

# Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel

Genesis 29:15-30

Young children still view the happenings of life in terms of their most immediate authority figures—parents, grandparents, and teachers. Everything that happens in their lives—the food they eat, the places they go, the people they meet—children see as an outreach of the people they know best. Use this lesson to teach kids that there’s someone even bigger and smarter than their parents, and that this loving God who made and cherishes them is in control of their lives.



**► Bible Point**  
God uses hard times to help us grow.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>1</b> Getting Started	<b>Have a Ball!</b> <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Play a game that gets increasingly harder.	balls	
<b>2</b> Bible Exploration	<b>Moving On</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Hear how Jacob moved to Laban’s house.	Bible, CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	
	<b>Jacob Gets Married</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Learn how Jacob married Leah and then Rachel.	CD player, 1 snack item per child, antibacterial gel (optional) <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	
	<b>Who’s There?</b> <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Play a game to see how Jacob was tricked.	dark sheet, tape	Hang the sheet across a corner of your room.


**Key Verse**  
“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

**Weaving Faith Into Life**  
Kids will rely on God to help them through hard times.

*Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.*





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p><b>3</b> Weaving Faith Into Life</p>	<p><b>Hard Times</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Draw or write about hard times they've faced.</p>	<p>My Bible Fun, crayons, pens</p>	<p>Tear out the Lesson 4 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.</p>
	<p><b>Romans 8:28 Puzzle</b> <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Learn the Key Verse, and make puzzles to help understand it.</p>	<p>Bible, My Bible Fun, CD player, construction paper, several pairs of scissors, glue, crayons, 1 copy per child of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson) <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD, "Romans 8:28 Puzzle Punch-Outs"</p>	
<p><b>4</b> Lasting Impressions</p>	<p><b>Daily Challenges</b> <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	<p>My Bible Fun</p>	
	<p><b>Weaving Faith at Home</b> <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*





# Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel

Genesis 29:15-30

BIBLE BACKGROUND  
FOR LEADERS

## Jacob Flees From Esau to Uncle Laban

After fleeing from his brother, Esau, Jacob headed to the land of his ancestors, and there he found his uncle Laban. Laban welcomed him into his home, and Jacob fell in love with Rachel.

## Jacob Marries Leah, But Loves Rachel

No one knows for sure the meaning of Scripture’s description of Leah’s eyes as “weak.” Some suggest that she was nearsighted; others say that her eyes lacked the sparkle or fire that was considered a sign of great beauty in that culture. Still others think the Hebrew word translated as “weak” could also be translated as “delicate” or “gentle,” indicating that Leah had some beauty but it paled by comparison to Rachel’s overwhelming beauty. Whatever Leah’s eyes were like, Jacob definitely preferred Rachel!

Reading through the passage raises at least a couple of questions: *Why did Jacob have to work seven years to “earn” his wife?* Jacob may have used this method because he wasn’t able to give Laban a dowry, as was customarily given to the father of the bride.

*How could Jacob have slept with Leah without knowing she wasn’t Rachel?* Remember that this event happened before the invention of electric lights, so it would have been very dark once the weak lamps were extinguished. Also Leah might have tried to make the deception succeed. Finally, Jacob’s senses may have been dulled by eating and drinking during the wedding feast.

Because multiple wives were common in that culture, Laban agreed to let Jacob take Rachel as his second wife after just one week—if Jacob worked another seven years for Laban. This was not your average honeymoon.

## Jacob Keeps His Word to Laban

So Jacob continued to work for Laban. Jacob fulfilled his promise. Perhaps this shows some growth in Jacob. Perhaps years of hardship had curbed his deceptive ways—after all, he could have taken his two wives and run before the second set of seven years was up. Perhaps he realized that God was teaching him patience and faithfulness through the hard times that came into his life.

Hard times come. How we respond to them may influence how God helps us through them. When we trust in God, he will never let us down.

## The Jesus Connection

We all go through hard times. No one has ever faced as many difficulties as Jesus did while he was here walking among humankind. God sees our hearts and he wants to help us grow in character and closeness to him. The more we allow God to shape our responses and attitudes, the closer we can draw to him and the more able we are to walk through hard times with faith and perseverance while trusting him. What are some ways you can ask God to help you change your attitude toward hard times? You can write your prayer below.

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## Have a Ball! Supplies

balls

# 1 GETTING STARTED

## Have a Ball!

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Gather everyone together, and have kids form two single-file lines. Say: **Let's play a game. This is how to play: I'll give the first person in each line a ball, and that person will pass the ball over his or her head to the next person in line. The next person in line will pass the ball under his or her legs to the next person. You'll continue that pattern—over the head and then under the legs—until the ball gets to the end of the line.** Demonstrate the process for kids. Then say: **The last person in line will run to the front of the line, hand the first person the ball, and run back to the end of the line. You'll keep playing until I say stop.** Have a group of four kids demonstrate so kids know exactly what to do.

Have kids play, and after the second round, begin introducing more and more balls into play. After adding several balls to each line, play will become somewhat frenzied. Stop play after a few minutes.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was this game like for you as we added more balls?
- Tell about a time things felt crazy or out of control in your life.
- What are some ways God can help you in times like that?

Say: **Our game became harder and harder to play as I added the balls. Sometimes in life we have to go through situations that are hard to handle, just as in our game. No one likes to go through hard times, but hard times happen to everyone. Our Bible Point tells us that ► GOD USES HARD TIMES TO HELP US GROW. Today we'll read in the Bible about someone who was going through a hard time. Let's hear what happened.**



2

BIBLE  
EXPLORATION

# Moving On

## What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Genesis 29:15-30, and show kids the passage. Say: **In the Bible today, we'll hear what happened to a man named Jacob and how God used a hard time in his life to help him grow. Tell a friend near you about a time that was hard for you.** Allow time.

Say: **Jacob had a twin brother named Esau. Jacob tricked Esau and their dad, Isaac, so that he could get all the blessings and privileges of an older brother. It was a really big deal, and Esau was so mad that Jacob's mom, Rebekah, told Jacob to leave for a while. So Jacob went to visit his uncle, Laban, who lived very far away. Let's pretend to travel a very long distance.** Lead children around the room twice.

Say: **Jacob's parents also told him to look for a woman to marry while he was there. Let's listen to what happened, and as we do, let's help Jacob with all the hard work.** Play "Jacob Finds a Job" (track 9 on the CD). Lead kids in "helping" Jacob with the hard work. For example, when Jacob talks about hauling water, pretend to carry water and pour it into a trough. When he talks about feeding the animals, pretend to scatter feed on the ground. And when he talks about harvesting grain, pretend to spear hay with a pitchfork and throw it into a pile. Each sound effect lasts about 15 to 20 seconds.

## Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you think about Jacob pledging to work for seven years?**
- **Tell about a time you said you would do something hard to get what you wanted.**
- **What did you learn from the hard work?**

Say: **Whether or not you've had a chance to work hard for something you wanted, working for seven years to marry Rachel probably seems to us like it would be a really hard time for Jacob. But ► GOD USES HARD TIMES TO HELP US GROW. The Bible tells us that when we love God, he works everything out—even hard times—for our good. Let's see what happens to Jacob next.**



## Moving On Supplies

- .....
- Bible
  - CD player
  - Teacher Pack**
  - CD: "Jacob Finds a Job"  
(track 9)





### Jacob Gets Married Supplies

CD player  
1 snack item per child  
antibacterial gel  
(optional)

#### Teacher Pack

CD: "Jacob Gets  
Married" (track 10),  
"Jacob Gets Married...  
Again!" (track 11)



### Who's There? Supplies

dark sheet  
tape

### Who's There? Easy Prep

Hang the sheet across a  
corner of your room.

## Jacob Gets Married

### What You'll Do

Say: **Jacob pledged to work for seven years just so he could marry Rachel, the woman he loved. Let's see if all that hard work paid off.**

Play "Jacob Gets Married" (track 10 on the CD).

Say: **Since Laban and his family are getting ready for a feast, let's have something to eat ourselves!** Distribute the snacks you brought for kids, and let them eat as you play "Jacob Gets Married...Again!" (track 11 on the CD).

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What do you think about how Laban tricked Jacob?
- Tell about a time someone tricked you.
- What are some ways you can respond like Jacob did?

Say: **Jacob worked for seven years so he could marry Rachel, only to be tricked. But he responded to Laban by agreeing to work another seven years so he could marry Rachel. He knew that ► GOD USES HARD TIMES TO HELP US GROW. Like Jacob, we can trust God to take care of us when things happen in our lives that surprise or hurt us.**

## Who's There?

### What You'll Do

Say: **It seems strange to think that Jacob was tricked like that. Let's see how that might have happened.** Have kids form two groups. Have kids from one group stand behind the sheet, while kids from the other group sit in front of the sheet and close their eyes.

Say: **Our friends behind the sheet will take turns saying a few simple words or phrases such as "Hello" or "How are you?" Then everyone in front of the sheet will try to guess who's speaking.** Quietly tell the kids behind the sheet to whisper or try to disguise their voices. Have the other children try to guess who's speaking. Then let groups switch roles.



### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like trying to guess who was speaking?
- Tell about something hard that you have to do in your life right now.
- What can you do to show God you trust him as you do that hard thing?

Say: **God was with Jacob during his hard times, and God is with you during your hard times. Knowing that God helps you during hard times is so important. Our Bible Point for today tells us that ► GOD USES HARD TIMES TO HELP US GROW.**

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## 3

### WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

## Hard Times

### What You'll Do ■■■■

Distribute this week's My Bible Fun pages, crayons, and pens. Point out the "Hard Times" section.

Say: **Think of a time in your life that was hard for you, and draw a picture of that time inside the puzzle piece on the bottom of the page.**

Give kids several minutes to draw. Then have kids form pairs and explain their pictures to their partners.

Say: **Now think of a hard time you might be facing soon. Maybe you have a test in school this week, or maybe someone in your family is sick. At the top of the page in the "Dear God" section, write a letter to God, asking him to help you during the hard time you're facing.**

When kids finish writing, have them explain to their partners what they wrote.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Hard times happen to everyone, but God will help you when you have hard times. God knows all about what's happening in your life. In fact, he loves you so much that if you trust him, he'll work everything out—even the hard times—for your good. Remember, our Bible Point for today tells us that ► GOD USES HARD TIMES TO HELP US GROW, just as he did for Jacob.**



### Hard Times Supplies

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My Bible Fun  
crayons  
pens

### Hard Times Easy Prep

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Tear out the Lesson 4  
pages from each My  
Bible Fun student book.





### Romans 8:28 Puzzle Supplies

Bible  
My Bible Fun  
CD player  
construction paper  
several pairs of scissors  
glue  
crayons  
1 copy per child of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)  
**Teacher Pack**  
CD: "God Works for the Good" (Romans 8:28) (track 12)  
"Romans 8:28 Puzzle Punch-Outs"

## Romans 8:28 Puzzle

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: Today we're learning that ► **GOD USES HARD TIMES TO HELP US GROW.**  
**Our Key Verse** today can help us remember that God always works for our good.

Open your Bible to Romans 8:28, and show it to kids. Then read aloud the verse: **"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).** Have kids repeat the verse with you several times.

Say: **This verse says that in all things—both good and hard times—God will work everything out for your good, as long as you love him. And he has a plan and purpose for your life. When we're going through hard times, it can be tough to see what good things God has planned. But God sees the bigger picture. He knows what he wants for our whole lives, not just the little bit we can see right now.**

**Let's sing a song to help us remember that.** Give each child a copy of the lyrics page. Then play "God Works for the Good" (Romans 8:28) (track 12 on the CD). Lead kids in singing and doing the motions.

*(Chorus)*

**And we know, we know** *(point to head)*  
**That in all things** *(stretch arms high)*  
**God works for the good** *(give thumbs-up)*  
**Of those who love him.** *(touch hand to heart)*  
*(Repeat.)*

**Who have been called** *(put hands on hips)*  
**According to his purpose.** *(point upward)*  
**Who have been called** *(put hands on hips)*  
**According to his purpose.** *(point upward)*  
**If you understand** *(point to head)*  
**It's in his command** *(shake finger)*  
**To work things out for his children.** *(give thumbs-up)*  
**That is you!** *(point at each other)*  
**That is me!** *(point at self)*

*(Repeat chorus 3x.)*

**And we know, we know** *(point to head)*  
**That in all things** *(stretch arms high)*  
**God works for the good** *(give thumbs-up)*  
**Of those who love him,** *(touch hand to heart)*  
**Who love him.** *(pat heart)*

"God Works for the Good" (Romans 8:28) by Rob Biagi. © 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Show the “Romans 8:28 Puzzle Punch-Out.” Say: **Even though we can only see today, like one piece of a puzzle, God knows how the whole picture will fit together.** Punch out the three punch-out pieces from the page.

Set out construction paper, scissors, glue, crayons, and the Romans 8:28 puzzle shapes. Have each child trace the punch-out shapes onto construction paper. Then have kids cut out the shapes. As they work, encourage kids to talk about things in their lives that don’t seem to make sense at the moment.

When kids finish cutting out the three shapes, give each child another sheet of construction paper. Let kids gently try to fit their puzzle pieces together without glue.

Say: **These puzzle pieces don’t form a complete picture, do they? That’s how our lives may seem sometimes. But we can’t see the whole picture like God can.**

Have kids cut out the puzzle piece they drew on from the “Hard Times” section on their My Bible Fun pages.

Say: **Today we learned that God helped Jacob through hard times, and Jacob ended up having good things happen—he got to marry Rachel. We may not be able to see how hard times fit into our lives, but our Bible Point tells us that ► GOD USES HARD TIMES TO HELP US GROW.**



Have each child use the puzzle piece from the My Bible Fun page to make a complete puzzle with the traced punch-out pieces. As kids work, say: **This puzzle piece shows a picture of a hard time you went through. You may not have known what purpose that hard time had in your life, but God knew. And he’s able to use that hard time for your good.** If necessary, show kids how the puzzle pieces fit together to form a large heart. Have kids each glue the heart to a sheet of construction paper.





### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like to try to fit the puzzle together?
- How is that like or unlike trying to understand hard times in your life?
- Why can you trust God in hard times?

Say: **Just as your puzzle wasn't complete without the "Hard Times" piece from your My Bible Fun page, sometimes God uses hard times to complete parts of our lives. But God always helps us during hard times, just as he helped Jacob. This week when you come across something that's hard, remember that ► GOD USES HARD TIMES TO HELP US GROW and trust him to work things for your good.**

## 4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

### Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges  
Supplies

My Bible Fun

### What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Let's think about how ► GOD USES HARD TIMES TO HELP US GROW.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their My Bible Fun pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Plant some seeds in your yard, and thank God for using hard times to help you grow.**
- **The next time you argue with a friend at school, ask God to help you see him working in the hard times.**
- **With a parent, take flowers to someone in the hospital, and tell that person that God helps us grow in hard times.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**





Say: **Just as God did in Jacob's life, ► GOD USES HARD TIMES TO HELP US GROW. This week, let's remember that God works for our good as we follow through on our Daily Challenges.**



## Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how God uses hard times to help us grow. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their My Bible Fun pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at [group.com/digital](http://group.com/digital).

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God that when we love him, he always works for our good. Give each child a chance to thank God for working for his or her good and give an example if they choose to share. Then close the prayer by praying: **God, we know you have a plan and a purpose for us, even when we're going through a hard time in our lives. Help us trust you. In Jesus' name, amen.**





## Lyrics ■■■■

# God Works for the Good (Romans 8:28)

*(Chorus)*

**And we know, we know** *(point to head)*

**That in all things** *(stretch arms high)*

**God works for the good** *(give thumbs-up)*

**Of those who love him.** *(touch hand to heart)*

*(Repeat.)*

**Who have been called** *(put hands on hips)*

**According to his purpose.** *(point upward)*

**Who have been called** *(put hands on hips)*

**According to his purpose.** *(point upward)*

**If you understand** *(point to head)*

**It's in his command** *(shake finger)*

**To work things out for his children.** *(give thumbs-up)*

**That is you!** *(point at each other)*

**That is me!** *(point at self)*

*(Repeat chorus 3x.)*

**And we know, we know** *(point to head)*

**That in all things** *(stretch arms high)*

**God works for the good** *(give thumbs-up)*

**Of those who love him,** *(touch hand to heart)*

**Who love him.** *(pat heart)*

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