

Session 6

Jacob's 12 sons: Dreams and tricks
Children learn more of Jacob's story.

Scripture: Genesis 28:11–29:30

Supplies:

- Salty cooldrink/bitter, cold coffee
- Sandbox and toilet roll figures to tell the story
- Popsicle sticks
- Copies of the handouts
- A thin piece of cloth (veil) and a bit of olive oil
- Smooth rocks



Welcome

A game based on “Cat and Mouse”. The group makes a circle and hold hands. Inside the circle there is one child, we'll call her Rachel. Outside the circle there is a boy we'll call Jacob. Jacob should try to get inside the circle to catch Rachel, but the circle is Rachel's family that try to protect her by closing the gaps when Jacob comes close. To make the game more interesting, you can add another child who tries to catch Jacob. We'll call her Leah.

If the weather and the venue allows it, take the group outside and give them a chance to lie on the ground and look at the sky. Let's daydream a little and chat about the things we've dreamt about.



Worship

Settle down ritual: Children lie on the ground and hold each other's hands. The leader says: “Remember, God binds us together as his children and also to our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” Squeeze each other's hand and get up again.



Word

Make cold coffee or salty cooldrink beforehand. Tell the group that you have some delicious cooldrink for someone who wants to taste it. Let them taste it. Now ask the group if they've ever tricked someone. Have they ever been tricked by someone? Sometimes when someone tricks us, it can be very funny but other times someone could get hurt. Remember when Jacob tricked his dad? Esau was so mad that he wanted to kill Jacob. His dad was very sad. Jacob had to flee to his uncle Laban, who lived in Harran.

Sandbox

You'll need: Jacob, Laban, Rachel and Leah, a ladder made from popsicle sticks with angels and a cloud on top, a rock, sheep, a veil, and oil (olive oil).

En route to Harran Jacob found a place where he could sleep. He used a rock for a pillow. He dreamt. In his dream there was a ladder that went from earth right into heaven. Angels walked up and down the ladder. God came to

Jacob and told him, “I am the Lord, the God of your grandfather, Abraham and your father, Isaac. I will give the ground on which you lie to your children. Your family will be very big. They will be as many as the dust on the earth. Through your family the whole world will get to know me. I am with you. I protect you wherever you go. *(While reading this, put your hand over Jacob as a sign of a blessing.)* I will bring you back to this land. I won’t let you down. I will do what I have promised.”

Jacob woke with a fright and said, “It’s true! God is here and I never realized!” Jacob was blown away. He said, “This is a special place, it is the house of God. Here I saw the heavenly door open.”

That morning Jacob put the rock he used as a pillow upright. He poured a little oil onto the stone because it was a special reminder of God’s presence. He named the place Bethel. It means “house of God”. *(Put a rock upright and pour some olive oil over it.)*

Jacob finally arrived at his uncle Laban’s house and began working for him. After a month Laban told him, “You have been working here for a month. How can I pay you for the work you have done?” *(Whisper secretly)* Laban had two daughters. The eldest’s name was Leah. She wasn’t very pretty but she had beautiful eyes. *(Leah’s face only has eyes and a veil.)* The youngest daughter was Rachel, and she was beautiful. Jacob fell in love with her immediately. *(Stick a red heart on Jacob’s chest.)* He told Laban, “I will work for you for 7 years if I can marry Rachel.” Laban answered, “This is a good idea.” *(Take Rachel and Leah away.)*

The 7 years felt like a few days to Jacob because he really loved Rachel. When the 7 years were over, he told Laban, “The 7 years are over, I want to marry Rachel now.”

Laban planned a big wedding. *(Place 4 popsicle sticks in a square and put white or gold material on top. Put Leah and Jacob in front of the tent. Leah now has a veil over her head.)*

When the wedding was over, Jacob realized with a shock that he had married Leah and not Rachel. Laban had tricked him! Jacob was furious and went to Laban. “Why did you trick me? I worked 7 years to marry Rachel.” Laban answered, “You don’t understand our ways. Here our youngest daughters can’t get married before the eldest. Wait a week, then you can marry Rachel as well. But then you must work for me for another 7 years.” After the week was over, Jacob married Rachel.

Jacob had 12 sons and 1 daughter. God kept his promise that Jacob would have many children.

Children reflect on the story:

1. I wonder what was important to you in the story.
2. I wonder if you can think of a time and a place that has a special reminder of God for you.
3. I wonder how Jacob felt when he was betrayed (as he betrayed his brother).



Working and Playing

- Use the popsicle sticks and pictures of angels to make the ladder from Jacob’s dream. Write God’s promise to Jacob on the sticks. Older children can find the scripture in the Bible and write it down as well: Genesis 28:15.
- Take a rock and write God’s promise on it. It’s something you can take home.



Closing prayer to end the session