

Jacob's Dream

Genesis 28:10-22

MEMORY VERSE

GENESIS 28:15a

"Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go."

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

As many 30" pieces of string as the number of children in your class.

White school glue, Plastic wrap (like you use for foods), and as many small, pretty rocks and small paper cups as the number of children in your class.

As many pieces of yarn in two colors as the number of children in your class.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Jacob's Ladder

You will need a 30" piece of string for each child in your class. Tie the ends together to make a loop. Teach your class how to make Jacob's ladder out of string. An easy way is to hold the string on both of your thumbs and pinkies forming a square. With each middle finger in turn, take the string stretched across the opposite palm.

For a more complicated ladder use the attached instructions. Explain that in today's lesson we are going to learn about the real "Jacob's ladder".

LESSON TIME!

Have you ever felt all alone? Maybe you have looked up at the sky on a bright, starry night and felt so little in a great big universe. Man in his natural state is so helpless and God can seem so far away at times yet, the Almighty God Himself chooses to have fellowship with us! We never have to feel alone as His children because He loves us, pours out His grace on us, and has promised He will always be with us. **The Lord will never leave His children.**

GENESIS 28:10-11

Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran.

So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.

Imagine how Jacob must have felt. He had left his family and his home and was now traveling all alone to a new place. In a dark, strange place he made the ground his bed with the heavens alone being his shelter. There he slept helpless in a vast, wide universe. It was at this lowly state that God chose to appear to Jacob. **The Lord will never leave His children.**

Sometimes we can feel all alone, but God promises to always be present with us, His children. So if you ever find yourself lonely or afraid, remember that you can reach out to the Lord who will be there to help you in your time of need. It is in these places that we will find that the Lord will be there for us and help us.

GENESIS 28:12-15

Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there

the angels of God were ascending and descending on it

And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.

"Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

"Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you."

Jacob did nothing to deserve this awesome dream of God. Remember back to some of our past lessons? Jacob actually did some pretty mean things to his family. Yet, by His grace, God chose to give Jacob this high honor and revealed Himself to Jacob. God shows his grace and love towards us even when we don't deserve it. Jacob could be a real stinker! We can be real stinkers too sometimes. But God still loves us and has a plan for our lives.

God bestowed His blessing on one who deserved nothing. For the Lord, by His grace, chooses "the foolish things of the world to confound the wise" and "the weak things of the world to put shame the things which are mighty." We are helpless without the Lord, yet by His grace He has called us to be His children and has promised to always be with us. **The Lord will never leave His children.**

As Jacob lay looking up at the sky, God must have seemed so far away; he needed someone to bridge the gap between himself and God. In his dream Jacob saw a ladder reaching up into heaven with angels ascending and descending on it and God Himself standing above it. This ladder reached directly down to the earth, to mankind.

John 1:51 reveals to us that Jesus Christ is the ladder that bridges the gap between God and man. Who is worthy enough to come to God? Jesus came that He might bridge the gap, bring to us fellowship with God that we might be saved from our sin and ultimately death.

God gave His promises to Jacob and encouraged Jacob with His presence. The Lord, out of His goodness alone, has promised us that He will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:6). We can learn from this that even if we are in a lonely or scary place we can place our trust in the Lord. He will always be there for us. **The Lord will never leave His children.**

GENESIS 28:16-19

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it."

And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it.

And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously.

Stuck Like Glue

Give each child a rock to remind them of Jacob's pillow. With plastic wrap, line the inside of small paper cups. Have your class put their rocks in the bottom of the paper cup and fill the cup with glue to cover the rock.

Explain to your students that in about a week, the glue will have dried and they can take their encased rock out and remove the saran wrap. The glue should be pretty easy to see through when completely dry. Explain to your class that God sticks to us and surrounds us like the glue sticks to and surrounds their rocks. Remind your students that **the Lord will never leave His children.**

Jacob was blessed and filled with awe over what the Lord had done in his life. In response to the Lord's love and goodness Jacob worshiped Him. He woke up early and set up a memorial to the Lord. He worshiped the Lord out of his heart and changed the name of the place from Luz which means "separation" to Bethel which means "House of God (the place God dwells)."

Something that is interesting is what Jacob says when he wakes up. He said that the Lord is in this place, but he didn't know it. Sometimes we can forget that the Lord is with us. God is everywhere all of the time and when we ask Jesus to come into our hearts He comes to live inside of us. He is with us everywhere we go. But because we don't always see Him, we can forget that He is there and begin to get afraid. Let's always be careful to remember that God is with us all of the time.

As Christians we are no longer separated from God, but through Jesus Christ we have become His children and may dwell in His presence at any time. What a blessing to be able to enter into His presence and live separated from the world. That should cause us

to worship the Lord, just like Jacob did. **The Lord will never leave His children.**

GENESIS 28:20-22

Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on,

"so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God.

"And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

Here we see Jacob making a vow to God. But it seems almost like it is a bargain, like maybe Jacob is putting the Lord to the test. He is saying, if you do what you say, then you will be my God. It is interesting that Jacob would put conditions on His service to the Lord. How we need to just trust in the Lord in what He says to us. God's word is more solid than the stone Jacob laid his head on. If God says something He will certainly do it! We need to be careful that we don't doubt God in any way.

We also need to be careful in trying to earn God's favor by making promises that we may or may not be able to keep. God loves us because of His grace and goodness, not because we have done anything to deserve it. We are sinners and deserve punishment for our sins, but God offers us forgiveness. All we need to do is to respond to Him in faith and obedience. **The Lord will never leave His children.**

Then Jacob promises to pay a tithe to the Lord. We need to worship the Lord freely with all we have. After all, everything we have is really the Lord's anyway. To give tithes and offerings is an act of worship and thankfulness to the Lord. So we need to

worship the Lord also with our resources. **The Lord will never leave His children.**

So we learn some valuable lessons from this story of Jacob. We learn that God is always with us and will never leave us. We also learn that sometimes we can forget that and need to be reminded. And then we learn that we need to just take God at His word and not try to make promises or do anything to please Him. Really the only thing that pleases Him is what His son Jesus did in perfect obedience on the cross. When we accept that then we are pleasing to God. We don't need to make any extra promises. We only need to TRUST and OBEY!

Reminder Bracelets

Give each student two different colored pieces of yarn about 36" each. Tell them that one piece represents God and the other them.

Tie the two pieces together at one end. Have one child hold the knotted end while another child twists the pieces together. The pieces should start to curl up and begin to get tangled. This means you are ready for the next step.

Have the "holder" and the "twister" gently pull to straighten out the yarn. As they do, you (teacher) hold the center between your thumb and index finger.

Let them put the two ends together but do not let go. Let the twister take both the knotted end and the unknotted end and hold them together tightly.

Then the teacher lets go and zip! You have a beautiful bracelet to remind you that **the Lord will never leave His children.**

Tie the ends together around one of the child's wrists and explain that this bracelet is a reminder that **the Lord will never leave His children.**

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for God's ever-presence in our lives. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.