

General Church Education



# Jacob Meets Rachel

Genesis 29:1-30

## Lesson 11

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 2: The Lord Is Our Shepherd

For ages 7-8 years

## Jacob Meets Rachel

### Genesis 29:1-30

#### Ideas for Parents & Teachers

As an adult, Jacob was forced to leave his home and flee from the anger of his brother, Esau. The Lord protected him and led him to safety where He blessed Jacob with wealth and the happiness of marriage and children. Finally, the Lord led Jacob back to his home to be the new patriarch of the Hebrews. Jacob's interactions with others provide wonderful opportunities to focus on the moral concepts of honor, kindness, and forgiveness as integral elements of human relationships.

The internal meaning of this story describes the development of goodness on the outward plane of life. Just as Jacob was concerned with his own success and safety when he began his journey from home, selfish motives play a big part at the start of our lives. However, in his effort to lead an orderly life, he first stopped at a well near Haran. Wells in the Word represent the literal meaning of a story. When we are trying to live a good life, we must stop at the well of the Word of the Lord first. This is where the "water" of truth is found. When we have a genuine desire to live a spiritual life, our innocent affections, pictured by the sheep, can be satisfied, and we can learn about the Lord's purpose for our life.

#### Ideas for Children

- Jacob was the third patriarch to follow the Lord and with whom the Lord renewed His covenant.
- The Lord leads us to find our conjugal partner.
- The Lord gives us happiness when we are useful.

#### From the Writings

For most people, the existence of love is a given, but the nature of love is a mystery. We say that someone loves us, that monarchs love their subjects, that subjects love their monarchs, that a husband loves his wife and a mother loves her children, and vice versa. We say that people love their country, their fellow citizens, and their neighbor. We use the same language when talking of things as well.

Even though the word "love" is commonly used, hardly anyone knows what love is. When we stop to think about it, we find that we cannot form any image of it in our thoughts, so we say either that it is not really anything or that it is simply something that flows into us from our sight, hearing, touch, and conversation and therefore influences us. We are wholly unaware that it is our very life—not just the general life of our whole body and of all our thoughts, but the life of every last detail. Wise people can grasp this when you ask, "If you take away the effects of love, can you think anything? Can you do anything? As the effects of love lose their warmth, do not thought and speech and action lose theirs as well? Do they not warm up as love warms up?" Still, the grasp of these wise people is not based on the thought that love is our life, but on their experience that this is how things happen. See *Divine Love and Wisdom* 1

## Jacob Meets Rachel

In our last story Jacob ran away to Haran. Why was he going there? (He was going to find a wife from his mother's relatives.)

On the first night of Jacob's journey he had a dream (Genesis 28). At the end of the day, he was alone in the high hills of Bethel. This is the place where Abraham and Lot had once looked out over the land. Jacob didn't have many belongings with him, so he slept on the ground and used a stone for a pillow. He had a wonderful dream of angels going up and down a ladder to heaven. The Lord spoke to Jacob from heaven and renewed the covenant that He had made with Abraham and Isaac. The Lord promised to be with Jacob on this journey and to bring him safely back to Canaan, the home that he loved. For his part, Jacob promised to give one tenth of everything he had to the Lord.

### Jacob Falls in Love

Jacob traveled on safely to Haran. He came to a well in a field and saw flocks of sheep lying around it. People usually waited until all the flocks arrived and then moved the heavy stone

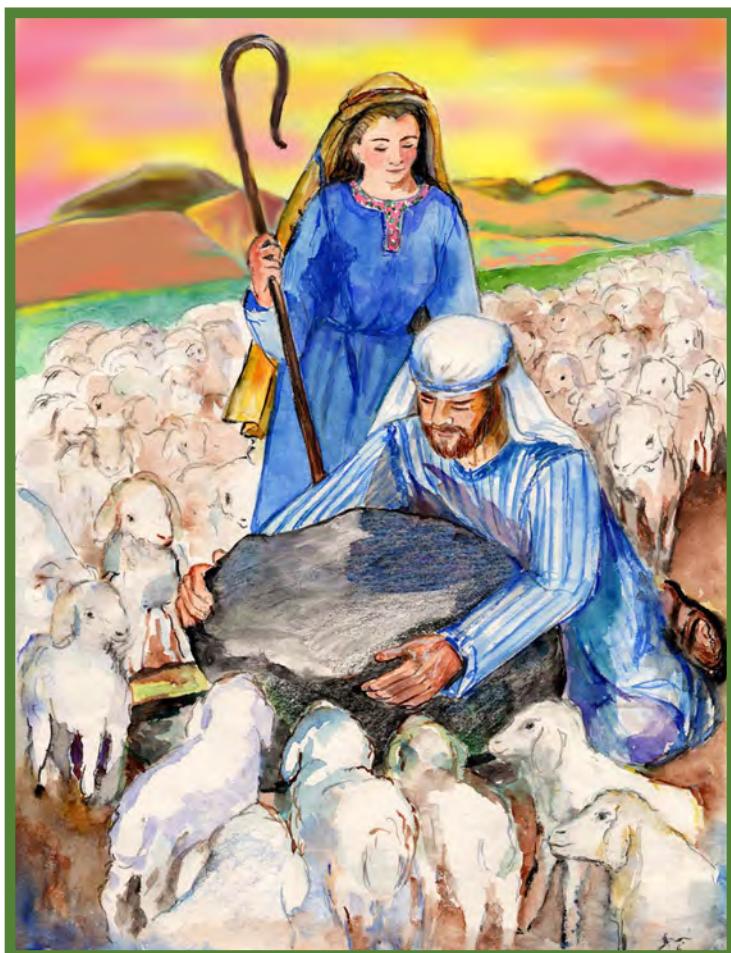
from the mouth of the well so that all could get a drink. The large stone protected the water. It kept anything unclean from going down into the well.

Do you remember who Laban was? (He was Rebekah's brother who lived in Haran.)

Laban had become the head of his family in Haran. Let's read the first part of the story and find out who Jacob saw coming to the well.

**Read Genesis 29:1-6.** Who was coming to the well? (Rachel.) Whose daughter was Rachel? (Laban's daughter.) Read on and find out what job Rachel had and what Jacob did for her.

**Read Genesis 29:7-11.** What was Rachel's job? (She was a shepherdess.) What did Jacob do for Rachel?



(He rolled the stone from the mouth of the well and watered the sheep for Rachel.)

Jacob had come a long way to find a wife for himself. The Lord led him to find just the right one. When Jacob saw the beautiful Rachel he loved her at once. Jacob wanted to marry her and told his wish to Laban, Rachel's father. Do you think Laban was pleased? Let's read on and find out.

**Read Genesis 29:12-20.** How many daughters did Laban have? (Two.)

What did you learn about Leah? (She was the older sister and had delicate eyes.)

What did you learn about Rachel? (She was the younger sister and she was beautiful.)

Jacob was willing to work for Laban for seven years in order to have Rachel as his wife. Jacob took care of Laban's flocks and herds of animals. Seven years sounds like a long time, but it seemed to go by very quickly for Jacob because he loved Rachel so much. He was happy to work in order to have her for his wife. At the end of the seven years, something unexpected happened.

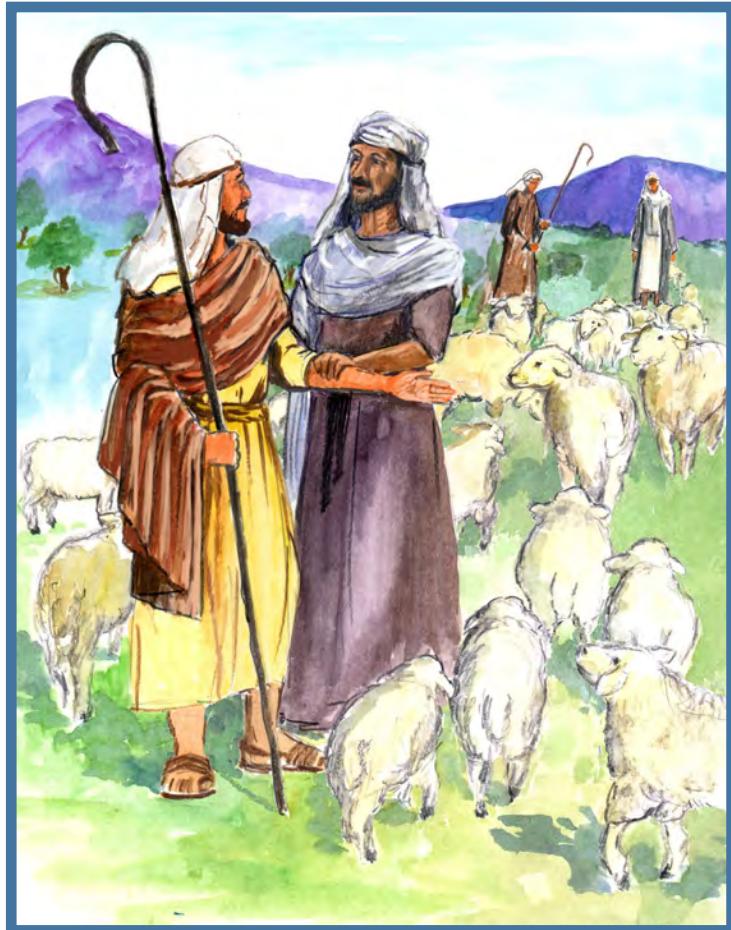
**Read Genesis 29:21-30.** What strange thing did Laban do? (He gave Jacob his daughter Leah for a wife instead of Rachel.)

How did Jacob feel about this switch? (He felt like he had been tricked. He was not happy about it.)

Laban told Jacob that in Haran a younger daughter could not be married until the older daughter was married. Laban said that Jacob could have both of his daughters if he would work seven more years for him. This sounds strange to us but in those days people did not know that a man should have only one wife. They often had two or more wives. So Jacob married Rachel a week later and then worked another seven years because he loved her.

### Work Can Be Hard or Easy

Have you ever worked hard for something? Perhaps you have done chores at home to earn money to buy a special toy. Maybe you have practiced very hard to learn how to play a musical



instrument. Maybe you study hard to learn reading or math skills. Sometimes a whole family saves money to take a special vacation.

How does it feel to work hard for something? When you have a goal, something you want badly, is it easy to keep going? Yes, it is easy to work for something that you want! It seems like the time flies by because you enjoy getting closer to your goal.

Maybe you have worked hard for something and then you have not gotten what you wanted. Sometimes we hope for more than we get. Sometimes things do not work out the way we planned. Other times we don't see a good reason to work. Then the work becomes hard, and it is not fun.

When we do our work just for what we can get out of it, we can be disappointed with how we feel when we have finished. But work can be satisfying if there is love behind it. When we do work because we love the Lord or want to be useful to others, the Lord gives us the wonderful gift of happiness.



### Discussion Questions

- Can you describe the Lord's covenant with Jacob? (The Lord promised to be with Jacob on his journey and bring him safely back to his home so that his children could inherit the land. In return, Jacob promised to give one tenth of all he had to the Lord.)
- What can you tell about the people in Haran that Jacob was going to visit? (He went to visit his mother Rebekah's family. Her brother Laban was now the head of the family in Haran.)
- Compare the meeting of Jacob and Rachel with the meeting of Abraham's servant and Rebekah. (Both men stopped at a well near Haran. Both were looking for a wife. Both were well received in the home of the relatives in Haran. The servant was looking for a wife for his master's son while Jacob was looking for his own wife. Abraham's servant brought rich presents for the bride and her family while Jacob worked because he loved Rachel.)
- Describe a time when you were helping someone or making a gift for a person you love or doing some other useful activity. What did you do? How did you feel?

# Activity Overview | Jacob Meets Rachel

## Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it.... This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven! Genesis 28:16-17

## Songs

### *The Twelve Sons of Israel*

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-the-twelve-sons-of-israel/>

### *Jesus, Tender Shepherd, Hear Me*

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-jesus-tender-shepherd-hear-me/>

## Activities

Choose one or two.

- Activity 1 | Jacob's Ladder Picture Collage
- Activity 2 | Stew
- Picture to color

## Additional Activity Ideas

- Display a picture of an angel as a reminder that angels are all around us, and that the kingdom of heaven is close by at all times.
- Learn the song *Jacob's Ladder* by Lori Odhner by singing along with a video. Watch at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-jacobs-ladder-song/>
- Try to memorize the twelve tribes of Israel by watching *The Twelve Sons of Jacob* video. Watch at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-the-twelve-sons-of-jacob-song/>

## **Activity 1 | Jacob's Ladder Picture Collage**

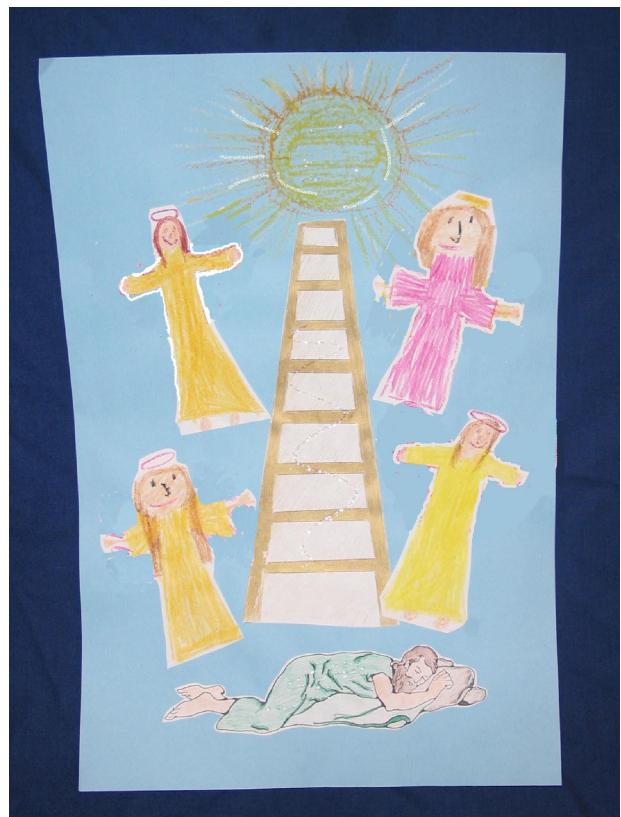
Make a large pictures showing angels ascending and descending a ladder that leads to the Lord while Jacob sleeps.

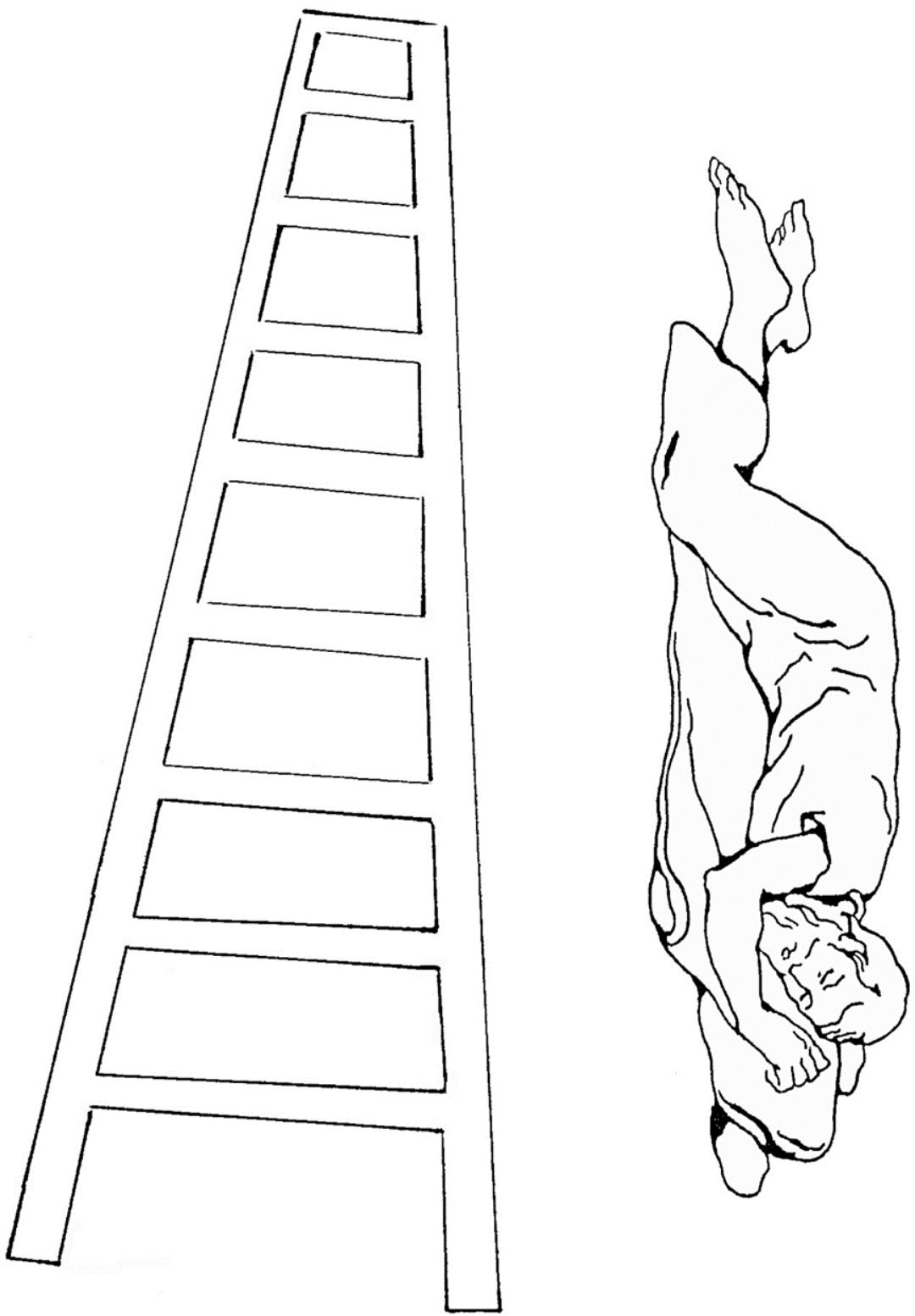
### **Materials**

1 large piece sturdy blue paper, such as construction paper (12"x 18"; 30cm x 45cm)  
4 small pieces of white paper, such as construction paper (4"x 6"; 10cm x 15cm)  
crayons or oil pastels  
picture of Jacob sleeping and ladder (see next page)  
scissors  
glue  
gold glitter  
glitter tray

### **Directions**

1. Draw four angels on the small pieces of white paper, using crayons or oil pastels.
2. Cut the angels out.
3. Color the Jacob sleeping and Jacob's ladder.
4. Cut out Jacob and the ladder.
5. Arrange the pieces on the blue paper as shown below and glue them into place.
6. Using glue, draw light rays at the top of the ladder as a symbol of the Lord. Sprinkle glitter on to the glue.





## Activity 2 | Jacob Meets Rachel at the Well

Construct a well with a stone that can be “rolled aside” by Jacob. At the time of this story water was precious and scarce. Wells would have been covered to protect water from evaporation or contamination. Sometimes wells were pits in the ground that would fill when it rained. What is important in our story is that Jacob rolled the stone aside so that he could water Laban’s flocks for Rachel.

### Materials

- 1 piece sturdy blue paper
- 1 piece sturdy brown paper the same size as the blue paper
- paper fastener (split pin)
- pen or pencil
- Glue
- scissors

*Optional:* shiny blue wrap or plastic wrap to make the water look more life-like

### Directions

1. Fold the brown paper in half.
2. Cut a fairly large semi-circle in the middle of the folded edge. (See a. below.) When the paper is opened there will be a hole in the middle of it. Keep the circle you have cut out.
3. *Optional:* If you want to make the water look more life-like, glue plastic or shiny blue wrap over the blue paper. Make sure you glue it towards the middle of the paper so it will line up with the hole that has been cut in the brown paper.
4. Line the brown paper up over the blue paper. You should see a blue circle in the middle.
5. Using a paper fastener, attach the circular cut-out over the hole to act as a rock that is covering the well. (See b. below.)
6. Practice rolling the stone aside to see the water in the well.
7. Write “Jacob rolled the stone away” on the rock that is rolled away.

