

Beginner Level, Block 3, Week 1

Jacob—Being Born the Second

Point to Emphasize: We can be thankful for God’s arrangement in our family.

Reference Reading: Genesis 25:19-27

Memory Verse: Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named. (Ephesians 3:15)

Story Sample

Today we are going to learn about a new person in the Bible, a man named Jacob. We have learned about Abraham and Isaac, right? Well, Jacob was Isaac’s son and Abraham’s grandson.

Actually, Isaac had two sons—he had twins! The older twin was named Esau, and Jacob was the younger twin. Esau was born first, and when he was born he was so hairy that they called him Esau, which means *hairy*. Jacob was born second. His name means *heel-holder*. Isaac and Rebekah gave him that name because when Jacob was born he was holding onto Esau’s heel—as if he wanted to pull ahead of Esau. He wanted to be born first.

Jacob and Esau were really different from each other. Esau was strong in some ways—he was physically strong and he liked to be outdoors. Jacob was strong in other ways—he was a quiet person who had a strong mind and liked to stay indoors. Esau spent his time hunting, while Jacob was always thinking up ways to get what he wanted.

Even while he was being born, Jacob was trying to get his own way—he was holding Esau’s heel because he wanted to be born first. But God had a different plan. God arranged that Jacob would be born second. That was no accident. God knew exactly what Jacob needed—He knew that Jacob needed to have a father like Isaac, a mother like Rebekah, and a brother like Esau. He even knew he needed a grandfather like Abraham. Jacob was placed in exactly the right family.

We too, have been placed by God in the right family. Sometimes this might seem hard to believe. Did you know I have three younger brothers? Three! My youngest brother was born when I was seven, and when my parents brought him home, I thought they had made a mistake. How could one girl have three brothers and no sisters? Shouldn’t I have at least one other girl to grow up with? But it was not a mistake. As I grew older, I realized the Lord gave me the best family. He planned out who would be my brothers and who would be my parents, and He put me with those ones. *[Storyteller, insert your own story about God putting you in the right family.]* God knows what parents we need, what brothers and sisters we need, even what grandparents, aunts, uncles, and more. He put us in exactly the right family.

I’m thankful for my family. Aren’t you thankful for yours? Every night we can thank God for our family!

Beginner Level, Block 3, Week 2

Jacob—Chosen by God

Point to Emphasize: God will take care of all of our needs. We just need to follow Him.

Reference Reading: Genesis 28

Memory Verse: Behold, I am with you and will keep you... (Genesis 28:15)

Story Sample

Have you ever had to worry about not having anything to wear? Not having food to eat for dinner? What about not having a snack to bring to school? Today we'll hear a story about Jacob. And we will learn that, like Jacob, God will take care of all of our needs.

Jacob had an older brother, an older twin, Esau. At that time, the custom was for the older child to get all the blessing from their father. Jacob was born second, but he wished he was born first so that he would get the blessing. But God arranged for Jacob to be born second, after his brother. I was born second, and I just accepted it. Not Jacob though. He thought of ways that he could get what rightfully belonged to his brother. And one day, he just did that. Do you think Esau was happy with him? No way. If my sister got something that belonged to me, especially without my permission, I would be very angry with her.

So because Jacob took something that belonged to his brother, his brother Esau got very angry. As a result Jacob had to leave his house and his family. But he was not alone. No. One night, when he was trying to find a place to sleep, God appeared to him, just like God appeared to Noah and to Abraham. God would appear to people to speak to them.

When God appeared to Jacob, God told him that He was the God of Abraham (Jacob's grandfather) and the God of Isaac (Jacob's father) and that He had chosen him, too. God promised to give Jacob three things: land for him and his family; seed, which means a large family; and for all the families of the earth to be blessed through him. That meant God would take care of all of his needs. And what did Jacob have to do to receive all these promises? Nothing, except to follow God.

When I was younger, my parents would take my brother, my sister, and me on vacations. At those times I didn't have to worry about anything regarding our trip. I didn't have to pack my clothes or food or sunscreen or pajamas. Whatever I needed, my mom took care of. If we were going to the pool, she'd have my swimsuit ready. If we got hungry, she would buy or prepare food for us. All I needed to do was follow my parents. *[Storyteller, insert your own story of God caring for your needs by following your parents.]*

Jacob was away from home and his family. But God promised to be with him. Even though he did something wrong, he was still chosen by God. God said He would not leave him. God even promised him land, seed, and blessing of all families through him.

God also chose us to be those who love Him and to have parents who love Him, trust in Him, and follow Him. That's why He placed us in the family we are in. God will take care of all of our needs. We don't have to worry about anything. All we need to do is follow God by following our parents.

Beginner Level, Block 3, Week 3 **Jacob—Becoming Israel**

Point to Emphasize: We need to be ones who are willing to be changed/molded in order to be useful to God.

Reference Reading: Genesis 32

Memory Verse: ...He will be a vessel unto honor, useful to the master, prepared unto every good work. (2 Timothy 2:21)

Story Sample

Last week we talked about how Jacob was chosen by God and how everything he needed was taken care of by God. This sounds like a perfect life, doesn't it? Well, although Jacob had a perfect God who cared for him, we find out that Jacob himself was far from perfect.

You might recall from last week that Jacob did something wrong, but do you know that wasn't the only thing he did wrong? First, he tricked his brother out of something very valuable and ran away. Then, he went to stay with his uncle Laban and he also tricked him. He did that in order to get more sheep and goats than Laban had planned to give him. Jacob hadn't really changed much. Now, years after leaving home, God spoke to him to return to his homeland and family. God even promised that He would be with him.

As he was returning home, one night something unusual happened. God wrestled with Jacob as a man. God was with him all night, but not in the way Jacob thought He would be! They wrestled all night long! Early in the morning, when they were done wrestling, Jacob was different. Now, Jacob walked differently (now he limped). He also was different in how he began to treat others, and even his name was changed! God changed his name to Israel, which means "wrestler with God". He was now one that God was working on in order to change, and no longer be a "supplanter/heel holder". For the rest of his life God kept changing him little by little.

Now, I have never wrestled with God in person, but there were many times when I thought I knew better than God and I told Him so. When we think our ways are better and want to do things our way, it is like we are wrestling with God. When I was young, I often fought with my sisters, even though I knew the Bible said to "love one another." Then, as I grew a little older, I began to honor God's word more and more, and I started to want to change how I treated my sisters. I noticed that I was fighting with them less and less and even began to see that I really loved them! *[Storyteller, use your own personal example.]*

Jacob didn't change right away, but from the time he wrestled with God, he began to be a different person. By the time he was very old, Jacob had become very useful to God. I hope we can be this way too. Maybe you have a bad temper; maybe you are too slow, or too fast. Maybe you are even sneaky sometimes like Jacob. But, if you are willing to change, and not think your ways are better than God's, you will change bit by bit.

Beginner Level, Block 3, Week 4 **Joseph—The Shepherd**

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who care and love everyone, even when we are not liked by them.

Reference Reading: Genesis 37

Memory Verse: A friend loveth at all times... (Proverbs 17:17)

Story Sample

The last three stories we heard were about Jacob. Last week we learned that after God wrestled with him, He changed Jacob's name to Israel. Today, we will hear about the sons of Israel. He had twelve sons. Can you imagine being in a family with so many siblings? I come from a family of four and I just can't imagine a family with twelve siblings! If I ask, so how is it growing up in the ___ [*storyteller, insert a child's last name*] household, I'm sure you will have many stories to tell. But let me tell you that this family of twelve brothers is like no other. The stories of these twelve brothers are SO incredible! Undoubtedly, the stories in the Bible are the best!

Just like Abel, these twelve brothers were all shepherds. They shepherded their father's flock. Joseph was one of Israel's sons. He was the second youngest brother. Out of all the twelve brothers, we should all want to be like Joseph and I will tell you why. Joseph was only seventeen years old and he was also a shepherd. Joseph's brothers cared for and fed their father's flock, but Joseph was different. He cared for the flock, but he also cared for others. Joseph cared for his brothers.

Joseph was his father's beloved. His father loved him so much that he gave him a coat of many colors. When his brothers saw how much their father loved Joseph, they did not like him and could not speak kind to him. Nevertheless, Joseph loved and cared for his brothers. When Joseph had two dreams, he told the dreams to his father and to his brothers. In the first dream, Joseph saw his brothers as bundles of grain bowing down to him. In the other dream, he saw them as the sun, the moon and the stars all bowing down to him. Can you believe it? In both dreams his father, his mother and his brothers were all bowing down to Joseph. Oh, this made his brothers SO jealous of him. But even when his brothers were jealous of him, Joseph never looked down on them. Joseph never criticized, nor found fault in his brothers. Joseph was a shepherd to his brothers; he cared for them and even appreciated them.

Growing up there was a girl in my classroom that was different from all of us. She came from another city to study at our school. She had the best backpack and the prettiest shoes. She had the best pencils and the newest toys. Even more, she was our teacher's daughter and I believe she was the teacher's beloved. The teacher would treat her very differently from the rest of the classmates. I remember that my classmates were very jealous of her and never wanted to play with her. Every day I would look at her and then look at my classmates and I knew I had to be different. So, I cared for her in the same way I cared for my other classmates. [*Storyteller, insert your own story.*]

We all can be like Joseph! We can be those who care for and love everyone, even when we are not liked by them. Let's show we care about all the ones around us. We can show we care to our siblings, to our parents, to our cousins, to our uncles and aunts and to our grandparents. We can even show we care to our neighbors and our classmates. Let's be like Joseph!

Beginner Level, Block 3, Week 5 Joseph—Trusting God

Point to Emphasize: We can follow those who trust in God.

Reference Reading: *Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 104, p. 1337

Memory Verse: Trust in Jehovah forever and ever... (Isaiah 26:4)

Story Sample

Isn't it good to hear about someone who cares for everyone, even those who do not like him? *[Storyteller, review last week's story briefly.]* That was Joseph. If someone doesn't like us, it's hard for us to care for them. We might even get angry and think, well, if they don't like us, we won't like them either. But Joseph is such a good example to us! Even though his brothers did not like him, he not only liked them, he also cared for them.

In the Bible we read about so many different types of people. But Joseph is the first person we hear about who did nothing wrong. His behavior was perfect. That is because he was a person who trusted in God. Because he trusted in God, he was faithful. To be faithful means to be trusting, trustworthy, and reliable.

Joseph was like this. He did not have time to argue with his brothers or to fight with them. He just cared about doing things that would make good use of his time. His father trusted him to take care of the sheep and his brothers, and Joseph was very good at that. Do you know how he could be so faithful? Because he lived a life of trusting in God for everything. As we will see later, no matter what unimaginable things happened to him, he simply trusted in God.

You see, Joseph came from a family who trusted in God. His father Jacob trusted in God. His grandfather Isaac trusted in God. So did his great-grandfather Abraham.

When I was young, my parents decided to move our entire family to a different country. We all had to ride on a plane for 16 hours! And we could only bring what could fit in 2 suitcases per person. But my parents trusted in God. They were faithful to follow God, just like their parents were. They learned to trust in God from their parents. *[Storyteller, insert your own story about trusting in God.]*

Like Joseph, we can follow in the footsteps of our parents, our grandparents, and even our serving ones, who trust in God. Because Joseph was faithful and trusted in God, God blessed him. No one in the Bible received a greater blessing than Joseph. All the good things in the universe became a blessing to him. Don't you want to be someone like that?

Beginner Level, Block 3, Week 6

Joseph—The Dreamer

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who wait patiently for things to happen.

Reference Reading: Genesis 37

Memory Verse: ...They ought always to pray and not lose heart. (Luke 18:1)

Story Sample

Joseph was a dreamer, but his dreams were different than the dreams we have. His dreams came from God! When Joseph was young, God gave him dreams about something that would happen to him one day. There were two dreams that he had. In both he dreamed that his father, his mother, and all of his brothers would bow down to him. I wonder if Joseph thought the dreams would be answered right away. It must have been so exciting for him to know that God had given those dreams to him! I know I would have expected an answer right away.

But it didn't happen like that! Rather than something good happening to him right away, Joseph ended up in trouble right away. And not just once, but many times he had trouble come to him. His life was a real struggle. First, his brothers sold him; then, he became a servant in Egypt. Later on, he even was falsely accused and ended up in prison for a very long time!

Wouldn't you have been discouraged by all of this? Do you think you would have begun to doubt that the dream would ever be answered? Have your mom or dad ever promised you something that you thought you would get right away, but then time went on and on and on and you still didn't get it?

When I was young, I loved to draw. More than anything there was this very special art kit I wanted to get. It was my dream! My parents promised me that one day I would get it. But months went by and I never got the kit. I began to think that my mom and dad had even lied to me and I would never get it. But a year later, guess what I found in my room one day? My art kit! I was so ashamed I had given up believing I would get it. *[Storyteller, tell a personal story about patiently waiting for something you had dreamed you would have.]*

Joseph wasn't like this though. He never gave up believing that his dream would come true, no matter how bad things seemed to get. He waited twenty-two years for this dream to come true! And it did! Isn't that amazing? In the weeks to come we will talk about some of the things that happened to Joseph while he waited for this dream to come true.

I'd like to be like Joseph and not lose heart while I am waiting patiently!

Beginner Level, Block 3, Week 7

Joseph—Diligent and Responsible

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who are open to learn and do the best we can.

Reference Reading: Genesis 39—41

Memory Verse: And let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands... (Psalm 90:17)

Story Sample

Joseph was truly someone special in the Bible. He was someone who trusted in God and was perfect in his behavior. He also waited patiently for his dreams to be fulfilled. You know what else about Joseph? He was the best at what he did. He was a dreamer, but he did not just wait for things to happen. He was responsible for the things he needed to do and worked hard to get things done.

At a very young age, Joseph was separated from his family and was all-alone in a foreign place. But instead of feeling sorry for himself, he did the best he could in the situation he was placed in. That also meant he was wise. He knew that there was nothing he could do about his situation except to accept it and make the best of it. Joseph also knew God was with him and trusted that God would take care of him, even if the situation seemed not-so-good.

When he was first brought to Egypt, he was bought as a slave by a man named Potiphar. Potiphar was the captain of the guard, an official of Pharaoh the king. So the person Joseph worked for was a very important person. Since Joseph was such a good worker and always did his best, before long Potiphar put him in charge of his house. That's quite something for someone so young. He was only a teenager. But he was wise, responsible, open to learn new things, and did the best that he could.

Later on, he was falsely accused and put in prison. But he didn't feel sorry for himself in prison either. In fact, he was again put in charge. The guards made him responsible over all the other prisoners.

More than that, after he was released from prison, he became the second most powerful man in the whole earth at that time. That meant he had a huge responsibility to take care of so many people. He had to be wise to plan for how to do that. And God was with him and blessed everything he did.

Are you taking any lessons, like piano lessons or playing any sports like baseball or soccer? Or how about doing martial arts or dance? Well, if we want to be good at something, we need to practice and do the best we can. If we don't try our best, it's hard to be very good at anything and definitely impossible to be the best in anything. But this means that we have to work hard at practicing. When I was younger, I had to learn to play the piano. But I did not work hard at practicing. Sadly, I only did the bare minimum. If I had practiced and done my best, right now I would surely be a better piano player. *[Storyteller, insert your own story of being open to learn or working hard and doing the best you can.]*

Joseph could be the best at what he did because not only God was with him, but also he was willing to do his very best. He was wise, open to learn, and always worked hard, which made him the best person for any job. Like Joseph, we should be willing and happy to learn and not think that we know everything. We can also do our very best in whatever we do. We may not be the best at everything, but we surely can try our best at everything we do.

Beginner Level, Block 3, Week 8 **Joseph—Helping Others while in Prison**

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who help others even when we are in need.

Reference Reading: Genesis 39:20—40:23

Memory Verse: To him who asks of you, give... (Matthew 5:42a)

Story Sample

While Joseph was in Egypt, he worked for a man named Potiphar and he did his jobs really well. But one day, someone told a lie about Joseph. He was accused that he had done something that he had not done. Potiphar believed the lie, and he was so angry with Joseph that he had him thrown into prison.

But God was with Joseph even in this prison. He caused the jailer to really trust Joseph, and the jailer put Joseph in charge of the prisoners. Joseph took care of the prisoners who were under him—especially two prisoners from Pharaoh’s house: the baker and the cupbearer. Both of these men had done things to make Pharaoh angry, therefore they had been thrown into prison for a long time. One night, both the baker and cupbearer had special dreams. When they woke up they couldn’t understand what the dreams meant, though, so they got really worried.

In the morning, Joseph saw them and he saw how worried their faces looked. Joseph could have been thinking just about himself—thinking how long he had been in jail and feeling sorry for himself. But that wasn’t Joseph’s attitude at all. He asked the men, “Why are your faces so sad today?” He was concerned for them! Even though he was in prison and probably had his own reasons to be sad, he was concerned for these two men.

The baker and the cupbearer told Joseph that they were sad because they didn’t know what their dreams meant. What do you think Joseph did when he heard that? He offered to help them! That’s right! He asked them to tell him what they had dreamed, and then he explained the meaning of the dreams to them.

In a way, Joseph wasn’t too different from these men at that time: Joseph had had dreams himself, and he was stuck in jail, too. He could have just told the men to work it out for themselves. He could have said, “I had a dream, too, and I’ve been in prison even longer than you. Why should I help you? I have my own problems. Go ask someone else.” But Joseph was not this kind of person. He was willing to help others, even though his own needs had not been met.

We can be like this, too. Maybe we are playing with friends and we all realize we are thirsty. We can help someone else get some water first, before us, even though we are thirsty, too. Or maybe we want to go outside and play, but a friend needs help getting his coat zipped first. We can help our friend with his coat, even if it means he gets to go outside before us. *[Storyteller, insert your own story if you would like.]*

Joseph was the kind of person who helped others even when he was in need, and we can be like that, too.

Beginner Level, Block 3, Week 9

Joseph—Hard Worker and Reliable

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who work hard and are reliable.

Reference Reading: Genesis 41

Memory Verse: But you be strong and do not let your hands fail, for there is reward for your labor. (2 Chronicles 15:7)

Story Sample

One day Pharaoh had two dreams and was troubled, as he did not know what they meant. He called all the magicians and all the wise man to help him understand his dreams. But no one could interpret his dreams. This is when the cupbearer remembered Joseph! The cupbearer told Pharaoh that there was a Hebrew boy named Joseph, who was still in prison, who had interpreted his dream. So Pharaoh called for Joseph. Do you think Joseph could interpret Pharaoh's dreams? Of course he could! Not because he could do it, but because God would be the one doing it and giving peace to Pharaoh.

Joseph told Pharaoh that in his dreams God was telling him what was about to happen. Do you know what was going to happen? There were going to be seven years of abundance of food followed by seven years of severe famine. Can you imagine having seven years in which the land does not produce any food? This is terrible! People were not going to have anything to eat! A lot of people could die! Joseph advised Pharaoh that he needed to set a man over the land of Egypt that would be discerning and wise to plan what to do. Who would that man be?

Joseph knew exactly what Pharaoh needed to do in order to have food available during the years of famine. Joseph came up with a plan. They needed to gather part of the food that was being produced during the years of abundance and save it so they would have food stored for the years of famine. Isn't that a wonderful plan? Pharaoh and all his servants liked Joseph's idea. Now, who was going to do it? Pharaoh said to Joseph, "there is no one as discerning and wise as you." WOW! I don't think Joseph was expecting that! Pharaoh set Joseph to rule over the whole land of Egypt!

Joseph was a wise man. For the next seven years in which the land produced a lot of food, Joseph kept storing it. How was he able to store all this food? The Bible says Joseph put the food in the surrounding fields within each city. Joseph stored the grains in barns. This was a BIG job. I have no doubt that during all those years Joseph was working hard. He not only came up with a plan. He also put that plan to work. I'm sure he was not lazy. I'm sure he would wake up every morning and labor hard in all he needed to do. You see, God can't use lazy people for the things He needs to do. God only uses people that are reliable.

Don't you want to be a hard working person? Don't you want to be reliable? I'm sure you do! Don't think that being a hard worker only applies to adults. As children in Kindergarten or First Grade, you can be hard working and reliable persons!

One of the tasks I enjoy is washing dishes. Since I was very little, my mom would ask me to help her in the kitchen. I learned from a very young age to be a hard working person. First of all, I would plan how I would do it. I always started with the utensils. Then, I would soap and rinse all the cups. Afterwards, I would do all the plates. Finally, I would do all the pots and pans. Even if my younger siblings were playing next to me, once I started that task I would not

pause until the job was done! I thank my mom for teaching me to be this way! *[Storyteller, insert your own personal story.]*

I hope that we all go home today and practice to be like Joseph! Let's be those that see a need, come up with a plan and are reliable to see it through! Let's be like Joseph!

Beginner Level, Block 3, Week 10
Joseph—The Ruler Who Took Care of His Family

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who care for our family.

Reference Reading: Genesis 42—50

Memory Verse: This is My commandment, that you love one another even as I have loved you.
(John 15:12)

Story Sample

We have heard about all the troubles Joseph went through as a child and a young person. Now he was a ruler in Egypt! He was in charge of giving food to the people on the earth who had none during this time of famine. For seven years he had collected grain and now, while there was no food available, he was the one who distributed it to others. He had come a long way, from being sold by his brothers, to being a prisoner and a servant, to being a ruler!

If you remember, the rest of Joseph's family lived in Canaan, not in Egypt. The famine was everywhere so even in Canaan they had no food. So his father Jacob and his eleven brothers were also in need of food. Jacob had his sons (except for Benjamin) go to Egypt to request food from Joseph. They didn't know that this ruler was their brother, the one they had treated wrongly when he was young. But Joseph knew who they were! He didn't tell them right away who he was though. And rather than try to get back at his brothers for wronging him, Joseph treated them fairly, making sure that they got enough food for all of them. After their first visit to Egypt, they returned home to Canaan with the food. After they ran out of food, they went back to Egypt to ask for more. This time Benjamin went along, as Joseph had asked.

Have you ever had a brother or sister treat you badly? One time my sister called me a name in front of my friends. I was so mad! She not only made me feel bad about myself, but she also embarrassed me! I told myself I would never talk to her again! But shortly after this incident, one day she fell at school while playing dodgeball and broke her arm. And suddenly, I wasn't mad at her any more. I felt bad for her, laying on the playground in pain while the children on the playground were laughing and calling her clumsy, and I didn't like that! So I told them that my sister was NOT clumsy, and then I helped her get up and took her to the nurse's office. I realized it is better to take care of your family rather than to try to get even with them.
[Storyteller, insert your own personal story.]

In the end, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers. There was a lot of crying as they all were so glad that Joseph was all right. They returned to Canaan to get their father and bring him back to Egypt. Again, there was another happy reunion when Joseph and his father saw each other. Now Joseph promised that he would take care of all of them. After all, he was a ruler and could do what he wanted. And he wanted to take care of his family! They all lived in Egypt until the end of Jacob's life.

I hope I can remember this story the next time I am mad at my sister. I want to be someone who always takes care of my family, don't you?