

A PROMISING DREAM

Jacob
Genesis 28:10–22
1930 BC

OVERVIEW

BIBLE TRUTH

God is with us.

BIBLE VERSE

I am with you and will keep you wherever you go.
Genesis 28:15

LEARNER GOAL

I understand that God is with me all the time.

LAW & GOSPEL

We think God does not care or has left us alone.

God promises in His Word never to leave us. His gracious love for us, revealed through His Son, Jesus, moves our hearts to worship and praise Him.

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

Jacob undeservedly receives his father's blessing—he and his offspring will dwell in the land of Canaan. As the days of Isaac's life approach their end, Jacob rightly fears for his life. Following the urging of Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob sets out for the house of his uncle Laban. Along the way, Jacob dreams of a staircase reaching to heaven, with the Lord Himself standing at the top. The preincarnate Christ repeats God's promise to give this land to Jacob and his descendants.

LESSON PREP

BASIC Read Genesis 28:10–22 and notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

MORE TIME Read the leader devotion, found in the digital resource center.

IN DEPTH Read “Family Life in Israel” on pages 54–55 of *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

- Paper or glow-in-the-dark stars
- Flashlight
- Star stickers
- Pretzel sticks and mini marshmallows
- Images of church objects

FOR EVERY LESSON

- Bible
- Device with prepped music
- Copies of downloadable activity page
- Copies of Enduring Faith Page
- Supply Box

LAUNCH

Plan your lesson by reading through the options in each section. Choose the activities that will best fit your learners, and mark those boxes to guide you as you teach the lesson.

BEGIN

- Follow the Order of Opening Worship, use the Lesson Opening, or do both (part of the planning resources in the digital resource center).
- Sing songs using music found in the digital resource center, or sing your own favorite songs.

PRAY

Dear Lord, bless us as we gather to study Your Word today. Help us to learn how You are with us wherever we go. In Your name we pray, Jesus. Amen.

LEARN

Show your Bible, and remind the children that all the stories in God's Word are true.

TELL THE BIBLE NARRATIVE

Choose one of the options on the next page to tell the Bible narrative.

DO THIS!

Use one or more of the following activities to talk about the Bible narrative after you've read it.

- FOR A MIXED-AGE GROUP** Put paper or glow-in-the-dark stars on the ceiling ahead of class. Have the children pretend to be Jacob walking to his uncle's. Lead them around the room or walk in place. Turn off the lights in your room when you talk about Jacob going to sleep. Have the children lie on the ground, using carpet squares for their pillows or pretending to sleep with a stone pillow. Shine a flashlight on the stars to talk about the night. And so on.
- FOR OLDER CHILDREN** Have students pretend to be news reporters interviewing Jacob about his amazing dream. Have one student play the part of Jacob; have another student play the reporter asking questions. Another person could be the TV news anchor telling the story or interviewing the reporter. Ask students which part they want to do. Students could also be creative and make their own video to tell others about this amazing event.

SAY

- Have you ever gone on a trip to visit someone faraway?** Let children say how they went and who they saw. **Today you'll hear about a man who went to see his uncle far away.**
- Has anyone ever been camping? If not, tell me what you think camping would be like. Have you ever used a big rock for a pillow? What kind of dream would you have if you slept on a rock?**

TALK ABOUT IT

Choose a few questions that best fit the learning level of your group.

- How did God let Jacob know that He was with Jacob?
- How do we know that God is watching over us?
- How does God communicate with us today?
- How do you talk to God?

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

Guide discussion using these key points.

- The Lord spoke to Jacob from heaven, repeating His promise to bless Jacob and his descendants and promising that He would be with Jacob wherever he went.
- God tells us in His Word, the Bible, that He is always watching over us. God kept His promise to send a Savior.
- God speaks to us through His Word. God's Word shows us our sin and shows us our Savior, Jesus.
- God invites us to talk to Him in prayer—any time, anywhere, about anything. He promises to hear us.



CHRIST CONNECTION

God promises in His Word to be with us always. We know He is with us and watches over us because He sent Jesus to be our Savior.

BIBLE NARRATIVE FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

STORYTELLING DIRECTIONS: In class, have children listen for the prepositions *up* and *down* as you read the story and stand up or sit down when they hear them.

Jacob was sad;
he had to leave home.
He went by himself;
he was all alone.
He walked and walked till the end of the day.
He felt tired and lonely.
He was so far away.
Jacob looked all around.
It was getting dark.
He thought, “I know—
I’ll sleep here on this rock.”
So, he lay on the ground
As the sun went **down**,
Using a rock for his pillow
On the cold, hard ground.
I wonder . . . what do you think happens next? *Pause for answer.*
Let’s find out
Up overhead twinkled stars in the dark night sky.
Jacob yawned, closed his eyes, and gave a big sigh.

Soon, Jacob was dreaming and saw a great light.
There were many angels, all shining bright.

They went **up** and **down** stairs that reached to the sky,
Down to the ground and **up** to the heavens so high,

And there at the top stood God too,
Promising Jacob, “I’ll watch over you.”

Then Jacob woke **up** with the bright morning sun.
He felt rested and happy; his dream was done.

He said, “This rock was a good pillow;
I’ll set it right here to help me remember:

God’s always with me; I’m never alone.
He watches over me, even when I’m far from home.”

God makes this promise to you and me too.
He says, “I am with you and will watch over you.”

BIBLE NARRATIVE FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Esau was furious at Jacob for tricking their father and taking his blessings. He did not want to upset Isaac, so he decided to wait until his father died, and then he would kill Jacob. Rebekah learned Esau’s plan and told Isaac it was time to get a wife for Jacob. She did not want him to marry the women who lived around them. She asked Isaac to send him to her brother Laban to get a wife. **Isaac agreed and sent Jacob far away.**

Jacob was nervous. He had never traveled this way before and he had to live with his uncle Laban, a man he had never met. One evening he stopped to sleep for the night. He took a rock and used it for his pillow.

In the night as he slept, God gave him a special dream. Jacob was standing at the bottom of a huge staircase that rose up out of the ground and reached clear up into heaven. **He saw angels going up and down on the staircase because God was sending them to help people.**

Jacob saw God standing at the top of the stairs. God told him, “The land on which you lie I will give to you and your offspring. Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth . . . , and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

Jacob was shocked. This was the very same promise God gave to Abraham and Isaac. Now Jacob knew he was in the family line that would give us the Savior God promised long ago.

Before this dream, Jacob hadn’t really thought about God very much. If he did, he wouldn’t have tricked his father and his brother. But now he knew God was watching over him.

When he woke up, he stood up the rock that was his pillow and poured oil on it to set it aside as something special. **He said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.”** 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.”

Jacob made a promise to God: “If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then **the Lord shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house.**”

LIVE

Choose from the following activities and crafts to help connect Bible learning to life.

Angel Picture

Give each child a sheet of paper and show them how to draw an angel using a large triangle for a body, two small triangles for wings, and a circle for a head. Decorate with glitter glue and star stickers. Encourage children to give their angel to a friend or family member and tell them about Jacob's dream and how God promises to be with us.



Bible Verse Fun

Make up actions to describe where God is with us. Have children say the Bible Verse with you. Say,



God is with me, and God is with you. He says, "I am with you and will keep you wherever you go."

**When we ride in our cars,
when we splash in the rain,
when we sleep under the twinkling stars,
when we fly through the air in a big shiny plane,
God is with me, and God is with you. He says, "I am with you and will keep you wherever you go."**

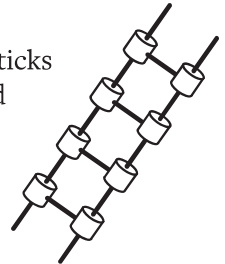
Virtual Church Trip

Show pictures of things we see in church that show God is with us (e.g., crosses, Bibles, banners, font, altar, Communion). *Option:* Use a digital device to find pictures online to show. Ask, **How do these show God loves us and is with us?**



Ladder Snack

Make a ladder snack using pretzel sticks and mini marshmallows. As you and your students eat your snack, talk about how God promises in His Word never to leave us.



Jacob's Ladder Quilt Block

Make copies of the downloadable activity page (found in the digital resource center).

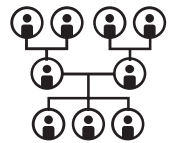
This is the quilt block called "Jacob's Ladder."

Have students color and cut the blocks, then put them all together on the wall to make a bigger design.



Family Tree

Work together as a group to make a family tree showing the line from Adam to Noah to Abraham to Isaac to Jacob to Jesus. Go simple (line drawing with words) or complex (each student decorates a leaf with a name on it and together you make a tree poster).



LEAVE

SAY

We are so thankful to know that God is with us wherever we go, just as He was with Jacob. We may not get messages in dreams, but God talks to us all the time through His Word.

PRAY

Dear God, help us remember that Your love for us reaches all the way down to earth and back up to the heavens. Thank You for sending angels to watch over us. Thank You most of all for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Amen.