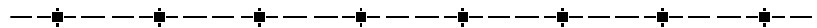


Old Testament

Mission Arlington • Mission Metroplex Curriculum • 2008

Families of the Old Testament



Created for use with young, unchurched learners
Adaptable for all ages including adults

Old Testament

A Father-in-law is Deceitful

Jacob and Laban

Genesis 29-31

A Father-in-law is Deceitful
Genesis 31

Memory Verse:

God is fair. He will not forget what you have done.
Hebrews 6:10 (NirV)

Lesson Goals:

1. Learn that Laban’s feelings toward Jacob changed.
2. Understand Jacob endured unjust treatment under Laban.
3. Recognize that God saw everything that was happening.
4. Understand that God will take care of us.

Last week, we learned about Jacob and Rachel. Jacob had to go away from his family. He traveled to where his mother’s family lived. There God gave him a new family.

Read the Bible

READ: Genesis 31:36-55 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Begin with Prayer

After Jacob had stayed with his new family for a month, Laban offered to pay Jacob for his work. (Genesis 28:14-15) Jacob was in love with Rachel. He agreed to work for Laban for seven years so that he could marry Rachel. (Genesis 28:18-20) Time passed, and Jacob did get to marry Rachel. But Laban tricked Jacob, and he married Leah first. (Genesis 28:22-28) [*Teacher: Please explain that God’s plan is that every man should have one wife.*]

Jacob continued working for Laban. But, Laban’s sons were jealous because God made Jacob rich. You may remember that we studied about other people who were jealous. We learned about Cain and Abel, Sarah and Hagar, Ishmael and Isaac, and Jacob and Esau. Good things did not happen in those situations. God does not want us to be jealous. (Romans 13:13)

“Jacob noticed that Laban’s feeling toward him had changed.” (Genesis 31:1-2) God told Jacob that He had seen everything that Laban had been doing. (Genesis 31:11) You may recall that God said the same thing to Hagar when Sarah mistreated her. (Genesis 16:6-9) God spoke to Jacob, and told him to go back to his family and to his father’s land. God promised to be with Jacob. (Genesis 31:3-14)

So, Jacob talked to Leah and Rachel. He reminded them that Laban had changed his pay, ten times. This was not right. God is fair, and He wants us to be fair. God sees when we are kind to others. He says that when we show love to others, we are showing love to Him. He will not forget it. (Hebrews 6:10) The Bible tells us that “love does no harm to its neighbor.” (Romans 13:10 NirV). Jacob was not only a neighbor. He was part of Laban’s family. The Bible tells us, “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” (Mark 12:31 NirV)

But, Laban was not a worshipper of God. Laban worshipped idols. (Genesis 31:19) When someone does not behave in a way that is kind, it could be that they do not know Jesus.

Jacob and Laban Bible Facts

1. Laban mistreated Jacob.
2. Laban's son's were jealous.
3. Laban mistreated his daughters.
4. Jacob tricked Laban and ran away.
5. Laban and Jacob agreed not to harm each other.

Leah and Rachel agreed to go with Jacob. They said that their father treated them like strangers. They were probably not happy with the way their father treated them. [Teacher: If questions arise, remind the children that God's plan is that each man should marry one wife, and certainly not sisters. Some children may be too young for this information.] Sometimes in families, parents may treat their children unfairly. The Bible tells parents not to make their children angry. It tells children to honor and obey their parents. (Ephesians 6:1-4) [Teacher: Be sensitive to your children. Some may have difficult circumstances. Listen prayerfully.]

When Laban was gone, Jacob ran away. But Laban went after him. Laban told Jacob, "I have the power to harm you. But last night the God of your father spoke to me. He said, 'Be careful. Do not say anything to Jacob, whether it is good or bad.'" (Genesis 31:20-29) God spoke to Laban, even though Laban was an idol worshipper. God had promised to be with Jacob, and He let Laban know it. (Genesis 31:29) God cares about us. (1 Peter 5:7) He is our protector. (Psalm 32:7) God sent Jesus so that we can know Him better. God wants us to know that He cares about us and wants to protect us.

Jacob and Laban talked. They agreed not to harm each other. They made a promise. They were at a place called Mizpah. "Laban said, "May the Lord keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other.'" (Genesis 31:49) The next morning, Laban said goodbye to his children and grandchildren. He blessed them and went home. (Genesis 31:55)

Review questions.

1. How did Laban treat Jacob? (Laban changed Jacob's wages ten times.)
2. Did Laban's son's like Jacob? (Laban's sons were jealous of Jacob.)
3. How did Laban treat his daughters? (They said he treated them like strangers.)
4. What did Jacob do? (He took his family and his flock and ran away.)
5. What did Laban do? (Followed him and made an agreement not to harm Jacob.)

Do you know Jesus? God sent Jesus because He loves us. He wants us to know that He cares about us and wants to protect us. We can know God in a personal relationship because Jesus came to die on the cross for our sins. Jesus rose from the dead. Because Jesus is alive, we can go to heaven. Jesus is the way to heaven. (John 14:6) If you invite Him into you life, He will come and be a part of your life. He will forgive your sins. You will know God.

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus .
3. Ask God to help you to be kind to others.
4. Pray for friends and family members who may be unjust (not fair).

Application

Jacob had a new family, but then problems began. Laban's sons were jealous, and Laban's feelings toward Jacob changed. Jacob endured unjust treatment under Laban. God saw everything that was happening. God told Jacob to go home to his father and that He would be with him. God cares about us. God protected Jacob when he ran away from Esau and when he ran away from Laban. God wants to protect us, too. But, God wants us to be kind. "God is fair. He will remember the love you have shown Him. You showed it when you helped His people. And you show it when you keep on helping them." (Hebrews 6:10 NIRV)

Planning for the next week:

Joseph (A Son is Favored) — Genesis 37-39

Preschool Lesson

Read the Bible

READ: Genesis 31:44-55 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Sing: “It’s a Small World,” or another song related to the story.

(God told Jacob He saw everything that was happening to him. Bring binoculars, kaleidoscopes, magnifying glasses, cameras with lenses that extend, and other items that can help children see. Allow them to see through the different lenses. Talk about what they saw.)

Laban was unkind to Jacob. But God protected Jacob. God told Jacob that He had seen everything that Laban had been doing. (Genesis 31:11)

God spoke to Laban, even though Laban was not a worshipper of God. (To worship is to treat someone like they are the best thing in the whole wide world. That is what honor and reverence are.) Laban was an idol worshipper. (An idol is like a picture; the idol can be made of paper, wood, clay or metal) God told Laban not to say or do anything to Jacob. (Genesis 31:20-29) God had promised to be with Jacob, and He let Laban know it. (Genesis 31:29) God cares about us. (1 Peter 5:7) He wants to be with us always.

Jacob and Laban talked. They agreed not to harm each other. They made a promise. They were at a place called Mizpah. “Laban said, “May the Lord keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other.”” (Genesis 31:29) The next morning, Laban said goodbye to his children and grandchildren. He blessed them and went home. (Genesis 31:55)

God is our protector, too. (Psalm 32:7) God took care of Jacob. We can pray and ask God to take care of us. God sent Jesus so that we can know Him better. God wants us to know that He cares about us and wants to protect us.

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus so that we can know Him.
3. Thank God for your family.

Did you know? You can help a preschooler feel safe.

Consider this: Be there consistently. Be calm (even when they are not). Be a good listener. Have a routine. Having a routine is one of the best ways to help a preschooler feel safe, so they will know what to expect. Set up a schedule for your preschoolers. Use pictures to depict what is next on the schedule. Use kids sitting in a circle to depict story time. Use blocks to depict play time. Use trees to depict time outside. Be creative. Share this information with parents.

Learning Activities

- **Memory verse activity**— Bring alphabet cereal, soup, or some other treat for the children.

Make sure they wash their hands. Have the children find the letters to the scripture reference. If they are older you could have them find the letters for the whole verse. Practice the verse and eat the treats.

- **Test your memory**— Bring stickers of families (adults, children, etc.) and animals (camels, donkeys, sheep—animals that Isaac had). Put the stickers on a poster board as you tell the story. Ask the children to retell the story using the stickers. If possible bring enough stickers for everyone to create their own poster.

- **Taste activity**— Bake cookies in the shapes of letters that spell Laban and Jacob. As the children eat their treats, talk about how God is fair. Tell the children God remembers when we are kind to others.

- **Think about it** — Tell the children that God allows people to choose behavior. Many people choose to sin. Talk about God being our protector. Bring pictures of how chickens protect their chicks. Look for some on the Internet.

The Bible says that God is fair. Talk about fairness. Use scripture to help the children understand how God wants us to behave.

1. Treat people the way you want to be treated. (Matthew 7:12.)
2. Tell the truth. (Colossians 3:9)
3. Think about your actions. (Galatians 6:4)
4. Don't blame others. Confess your sins. (1 John 1:9)

- **Touch activity**— Bring binoculars, kaleidoscopes, magnifying glasses, cameras with lenses that extend, and other items that can help children see. Allow them to see through the different lenses. Talk about what they saw. Remind them that God told Jacob, He saw everything that was happening to him. Tell them God sees everything and cares about us.

- **Run and play**— Have the children divide into groups of five to seven (depending on the size of your group.). Make sure that the children in each group are different heights. Have the children walk as fast as they can in races. Tell them that Jacob had to run away from Laban. Talk about God's protection.

- **Listen**— Remind the children that God protects them. As they take time for silence, remind them that God wants everyone to be kind.

- **Sing**— Sing "God Is My Refuge" or a song related to the story.

Memory Verse

God is fair.
He will not
forget what
you have done.
Hebrews 6:10
(NIV)

Word Art

Trace the letters.

God saw

everything

that was

happening.

Word Puzzle

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

CHANGE

PAY

TEN

TRICKED

RAN

STRANGER

FOLLOWED

SEVEN

HARM

Word Puzzle

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

CHANGE

PAY

TEN

TRICKED

RAN

STRANGER

FOLLOWED

SEVEN

HARM

Anagram

1. ESRCA-

2. OTTPCRE-

3. DBA-

4. DOGO-

5. VOLE-

6. DINK-

7. ETGRFO-

8. RAFI-

Anagram

1. ESRC A- CARES
2. OTTPCRE- PROTECT
3. DBA- BAD
4. DOGO- GOOD
5. VOLE- LOVE
6. DINK- KIND
7. ETGRFO- FORGET
8. RAFI- FAIR