

10.02 Jacob Arrives in Haran, Meets Rachel (Genesis 29:1-14)

(Most curricula combine this story with the next, “Jacob Gets Two Wives.”)

✓ “Check” it out: opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher, not the student. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- (optional) Beka flashcards.
- For a 3-D effect, one could make a well from a tuna can and make a covering for the well from cardboard. Wooden dowel characters (found at Hobby Lobby) could be Jacob, the shepherds, and Rachel. Stand-up paper sheep or scraps of sheep skin could be used for sheep.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *kissing*: In a cheek kiss, both persons lean forward and either lightly touch cheek with cheek or [lip](#) with cheek. Generally the gesture is repeated with the other cheek. Depending on the country and situation, the number of kisses is usually one, two, three or four. Hand-shaking or hugging may also take place (Wikipedia).
- *weeping*: men in Middle Eastern countries cry more openly than men of modern America
- *embracing*: hugging

Scripture (ESV)

Genesis 29:1 Then Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the east. 2 As he looked, he saw a well in the field, and behold, three flocks of sheep lying beside it, for out of that well the flocks were watered. The stone on the well’s mouth was large, 3 and when all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the mouth of the well and water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place over the mouth of the well.

4 Jacob said to them, “My brothers, where do you come from?” They said, “We are from Haran.” 5 He said to them, “Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?” They said, “We know him.” 6 He said to them, “Is it well with him?” They said, “It is well; and see, Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep!” 7 He said, “Behold, it is still high day; it is not time for the livestock to be gathered together. Water the sheep and go, pasture them.” 8 But they said, “We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together and the stone is rolled from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep.”

9 While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess. 10 Now as soon as Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother’s brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother’s brother, Jacob came near and rolled the stone from the well’s mouth and watered the flock of Laban his mother’s brother. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel and wept aloud. 12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father’s kinsman, and that he was Rebekah’s son, and she ran and told her father.

13 As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister’s son, he ran to meet him and embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house. Jacob told Laban all these things, 14 and Laban said to him, “Surely you are my bone and my flesh!” And he stayed with him a month.

Introduction/Review:

Jacob, forced to leave Beersheba because of Esau’s wrath, had set off on his ✓ month-long journey to Haran in Syria. He had left his father, Isaac, and his mother, Rebekah, going to Rebekah’s childhood home in order to find a wife from among her relatives. Early in his journey God had appeared to him in a vision of angels

ascending and descending a ladder to heaven. God, at the top of the ladder, repeated a summary of the covenant he had made with Abraham and Isaac: [Use visual found below of these promises.] He would bless Jacob; He would make his descendants numerous; He would give him the land where he was sleeping; in him all nations of the earth would be blessed. In addition, God told Jacob He would be with him wherever he went. Jacob, for his part, promised he would make God his God if God would bring him back to this place, which he named Bethel. Jacob also promised to tithe.

Story: (Dialogue of this story is heavily dependent on the ESV.)

The well

After about one month of traveling, Jacob was finally close to his destination, Paddan Aram.* He approached a well in a field. There he saw three flocks of sheep around the well. The well was covered with a huge, heavy stone.

“Hey there, brothers! Where do you come from?” Jacob asked the shepherds waiting at the well.

“We are from Haran,” they replied.

Haran! Ah! Jacob was close to his destination!

“Do you know Laban the grandson** of Nahor?” asked Jacob.

They answered, “We know him.”

Jacob asked them, “Is it well with him?”

“It is well. Look, Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep!” they replied.

Rachel

Then Jacob, who had been a shepherd himself, gave a little advice to these shepherds, or ✓perhaps he wanted to get rid of them so that he could talk to Rachel alone. This is what he said: “Men, it is still high day—much of it remains; it is not time for the livestock to be gathered together. Water the sheep and go pasture them.”

But the shepherds answered, “We cannot water the sheep until all the flocks are gathered together and the stone is rolled from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep.”

The stone

As they were still talking, Rachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess. As soon as Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother’s brother, and when he saw the sheep of Laban his mother’s brother, Jacob came near and by himself, with no help from the other shepherds, rolled that huge, heavy stone from the well’s mouth and watered the flock of his Uncle Laban.

My! I think if I had been Rachel, I would have been quite impressed as I watched this ✓77-year-old man, strong enough to move the huge well stone all by himself! Jacob might have had smooth skin and loved the kitchen, but he was no wimp!

Then Jacob told Rachel that he was her father’s relative—that he was Rebekah’s son. He kissed Rachel, probably in the way people greet one another in that part of the world—cheek to cheek. Then he did something else that was not wimpish for men of that time or place—he wept aloud. Can you imagine why Jacob cried? ✓Maybe he was relieved and happy to be finally at his destination. Maybe he could see, by looking at Rachel, that God would provide him a wife here.

When Rachel heard that Jacob was the son of her father’s sister, she ran to tell her father. ✓Ninety-seven years before, Laban’s sister, Rebekah, had come running from a well to tell him about the visit of Abraham’s servant. Now, the son of Rebekah was visiting. This was exciting!

Laban

As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him and hugged him and kissed him (maybe four times) and brought him to his house. Jacob told Laban everything ✓ about his family back home and his journey to Haran.

✓ When Laban heard the family stories, he said to Jacob, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh!"

So Jacob stayed with Uncle Laban one month, no doubt ✓ helping with the sheep and livestock without pay.

*Paddan Aram is the same as Haran.

***Son* can mean descendant in Hebrew text. In this case, Laban was the son of Bethuel, who was the son of Nahor, who was the son of Terah.

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus in the constant care of the shepherds concerning their sheep. This care "may serve to illustrate the tender concern which our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, has for his flock, the church; for he is the good Shepherd, that knows his sheep, and is known of them, Jn. 10:14" (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/genesis/29.html>).
- God said he would be with Jacob wherever he went. God kept his promise and brought him safely to Haran.
- Don't judge by appearances. Jacob looked like but was not a wimp.

Activities:

- Play dough: well; sheep
- Add a statement and picture to the bulletin board, "Well, Lots of Things Happened at Wells." For printables and a photo of the finished bulletin board, go to the Extras page at teachingthebibleto kids.org.
- Teach students and practice the proper way to meet someone and to introduce one's self to others.
 1. *Introducing someone else:* Say the name of the older or higher-ranking person, and introduce the other person: "Mrs. Smith, I want you to meet my friend, Sara."
 - a. Each acknowledges the other, starting with the older/ranking person: "I'm happy to meet you, Sara." "I am happy to meet you, too, Mrs. Smith."
 - b. This might be a good time to shake hands. If a male and female are meeting, it is best for the female to offer her hand first. Handshaking protocol is to look the other person in the eyes and grasp the right hand firmly but not too tightly.
 - c. The introducer should give a little information about both people so that a conversation might begin.
 2. *Introducing one's self:* The initiator might say, "Hi. I'm Susan." The responder should say something similar, like, "Hello. My name is Mary."
 - a. Follow-up questions might be about where people are from, why they are in this place, their relationship to the event or people around them.
 - b. Each person should be genuinely interested in the other person.
- Sing all of "Isaac" found at Lesson 09.01 or on the Songs page at teachingthebibleto kids.org.
- Sing first two stanzas of "Jacob" found in Lesson 09.04 or on the Songs page at teachingthebibleto kids.org.
- Sing "Jacob's Song" by Patsy Stevens found at <http://gardenofpraise.com/images/jac2song.pdf>.
- Snack: One of the products from Nabisco SnackWells® (Get it? *Wells*.)

- Play the game, “No Sheep Left Behind”: Lay a green table cloth (paper or plastic) on the floor at one end of the room; put a masking tape line at the other end of the room. Inflate 20-25 white balloons (more or less depending on the size of your class). Put the balloons behind the masking tape line. Have the children crawl on the floor (crawl only) and use their heads, not their hands, to push all the balloons from one end of the room onto the green “field” (http://www.dltk-bible.com/sunday_school_time_fillers.htm).
- Review questions: (Game: If using teams, have cotton balls and two transparent containers available. The student who correctly answers a question may put a cotton ball “sheep” into his or her team’s container.)
 1. About how long had it taken for Jacob to travel from Beersheba to Haran? [About one month or more.]
 2. What manners were observed at the well in Haran? [The shepherds waited until all the flocks had gathered before taking the stone off the well. Then all the flocks were watered.]
 3. What time of day was it? [High day.]
 4. As soon as Jacob learned the shepherds knew his Uncle Laban, who came along? [Rachel, Laban’s daughter.]
 5. Why was Rachel at the well? [She took care of sheep.]
 6. What physical thing did Jacob do to the well? [Moved the large stone from the top by himself.]
 7. How did Jacob introduce himself to Rachel? [Kissed her; wept; told her he was Rebekah’s son.]
 8. At this news, what did Rachel do? [Ran to tell her father.]
 9. What did Laban do when he came to Jacob? [Embraced him; kissed him; brought him to his house.]
 10. How long did Jacob stay after arriving in Haran? [One month.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- **Proverbs 3:6**—In all your ways acknowledge [the Lord], and he will direct your paths (KJV).

Handwork:

- Egg Carton Lamb Craft: Items needed are cotton balls or fiber fill, black construction paper (scraps will do), and enough Styrofoam® egg carton cups for each student to **get one**. Fold a small piece of black construction paper and cut out an ear shape (basically just a *U*). Cut apart at the fold, giving you two matching ears. Using tacky glue, glue two or three cotton balls onto a Styrofoam® egg carton cup, stretching one or two over the cup itself and adding a cotton ball for a head. Glue on the black ears (http://www.dltk-bible.com/sunday_school_time_fillers.htm).



kissing

weeping

embracing

God's Blessing to Jacob

At Bethel

- **I will give this land to you and to your offspring.**
- **Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south.**
- **In you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.**
- **Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go.**
- **I will bring you back to this land.**







