

# *Upper Elementary*

## *Jacob's Travels*

All scripture quotations are taken from the World English Bible, 2020.

## Checklist

- ☐Pillow
- ☐Bottle of medicine
- ☐Tennis ball
- ☐Can of seltzer
- ☐Measuring tape
- ☐Ladder (full size)
- ☐Wooden cross

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Intro:           | <p>What do you want to be when you grow up? Or what would you like to do? (chef, doctor, have a family, live in Paris, climb a mountain, etc.) Give students nametags to write a name on that reflects their goal (Mountain-Climber, Chef, etc). Have students wear their nametags and for the rest of class, address them by those names. Make a nametag for yourself, too. God sometimes gave name changes to people in the Bible to show what their future would be like. Just like the names we're going by today, Jacob's new name showed who he would become. His children would become the nation of Israel.</p>  |
| Genesis 27:41-45 | <p>Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him. Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand. Then I will kill my brother Jacob." The words of Esau, her elder son, were told to Rebekah. She sent and called Jacob, her younger son, and said to him, "Behold, your brother Esau comforts himself about you by planning to kill you. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice. Arise, flee to Laban, my brother, in Haran. Stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury turns away—until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him. Then I will send, and get you from there. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?"</p> |
| can of seltzer   | <p>When we feel angry it's like shaking up a can of soda. Shake the can quickly and then act like you will open it. What would happen if I opened this can right now? (It would explode all over the table) If you are feeling angry at someone what might you do if you act on your anger right away? (get in a fight, call someone a name, etc.) Esau would have murdered his own brother if he had been able to act on his anger right away.</p>  |



Raiders of the Good Book

1

### Jacob's Travels



Genesis 27:41-45

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When someone does something to upset me, I should react:

- ☐ right away
- ☐ after I have had time to cool down

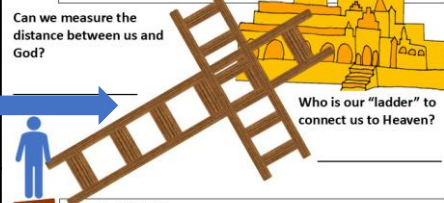
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| measuring tape   | Go into the hallway and have two students take opposite ends of a measuring tape. Stretch it out all the way. Now ask them to shake hands. Can they do it? (no)   |
| ladder and cross | Just like they can't reach across the measuring tape to shake hands, 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. In his dream, Jacob saw a ladder reaching between him and God, to connect them. Jacob could never climb to heaven himself, so God made the connection for him. Just like Jacob, we have a huge distance between us and God. It's longer than a measuring tape, and can't be measured by anything. Place the cross on the ladder. Jesus came to earth to be our ladder. When He died on the cross, he made the connection between us and heaven. |
| Genesis 28:13-15 | Behold, Yahweh stood above it, and said, "I am Yahweh, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. I will give the land you lie on to you and to your offspring. Your offspring will be as the dust of the earth, and you will spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. In you and in your offspring, all the families of the earth will be blessed. Behold, I am with you, and will keep you, wherever you go, and will bring you again into this land. For I will not leave you until I have done that which I have spoken of to you."   |

2

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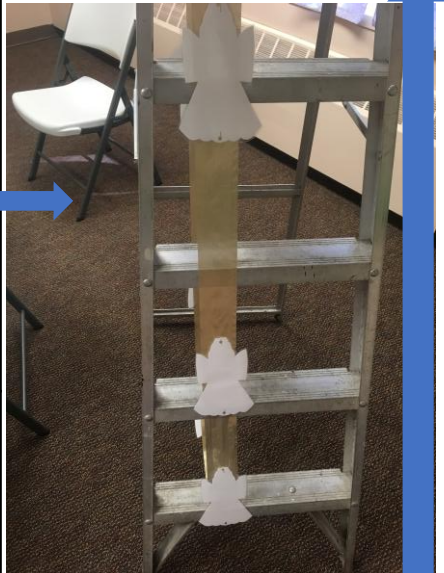
Can we measure the distance between us and God?



3

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|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
|                  | How did God introduce Himself to Isaac? (He was worshiped by Jacob's father and grandfather) Just because his family worshiped God, did that mean Jacob worshiped God? (no)  |
|                  | What are some things kids can inherit from their parents? (money, a house, eye or hair color, keepsakes, a nose) Does having parents or grandparents who have a relationship with God mean you automatically have one, too? (no) It is wonderful to have people in your family know God and teach you about Him, but it's not the same thing as knowing God yourself. God wants to introduce Himself to you, too.  |
| Genesis 28:16-19 | Jacob awakened out of his sleep, and he said, "Surely Yahweh is in this place, and I didn't know it." He was afraid, and said, "How awesome this place is! This is none other than God's house, and this is the gate of heaven." Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on its top. He called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of the city was Luz at the first. |
| medicine bottle  | Jacob thought his visit to his Uncle Laban would be a short trip, but it was 20 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 treated Esau. But even then, God was watching over Jacob and helped him to be successful where he was.  |

How did God introduce Himself to Jacob?

The Lord God who was worshiped by \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_.

Just because Jacob's father and grandfather had relationships with God, did that mean Jacob did, too? \_\_\_\_\_

Something I can inherit from my parents: \_\_\_\_\_

I can have a relationship with God:

☐ Because I inherit it from my parents

☐ I want to make God the center of my life



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Genesis  
31:1-7

Jacob heard Laban's sons' words, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's. He has obtained all this wealth from that which was our father's." Jacob saw the expression on Laban's face, and, behold, it was not toward him as before. Yahweh said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers, and to your relatives, and I will be with you." Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field to his flock, and said to them, "I see the expression on your father's face, that it is not toward me as before; but the God of my father has been with me. You know that I have served your father with all of my strength. Your father has deceived me, and changed my wages ten times, but God didn't allow him to hurt me.

God told Jacob it was time for him to leave his Uncle Laban's home. He got his family together and packed his things. He did not know if Esau would forgive him.

20 Years Later...



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While living in Haran, Jacob had eleven sons and one daughter. He would later have one more son, making 13 children.





Genesis 32:24-32

Jacob was left alone, and wrestled with a man there until the breaking of the day. When he saw that he didn't prevail against him, the man touched the hollow of his thigh, and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was strained as he wrestled. The man said, "Let me go, for the day breaks." Jacob said, "I won't let you go unless you bless me." He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob". He said, "Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have fought with God and with men, and have prevailed." Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." He said, "Why is it that you ask what my name is?" So, he blessed him there. Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for he said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." The sun rose on him as he passed over Peniel, and he limped because of his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel don't eat the sinew of the hip, which is on the hollow of the thigh, to this day, because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the hip.



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Who had Jacob wrestled with? (God and men) Whose face did Jacob say he saw? (God)

Who had Jacob wrestled with?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
 Whose face did Jacob say he saw? \_\_\_\_\_

pillow

Give students a pillow to wrestle with one at a time. As they do, name things that we "wrestle" with spiritually.

You want to go to a movie that your parents said has bad things in it.

The coolest kid in class will want to talk to you if you share gossip about other kids.

You forgot to study for a test and can easily see a smart classmate's answers without being caught.

Your friend invited you to a birthday party on a Sunday morning.

Your friends don't know as much about the Bible as you do, so you start to think you're better than them.

When we know what God wants us to do, but we don't want to do it, it can feel like we're wrestling with God. God wants us to give in to Him. If we don't do it willingly, He might choose to let us get hurt by the things we want in order to learn our lesson.

Genesis  
33:4-10

Esau ran to meet him, embraced him, fell on his neck, kissed him, and they wept. He lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, "Who are these with you?" He said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." Then the servants came near with their children, and they bowed themselves. Leah also and her children came near, and bowed themselves. After them, Joseph came near with Rachel, and they bowed themselves. Esau said, "What do you mean by all this company which I met?" Jacob said, "To find favor in the sight of my lord." Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; let that which you have be yours." Jacob said, "Please, no, if I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present at my hand, because I have seen your face, as one sees the face of God, and you were pleased with me.



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can of  
seltzer

Remember how angry Esau was when Jacob left? He was ready to explode with rage. But after twenty years, he had had time to calm down. Take the can of seltzer and open it. Just like this can of soda only needed a few minutes, you should normally only need a few minutes to calm down when you are angry at someone. You can take a minute to pray and ask God to help you calm down.

Closing:

Draw a smiley face on a tennis ball. Each time someone is mean to us; we should bounce back with gentle words. Have students make a line in the hall and let them take turns throwing the ball against the wall. For each example of meanness, try to think of a gentle response.

- Someone takes the seat you saved for your friend.
- You see someone taking cuts in line in front of you.
- Your brother gets to watch his favorite show and you don't.
- Someone breaks your new toy.
- Your sister destroys your favorite Lego creation.



# Jacob's Travels



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**Can we measure the distance between us and God?**



**Who is our "ladder" to connect us to Heaven?**

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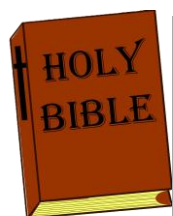
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I can have a relationship with God:

☐ Because I inherit it from my parents

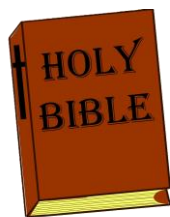
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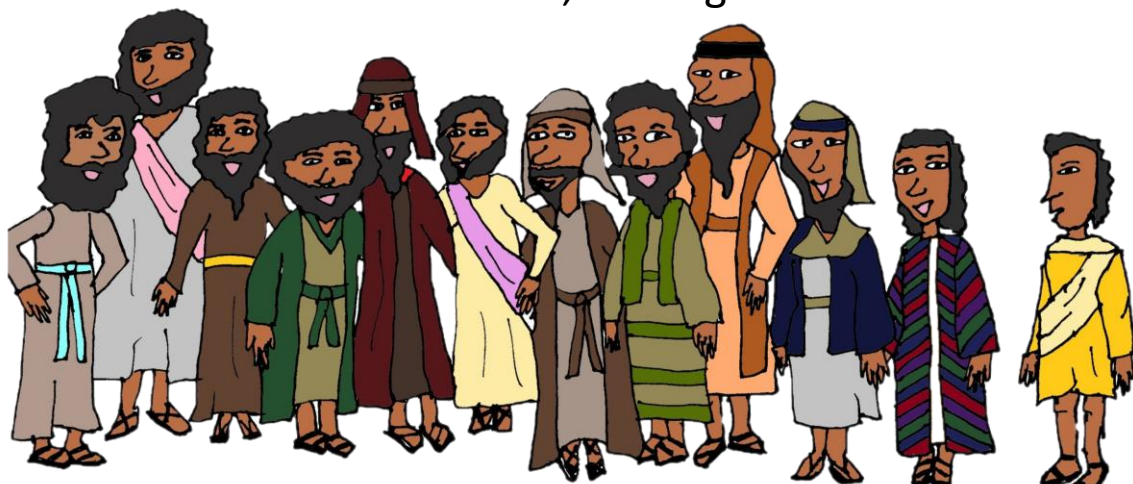


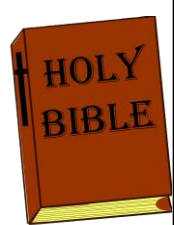
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**Who had Jacob wrestled with?**

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**Whose face did Jacob say he saw?** \_\_\_\_\_



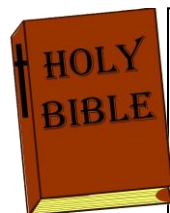


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# Jacob's Travels



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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| I | E | R | T | N | Y | C | E | D | O |
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| Y | S | H | D | E | I | O | H | G | X |
| F | A | M | I | L | Y | P | E | I | C |
| T | U | H | J | S | K | L | L | S | V |
| R | D | S | A | Z | X | C | V | R | B |
| E | H | E | A | V | E | N | B | A | N |
| W | D | F | G | H | J | K | L | E | M |
| Q | A | S | W | R | E | S | T | L | E |

JACOB

ANGELS

GOD

ISRAEL

BETHEL

HEAVEN

ESAU

FAMILY

WRESTLE

ROCK

LADDER