

Lower Elementary

Jacob's Travels

Checklist

- ☐ Popsicle sticks (optional)
- ☐ Hole puncher
- ☐ Angel template
- ☐ yarn

Introduction:

Have all the children run in place. Ask them to name things people might run away from:

- a bee
- a wolf
- a grizzly bear
- a giant runaway snowball

Does running make you very tired? Imagine running away from your brother because he was so mad at you, he wanted to hurt you.

Esau was furious with his brother Jacob because he had stolen the blessing that was supposed to be his. Rebecca knew her two sons needed some time apart. She told Jacob to go visit her brother Laban in her hometown of Haran.

“I will send you a message when your brother has calmed down,” she promised.

Jacob travelled all day, hurrying so he wouldn’t have to face his brother after he had tricked their old, blind father. At sunset he reached the town of Beersheba.



Jacob had nowhere to stay on his journey. He found a rock to lean against and despite how hard it was, Jacob was tired enough to fall asleep anywhere.

As he dreamt, he saw a ladder that reached from earth to heaven, with angels going up and down on it. Jacob must have realized that he was very far away from God. He had done bad things, and so there was a huge distance between himself and God, but God was making a connection for him. The Lord appeared to Jacob beside the ladder. “The land where you sleep tonight will one day belong to your family,” He promised. “Your descendants will spread over the earth in all directions and become as numerous as the grains of sand. Your family will be a blessing to all people. Wherever you go, I will watch over you.”



Jacob thought his visit to his Uncle Laban would be a short trip...but it lasted twenty years! During that time, his uncle tricked him. Jacob got a taste of his own medicine. Now he understood what it was like to be treated the way he had treated Esau. But even then, God was watching over Jacob and helped him to be successful where he was.

One day God spoke to Jacob. "It's time for you to go back to your home. Don't worry, I will bless you."

By this time Jacob had quite a large family. With over a dozen children and hundreds of animals, Jacob began the long journey home.



One night along the road, Jacob felt like he needed to be alone. A mysterious Man came and wrestled with Jacob until just before sunrise. He threw Jacob's hip out of joint, so that from then on Jacob would have to walk with a cane, humble and in need of others' help. But even with his hip hurting, Jacob wouldn't give up until the Man agreed to bless him. "What is your name?" The Stranger asked. "Jacob." "No," He replied. "From now on, you will be called Israel, because you have wrestled with God and with men, and you have won." Confused by these words, Jacob asked, "Well, what is your name?" "You don't know who I am?" He asked, before giving His blessing. Jacob was in awe as he realized he had seen God face to face.



As Jacob got close to his brother's home, he became nervous. Could his brother still be angry with him after all these years? Jacob was a different man now. He had learned many lessons. But Esau didn't know that.

When Esau heard that Jacob was coming, he ran toward his brother and hugged and kissed him. They both cried for joy.

Esau saw Jacob's enormous family and all the animals he brought. Jacob tried to give his brother many of his animals as gifts, but Esau refused.

"Master," Jacob answered, addressing his brother with humility, "Please accept them as a sign of our renewed friendship. It meant so much to me for you to welcome me back. Seeing your face felt like seeing the face of God." And Jacob certainly knew what he was talking about there!



Closing Discussion:



What did Jacob see in his dream? (angels going up and down a staircase, God speaking to him)

What promises did God make to Jacob? (to give him the land where he was, to make his children a great nation that would bless the whole earth) Do you remember who else God made this promise to? (his grandfather, Abraham)

After spending twenty years with his uncle, Jacob became rich and had a big family. How do you think this made him feel about himself? (proud) How was Jacob planning to get his brother to forgive him? (buying forgiveness with gifts)

Who came to wrestle with Jacob the night before he met Esau? (God) What did God do for Jacob? (blessed him and gave him a new name, Israel)

How was Jacob different after wrestling with God? (he was injured, his limp humbled him) Can we earn forgiveness from God with gifts? (no) Does God want us to be humble? (yes)

Just like Esau forgave Jacob with open arms, God wants to forgive us of the bad things we do with open arms. He loves us and just wants us to come to Him with humble, gentle hearts.

Craft:

Angels on ladder

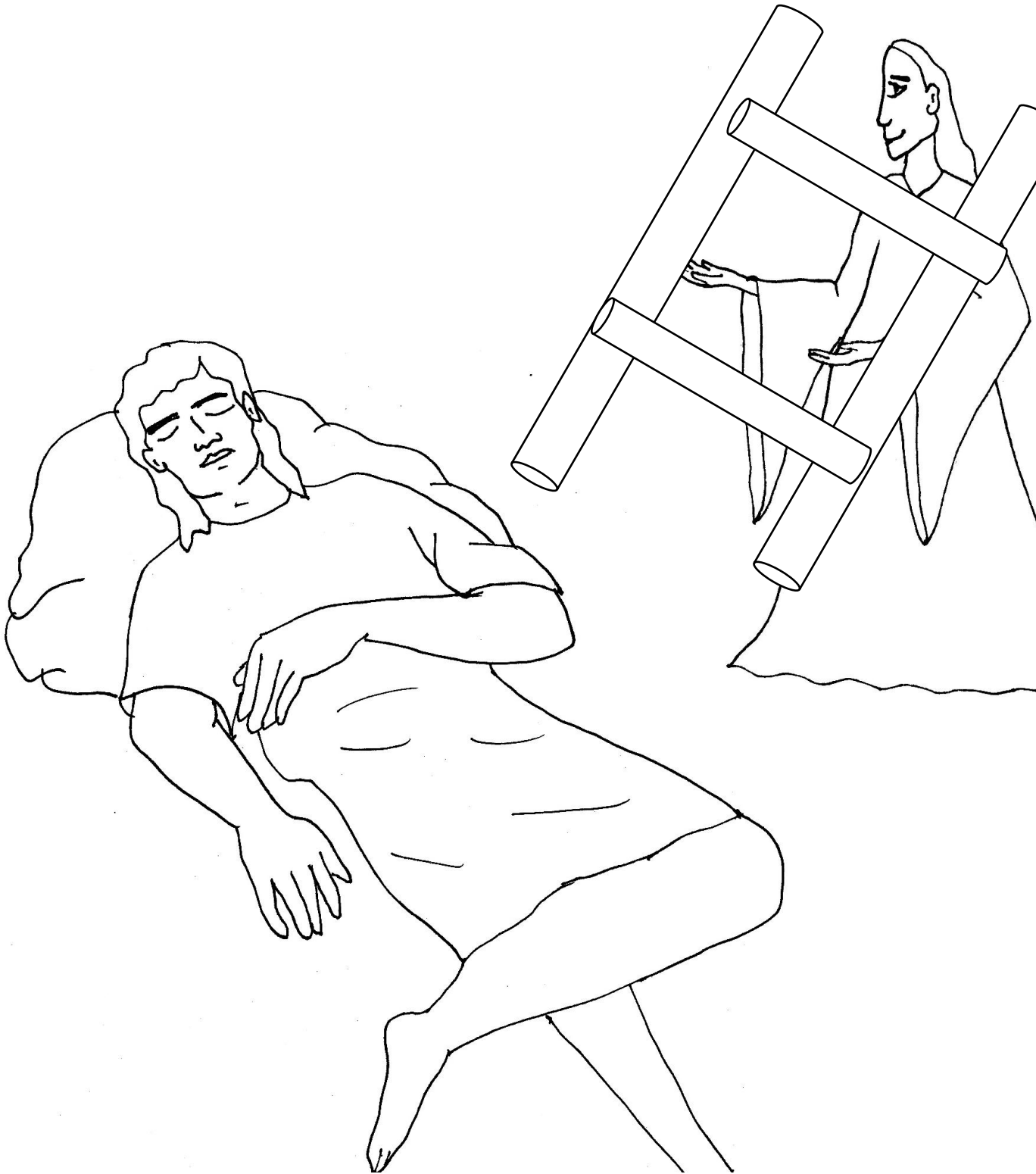
Closing Activity:

Children can pair up and thumb wrestle.

Jacob's Travels



Name: _____



The LORD was standing beside the ladder and said: I am the LORD God who was worshiped by Abraham and Isaac...Wherever you go, I will watch over you. ~ Genesis 28:13,15

Harder Option

- ❖ Children glue popsicle sticks together to make ladder
- ❖ Children cut out angels
- ❖ Teacher hole punches angels and strings yarn through
- ❖ Children pull angels up and down ladder



Easier Option

- ❖ Print ladder onto cardstock
- ❖ Children cut out ladder halves and glue/tape together
- ❖ Children color angels and cut around boxes only
- ❖ Teacher hole punches angels and strings yarn through
- ❖ Children pull angels up and down ladder



