

# JACOB THE DECEIVER



Did God ever send a baby to your family? How exciting! Isaac and Rebekah must have been doubly joyful. God was going to give them twins.



The babies struggled inside Rebekah. When she prayed, God said her two sons would lead two nations - and the younger one would be greater. Usually the firstborn was greater. At last the babies were born.



The twins were not alike. Esau, the older boy, was very hairy and grew up to be a skillful hunter. Jacob was smooth skinned and liked working around home. Father Isaac loved Esau best. Mother favored Jacob.



One day, Esau was hungry. "Give me food," he told Jacob. "Sell me your birthright," demanded Jacob. Esau did not care about God's promises to the

first-born. He made the deal with Jacob. Now Jacob would head the family when their father died.



God spoke to Isaac one night. "I am the God of your father, Abraham. I am with you. I will bless your descendants." Although Isaac worshiped God, his son Esau married two wives from the Hittites, a people who didn't care about God.



Isaac grew old. "Please bring me fresh meat," he told Esau. "Then I will bless you." This special blessing was from father to firstborn. Esau hurried out to hunt. But Rebekah had overheard. She wanted Jacob to be blessed.



Rebekah had a plan. While she quickly cooked the food Isaac loved, Jacob put on Esau's clothes, and put hairy animal skins on his hands and neck. Isaac did not see well. Perhaps they could deceive him.





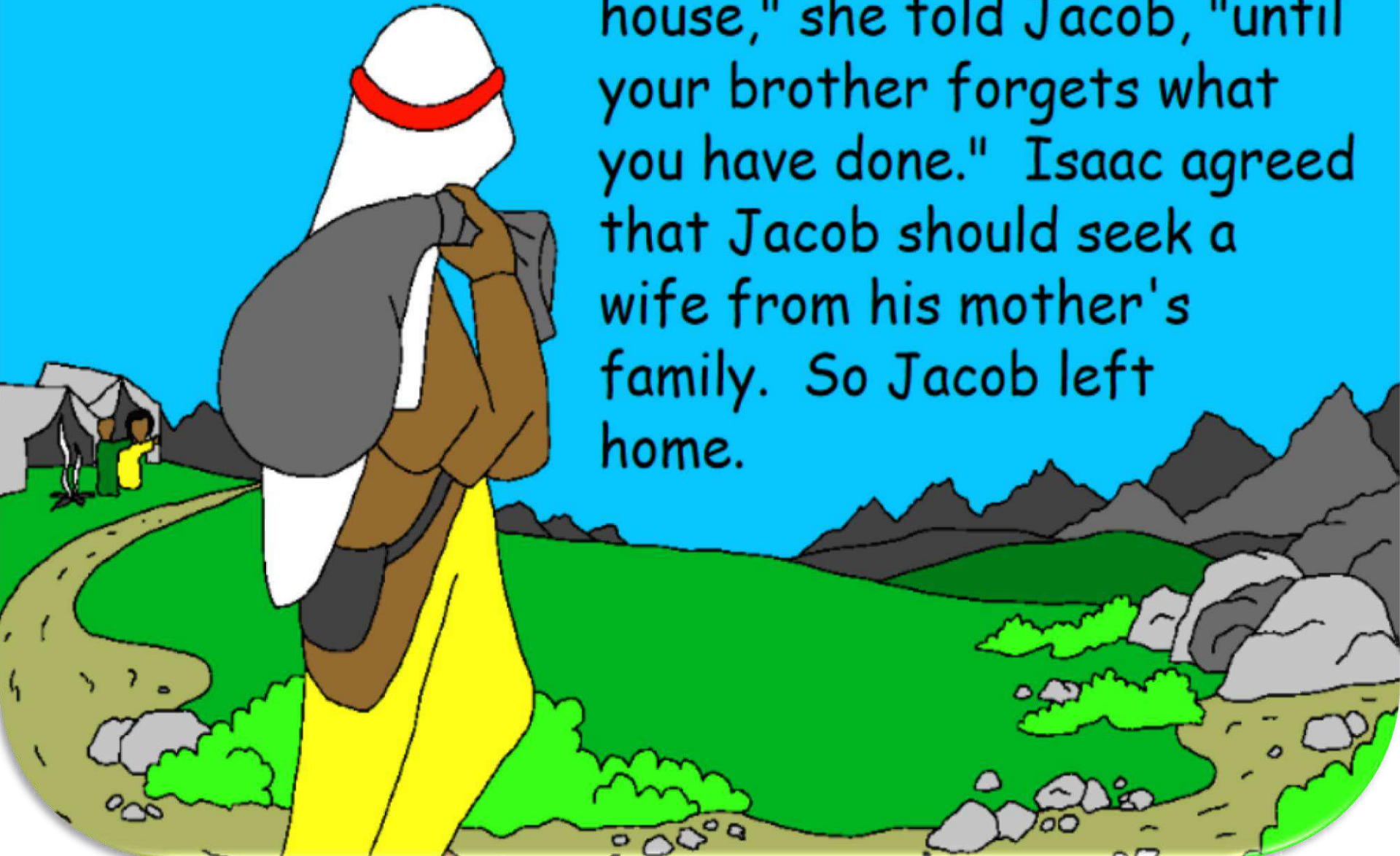
Jacob brought the food to Isaac. "You sound like Jacob," Isaac said, "but your hands feel like Esau." After he had eaten the food, Isaac blessed the son kneeling before him.



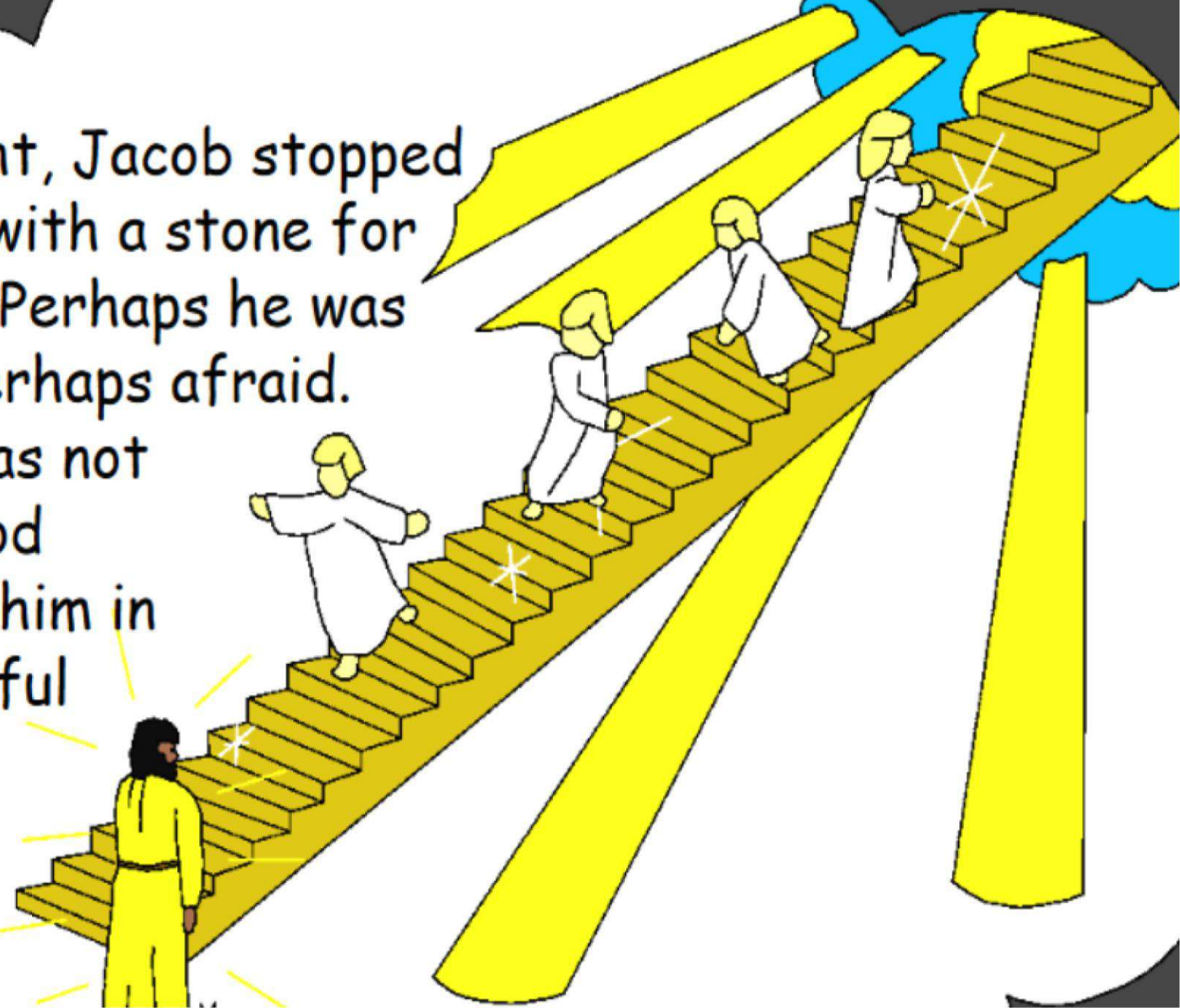
Just after Jacob left, Esau came to Isaac. "Here's your food," he said. Isaac knew he had been tricked. "I can not change the blessing," he cried. Esau's heart filled with hatred. He decided to kill Jacob.

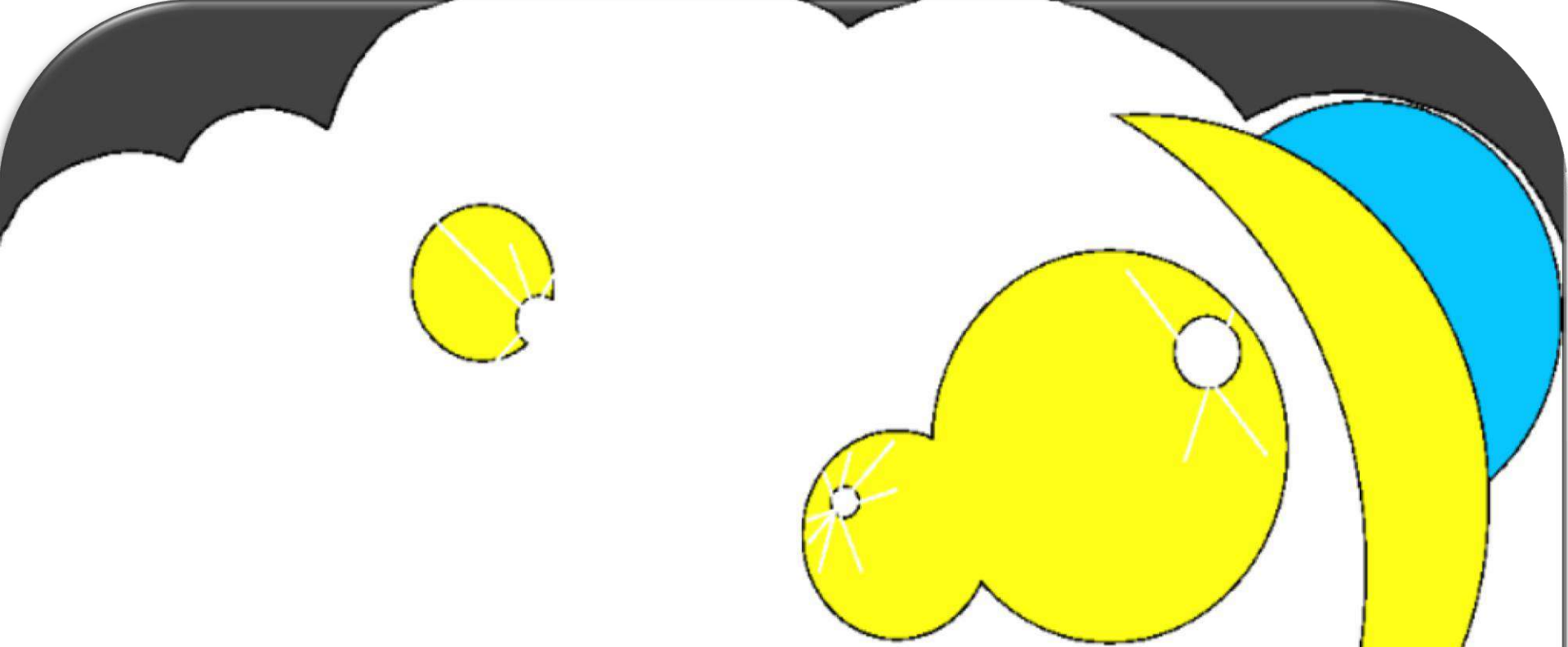


Rebekah heard Esau's threats. "Go to your uncle's house," she told Jacob, "until your brother forgets what you have done." Isaac agreed that Jacob should seek a wife from his mother's family. So Jacob left home.



That night, Jacob stopped to sleep with a stone for a pillow. Perhaps he was lonely, perhaps afraid. But he was not alone. God spoke to him in a wonderful dream.



A stylized illustration of a sky scene. It features a white cloud with a dark grey outline at the top. Below the cloud, there is a yellow sun with a white center and radiating lines. To the right of the sun is a yellow crescent moon with a white center and radiating lines. Further to the right is a blue arc, possibly representing a rainbow or a celestial body. The entire scene is set against a white background.

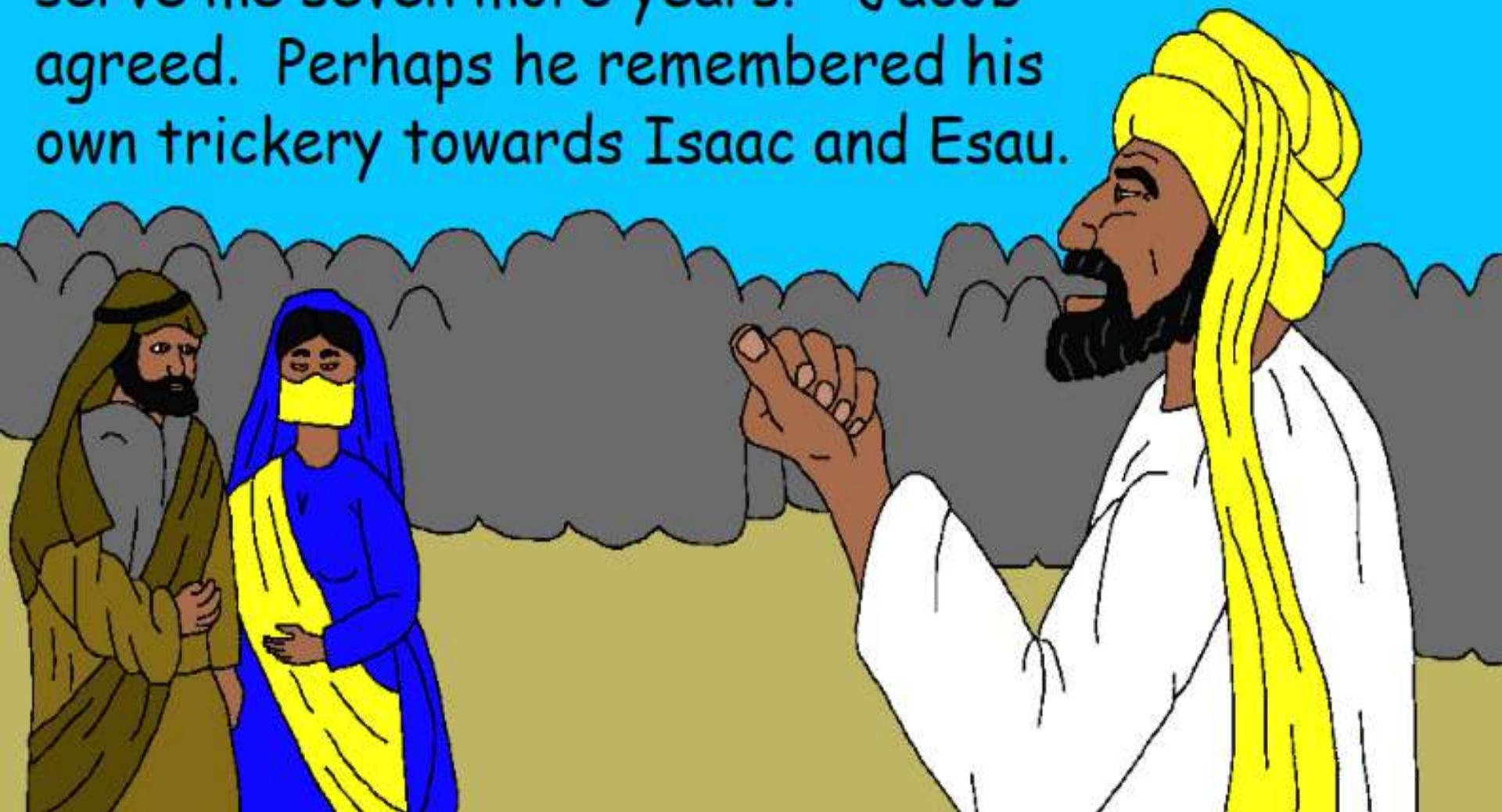
"I AM THE GOD OF YOUR FATHERS,  
ABRAHAM AND ISAAC. I AM WITH YOU.  
I WILL GIVE YOU THIS LAND. BY YOUR  
FAMILY ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE  
EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED." After God  
spoke, Jacob awoke. He was afraid.

Jacob's uncle Laban welcomed him. Jacob loved his cousin Rachel and served Laban seven years so he could marry her.

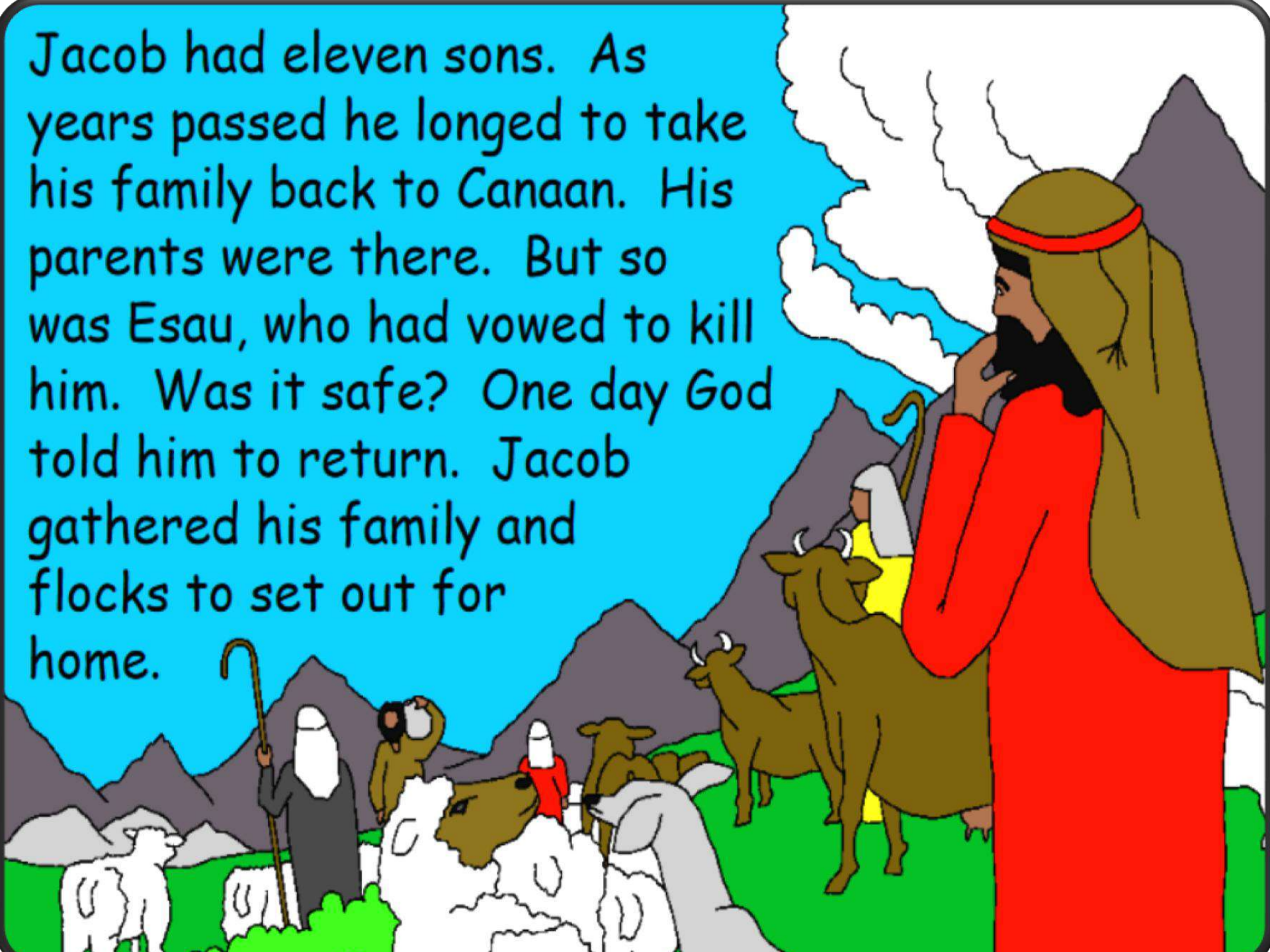


But, on the wedding night, Laban cheated Jacob.

"This is Leah, not Rachel," Jacob complained. "You tricked me." "The oldest daughter must be married first," Laban said. "Now marry Rachel also and serve me seven more years." Jacob agreed. Perhaps he remembered his own trickery towards Isaac and Esau.



Jacob had eleven sons. As years passed he longed to take his family back to Canaan. His parents were there. But so was Esau, who had vowed to kill him. Was it safe? One day God told him to return. Jacob gathered his family and flocks to set out for home.





What a trip it was. Esau came to meet Jacob with four hundred men! But he didn't hurt Jacob. He ran to meet Jacob and gave him a big hug. Jacob and Esau were friends again, and Jacob was safely home.

