Act It Out:
Fleeing from Laban



At a Glance:
Students will act out the story of Jacob leaving Laban, Laban following him, and their eventual agreement to separate. Depending on the group, children can act the story while the teacher reads or read and act it at the same time.

Supplies Needed:
- play script for each reader
- cleared area for students to act out the script
- *optional:* props such as pillows to represent the stones that were gathered into a heap, stuffed animals to represent the flocks and herds that Jacob took with him, etc.
- *optional:* simple costumes such as bathrobes or large t-shirts

Teacher Preparation:
- Read through the script so you are familiar with it.
- Decide if you will assign roles or ask for volunteers.
- Collect any costumes or props you wish to use.

Directions:

1. Review the characters in the story and assign roles or ask for volunteers.
2. Read and act out the story.

Speaking Parts:

Narrator
Jacob
Laban
Laban's Sons (one or more)
Rachel
Leah

Optional Non-Speaking Parts:

Children of Jacob
Servants of Jacob
Servants of Laban

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Fleeing from Laban Script

Laban and his sons stand on one side of the stage with Jacob nearby.

Narrator: Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons.

Sons: Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth.

Laban scowls at Jacob. Jacob notices and then walks to the other side of the stage. He looks up to hear the Lord speak to him.

Narrator: And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and indeed it was not favorable toward him as before. Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you." So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field.

Rachel and Leah walk on stage and stand next to Jacob.

Jacob: I see your father's countenance, that it is not favorable toward me as before; but the God of my father has been with me. And you know that with all my might I have served your father. Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not allow him to hurt me…. Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, "I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family."

Rachel & Leah: Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not considered strangers by him? For all these riches which God has taken from our father are really ours and our children's; now then, whatever God has said to you, do it.

Jacob, Rachel, Leah and any servants walk off-stage.

Narrator: Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels. And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained. And Jacob stole away, unknown to Laban the Syrian, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee. He arose and crossed the river, and headed toward the mountains of Gilead.

One of the sons pulls on Laban's sleeve and gestures off-stage. Laban and his sons and servants walk across the stage. The sons and servants leave, but Laban pauses and looks up, listening to the Lord.

Narrator: And Laban was told on the third day that Jacob had fled. Then he took his brethren with him and pursued him for seven days' journey, and he overtook him in the mountains of Gilead. But God had come to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, "Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad." So Laban overtook Jacob.

Jacob and his group enter and stand on one side of the stage. Laban and his group enter and come up to them.

Laban: What have you done, that you have stolen away unknown to me, and carried away my daughters like captives taken with the sword? Why did you flee away secretly and not tell me? It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, "Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad."

Jacob: What is my trespass? What is my sin, that you have so hotly pursued me? I have been in your house twenty years; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night.

Laban: These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and this flock is my flock; all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they have borne? Now therefore, come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me."

Jacob kneels and pretends to set up a pillar.

Narrator: So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar.

Jacob: Gather stones.

Everyone pretends to bring stones to Jacob and heap them up near the pillar. Jacob stands up.

Narrator: And they took stones and made a heap.

Laban: This heap is a witness between you and me this day. May the Lord watch between you and me when we are absent one from another. This heap is a witness, and this pillar is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and you will not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, for harm. The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, and the God of their father judge between us.

Jacob raises his arms and looks up to the sky. Then he beckons everyone to come sit in a circle around the heap. They all pretend to eat.

Narrator: And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac. Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread. And they ate bread and stayed all night on the mountain.

Everyone stands up. Laban pretends to kiss Rachel and Leah and puts his hand on their heads. Then he walks off stage, followed by his sons and servants.

Narrator: And early in the morning Laban arose, and kissed his sons and daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned to his place.