

General Church Education



# A Review of the Patriarchs

Genesis 17:1-9

## Lesson 2

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 3: The Lord Is Our Lawgiver

For ages 8-9 years

## A Review of the Patriarchs

### Genesis 17:1-9

#### For Parents and Teachers

In this quick review from Genesis, the succession of patriarchs is highlighted in order to introduce the story of the Exodus. Abraham and his family were real people and this is the beginning of recorded history in the Word. The Lord caused the Scriptures to be written in such a way that these stories also contain the inner sense or spiritual meaning of each of our lives. The Holy Land or Canaan represents heaven or the heavenly character. This is the land to which the Lord calls us. He promises a beautiful and peaceful state to all of us if we faithfully follow Him as the patriarchs of old were called to follow Jehovah. The journey is not easy, there are rough times as well as smooth ones in order to settle there. The message of the Old Testament is that the Lord guides us by providing the laws and the leaders that we need.

#### Ideas for Children

- The Lord rewards those who follow Him.
- The Lord is continually guiding and protecting us.
- Even when we choose evil the Lord can turn it to good purpose, if we let Him by expressing sorrow and trying not to do the evil again.
- A covenant is a two-way agreement where the Lord promises to do something and the person also promises something.

#### From the Writings

The purpose of any covenant is conjunction, that is to say, its purpose is that people may live together in friendship or in love. This also is why marriage is called a covenant. The Lord's conjunction with people does not exist except in love and charity, for the Lord is love itself and mercy. He wills to save everyone and by His mighty power to draw them toward heaven, that is, toward Himself. From this anyone may know and conclude that it is impossible for anybody to be joined to the Lord except by loving the Lord in return, and loving the neighbor as oneself. In this way alone is conjunction brought about; this constitutes the very essence of a covenant. When conjunction results from this, it quite plainly follows that the Lord is present. The Lord is indeed present with each individual, but that presence is closer or more remote, all depending on how near the person is to love or how distant from it. *Arcana Coelestia* 1038

## A Review of the Patriarchs

### Genesis 17:1-9

#### Words to Understand

**patriarch**—a male leader of a family or tribe

**covenant**—a two-way agreement

**famine**—a shortage of food or no food

**descendant**—a person who comes after you in your family; children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and so forth

**exceedingly**—more than expected; above and beyond

**fruitful**—plentiful, producing much

**blameless**—free from fault, not accused of doing any wrong

#### The Patriarchs of the Hebrews

How important is it to have a good leader? How are leaders chosen? The Hebrew people that we read about in the Old Testament started out as nomadic tribes. They lived in tents and moved about from place to place to find water and pasture for their animals. They were led by the head of the family, which usually was the oldest male, called the patriarch or great father. These leaders were very important to the Hebrew people. All of the patriarchs in this lesson listened to the Lord and obeyed Him. So the Lord rewarded them, continually guiding and protecting them wherever they went. The first of the patriarchs was a man named Abram.

#### The Lord Makes a Covenant with Abram

Do you remember the story of Abram? Last year we learned how the Lord called Abram to take a journey. Abram obeyed the Lord and took his household with all the animals and possessions and traveled far from his home in Ur, the land of the east. They traveled by camel and lived in tents along the way. It was hot and dry in the desert regions, but Abram, his wife Sarai, and their nephew Lot went all the way to the land of Canaan, which is also known as the Holy Land. Canaan was a beautiful land and the Lord had promised to give all this new land to Abram and to his descendants. Let's read about how the Lord made a covenant with Abram. **Read Genesis 17:1-9.**



Because Abram was a good man, the Lord made a covenant with him. Do you remember what a covenant is? A covenant is a special agreement in which there is something to be performed on both sides. Abram promised to obey the Lord and the Lord promised that Abram would be the father of many nations. In other words, Abram and Sarai would have many descendants.

The Lord showed Abram the night sky and asked him to try to count all the stars. He told Abram that one day he would have so many descendants that they would be as difficult to count as all the stars in the sky.

Abram became the first patriarch or father of the Hebrews. As a sign of this covenant the Lord added the letter “H” from His name in Hebrew, which was Jehovah, and changed the names of these faithful followers to Abraham and Sarah.

### **The Lord Makes a Covenant with Isaac**

Even though Abraham and Sarah were very old, the Lord fulfilled His promise and gave them a son of their own. His name was Isaac. When Isaac was a grown man, the Lord established His covenant with Isaac too. The Lord helped Isaac find a wife who was just right for him. Do you remember that Isaac and his wife Rebekah had twin sons, Esau and Jacob? Although it was the right of the firstborn son to inherit most of the goods of his father, Esau the firstborn, sold his birthright to his brother Jacob for a bowl of stew one day when he was hungry. Later Jacob stole their father’s best blessing from his brother by pretending to be Esau. (Genesis 25:29-34 and Genesis 27:1-29)

### **Jacob Becomes the Third Patriarch**

Then Jacob had to leave his home because Esau was very angry with him. He was sent on a journey to visit relatives so that he could find a good wife. The first night on his journey, Jacob fell asleep on the ground with nothing but a rock to rest his head on. It was here that he had a beautiful dream of angels going up and down a ladder or stairway from heaven to earth. The Lord was at the top.

The Lord renewed His covenant with Jacob and blessed his journey. Jacob found his relatives, fell in love with the beautiful Rachel and was happy to work for fourteen years in order to have her for his wife.

Jacob had many children. He had twelve sons and one daughter. When it was time for Jacob to return home, he had become rich with many possessions and herds of animals. At his homecoming he was joyfully greeted by Esau who had long forgiven his brother for what he had done, and they lived in peace.

### **The Twelve Sons of Jacob**

So the large family of Jacob began to live in the land of Canaan. The Lord gave Jacob a new name, Israel. His sons are sometimes called the “twelve sons of Israel.” That is how the family later became known



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as the “Israelites.” The names of the twelve sons of Jacob were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Gad, Asher, Dan, Naphtali, Joseph and Benjamin. It is good to remember these names because they later became the names of the 12 tribes of Israel.

### Joseph Becomes the Next Patriarch

From Jacob’s family of twelve sons the Lord chose Joseph and he became a great leader. Genesis 37 tells how Joseph’s older brothers were jealous and sold him into slavery. Joseph ended up far from his home in Egypt. Some bad things happened to him there, but the Lord brought protected Joseph and gave him great success because he was faithful and tried to do what was right. He gave Joseph the special ability to interpret dreams. Joseph rose to power and became the leader of all of Egypt under Pharaoh. Even when people intended evil toward Joseph, the Lord’s providence guided things toward better results. He does this in our lives too.



Because Joseph was such a powerful leader in Egypt, he was able to save his whole family when a famine struck. For seven years there was not enough food. So Joseph’s family came to Egypt to buy food. Through this, Joseph was reunited with his family. By this time the older brothers were sorry for the way they had treated Joseph and were trying to protect their youngest brother, Benjamin. Joseph asked them to move to Egypt. Pharaoh gave Joseph’s family the best part of the land to live in. That is how the Children of Israel came to live in Egypt.

### Discussion Ideas

- Talk about leaders we have in our lives. What are the qualities of a good leader? Emphasize the quality of innocence, which is a willingness to follow the Lord.
- These stories in Genesis teach that life is a journey. We can expect good as well as hard times in our life. Think about ways we can recognize the Lord’s presence on this journey.

# Activity Overview | A Review of the Patriarchs

## Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

So he answered and said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.”

Luke 10:27

## Songs

*The Good Samaritan*

Listen and download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-the-good-samaritan/>

*I'm Joseph Your Brother*

Listen and download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-im-joseph-your-brother/>

## Projects and Activities

Choose one or two activities.



- Activity 1 | Abraham, Isaac and Jacob Family Tree Rummy. Created by Karin Alfelt Childs.
- Activity 2 | Review the Patriarchs: choose a word to complete the sentence
- Picture to color—Isaac Meets Rebekah (Genesis 24)

## Additional Activity Ideas

- Watch *The 12 Sons of Jacob* song at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-the-twelve-sons-of-jacob-song/>
- Make a tree for your own family.
- The Lord made a covenant (two-way promise) with Abraham's family. The Lord makes a covenant with each of us in His Word. Talk or write about what do you can to do to obey this covenant today.



## Activity 1 | Abraham, Isaac and Jacob Family Tree Rummy

Be the first player to get rid of all your cards, and to become familiar with Abraham's family tree.

### Set-Up

1. Print (or copy) four game boards and four sets of playing cards.
2. Cut out the game cards. Tape the two halves of each game board together.
3. Lay the game boards on the floor or on a table. Gather players around the game boards.
4. Shuffle the game cards, and deal five cards to each player. Place the rest of the deck face down in a spot everyone can reach.

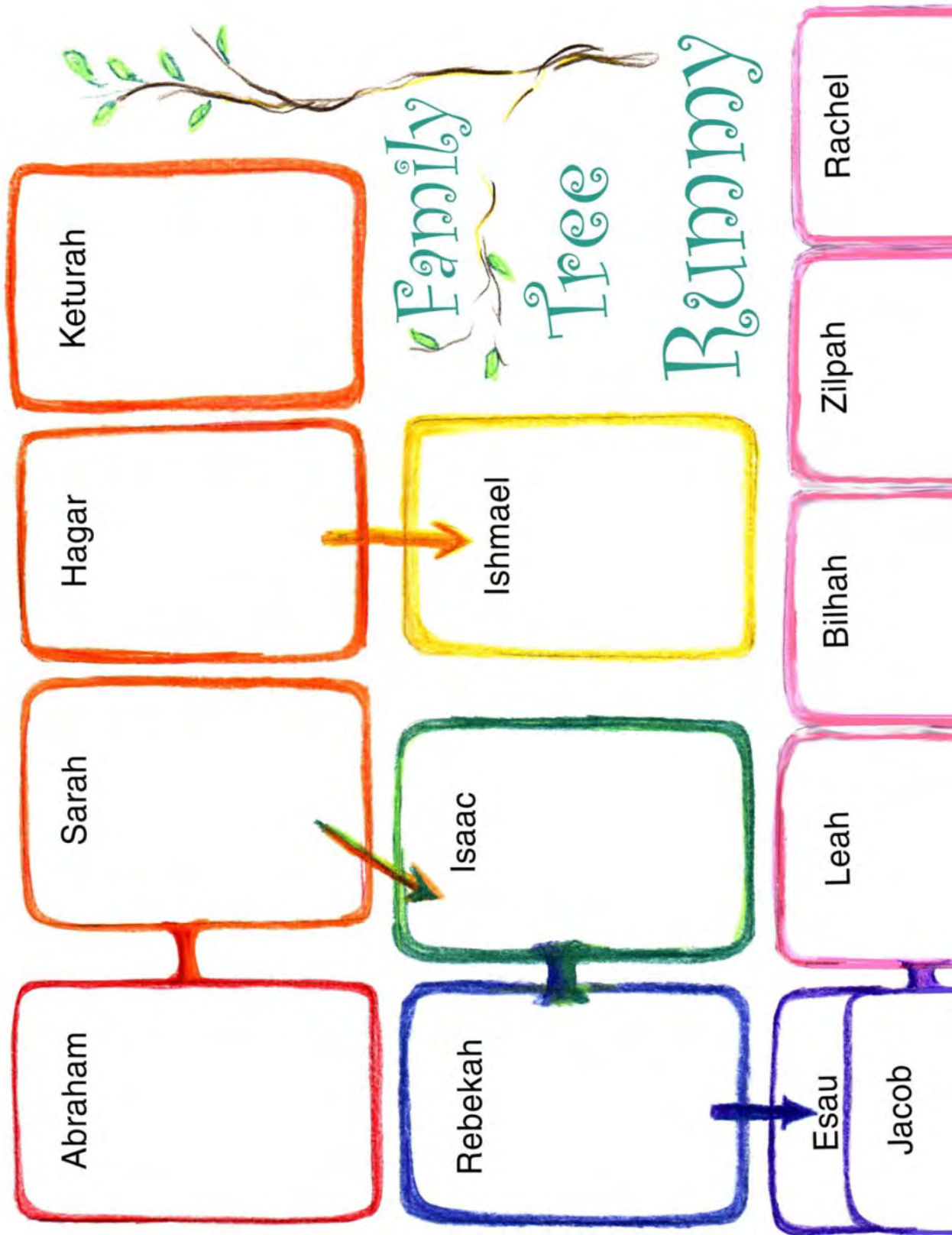


### How to Play

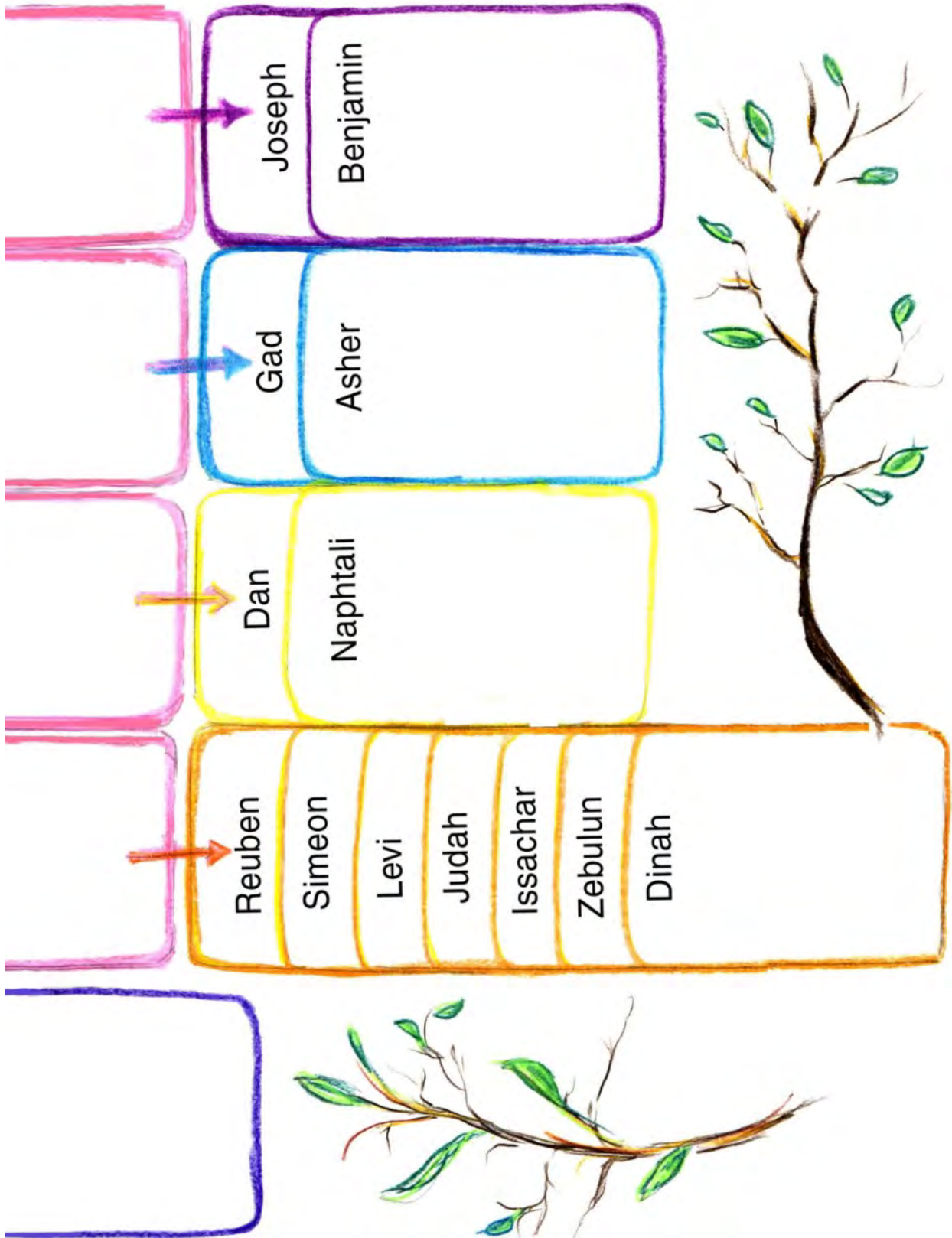
1. The player to the left of the dealer goes first, and begins by drawing a card from the deck.
2. The player looks to see if he or she can lay down cards on any of the four playing boards. In order to lay down cards, players must have two *different* cards belonging to the *same category* (e.g. "Sarah" and "Hagar" are two different cards belonging in the category "wives of Abraham"). If a player has two such cards, they can place them in the correct spots on one of the playing boards.
3. Cards marked "single" are the only ones in their category and may be laid down by themselves in the correct spot.
4. If a playing board already has two cards of a category laid down, a player may lay down any other cards from their hand that belong in that category on the same board. **Note:** Only *one* of each individual card belongs on each playing board.
5. When a player cannot lay any more cards down, his turn is over. It is then the next player's turn.
6. The next player begins the turn by drawing a card and proceeding in the same manner as the first player.
7. If a player is accumulating several of one card, he or she may ask for a "trade" on his or her turn, instead of picking a card from the deck. He may pick one other player who wants to make a trade, and they may exchange one unwanted card. Then the player can proceed with his turn.
8. The first player to get rid of all his cards wins the game.\*

\*If the deck runs out before the game is over, players take turns picking from each other.

*Eventually children should begin to learn where each card goes without help. Try to encourage this objective.*









Abraham, Isaac and Jacob Family Tree Rummy Cards





Abraham, Isaac and Jacob Family Tree Rummy Cards





Abraham, Isaac and Jacob Family Tree Rummy Cards



## Activity 2 | Review the Patriarchs

Read the sentences and circle the words that complete the sentences correctly.

1. The ancient Hebrews lived in (cities, tents, wood houses).
2. A two-way agreement is called a (promise, request, covenant).
3. The male leader of the Hebrew people was called a (patriarch, great father, chief).
4. Abraham and Sarah had a son named (Lot, Canaan, Isaac).
5. How many sons did Isaac and Rebekah have? (one, two, three).
6. How many years in all did Jacob work to have Rachel for his wife? (two, seven, fourteen).
7. How many sons did Jacob have in all? (twins, ten, twelve).
8. Joseph was Jacob's (favorite, last, tallest) son.
9. Joseph's special ability was to (speak Egyptian, interpret dreams, play the harp).
10. The ruler of Egypt is called a (king, chief, pharaoh).

Answers  
1. tents  
2. covenant  
3. patriarch  
4. Isaac  
5. two  
6. fourteen  
7. twelve  
8. favorite  
9. interpret dreams  
10. pharaoh

