

The Case of the God Who Would Never Leave

Genesis 27-28



Story-telling Tips

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Choose story action cues and/or prepare storyboard figures, if using. (Included in Visual Aids book)
3. Practice telling story with the storyboard pictures, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story.
2. Put up storyboard figures/add story action cues as you tell the story. Allow the children to help you put them on the board, if desired.
3. Include the children in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.

INTRODUCTION/ LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

“Our story is called: The Case of the God Who Would Never Leave. Here is your listening assignment.”

Read from Detective Dan’s Listening Assignment signs, but questions are summarized below:

Detective Dan’s Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:

I need to find out:

- 1. Who ran away from home? Why?**
- 2. Who was the God who didn’t leave him? Why was it so amazing that He didn’t leave him?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is Psalm 139:1-3,7-10:

“O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar... you are familiar with all my way...Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.”

I need to find out:

- 1. Who went far away from his home?**
- 2. How did the LORD show him that He was still with him, guiding him and helping him?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but only 4 of them are in the story.

They are: a brother named Esau, a ladder, a pair of glasses, an angel, a snake, and a rock. *Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.*

I need to figure out:

- 1. Which four belong in our story?**
- 2. Who praised the LORD for taking care of him, everywhere he went?**

Read the assignment questions, THEN SAY,

“Ok, Deep Down Detectives! Put on your best listening ears and see if you can hear the answers to Detective Dan’s questions. When I finish telling the story, we will see if we can answer all the questions.”

Read the Bible Truth story, answer questions, present the gospel and lead in prayer.

Answers to questions; the gospel; and, ACTS prayer are included with the story text.

The Case of the God Who Would Never Leave *Genesis 27-28*

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics) Numbers correspond to storyboard pictures and placement upon the storyboard. Always feel free to use less pictures, if it's best for your kids. Simply black out the numbers next to pictures you do not plan to use. All pictures are found in the Visual Aids book. Put BG (background) pictures on storyboard ahead of time. SB pictures (listed below in story text) are added to board as you tell the story. These numbers are also found on the back of each picture.

Tip: Stack pictures in numerical before telling story for easy use. Use sticky-back velcro to attach pictures to storyboard felt. Use sticky-tac putty to stick a picture on top of another picture.

Jacob (SB1) was about to be in big trouble! He was up to his tricky tricks again and what big tricky tricks they were! Jacob had (SB2) tricked his big brother, Esau, out of the special, firstborn gift he was supposed to get from their father. And now, Jacob wanted to trick their father into giving him the special, firstborn-blessing Esau was supposed to get from him, too. But time was running out. Jacob needed to think fast, if he was to get Esau's blessing.

Jacob and Esau's father, (SB3) Isaac, was a very old man who lay in bed. Before he died, he would give each of his sons a special blessing.

Isaac called for (SB4) Esau first. Esau was the oldest son in the family. Isaac would give him the best blessing—the special, firstborn blessing. That's what fathers did back then. "Esau, come here. I want to give you my special, firstborn blessing," Isaac told him. "But first, go hunting and bring me back some meat and make it into my favorite stew," Isaac said.

Esau happily obeyed. He (SB5) picked up his bow and arrows and set off into the fields. He hoped God would help him find good food for his father quickly. How he was looking forward to getting that special, firstborn blessing!

Rebekah, their mother, hurried to Jacob with the news. She and Jacob (SB6) wanted Jacob to have that best blessing, not Esau. It would take tricky tricks to get it. Could Rebekah and Jacob trick Isaac into giving Jacob the firstborn blessing instead?

This wasn't going to be easy. You see, Esau and Jacob might have been brothers (they were even twins!), but they were very, very different, as their father, Isaac, knew.

(SB7) Esau loved to work and hunt outdoors. He smelled of the fresh air and the fields. But Jacob loved to stay near the family tent and help his mother, Rebekah cook and do other chores. He smelled more like smoke from the fire and food. Esau had very hairy arms and legs, but Jacob had silky smooth skin. Jacob and Esau's voices were very different, too.

So, yes, indeed, it was going to take a particularly good tricky trick to fool Isaac into thinking Jacob was really Esau.

Before long, Jacob (SB8) had come up with just the trick...and it all depended on his father's bad eyes.

What do you think Jacob did?

Here's what Jacob did: (SB9) First, he dressed up in Esau's best clothes. Now he would smell like Esau. Then, he put goat's fur on his neck and hands. Now he would feel hairy, like Esau. Would this be enough to fool their father? Jacob hoped so.

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

While Esau was still hunting far from the tents, Jacob put his tricky trick into action. (SB10) He filled up a bowl with his mother's yummy goat stew and went to his father pretending to be his brother: (SB11) "Here I am father. It's your son, Esau," Jacob lied.

Jacob thought this was odd. "Hmmm...Esau has come back from hunting very quickly! Too quickly. And this voice. It doesn't sound like Esau. It sounds like Jacob! Could this be Jacob up to another of his tricky tricks?" Isaac wondered.

"Are you really my son, Esau?" Isaac asked the son standing before him.

"Yes, Father, it is I. The LORD helped me get some meat quickly. Eat your delicious stew and bless me. "Please bless me!" Jacob lied again.

Something still didn't seem right to Isaac. Since his old eyes didn't work very well, Isaac decided to use his nose and hands to make sure this son standing before him was really Esau.

What do you think Isaac used his hands and his nose to do?

(SB12) Isaac stretched out his arm and placed it on his son. He felt lots of hair. Yes, this felt like Esau all right!

Then Isaac leaned over to kiss his son and smell his son's clothes. They smelled like the outdoors. Yes, this smelled like Esau smelled all right. Now Isaac was sure. Yes, this really was Esau! So he stretched out his arm, put his hand on his son's head and gave him the special, firstborn blessing.

Ha! Jacob's tricky trick had worked! His father had given him the best blessing! How pleased Jacob was as he hurried away from his tent!

Yes, Jacob was very happy...but there was someone else who soon wouldn't be happy at all. Someone who came back from hunting and went into his father with his favorite stew, only to find out that his brother had been there before him with his tricky trick. Can you guess who it was?

Can you guess?

(SB13) It was Esau..the REAL Esau! And he was furious! Jacob had tricked him out of his father's firstborn gift to him and now he had tricked him out of his father's special, firstborn blessing to him, too! BOTH of his father's best gifts that should have been his were both GONE!

So, now it was Esau's turn for a tricky trick. As soon as old, father Isaac died, Esau (SB14) would get rid of Jacob and take back those best gifts for himself! That would take care of him once and for all!

Uh, oh! What should Jacob do?

There was only one thing Jacob could do: run away. But to where? Rebekah had an idea: "(SB15) Run away to the far away country where my family lives. They will take care of you and you can find a wife there," she told Jacob. So that's just what Jacob did. With the blessing of his father and mother, he packed up his little bundle of things and set off at once.

The trip to Rebekah's family was long and hard. They lived faraway. Jacob would have to (SB16) walk many days through the lonely, dry wilderness to get there. Each day, the hot sun would beat down on him. He would have to find his own water and food. He could easily get lost.

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

The (SB17) nights could be as hard as the days, out in that deep, deep darkness, all alone. The desert-y wilderness could be windy and cold at night. The ground was bumpy and hard. Jacob had only a rock for a pillow and his coat for a blanket. Ooh...ouch... brrrr...Cover up, Jacob!

The desert-y wilderness was home to lots of (SB18) creepy crawly bugs. Spiders and scorpions and other little wiggling, biting creatures could wriggle their way inside his clothes as he lay on the ground. Wriggle... wriggle...nip...nip...snap...snap...Watch out, Jacob!

There were (SB19) lions and bears and other creatures around. They had hungry tummies and sharp teeth. They prowled around in the dark, looking for food to eat. Roar....growl...chomp, chomp.... Hide, Jacob!

Why, there might even be (SB20) bad guys who would sneak up on him and take his bundle of things. Whoo, whoo...ha, ha! Beware, Jacob!

Jacob had never been away from home like this before, so very all alone, in the middle of nowhere. Who would be with him, as he traveled so far from home? Could anyone help him?

Can you think of anyone?

Yes, there was who someone could. The LORD could help Jacob! He is the God who is everywhere, all the time. He had been there when Jacob tricked his father and took his brother's special firstborn blessing. He had been there when Esau wanted to kill him and he had to run away. And He was right there, in the middle of that nowhere in the deep darkness where Jacob camped that night.

Now, Jacob's tricky tricks were very bad things and he deserved nothing but the LORD's punishment for them. After all, the LORD is good. He hates wrong-doing... and Jacob had most certainly done wrong!

But the LORD is also so very kind and merciful to sinners, even sinners like Jacob. And many times, the LORD takes very bad things and does very good things, things that we could never, ever deserve. And so it was that the LORD chose to be very kind and merciful to Jacob. The LORD chose to use the bad things that Jacob did to do some very good things. Things that would one day bring good to all people, everywhere... even to people like you and me.

So right there, in the middle of nowhere, in that deep darkness, on that cold ground, with that hard, rock pillow. Right there, with those bugs wriggling, those wild animals prowling, (and maybe even bad guys lurking), the LORD helped (SB21) Jacob fall asleep. And as he slept, the LORD gave Jacob a special dream about the good things He would do through Jacob and his family.

In his dream, Jacob saw (SB22) a VERY tall ladder. It was so tall that it stretched from the ground all the way up to (SB23) heaven.

And who did Jacob see climbing up and down that amazing ladder? Lots and lots of God's angels! Amazing! But even more amazing than all those angels on the ladder was who he saw at the very top of the ladder in heaven.

Who do you think Jacob saw?

It was (SB24) the LORD, Himself!

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

The LORD spoke to Jacob and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father, Isaac, and your grandfather, Abraham. I made big promises to them and now I'm making them to you. (SB25) The land you are sleeping on I will give to you and all your family after you. Your family is going to grow and grow and grow until it's so big, you can't even count everyone. And one day, I will bless the whole world through your family when the Savior, Jesus, is born into your family. He will be the greatest blessing of all," the LORD said.

"Jacob, you may be far away from your family, all alone, in the dark, but I am with you. I will take care of you wherever you go. I will bring you back to this land one day. I will do everything I've promised you," the LORD told him.

Jacob woke up from the dream. He was excited and a little scared. "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it. How awesome it is! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven," he exclaimed.

Jacob never wanted to forget what had happened that night. So the next morning, he took the stone that had been his pillow and (SB26) he stood it up on end like a tower. Then he poured oil on the stone as a sign that God had done something special.

He named the place, "Bethel," which means "House of God." Then Jacob made a big promise to the LORD:

"If You will be with me and will keep me as I go far away from home; if You will give me food to eat and clothes to wear, so that I come home one day to my father's house safely, and with no one mad at me, then You shall be my God. And this stone, which I have set up as a tower, shall be a special place where people come to worship You and meet with You. And I will give You worship gifts from everything You give me," Jacob promised. The LORD was pleased with Jacob's promise and accepted it.

Then (SB27) Jacob picked up his bundle and went on his way. Day after day, he traveled on through the desert-y wilderness--under the hot sun, looking for food and water, and trusting that he wasn't lost. Night after night, he lay down in the deep darkness, on the cold ground, with the creepy, crawlies wriggling, the growling, animals prowling, and maybe even the bad guys lurking near by. Jacob went farther and farther away from home and everything he had known, but now everything was better. Now he knew who was with him.

Who was with him?

The LORD, the God who was everywhere, all the time. HE was always with Jacob. He would make sure Jacob had everything he needed. He would keep all of his promises to him.

And so He did! The LORD helped Jacob get all the way to his mother's family in the faraway country. He (SB28) blessed Jacob with a big family and many good things. He worked inside Jacob, too. He changed Jacob into a man who loved Him and trusted in Him. And many years later, the LORD led (SB29) Jacob safely back home to his family... where everyone was happy to see him—even his brother, Esau!

Jacob praised God for taking care of him. He truly was the God who is everywhere, all the time.

God also kept His promise to bless all peoples through Jacob's family. At just the right time, (SB30) Jesus, God's Son, was born--Jacob's great, great, etc. grandson. He was called Emmanuel, God with us. He came to give us the greatest blessing of all: forgiveness of our sins, when we turn from our sins and trust in Him as our Savior. If we do, the LORD will be OUR God who is with US, everywhere, all the time, bringing good to us. No matter where we go or what we do, He will be right there with us: loving us, taking care of us, and working inside of our hearts, helping us to love Him and trust in Him. How kind the LORD has been to us through Jacob and his family!

Cracking the Case: (story wrap-up for Listening Assignments)

It's time to see how we did with our Listening Assignment.

Detective Dan's Lesson 1 Listening Assignment:

1. Who ran away from home? Why? Jacob ran away from home because he cheated his brother out of their father's special blessing.

2. Who was the God who didn't leave him? Why was it so amazing that He didn't leave him? The LORD was the God who didn't leave Jacob. It was amazing that the LORD didn't leave Jacob because the LORD hates wrong-doing (sin) and Jacob had done a very bad thing by tricking his father to get the special, firstborn blessing.

For You and Me:

Isn't the LORD amazing! He is good and He hates wrong-doing (sin); but, He is so merciful, too. The LORD stayed with Jacob and promised to bless him. He changed Jacob into a man who loved Him and lived for Him. The LORD even used Jacob to bless us, too. How? By sending Jesus through Jacob's family to be the Savior for our sins. When we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus, the LORD will forgive our sins, too. He will make us His special people who He will bless every day of our lives. And one day, He will take us to live with Him forever. That will be the greatest blessing of all!

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:
Our Bible Verse is Psalm 139:1-3,7-10:

"O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar... you are familiar with all my ways... Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast."

1. Who went far away from his home? Jacob did.

2. How did the LORD show him that He was still with him, guiding him and helping him? The LORD helped Jacob find the way to the country where his mother used to live. He took care of Jacob while he lived there and then He brought Jacob back home. He worked inside of Jacob, changing him into a man who loved and trusted in Him. He helped Esau forgive Jacob and He blessed Jacob with all of the good things He promised him. Best of all, He kept His promise came to

save us from our sins. He can be our Savior when we turn away from our sins and trust in Him as our Savior. Then we will be the LORD's special people who have Him to care for everywhere we go, every day of our lives now. And one day, will live with Him forever in heaven.

For You and Me:

The LORD knew Jacob's thoughts. He was familiar with all of his ways. He knew Jacob was a sinner and did not deserve His loving-kindness. But the LORD treated Jacob better than he deserved. The LORD loved Jacob and helped him. He took care of his needs and changed his life into one that wanted to love and obey Him. Like Jacob, we are sinners, too. The LORD offers His loving-kindness to us, too. He wants us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. He can be the God who is taking care of us as His special people, everywhere, all the time, too. Ask Him to help you!

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: a brother named Esau, a ladder, a pair of glasses, an angel, a snake, and a rock.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The brother named Esau, the ladder, the angel, and the rock belong.

2. Who praised the LORD for taking care of him, everywhere he went? Jacob did.

For You and Me:

The LORD was not just with Jacob long ago when this story took place. He is still the God who is everywhere, all the time. He is with us, too. He knows everything we think and do and say. And, if we turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, not only will He be with us, He will make us His special people. We will get to know Him in our hearts now. And one day, we will get to go and live with Him forever. That will be best of all! Ask Him to help you do this! He loves to answer this prayer!

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)

Our Bible Truth is:
Can Anybody Tell Me What the LORD Is Like?
He's Not Like Anyone Else...
He Is Everywhere, All the Time!

How good the LORD was to Jacob! He took care of him everywhere he went. He kept all of the promises He made to Jacob...even the promise to bless all peoples through his family one day. How did the LORD bless all people through Jacob's family? By sending Jesus to save us through Jacob's family. At just the right time, Jesus came to die on the cross and be the perfect payment for our sins. On the third day, He rose from the dead, showing He had beaten sin and death for us. Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior can be saved! They become God's special people. He will be with them, helping them and caring for all of their needs, everywhere they go. And, He will prepare them for the great day when they will go to live with Him forever.

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, that You are the great and awesome God. There is no God like you. You are everywhere, all the time. You see everything there is to see. You are always with us.
- C** God, You are always with us. Nothing is hidden from You. We know You see us disobey You every single time. We need a Savior! Please forgive us through Jesus!
- T** Thank You, God, for always being with us wherever we are. Thank You that even when we feel very alone, You are there. We can always turn to You and ask You for help.
- S** Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to live to please You as You watch us. Help us to depend on You to take care of us.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Go to Lesson Plan, p.9 for the script to the rest of the lesson.