country and choose a wife for him among my family". The servant replied, "But what if she doesn't want to come with me; should I take Isaac with me?" But Abraham did not want him to do that and assured him that God would show him who was the right woman. Then, the servant swore to Abraham he would do as Abraham said and, taking many presents with him, departed to the land Abraham had instructed him.

He arrived at the place when the night was falling, so he sat down to rest near a well. The women used to go to the well at that time of the day, so the servant prayed to his lord's God saying, "Let it be that the young woman to whom I ask for water to drink and answers me, 'You drink and I will get water for your camels to drink', be the one You have chosen for Isaac." The servant had not finished praying when he saw a young woman coming with her jar. He asked her for water to drink, and she gladly gave water to him, and to his camels! The servant then asked what her name was and who was her father. She said, "My name is Rebecca and my father is Bethuel, son of Milcah and Nahor." Nahor was Abraham's brother! So the servant praised God and gave Rebecca a nose ring and two bracelets.

Rebecca ran to tell her family what had just happened and they invited the servant to spend the night at their house. After dinner, Bethuel told Rebecca to marry Isaac, because it was God's will and she agreed. Then Isaac married Rebecca and felt consolation for his mother's death.

## Talk About the Story:

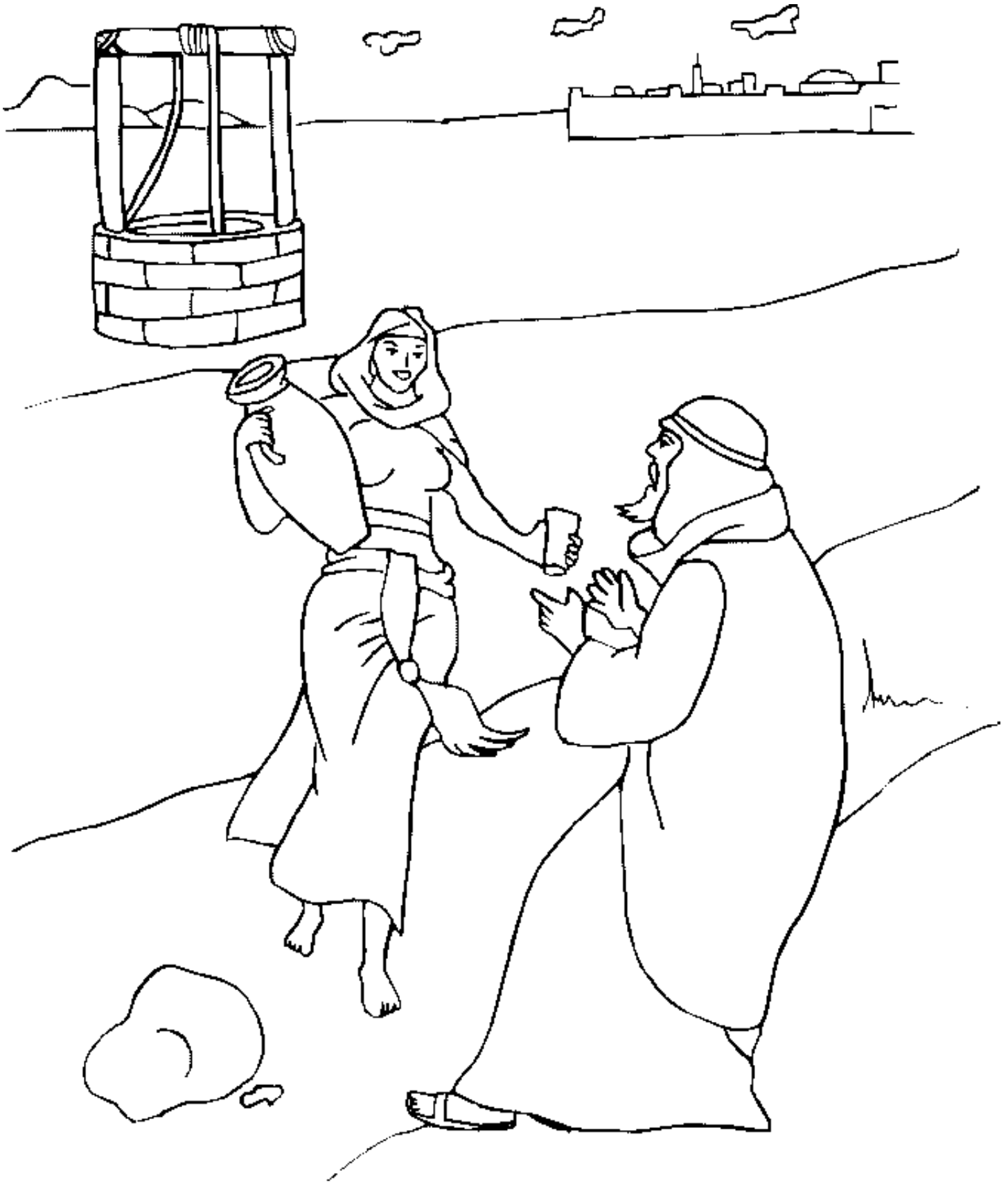
What kind of wife did Abraham want for Isaac? Why didn't Abraham want Isaac to go back to the land they came from? How did the servant know who was the right woman? Why was Isaac sad? Who was Bethuel?

## What Do You Say?

Why didn't Abraham want Isaac to marry a woman from Canaan? Was it a coincidence that Rebecca walked by right when the servant was praying? What would you have done if you were Bethuel and a complete stranger came trying to take your daughter to another country? What if you were Rebecca?

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***“Before he had finished praying,  
Rebecca came out with her jar  
on her shoulder.” Genesis 24:15***



⑥

# Two Very Odd Twins



## Great Bible Truths

1. Every person is very unique, even among brothers and sisters.
2. People lose great blessings because they only want something to satisfy themselves right now.

## Genesis 25:19-34

Isaac married Rebecca when he was 40 years old. Rebecca could not become pregnant so Isaac pleaded with God for her. The Lord listened to Isaac's prayer and so Rebecca became pregnant, expecting twins. But Rebecca felt her babies were fighting inside her, thus she asked God why was that happening and God answered, "Two nations are in your womb, two peoples are fighting inside you even before they're born. One people will be stronger than the other and the oldest will serve the youngest".

When Isaac was already 60 years old, the children were born. The oldest was red-haired and his body was all covered with hair. He was named Esau. The second one was born grabbing his older brother's ankle and was named Jacob. As they grew older, Esau came to be an excellent hunter, strong and he liked to eat wild beasts he hunted himself. Because of that, Isaac loved Esau the most. In contrast, Jacob was very peaceful and loved to stay home. Therefore, Rebecca loved Jacob the most.

In those lands, when the father died, the oldest son received twice as much inheritance as the rest of the sons. Since Esau was the oldest son, he had the right to receive the double share, the birthright.

One day, Esau was coming back from the wilderness and was famished. Jacob had fixed a red lentil stew which filled the air with a delicious scent. Esau asked Jacob for some stew, but Jacob said he would give him soup only if he would give him the birthright. Esau thought, "If I don't eat, I'll starve to death and my birthright will be useless", so he agreed and swore to Jacob and gave him his birthright. Esau ate and left as if nothing had happened.

### Talk About the Story:

How did Rebecca finally become pregnant? What was Esau like? What was Jacob like? What is a birthright? What did Esau do with his?

### What Do You Say?

How do you think Rebecca felt when she heard God's answer? Do you think Isaac and Rebecca were wrong to have favorite sons? How do you feel about Esau's attitude? What about Jacob's attitude? Would you sell your birthright?

**But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob. Genesis 25:33**





7

# Jacob Keeps Esau's Blessing



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## Great Bible Truths

1. To have favorite children in a family brings great sadness to any home.
2. Deceit and dishonesty divides families.

## Genesis 27:1-40

It was a tradition in Isaac's family that fathers would bless their sons before they died. In this blessing, the father asked God to give his son protection, wealth and abundance, according to God's guidance. When Isaac had grown old, he became blind and decided it was time to bless his oldest son, Esau. So he called him and said, "Take your weapons and go hunt something so I can have a stew just like the one I love and then I will give you your blessing". So Esau went out into the wild.

But Rebecca heard when Isaac said this to Esau and warned Jacob, her favorite son. She told Jacob to bring two goats so she could fix Isaac the stew he loved so much and Jacob could get the blessing. Jacob felt fear at first, but Rebecca talked him into doing so and he finally did as she said. After she had fixed the stew, Rebecca dressed Jacob with Esau's finest clothes and covered his hands and neck with the skins of the goats so Isaac would think it was Esau.

Then Jacob brought the food to his father. Isaac asked, "Who are you, my son?" And Jacob replied, "I'm Esau, your oldest son. I did just as you told me, so eat and give me my blessing". Isaac recognized Jacob's voice, but when he touched his arms and smelled Esau's clothes, he gave him his blessing. He blessed him with abundance of food, water, land, and declared his brothers and other nations should bow before him. He said those who blessed him would be blessed and he cursed those who would curse him.

When Esau returned from hunting, he found out what had happened and became very upset. But Isaac blessed him also, even though his blessing could not be as great as Jacob's had been.

### Talk About the Story:

Why was a father's blessing so important? Who should receive the blessing? What did Jacob do to pretend he was Esau?

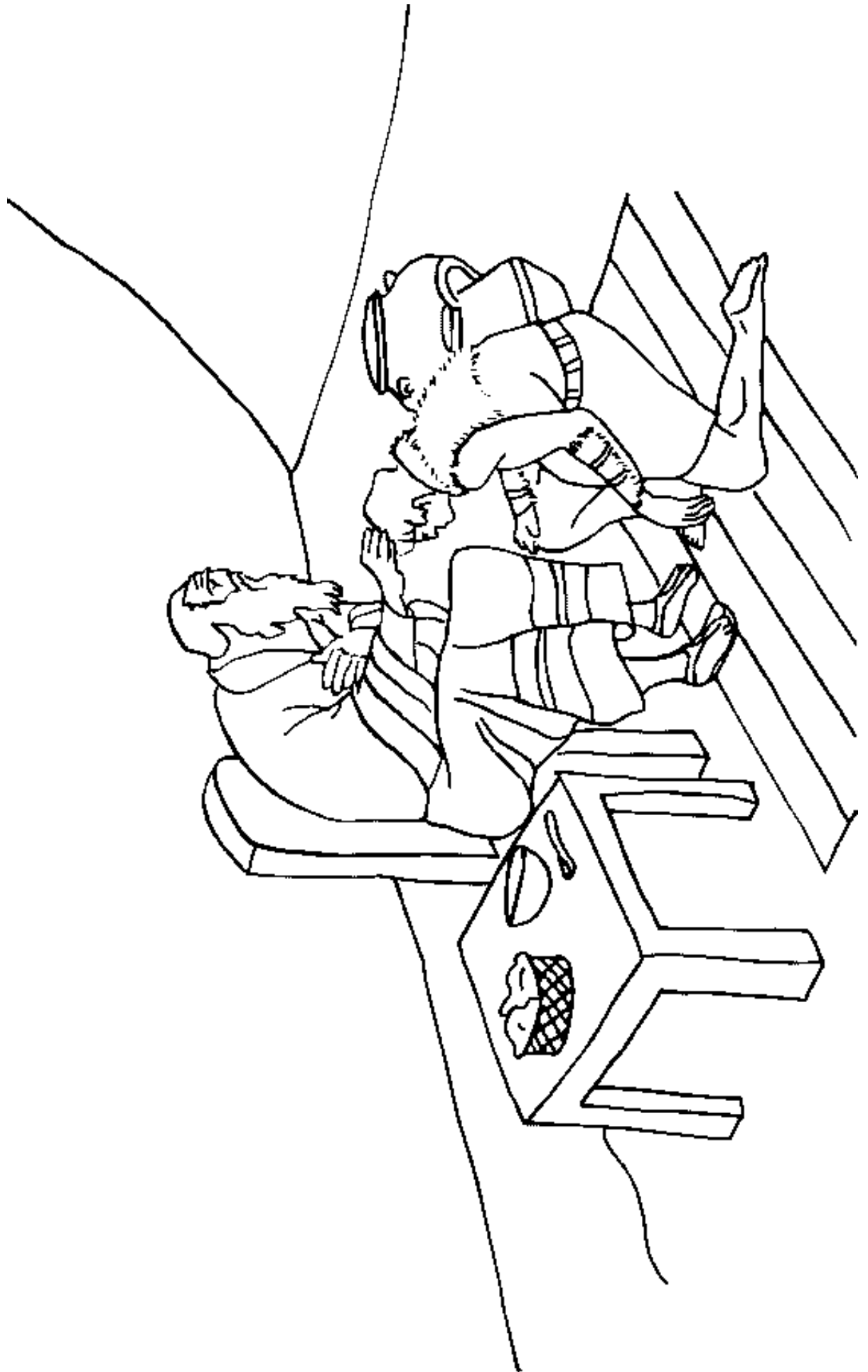
### What Do You Say?

Do you think Esau longed to receive his father's blessing? What about Jacob? Do you think Isaac didn't really recognize Jacob? How do you think Rebecca felt about what happened? Could you do something like what Jacob did?

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***Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game so that you may give me your blessing." Genesis 27:19***



# ⑧ A Dream That Changed A Life



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## Great Bible Truths

1. A divided family brings sorrow to everyone.
2. God is with his people no matter where they are.

## Genesis 27:41-28:22

Esau was so angry after Jacob stole his father's blessing from him that he planned to kill him just as soon as his elderly father died. When Rebecca heard this, she warned Jacob and urged him to escape to the house of her brother, Laban, who lived far away in Haran. Before Jacob left, his father Isaac reminded him of the promise that God had given to Abraham and said that the promise was also for him. He also told him not to marry any woman from Canaan, but to find a wife in the land from which Rebecca came. With that, Isaac sent his son away, to save his life.

When the first night came, Jacob used a smooth rock as a pillow and laid down to sleep. Soon, he had a strange dream. He saw a ladder that went up from the ground all the way to heaven. Angels were climbing up and coming down the ladder, and at his side was God Himself! God said, "I am the God of your grandfather and your father. You will have many descendants and this land where you are sleeping will belong to you and to all of your descendants. All the families of the earth will be blessed because of you and your family. I am with you wherever you go."

When Jacob woke up, he thought, "God is here. This place is holy. This is the gate to heaven!" Then he took the rock he had used for a pillow and set it up as a pillar and poured oil upon it. He called the place "Bethel" which means "House of God." Jacob promised that if God would protect and bless him as He had said in the dream, God would be his Lord all of his life and he would always give God one tenth of everything he earned. This is called a "tithe."

## Talk About the Story:

What did Esau plan to do about his brother and why? Where did Rebecca tell Jacob to go? What did Isaac tell Jacob before sending him away? What happened to Jacob the first night of his trip? What was his dream? What did Jacob do with the rock when he woke up? What did he promise God?

## What Do You Say?

How do you think Isaac and Rebecca felt when they learned about the plans of Esau, their son, to kill their other son, Jacob? What would you think if you had a dream like Jacob's dream? What do you think of Jacob's promise to God? What have you promised to God?

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***“Remember, I will be with you  
and protect you wherever you  
go, and I will bring you back to  
this land.” Genesis 28:15***



9

# Jacob's Surprise Wedding



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## Great Bible Truths

1. Our future and success in life is always in God's hands.
2. God's way is for one man and one woman alone to be in love.

## Genesis 29:1-30:21

Running far from his brother Esau, Jacob headed for Haran. When he got there, he asked some shepherds if they knew his uncle, Laban. They told him that they did and that his uncle was well. Even as they were talking, Laban's youngest daughter, Rachael, came by. Jacob talked to her and right away fell in love with her. She took him to her father, Laban, who was very glad to receive him.

After a month, Laban offered work to Jacob. He agreed to work for Laban for seven years if he would let him marry Rachael at the end of that time. It seemed to Jacob like a very short time because he loved Rachael so much. When the seven years had passed, Laban prepared everything for the wedding and brought to Jacob the bride, with her face covered by a heavy veil, as was the custom in those days. After the ceremony, Jacob wanted to see his wife and lifted her veil. What a surprise, his bride was not Rachael, but instead, was Leah, Rachael's older sister! Jacob asked Laban why he had done such a thing to him, and he answered that it was the custom that the older daughter must marry before the younger one. So, if he wanted to have Rachael for his wife, he would have to work for him for another seven years!

Jacob loved Rachael so much that he agreed. He received Rachael as his second wife and promised to work another seven years for her. God saw that Jacob looked down on Leah and had Rachael as his favorite. Therefore, God let Leah have children but Rachael did not seem able to have children. Jacob had seven sons with Leah, two with Rachel's servant and two with Leah's servant, according to the customs and laws of that time. At last, God answered their prayers and Rachael had a son. She and Jacob named him Joseph.

God greatly blessed the work of Jacob and finally Jacob become richer than his uncle, Laban. This caused Laban and his sons to become very jealous of Jacob and they started to have a lot of trouble between them.

## Talk About The Story:

How did Jacob meet Rachael when he got to Haran? What did he agree to do in order to marry Rachael? How did Laban fool Jacob? What more did Jacob have to do to marry Rachael?

## What Do You Say?

How do you feel when you come to a new place alone? How do you think Rachel felt when Jacob fell so much in love with her? How do you think Jacob felt when he saw he married the wrong girl? How do you think Leah felt when she saw how little Jacob loved her in comparison with Rachel? Why do you think Jacob got richer than his uncle Laban?

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***“Find a wife and you find a good thing; it shows that the Lord is good to you.” Proverbs 18:22***



# Jacob Comes Home



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## Great Bible Truths

1. There are times when God's servants suffer at the hands of others.
2. God helps his servants to make peace with those who are their enemies.

## Genesis 31:1-33:20

As time passed, Jacob became richer than Laban, his wife's father. For this reason, Laban and members of his family became envious of Jacob and began to dislike him. Then God gave Jacob a dream, telling him to go back to Canaan where he had been born. Jacob told his two wives about this and the family packed right away and secretly left Haran so Laban would not notice.

Three days later, Laban discovered this and with armed men left right away chasing after Jacob and his family. Seven days later, he caught up with them. But God gave Laban a dream in which he told him not to speak harshly. When Laban caught up with Jacob, he spoke to him mildly. The two men raised a pile of rocks as a sign of their agreement to peacefully separate. They called the place "Mizpah", which means "Place of Watch" because they asked God to watch them both. Then Laban said goodbye to his daughters and grandchildren.

Jacob continued on his way and when he reached the edge of Canaan, he sent some messengers to let his brother Esau know he was coming. But Esau lived farther away, in Edom, and the messengers went there and told him. The messengers came back to Jacob and told him that Esau would come and meet him, bringing 400 men. When Jacob heard this, he was really frightened, thinking that Esau planned to kill him. So, he divided his family and servants into two groups so if Esau killed one group, the other group would escape. Then he prayed to God and prepared gifts for his brother, sending them on ahead of his family hoping to calm his brother.

All that night, Jacob wrestled with God until sunrise. At that moment, God wounded Jacob in the hip, ending the fight. Then, he blessed him and gave him the name "Israel" which means "God struggles" or "he who struggles with God." Jacob limped from that day on, as a sign of his struggle with God. The next morning, Esau came to where Jacob was, and in spite of all that had happened before, Esau ran to hug Jacob. Although he didn't want to do so, he accepted Jacob's many gifts. Then, Esau returned to live in Edom and Jacob remained in Canaan.

### Talk About the Story:

Why did Jacob leave Haran? What happened when Laban caught up with Jacob and his family? What did Jacob's messengers tell him about Esau? What did Jacob do to protect his family from Esau? What happened to Jacob's leg? How did Esau act when he saw Jacob?

### What do you say?

How do you feel when others do better than you? Have you ever worried about something that turned out all right? Why do you think Esau was so friendly to Jacob when he came to him? Do you need to forgive someone who has done something very bad to you?



***"Your name will no longer be Jacob. You have struggled with God and with men, and you have won." Genesis 32:28***





# 11

# Joseph Sold as a Slave



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## Great Bible Truths:

1. Bad feelings in a family cause great suffering.
2. God saves those who love him in spite of bad things that happen.

## Genesis 37:1-36

After living for some time in Canaan, Rachel and Israel (Jacob) had a second child, Joseph's brother, Benjamin. A few years later Israel's wife Rachel died and so did his father Isaac. Israel lived with his twelve sons, but he loved Joseph, the child of Rachel, most of all. He loved him more than all his other sons.

When Joseph was 17 years old, he cared for the sheep along with his brothers. Whenever one of them did something wrong, Joseph told it to Israel. His brothers grew angry at him for this. One day, Israel gave him a beautiful coat of many colors. When the brothers saw that Israel loved Joseph more than them, they hated Joseph and acted mean.

One time, Joseph dreamed that he was gathering cut wheat and the bunch of wheat he held stood up by itself and the bunches of wheat his brothers held bowed in front of his bunch. Then he dreamed that the sun, the moon, and eleven stars fell down before him. When Joseph told his brothers about the dreams, they grew even more angry. Even Israel scolded him for suggesting that he and his sons should honor Joseph in this way. But Israel never stopped thinking about what these dreams could mean.

At another time, Joseph's brothers had gone far away to find new pastures for the sheep. Israel sent Joseph to see how the brothers were doing and to come back and tell him. Joseph went where the brothers were supposed to be, but found that they had gone even farther away. He kept going until, at last, he saw them. But when they saw him coming, they decided to kill him and throw him in a dry well and say that some wild animal had killed him. They said, "We will see what will happen to his dreams then." But Ruben, the oldest brother, convinced them not to kill Joseph. Instead, they took away his beautiful coat and let him down into a dry well to stay. Later, a group of Ishmaelite traders came along and the brothers decided to sell Joseph as a slave for 20 silver coins instead of leaving him to die. When they got home, they told Israel that they found Joseph's coat covered with blood. Israel cried and was always sad because he thought his son had been killed by some animals.

## Talk about the Story:

Who was Joseph? How did Joseph get along with his brothers? What did Joseph's father do that only made things worse? Tell about Joseph's two strange dreams. What trip did Joseph make all alone? What did the brothers talk about doing to Joseph when they saw him coming? What did they finally do to him?

## What do you Say?

What do you think about Joseph's ideas about his brothers? What would you do if you had a brother like Joseph? What do you do when you feel jealousy?

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***The brothers pulled Joseph out of the well  
and sold him for twenty pieces of silver.***

**Genesis 37:28**

# 12

# Joseph, a Prisoner in Egypt



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## Great Bible Truths

1. God has great plans for those who resist the temptations of people who want to do wrong.
2. Those who love and serve God always bring God's blessings to other people.

## Genesis 39:1-40:23

The traders who bought Joseph took him to sell in Egypt. There they sold him to a man named Potiphar, a rich man who worked for the king of Egypt. God was with Joseph and for that reason God blessed his work and made the business of Potiphar richer.

Joseph was very good looking and after a while Potiphar's wife thought she loved him. Many times, she tried to be alone with Joseph, but he knew that Potiphar trusted him and Joseph refused to do anything wrong, sinning against God. One day, Joseph came into the house on an errand. Only Potiphar's wife was in the house and she grabbed Joseph's robe and tried to make love with him. Joseph ran out of the house, but the woman had his robe in her hands. She was very angry and shouted that Joseph had tried to abuse her.

Potiphar became very angry and sent Joseph to prison. God went with Joseph to prison and blessed him there. The head jailor quickly saw that God was with Joseph and he put him over all the prisoners. He knew he could trust Joseph in all his work.

One time, the man who served wine to the king along with the king's baker were put in prison. While in prison, they both had strange dreams. The wine servant dreamed that a grape vine had three branches that suddenly had grapes. He squeezed the grapes and gave wine to the king, the Pharaoh. The baker dreamed that he had three baskets of bread on his head and that birds flew down and ate the bread. Joseph told them the meaning of the dreams: In three days, the wine servant would go back to work but the baker would be taken and his head would be cut off. Joseph asked the wine servant to speak to the king about him and send him home to his father. On the third day, everything happened just as Joseph had said and the wine servant promised to help Joseph. However, the wine servant didn't say anything to the king for two more years.

## Talk about the Story:

Who was Potiphar? What was Joseph's life like in Potiphar's house? Why did they send Joseph to prison? What job did Joseph have in prison? Who did he help there? What did the wine servant promise Joseph, and what did he do?

## What do you Say?

What do you see God doing in Joseph's life as a slave and a prisoner? What do you do when faced by a large temptation? How do you feel and act when you have big problems? Has God helped you in some special way?

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***But the Lord was with Joseph  
and blessed him, so that the  
jailer was pleased with him.  
Genesis 39:21***



### Great Bible Truths

1. God reveals his plans to those who love him and serve him well.
2. The Lord uses hard things in life to prepare his children for important jobs.

## Genesis 41:1-46

One night, the Pharaoh had two strange dreams. In the first, he saw seven fat cows grazing near the Nile River. Seven thin cows came out of the river and ate the fat cows. In the second dream, he saw seven large stalks of wheat which were eaten by seven dry and useless stalks of wheat. These dreams bothered the king very much and when the morning came, he called all the wise men and magicians of Egypt to come and tell the meaning of the dreams. But when he told them the dreams, no one could give their meaning. Then the wine servant remembered Joseph and told the king about him. The king sent for him to come immediately from the prison. Joseph cut his hair and changed his clothes before seeing the Pharaoh. When the king told Joseph the dreams, Joseph said that only God could give the meaning. Then he told the king what God had let him understand. The seven fat cows and the seven heavy stalks of wheat represented seven years of large crops in Egypt. The seven thin cows and the seven thin, dry stalks of wheat meant seven years of very poor crops. Joseph told the king that he should name a leader to collect and store much wheat during the seven good years to use during the seven bad years. The king was so impressed with the wisdom of Joseph that he named him right then to be that man and to serve the king as governor of all Egypt. The king even took off his own ring and put it on Joseph's finger and had Joseph dressed in the very finest clothes.

All this power and riches did not change Joseph at all. He stayed being just and fair with everyone and stored away the great crops of wheat. During this time, Joseph had two sons: Mannases and Ephraim. When the seven years of hunger came, just as Joseph had said, people came from many places to buy the wheat that Joseph had stored away.

### Talk about the story:

What were Pharaoh's two strange dreams? Why did Pharaoh command for them to bring Joseph to him? Who did Joseph say was the only one who knew the meaning of such dreams? What did the dreams mean? What did the king do when he heard Joseph's advice?

### What would you say?

How do you think the Pharaoh felt when none of his wise men or magicians could tell him the meaning of his dreams? What do you think Joseph thought about when officials came to the prison to take him to the king? Have you ever felt like God had forgotten all about you? Why do you think God can make good things happen out of bad?

**God has shown you all this, so it is obvious that you have greater wisdom and insight than anyone else.**

**Genesis 41:39**

