

Genesis 31

Do you think it's okay to take something that belongs to another person when they aren't looking? If your friend Bobby has a truck that you want, is it okay to take it home and keep it? If your friend Emily has a teddy bear that she throws on the floor and kicks, then is it alright to take the teddy bear home when she isn't looking?

No, this would be stealing and God tells us in the Bible that we should not steal! Well, today we are going to tell a story about a lady who didn't follow God's laws.

Jacob was married to Leah and Rachel, and their father's name was Laban. Now Laban had been very unfair to his two daughters. Laban had taken the money that belonged to Leah and Rachel and Laban had been unfair to Jacob as well. Jacob had worked many long, hard, days and nights for Laban and Laban kept trying to cheat Jacob. This wasn't right, was it? But, does that mean it was okay for one of Laban's daughters to steal from Laban? No, it's never right to steal, is it?



Lesson # 17

2.

One night Jacob had a dream and God told Jacob he needed to leave Laban's home and go on a long journey. Jacob's father lived far away and Jacob was to take his wives and children and go back to his father's land. This pleased Jacob, so the next morning he had his older sons help him round up the sheep and goats and cows and camels, while the younger children helped their mothers pack up the clothes and tents and cooking pots. Little Joseph was the baby of the family and he probably sat on the ground and wondered why everyone was hurrying around and putting all their things on donkeys and camels!

Laban and his older sons were working far away at the time, so they didn't know Jacob and his family were going to leave. Just as everything was almost packed, Rachel thought of something. Her father owned an important idol called a teraphim. The man who owned this idol would own a lot of land and so Laban was very careful to keep the idol hidden in his room. Rachel searched Laban's room and when she found the Teraphim idol, she took it and hid it in her camel's saddle! Why do you think she did that?



Rachel took the Teraphim because she thought that she deserved to have Laban's land! Laban had been very unfair to her and Leah and to Jacob too. Rachel probably told herself it was okay to take the idol because Laban had been so mean to them.

As soon as the animals were rounded up and everything was packed, the family got on their camels and started out. Every night the family would stop and the children would gather wood so the women could build a campfire and cook their supper. Meanwhile the older boys would help set up tents and help Jacob water the animals and find grass for them to eat.

Meanwhile, Laban came home and found Jacob and his family gone. Laban looked around to see if they had taken anything of his, and when he discovered his Teraphim idol was missing he became VERY angry! He thought Jacob had stolen from him and Laban was ready to attack Jacob and his family, even though they were his daughters and grandchildren. Laban got swift camels ready and he and his men went rushing after Jacob's family!



Lesson # 17

4.

One evening Laban and his men saw the smoke from Jacob's campfire in the far distance. "We'll catch up to them tomorrow for sure," Laban said. "We'll stop here for the night and in the morning we'll surprise them before they get moving." That night God spoke to Laban in a dream. God told Laban that he was not to hurt Jacob or his family. They were being protected by God and Laban was to leave them alone. The dream frightened Laban, so in the morning Laban told his men they would just ride up to Jacob's family and talk to them but he wouldn't attack them.

When Laban came to Jacob's camp he asked, "Why did you leave so fast? Why didn't you let me give you a party with food and music before you left?" Then Laban angrily asked, "Why did you steal my Teraphim idol?" Now Jacob didn't know Rachel had stolen the idol, so he said, "Go ahead and search our tents, if anyone has the idol, he will be killed!" It was very serious to steal things, wasn't it?



Rachel was very frightened; what if Laban found she had the little idol? Rachel quickly put her camel's saddle in the corner of her tent and hid the idol under the saddle. Then she plopped herself down on the saddle and pretended she was too sick to get up! Laban and his men looked through all the tents and when he came to Rachel's tent, she told Laban she was too sick to get up, so Laban searched everywhere else but didn't look under the camel's saddle.

Rachel must have felt she had tricked Laban and no one would ever know she had stolen the idol. Do you think anyone knew she stole it? God sees everything we do and he knows what we are thinking. God knew Rachel had done something bad and later Rachel was punished for doing wrong. But for now Laban didn't find the idol so he and his men said goodbye and they left, while Jacob and his family traveled on.

We should never steal or tell lies or try to fool God, should we? God is so happy when we do good, but it makes God very sad when we do wrong. Let's try very hard to do right and please God!



LESSON # 17

6.

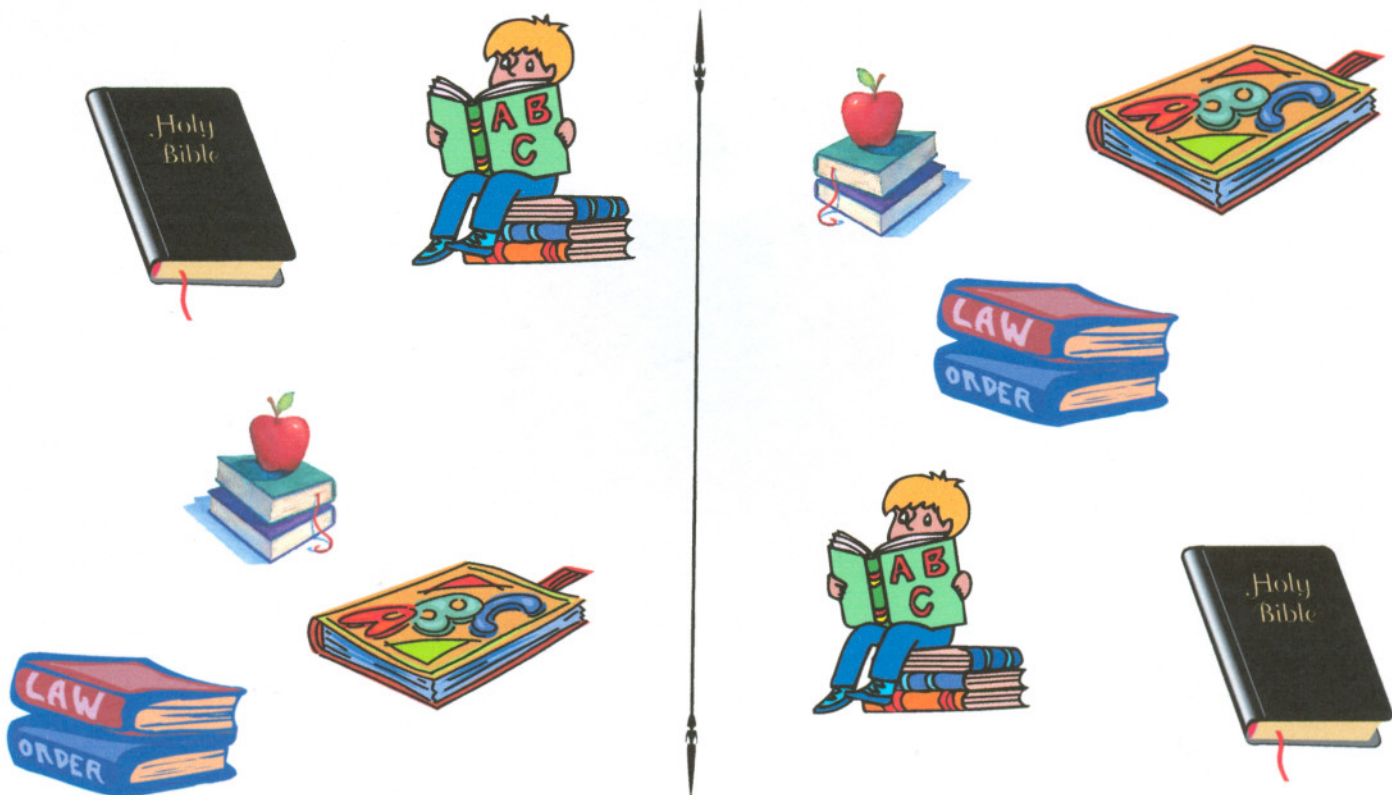
Question Page

1. Did God walk up to Jacob and speak to him or did he speak to him in a dream?
2. Was Rachel's father a good, kind man or a mean unfair man?
3. Who told Jacob he should leave Laban's place and go back to his father's home?
4. Why did Rachel think it was okay to steal something of her father's?
5. What did Rachel steal?
6. What book tells us we should not steal or tell lies?
7. Why did Laban and his men go after Jacob and his family?
8. Who spoke to Laban in a dream and what did he say?
9. Who sees everything we do and knows what we are thinking?
10. What did Jacob say would happen to the one who had the idol?
11. Where did Rachel hide the idol?
12. Does it make God happy or sad when we do bad things?

Circle the kind of animals Jacob and his family took with them when they started on their trip
Can you name all these animals?

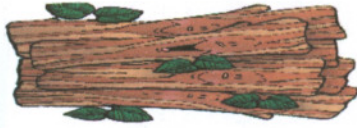


Match the books on the right side to the books on the left side. Which is God's book?



17

Jacob's sons have round some wood for a campfire. Can you color a yellow and red fire for them? How about drawing some tents for them to sleep in and draw some bread and oranges for them to eat and some milk for them to drink.



17

Color all the shapes with spots in them to see what kind of animal is hidden here

