

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 comparison to the 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. When we are at a low point, feeling we are without a friend or feeling afraid; remember, God desires to be our comfort and help. **The Lord will never leave His children.**

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."

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 and bring us into fellowship with God. When Jesus took the punishment for our sins upon the cross, He took upon Himself the separation from God the Father that we deserved. He experienced separation from God the Father upon the cross that we who believe in Him might never experience separation from God. **The Lord will never leave His children.**

God gave promises to Jacob and encouraged Jacob with His presence. 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 bless Jacob and reveal Himself to Jacob. God shows his grace and love towards us even when we do not deserve it. Jacob did not have a flawless character. He could be crafty, selfish, and at times deceitful. We do not have flawless characters either; yet, God still loves us and has a plan for our lives.

The Lord, out of His goodness alone, has promised us that He will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:6). Even if we are in a lonely or scary place, we can place our trust in the Lord. He will always be here 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.**

Do you recall Jacob's words when he first woke up? He said that the Lord is in this place, but he did not 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. Because we do not see Him and often do not feel Him, we can forget, as did Jacob, that He is present with us. Circumstances will not make us feel lonely or afraid if we remember that God is present with us!

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 worshipped Him. He woke up early and set up a memorial to the Lord. He changed the name of the place from Luz which means "separation" to Bethel which means "House of God" (the place God dwells)." As Christians, we are no longer separated from God; we dwell within His presence! What a blessing that we may come boldly before His throne of grace and commune with Him at all times. 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. We can be sure, what God says, He *will* do. God's Word is more solid than the stone Jacob laid his head on.

Please note also, we do not need to make vows (promises) to God. God loves us and blesses us because of His grace and goodness, not because we have done or can do anything to deserve it. We need to be careful not try to earn God's favor by making promises that we may or may not be able to keep.

Jacob promises to pay a tithe to the Lord, willing to give of his resources. As Christians, we understand that all we have has come from and belongs to God. May we, as Jacob, be willing to worship the Lord with our resources, giving tithes and offerings.

We have learned some valuable lessons from this story of Jacob—especially that we can be confident God is with us, even when we do not feel His presence. He will never leave us or forsake us. **The Lord will never leave His children.**

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.