Preschool–Grade 6

Jacob, Rachel and Leah

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Love serves. Jacob loved Rachel so much that he worked seven years for her.
Bible passage: Genesis 29:1–30. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her." *Genesis 29:20 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, a big gray paper circle (the stone), a blue paper circle a little smaller (the well), 5 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: lay the blue circle on the floor and put the gray circle on top of it. Write the memory verse on the 5 paper strips (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at Genesis 29:10 and Genesis 29:20.

1. Opening game: Gather the Flocks (5 minutes)

Split the class into three "flocks" of sheep. Point to the circles on the floor and say: "This is a well, and a great stone is on top of it. The shepherds could not move the stone until all the flocks were gathered." Call one flock at a time: "Flock one, come to the well!" They crawl over and say "Baa!" When all three flocks are there, everyone helps slide the stone off the well together. Say: "Today a man named Jacob comes to a well like this, and he rolls the stone away!"

2. Bible story: Jacob, Rachel and Leah (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Genesis 29, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Jacob went on a long journey to the land in the east (Genesis 29:1). He came to a **well** in a field. Three **flocks** of sheep were lying by it, and a **great stone** was on the well's mouth (29:2). Say: "A **well** is a deep hole where people get water. A **flock** is a group of sheep." The shepherds rolled the stone away only when all the flocks were gathered, then they gave the sheep water and put the stone back (29:3).

Jacob asked the shepherds, "My brethren, whence be ye?" Say: "That means, 'Friends, where are you from?'" They said, "Of **Haran** are we" (29:4). Jacob asked if they knew **Laban**. Laban was the brother of Jacob's mother (29:5, 29:10). They said, "He is well," and look, here comes **Rachel**, his daughter, with the sheep (29:6)!

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The story continues: Rachel came with her father's sheep, "for she kept them" (29:9). Say: "**Kept** means she took care of them. Rachel was a shepherd girl!" When Jacob saw Rachel and the sheep, he went near, **rolled the stone** from the well's mouth, and gave Laban's sheep water (29:10). Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and he cried out loud (29:11). He told her he was family, and Rachel ran and told her father (29:12). Laban ran to meet Jacob, hugged him, kissed him and brought him to his house (29:13). Say: "In Bible times, family said hello with a kiss."

Jacob stayed a month. Laban said, "Tell me, what shall thy **wages** be?" (29:14–15). Say: "**Wages** means pay for your work." Laban had two daughters. **Leah** was the older one, and Rachel was the younger one (29:16). Jacob **loved** Rachel. He said, "I will **serve** thee seven years for Rachel" (29:18). Say: "**Serve** means work for someone. Jacob would work for Laban seven whole years so he could marry Rachel!" **Read Genesis 29:20 from your Bible:** "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her."

When the seven years were over, Laban made a **feast**, a big dinner, for all the men of the place (29:22). But Laban played a trick. He brought Leah to Jacob to be his wife instead of Rachel (29:23)! Jacob found out it was Leah. He said to Laban, "Wherefore then hast thou **beguiled** me?" (29:25). Say: "That means, 'Why did you trick me?'" Laban said that in his country the younger daughter could not be married before the older one (29:26). Laban said Jacob could marry Rachel too if he would work seven more years (29:27). Jacob **did so** (29:28). Laban gave Rachel to Jacob as his wife too, and Jacob worked for Laban seven more years (29:28, 29:30). Say: "Laban was not honest, but Jacob kept his word."

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What was on top of the well? *(A great stone, Genesis 29:2)*
2. Who came to the well with her father's sheep? *(Rachel, 29:9)*
3. What did Jacob do for Rachel's sheep? *(He rolled the stone away and gave them water, 29:10)*
4. How many years did Jacob work so he could marry Rachel? *(Seven years, 29:20)*
5. How long did the seven years seem to Jacob? *("But a few days, for the love he had to her," 29:20)*

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4. Memory verse: Seven Claps (5 minutes)

Write the verse on the 5 strips: *And Jacob served / seven years for Rachel; / and they seemed unto him / but a few days, for the love / he had to her. Genesis 29:20.* Tape them in order on the wall. Explain the old words: **served** means worked for someone, and **they seemed unto him but a few days** means the years felt short to him, like only a few days. Read the verse together. Then everyone claps seven times for the seven years and says, "Love makes it seem short!" Take one strip away and read again. Keep taking one strip away until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Jacob loved Rachel, so he worked hard for her. God loves you even more than that. We have all done wrong things. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. But God loves you very much. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: show love by serving. Help someone at home without being asked, and always tell the truth.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Jacob, Rachel and Leah word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/rachel-and-leah-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/rachel-and-leah-craft), or **Helping Hands.** One child at a time acts out a way to serve without talking: setting the table, carrying groceries, feeding a pet, watering plants, picking up toys. The others guess. After each one, say: "That's love that serves!"

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for loving us so much that You came to save us in Jesus. Help us love others by serving them, help us always tell the truth, and help us keep our word. In Jesus' name, amen."

Teacher note: this lesson tells Genesis 29:1–30 simply. It leaves out the wedding-night wording (29:21, 23, 30) and the two handmaids Laban gave his daughters (29:24, 29). The Bible tells that Jacob had two wives the way it happened, without saying it was right. If a child asks, God's way from the beginning is one husband and one wife (Genesis 2:24).

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