

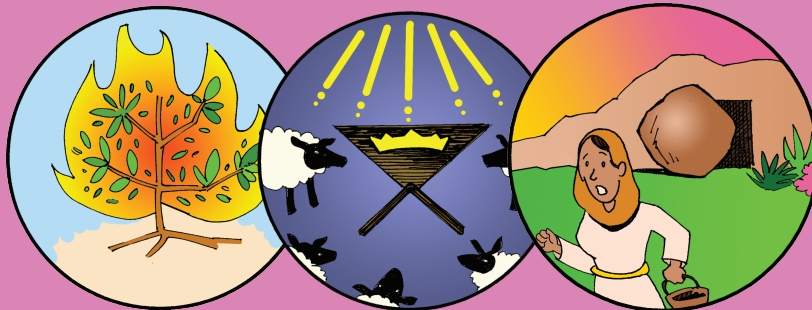
YOUTH

**LESSON
#2-3**

**SAMPLE
DISPLAY COPY**

LIVING THE WORD

Narrative Lectionary



Youth

Leader's Guide

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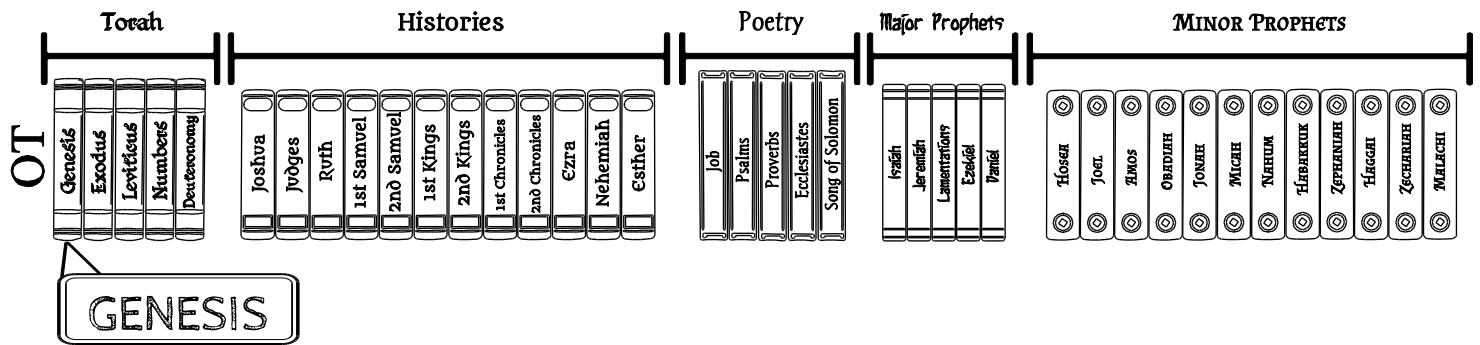
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Jacob Wrestles

Genesis 32:[9-13] 22-30

On a journey to reunite with his estranged brother, Jacob encounters an unknown man. The two wrestle and Jacob is injured. Before the man leaves, Jacob demands a blessing and receives one along with a new name: Israel.

Making Connections

It is not always easy living out God’s kingdom. Just as Jacob wrestled with his fear and with God, we wrestle with our own fears and doubts. Sometimes we even wrestle with where God is calling us to go or what God has in plan for us. Jacob is forever changed by his encounter with God, and we are changed, too.

Lesson @ A Glance

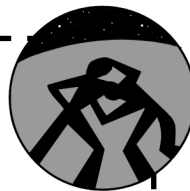
#2-3: Jacob Wrestles
Genesis 32:[9-13] 22-30

The Point: God changes us.

Making Connections: God Creates Family

Spiritual Practice Emphasis: Prayer

Bible Nuts & Bolts: Israel’s Origin Stories



Story Summary

Jacob Wrestles

While traveling with his family, Jacob meets a stranger who proceeds to wrestle with him through the night. The stranger strikes Jacob’s hip and it becomes disjointed. However, Jacob does not stop fighting. Come dawn, Jacob is asked by the stranger to stop wrestling. Jacob refuses to stop unless he receives a blessing. The stranger proceeds to reveal them self as God and changes Jacob’s name to Israel, or “one who prevails with God,” because Jacob wrestled with God and prevailed. This blessing changes Jacob.

The Point

God changes us. Sometimes God changes us as we grow closer to God through prayer, Bible study, and loving others. Other times the change comes through challenging experiences. God interacts with humanity in many different ways, providing us with blessings that change us, too.

Bible Nuts & Bolts: Israel's Origin Stories

The word "Genesis" means "beginning."

In the Bible, Genesis is a book of beginnings. It is an Origin Story. The book of Genesis is the first book of the Bible. It introduces many important stories, characters, and themes that recur throughout the rest of Scripture. Origin stories give people a sense of understanding about where they come from and why things are the way they are. Genesis is the beginning or the origin of the Biblical story. In the book of Genesis the world is created and God is first revealed to humans. God makes a covenant with Abraham that continues to be fulfilled

throughout the rest of Scripture.

Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." "

Genesis 32:28

For Your Reflection:

Have you ever "wrestled" with something?
How did the experience change you?

Where are some of the places in which you encounter God in your life?

How will you help the youth understand that it is okay to wrestle through their spiritual beliefs on the road to understanding?

Spiritual Practice:

Prayer

Prayer is an honest conversation with God. What is bothering you? What is hard for you to accept or understand about God? What is frustrating you? Talk it out to God without holding back. Let God know your concerns, your emotions, and your frustrations.

Overview, Objectives, and Materials You'll Need

Core Elements

+Into the Story

10 min.

What's the Meaning?

Discovering how the meaning of names connects to the Bible story.

- > Bibles
- > Activity Sheet #2-3.A
- > Internet-connected devices
- > Pens or pencils

+Learning the Story

15 min.

Changes and Revelations

Identifying change in Jacob's story.

- > Bibles
- > Lemon juice
- > Bowls
- > Cotton swabs
- > Optional: printed copies of the Bible text

Living the Story

15 min.

Blessings and Prayer

Identifying a blessing as a form of prayer.

- > Paper
- > Pens or pencils

+Sending the Story

5 min.

- > Story @ Home

Short on time?
 Items marked +
 can be adjusted to be done with
 what you probably already
 have in your pocket or
 classroom.

Extending the Learning:

<p>Hands On <i>Encounters with God</i> <i>Creating a collage of encounters with God.</i></p>	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Mural paper > Magazines > Scissors > Glue stick > Optional: old photographs
<p>Mixed Media <i>Twenty-Second Tales</i> <i>Re-telling Jacob's story in twenty-second videos.</i></p>	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Internet-connected device(s) > Digital (video) camera
<p>+The Competitive Edge <i>The Test of Strength</i> <i>Competing in an arm wrestling match.</i></p>	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > None
<p>Simply Serving <i>Blessing Each Other</i> <i>Serving others by blessing them.</i></p>	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Bowls of water
<p>+Worship Connection <i>Benedictions</i> <i>Learning about worship blessings and benedictions.</i></p>	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Internet-connected device(s) > Optional: worship books or bulletins
<p>+Discussion Guide <i>Jacob Wrestles</i> <i>Discussing today's story.</i></p>	15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Youth Discussion Guide

Into the Story:

What's the Meaning? (10 minutes)

Discovering how the meaning of names connects to the Bible story.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Make a copy of Activity Sheet #2-3.A for each person.
2. Find a name dictionary website or check out <http://www.behindthename.com/>.

Supplies:

- > Bibles
- > Activity Sheet #2-3.A
- > Internet-connected devices
- > Pens or pencils

DURING CLASS

1. Hand each person a copy of Activity Sheet #2-3.A and a pencil or pen.
2. **Did you know that your name might tell us a lot about you? Do you know what your name means?**
3. **There are many characters in the Bible, with many different names. Let's find out what some of those names mean.**
4. Invite the youth to work in partners to use the online name dictionary to fill out the first blank column on Activity Sheet #2-3.A.
5. **Do you know who any of these Bible characters are? Do their names reflect their stories?**
6. Working with their partners, invite the youth to pick two Bible characters from the sheet and look up the characters' stories, writing brief summaries of the stories in the second blank column of Activity Sheet #2-3.A.
7. Invite pairs to share their findings. **What are some of the stories you read? How do the names of Bible characters relate to their stories?**
8. **Sometimes our names tell people a little about our personalities. We give people nicknames based on events that happen or experiences we have. In today's story, God gives the main character a name that tells us a lot about what that person experienced.**

Learning the Story:

Changes and Revelations (15 minutes)

Identifying change in Jacob's story.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. For youth to get the most out of this lesson and become comfortable using their Bibles, it is recommended that youth have personal Bibles to mark in for this activity. If this is not possible for one or more youth, please provide printed copies of the day's Bible text.

Supplies:

- > Bibles
- > Lemon juice
- > Bowls
- > Cotton swabs
- > Optional: printed copies of the Bible text

DURING CLASS:

1. **Today I am going to read our Scripture passage. It is a story from the Old Testament about a man named Jacob. In this story, Jacob has an encounter with God. As I read this story, think about how the encounter Jacob has with God changes him.**
2. Invite the youth to open their Bibles to Genesis 32:22-30. Begin by reading verses 22 through 24.
3. **Who does Jacob meet at night? [A man.] What does Jacob do? [He wrestles with the man.]**
4. **Read verses 25 and 26. What physical change does Jacob experience in this part of the passage? [His hip is put out of its joint while wrestling.] When the man asks Jacob to stop wrestling, what does Jacob demand? [A blessing.]**
5. **At this point in the story we are not really told who this man is. With whom do you think Jacob is wrestling? [Answers will vary.]**
6. **Read verses 27 and 28. Jacob experiences a pretty big change at this point in the story. What is changed? [His name.] What does Jacob's new name tell us about his story and experience? [It tells us that he wrestled with God.]**
7. **In today's story, Jacob encounters God in a different and strange way. God comes to him unexpectedly and this unexpected encounter changes Jacob's life!**
8. Pour some lemon juice into bowls and give each person a cotton swab.
9. **We are going to create reminders of the special changes that happen in this story. We are going to use this lemon juice to create "invisible ink" reminders of Jacob's transformation. Put a little dot of lemon juice on your cotton swab. As I read through the story again, mark in your Bible where some of the big changes occur.**
10. Re-read the story, slowly. Allow the youth time to mark in their Bibles as you read.
11. **Once the ink dries, hold the pages of your Bible up to a bright light. You will see the pages change and reveal your markings.**

Living the Story:

Blessings and Prayer (15 minutes)

Identifying a blessing as a form of prayer.

DURING CLASS:

1. **In today's story, Jacob encounters God. Has there ever been a time in your life when you have encountered God? What happened?**
2. **Sometimes we struggle: in school, in faith, during a physically challenging activity, or at other times. When is a time you have struggled with something? How did you see God's blessing in these struggles?**
3. **One definition states that the word blessing means "praise, devotion, or worship." Sometimes we say blessings before meals or when we enter new buildings as a way to pray for God's presence in our lives. Where have you seen blessings used as prayer?**
4. **After receiving God's blessing, Jacob is changed. When have you felt a change or transformation after having a powerful encounter with God?**
5. **Write your own blessing to use before eating meals. Pray your blessing every day this week.**
6. **Optional: What prayer of blessing can we say for others, while also saying it to them? Let's come up with some ideas and practice the prayers. Allow time for this process.**

Supplies:

- > Paper
- > Pens or pencils

Hands On:

Encounters with God (15 minutes)

Creating a collage of encounters with God.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Provide a wide variety of magazines to use during this activity. Different people encounter God in different ways. Some typical responses include people, nature, and worship, but providing different hobby and news magazines will provide youth the opportunity to think creatively while completing the project.

Supplies:

- › Mural paper
- › Magazines
- › Scissors
- › Glue stick

DURING CLASS:

1. Give each person a sheet of mural paper. **In today's story, Jacob encountered God during his wrestling experience. There are many ways that people encounter God. Take a moment to look through these magazines and pictures, and use them to create a collage depicting the places where you see God every day.**
2. Allow time the youth to page through the materials and create their collages. Encourage them to think about all the places in their lives—school, home, church, their community, and even in the world—where they encounter God.
3. After everyone has finished their collages, invite them to share their collages with the rest of the group (if they are comfortable doing so).
4. Upon completing the activity, you may wish to hang the collages in your space as a reminder of how we encounter God every day.

Mixed Media:

Twenty-Second Tales (15 minutes)

Re-telling Jacob's story in twenty-second videos.

DURING CLASS:

1. **Can you tell the story of Jacob in twenty seconds or less? Let's find out.**
2. Split the youth into small groups of three or four each.
3. **As a group, work together to film your twenty-second interpretation of today's story.** Give each group time to film their interpretations of Genesis 32:22-30.
4. If you have time, invite groups to share their twenty-second tales with the rest of the group.
5. If the technology is available to you, have your group share their finished project with the congregation.

Supplies

- > Internet-connected device(s)
- > Digital (video) camera

The Competitive Edge:

The Test of Strength (15 minutes)

Competing in an arm wrestling match.

DURING CLASS:

1. Ask the group to divide into partners. If anyone is uncomfortable with or is not able to participate in this activity, allow them to become a referee or cheerleader for the other participants.
2. Invite partners to participate in an arm wrestling match against each other.
3. Once each pair has a winner, invite the winners of each match to pair up with another winner and arm wrestle each other.
4. Continue pairing winning wrestlers from each match together for the next round, until you are left with two people to play for the arm wrestling championship.
5. The winner is the individual who wins the championship arm wrestling round.
6. **We may not have been changed through that arm wrestling game, but when we wrestle through the matters of life, God can work in us and change us.**

Supplies:

> Nothing

Simply Serving:

Blessing Each Other (15 minutes)

Serving others by blessing them.

DURING CLASS:

1. Invite the youth to sit in a circle. Place the bowl of water in the center of the circle.
2. **Normally, when we talk about service, we talk about serving other people, especially people we do not know. However, we can also serve everyone in this room. Today we are going to serve each other by reminding each other that God can come to us in unexpected ways.**
3. **Begin by dipping your finger in the bowl of water. Turn to the person to your right. Make the sign of the cross on the person's forehead while saying the following blessing: "May you always remember that God loves you and will bless and change you in unexpected ways."**
4. **Invite the person to your right to dip their finger in the bowl of water and bless the person to their right. Continue around the circle until everyone has blessed each other.**

Supplies

› Bowl of water

Worship Connection:

Benedictions (10 minutes)

Learning about worship blessings and benedictions.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Optional: collect worship books or bulletins to use for this activity.

DURING CLASS:

1. **People use blessings as a form of prayer in many different ways. One way we use blessings is at the end of a worship service.**
2. Invite the youth to look up benedictions (a form of blessing) and other prayers of blessing using their phones or other devices.
3. Optional: invite the youth to look for these blessings in worship books or church bulletins.
4. After researching, read through some of the blessings as a group.
5. **How are these blessings prayers?** *[Answers will vary.]*

Supplies

- > Internet-connected device(s)
- > Optional: worship books or bulletins

Sending the Story (5 minutes)

Review

- Where was Jacob when he wrestled with God?
- What happened as a result of Jacob's wrestling match?

Supplies

> Story @ Home

Prayer

Raise your right hand and ask the youth to bow their heads. Pray the blessing in Numbers 6:24-26 over them: **The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.**

Remember to send "The Story @ Home" take home sheet with the youth before dismissing them.



Jacob Wrestles

Unit 1: God Creates Family

Youth Discussion Guide

If you break into small groups (or are a small group), use the following questions to discuss the day's Bible passage and how it relates to your lives. Make a copy of this sheet for each member of the group and provide pencils or pens. Encourage each other to take a moment to write your response in words or doodles before discussing out loud.

Start your time by going around your group and asking each member (adults included) to share a high point and a low point from the past week.

Opening Prayer

Include a short, one-sentence prayer that asks for God's presence in this group, based on the Bible passage/The Point.

Using the topics and instructions below, create 5 to 6 questions that encourage reflection, sharing, and discussion among the small group members.

Understand

- ❓ Answer the who, what, when and where questions about Jacob's wrestling match. Who did he wrestle with? What did they wrestle over? When did they wrestle? Where did they wrestle?

Wrestle

- ❓ What does it mean to wrestle with God?
- ❓ When wrestling with God, is the outcome always one in which we surrender to God's will? Explain the reasoning behind your answer.

Share

- ❓ Write or draw about a change that you experienced that you can now see God was a part of.

Apply

- ❓ Ask God to bless you with change that makes you more like Jesus.

What's the Meaning?

Discovering how the meaning of names connects to the Bible story.

<u>Name of Character</u>	<u>Meaning of Name</u>	<u>Where's the Story?</u>	<u>Summary of Story</u>
Noah			
Sarah			
Moses			
Ruth			
Peter			
Paul			



Jacob Wrestles

Unit 1: God Creates Family

LAST WEEK

Last week, God appeared in the form of three strangers and promised to Abraham and Sarah that they would have a child. A year later, their son was born, and they named him Isaac (Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7).

THIS WEEK

Isaac would become the father of Jacob and Esau, and the covenant God made with Abraham is passed on to Jacob (Genesis 32:[9-13] 22-30).

Story Summary

While travelling with his family, Jacob meets a stranger who proceeds to wrestle with him through the night. The stranger strikes Jacob's hip and it becomes disjointed. However, Jacob does not stop fighting. Come dawn, Jacob is asked by the stranger to stop wrestling. Jacob refuses to stop unless he receives a blessing. The stranger proceeds to reveal them self as God and changes Jacob's name to Israel, or "one who prevails with God," because Jacob wrestled with God and prevailed. This blessing changes Jacob.

The Point

God changes us.

Bible Nuts & Bolts: *Israel's Origin Stories*

The word "Genesis" means "beginning." In the Bible, Genesis is a book of beginnings. It is an Origin Story. The book of Genesis is the first book of the Bible. It introduces many important stories, characters, and themes that recur throughout the rest of Scripture. Origin stories give people a sense of understanding about where they come from and why things are they way they are. Genesis is the beginning or the origin of the Biblical story. In the book of Genesis the world is created and God is first revealed to humans. God makes a covenant with Abraham that continues to be fulfilled throughout the rest of Scripture.

Practice Prayer

Prayer is an honest conversation with God. What is bothering you? What is hard for you to accept or understand about God? What is frustrating you? Talk it out to God without holding back. Let God know your concerns, your emotions, and your frustrations.

NEXT WEEK

Next week, the story picks up 400 years later as the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the Israelites—are enslaved in Egypt. God comes to Moses in the form of a burning bush and sends Moses to deliver God's people from slavery (Exodus 1:8-14 [15—2:10]; 3:1-15).

Going Deeper

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. What is God's message to us? Consider the following basic pattern as a way of forming family devotions:

- ✦ Light a candle to help you focus this time as "God time." Pray a simple prayer together.
- ✦ Take a moment to check in with each other; what are each person's "highs" and "lows" today?
- ✦ Read aloud from the Daily Bible Readings from below. Discuss the questions following each.
- ✦ End with a blessing, by simply tracing a cross on each other's forehead. The Lord's Prayer is a good way to end your devotion time. If you used a candle, extinguish it as a sign of the end of the devotions.

Note: This is only a suggested pattern. It will vary with your household's context and patterns. What works best for you? First thing in the morning? Over breakfast? Bed time? Be creative and flexible with how you practice and keep your devotions!

Daily Bible Readings

Sunday - Read Genesis 32:[9-13]

22-30

Jacob wrestles all night.

- What was Jacob dealing with in his mind and heart before the wrestling match?
- How did the wrestling match prepare Jacob for meeting Esau?

Monday - Read Genesis 33:1-11

Jacob and Esau reconcile after years of separation.

- When have you been surprised by the way someone received you?
- How does Esau's attitude toward Jacob help you in dealing with those who have offended you?

Tuesday - Read Genesis 30:22-24;

41:1-16

Pharaoh needs someone to interpret his dream.

- Who gave Joseph the ability to interpret Pharaoh's dreams?
- In what circumstance do you need God's strength or direction?

Wednesday - Read Genesis 41:25-36

Joseph comes to Pharaoh's rescue.

- Joseph was sold, falsely accused, and spent time in prison. In what ways did God change his life through the challenges?
- Who do you turn to for godly advice?

Thursday - Read Genesis 41:37-45

Joseph is exalted.

- What difficult situation have you felt will never get better?
- In what ways does Joseph's experience give you hope for what you are going through?

Friday - Read Exodus 1:8-14

The Israelites are captured and enslaved in Egypt.

- What modern day oppression or slavery are you aware of?
- How can you show love to those who are oppressed?

Saturday - Read Exodus 1:15-2:10

A few determined women make a decision that changes history.

- Why did the women take the risk they did with Moses's and their own lives?
- When is it wise to take or not take a risk?