



Leader Guide

Jacob & Esau

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Story of God- Leader Info

Big Idea:

God loves us and blesses us even when we don't deserve it.

Scripture:

Genesis 25-33

Memory Verse:

I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go.

Genesis 28:15

Kids' City is changing up the lessons a little bit! We are starting on a journey together to understand the Story of God, and grow closer to Him and know Him better along the way! The lessons each week will now be chronological stories from the Bible told to the kids orally in a Story-formed way.

Stories are the most powerful form of communication we have. Stories speak to the mind, the body, and the emotions —our spirits. In a story, we can identify with situations we have never been in. Every culture and society of people that have ever existed has been this way. We are all storytellers and we all LOVE stories.

Jesus was a GREAT storyteller!

The disciples came up and asked, “Why do you tell stories?” Jesus replied, “You’ve been given insight into God’s kingdom. You know how it works. Not everybody has this gift, this insight; it hasn’t been given to them. Whenever someone has a ready heart for this, the insights and understanding flow freely. But if there is no readiness, any trace of receptivity soon disappears. That’s why I tell stories: to create readiness, to nudge the people toward receptive insight.”
Matthew 13:10-13 (The Message)

Goals of Telling the Story

-To understand, experience, and intersect with God’s story.

-To become a ‘story-formed’ kids and people whose lives are daily shaped by the truths of the Story.

-To make disciples of Jesus who make disciples.

-To see and experience God’s “Redemptive Arc” throughout history as found in the Bible—seeing the connection between all of the stories— and seeing the Bible as one big story.

-To be moved by a Story that points to a God who constantly pursues us and desires to know us.

-To see the intersection of ours’ and the kids’ stories with God’s Story.

-To understand our identity differently in light of God’s story, who he is, and who he created us to be.

-To “live in the gospel”, seeing the world differently, seeking to further God’s Kingdom - to live missionally.

-To become excited about the biblical narratives, reading and learning more about them in the Bible.

-To learn to retell these stories and help others to see how they can find themselves in God’s story.

Introduction in Small Groups

Intro

Questions for the Kids about their week and to get them thinking about the lesson they will be going over.

1. What happened this past week that was really awesome?
2. What happened this past week that was a bummer?
3. How was the first week of school?
4. What is your favorite thing to do in snow?

Expected Behaviors

Go over the Expected Behaviors for the kids while they are in small group before Large Group begins.

1. Be respectful of others
2. Only one student speaks at a time
3. Listen quietly when others are speaking
4. Keep hands and feet to yourself
5. Follow the directions given by your leaders

Large Group

Game

Have the kids play a game of Heads up 7 up for the first few minutes before beginning the lesson!

Prayer, Offering, and Communion

Pray for the kids as they begin a new lesson, and ask the kids if they have anything specifically they would like to pray about! Pray for their requests during the week. Collect the offering if the kids have any, after the prayer. For the kids that have been baptized they can take communion at this time. Explain to the children that communion is a time for us to remember the sacrifice Jesus made for us on the cross and thank Him for all He has done for us!

Review the Story from Last Week

Review the last stories a bit, focusing more on the most recent story, Isaac.

What did we learn about God and people in the story of The Flood?

What did Abraham and Sarah learn about God?

How did God show up in the Abraham and Isaac story?

Briefly discuss what “inheritance” and “deceiver” mean, to make sure all children understand.

Tell the Story (Don't just read it—know it and bring it to life!)

When Isaac was 40 years old, he married Rebekah. Isaac prayed hard for his wife because she could not have a child. God answered his prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. But the two children fought with each other inside her womb.

She prayed and asked God, “Why is this happening to me?”

God told her, “Your sons will become two rival nations. One nation will be stronger than the other and the older son will serve the younger son.”

When the first son was born he was very red and hairy; he looked like he was already wearing clothing! So they called him Esau, which sounds like the word for “hair”. Then the other twin was born with his hand grabbing Esau’s heel. So they named him Jacob, which means “grabbing the heel”, but can also mean “deceiver”.

As the boys grew up, Esau became an expert hunter who loved the outdoors. His brother Jacob liked to stay indoors and live quietly in the tents. Isaac loved Esau and all of the wild game he would bring home, but Rebekah favored Jacob.

Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came home exhausted from hunting and said to Jacob, “I’m starving! Give me some of that red stew you’ve made.”

Jacob replied, “All right, but trade me your inheritance for it.”

“Hey—I’m dying of starvation!” said Esau. “What good is my inheritance to me if I starve?”

Jacob demanded, “Swear to me right now that you will give me your inheritance.” So Esau gave an oath, much like a promise, trading away his inheritance and his rights as the firstborn son. Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and stew. Esau quickly ate and drank and went on his way—not thinking about the fact that he had just given up his inheritance.

Years later, when Isaac was old and almost blind, he called for Esau and said, “I am an old man now and I will die soon. Hunt some wild game for me and prepare it just the way I like it. Then, before I die I will pass on the blessing that belongs to you, my firstborn son.”

Rebekah overheard this conversation. So when Esau left to go hunting, she said to Jacob, “Do exactly as I tell you. Go and bring back two of the finest goats from our flocks and I’ll prepare your father’s favorite dish from them. Take the food to your father; then he will eat it and give you the blessing instead of Esau.”

Jacob replied, “Mother... he won’t be fooled that easily. Esau is hairy and my skin is smooth! What if he touches me? He’ll see that I’m trying to trick him, and then he’ll curse me instead of blessing me.”

“Just do as I say!” Rebekah demanded.

So Jacob brought back two of their best goats, and Rebekah made Isaac’s favorite meal. Then she put Esau’s best clothes on Jacob and made him a pair of long hairy gloves from the skin of the goats. Then Jacob took the meal to his father pretending he was Esau.

“The voice is Jacob’s, but the hands are Esau’s,” Isaac said to himself.

“Are you really my son, Esau?” Isaac asked.

“Yes of course!” Jacob answered.

“If you are, come here and kiss your father,” Isaac said. So Jacob went and kissed Isaac. When he did this Isaac smelled his clothes and was finally convinced he was really Esau. So Isaac gave his blessing to Jacob saying, “May God pass on to you the blessing he promised to Abraham. Your family will grow large and become a great nation and other nations will become your servants. God will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you.”

As soon as Isaac had blessed Jacob, Esau returned from his hunting trip. When he learned that Isaac had given his blessing to his brother he wept out loud, “Father, bless me, too!”

But Isaac said, “Your brother was here and tricked me. He has carried away your blessing.”

Esau hated Jacob and said to himself, “After my father is dead, I will kill Jacob.”

Rebekah found out that Jacob was in danger and sent him far away to live with his uncle. On his journey God appeared to Jacob saying, “I am the God of your grandfather and father. I am giving you and your descendants this land. Your family will grow large and be a blessing to the entire earth! I will be with you and protect you wherever you go—giving you everything I have promised.”

And God blessed Jacob with great wealth and 12 sons! Jacob’s name was changed to Israel, which means “struggler with God”. The Hebrews would later be called the people of Israel, named after Jacob.

Many years later Esau forgave his brother Jacob. Then Jacob and his growing family moved back to the Promised Land of Canaan.

Small Groups

Retell the Story

This may seem redundant, but it is very effective in helping your kids remember and own the story. You will want to help them retell the story by giving them leading questions like: So, where did the story begin? What happened next? How did Jacob get Esau to give him his birthright? How did Rebekah and Jacob trick Isaac?

Dialogue

Remember **this is a dialogue, not a quiz**. The questions are a good start to draw out observations about the story, and the “answers” are just there to help you guide kids toward some key ideas.

- 1. From this story, what do we learn about Jacob? Esau? Rebekah?**
- 2. What did God tell Rebekah about the children in her womb? How might that have affected her actions?**
- 3. Why do you think Esau gave up his inheritance so easily?**
- 4. Why do you think Jacob wanted his father’s blessing?**
- 5. Why would God pass on his blessing to Jacob when he tricked his father to get it?**
- 6. What blessing is God passing on through Abraham, Isaac and now Jacob?**
- 7. In what ways are we also like Jacob? How does this give us hope?**

We are all sinners just like Jacob.

None of us do anything to deserve any of God’s blessings but still he blesses us.

- 8. What does the story teach us about God?**

God is powerful. He was able again to cause Rebekah, a barren woman, to conceive (Just like he had done with Sarah).

God knows all things. He knew the future of the boys while they were still in the womb.

He knew that the older would serve the younger.

God is the source of all grace. God blesses us even when we don’t deserve it.

Jacob was a continual deceiver, but God set up his covenant with him and loved him.

God keeps his promises. He passed the covenant he made with Abraham on to his son Isaac, and on to Jacob. Each time he promised to bless all the nations of the earth through them.

God is patient with our selfishness.

Application (Optional questions that may help apply the story)

9. **What questions do you have about the story?**
10. **What will you remember most about this story?**
11. **How does this story make a difference in your life?**
12. **Where in your life has God blessed you?**
13. **Why do you think that God uses people to bless others?**
14. **Have you ever been unkind to a person and then been blessed anyway?**

Activity

There is a word search, a book mark, and a color sheet for the kids to color after the lesson.

Extra Time Activities

If there is extra time, have the kids look up the passages from the story and read them out loud.