

**Year A, Week 31 (June 29, 2008)**

**Genesis 27: 41-45; 28: 10-21      Jacob Flees and Has a Dream**

**Hymn suggestions:** *Father Abraham* (calmly); or *Shout to the North and the South*

**Items Needed:**

- grown Jacob figure
- grown Esau figure (suggestion: the “giant” figure with strange clothes)
- Rebekah figure
- Small block to serve as rock-pillow
- Optional: angel figure to use during Jacob’s dream

We’ve been talking about how God made a promise with his people. We learned that God chose Abraham and his wife Sarah. He sent them to a new place called Canaan, and he made a promise – or a covenant – with them. He told Abraham that one day he would have as many descendants as there are stars in the sky or grains of sand at the beach.

God told Abraham, “This is my covenant. I will be your God, and you will be my people.”

Even though Abraham and Sarah were old when God made these promises, they did have a boy, whom they called Isaac. Later, Isaac had twin boys, Jacob and Esau.

Even though Esau was the oldest boy, Jacob was a trickster. First he tricked his brother into trading his birthright – the special privileges of an oldest son – for a bowl of stew. Then he tricked his father Isaac into giving Jacob the special blessing that was supposed to go to Esau.

In today’s story, Isaac and Esau realized that Isaac had given the special blessing to that trickster, Jacob. They were very upset. Esau was fuming! (*Touch Esau.*) He said, “My father will soon die, but later I will kill that little Jacob.” But Rebekah overheard her son say this. (*Place Rebekah and then Jacob down.*)

So she called Jacob to her and said, “Listen! Esau thinks that the only way he’ll feel better is if he kills you. I want you to leave this area and go stay with my brother Laban.” (*Remove all figures but Jacob.*)

Jacob left, and as night fell, he took a rock for a pillow and slept. (*Lay Jacob down with head on a block.*) As he slept, he dreamed that there was a ladder from heaven to earth. Angels were going up and down the ladder. (*If using angel, show it now.*)

In his dream, the Lord said, “I am the Lord, the God of Abraham and Isaac. You will have as many descendants as there are specks of dust, and you shall move north, south, east, and west in this land I am giving you.”

The Lord said, “I am with you wherever you go, but I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you.”

Jacob woke up and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place!” and he was afraid. (*Stand Jacob up.*)

The next morning, he poured oil on the rock he had used as a pillow, making it an altar. He named that place Bethel, the House of God.

Jacob said, “If God will be with me and take care of me and bring me back to my father’s house in peace with my brother, then the Lord will be my God.”

**Questions without Response:**

- I wonder ... why God sided with a trickster and a thief like Jacob?
- I wonder ... if God also sided with Esau?
- I wonder ... if God sides with all of us?