



# JACOB'S LADDER

GENESIS 28:10–22

## GOAL

- ▶ **Jacob had an extraordinary dream where he was given both a glimpse into heaven and a promise that would ultimately affect the entire world.** God promised Jacob that through him, a great nation would be formed, and from that nation the Savior of the world would come. Jesus was the Messiah who came to bridge the gap between heaven and earth, between God and man. To help the children understand that God always keeps His promises. Every promise God made Jacob, He kept. Likewise, every promise God makes to us in His Word, He will also keep.
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## CHARACTERS

- ▶ **Jacob:** He was chosen by God to inherit the family position of authority and future promise, and to be a part of the bloodline of Jesus the Messiah. His troubled relationship with his twin brother, Esau, is made worse when Jacob tricks Esau out of his father's blessing. Esau plots to kill his brother, so Jacob is forced to flee for his life. While on his journey, God gives Jacob a vision in which he shows him a ladder between heaven and earth. This vision confirms to Jacob that he is truly the inheritor of the promise and blessing—the very same blessing given to him earlier by his father Isaac.
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## MEMORY VERSE

- ▶ **Genesis 28:13:** "And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring."



## OVERVIEW

**Read Genesis 28:10-22:** This story begins with Jacob running for his life from his twin brother, Esau. After a long day of traveling, Jacob stopped to rest for the night in a quiet and lonely area called Luz. While he slept, God gave him a vision of a great ladder stretching from earth into heaven, filled with angels ascending and descending. God spoke directly to Jacob and promised that his descendants would become a great nation; they would inherit the land, and that through his line of descendants, Jesus the Savior would come to bless the whole world with salvation. God also promised to take care of Jacob and bring him safely back to his father's home. When Jacob woke up from his dream, he was awestruck by all that he had witnessed and renamed the place "Bethel," meaning "house of God." Then he set up a memorial in worship and made a vow of gratitude to the one true God.

## SUGGESTIONS

God kept His promises to Jacob.

### God promised Jacob that:

**1. Jacob's descendants would someday own the land he was sleeping on:**

His descendants later inherited the land, and there are still remnants of his family occupying the land today.

**2. Jacob would have many children who would one day form a great nation:**

His family grew into the nation of Israel, which still exists today.

**3. He would be with Jacob wherever he went, and would care for him and protect him:**

Jacob was eventually able to return safely to his father's house and become friends with his brother. God always kept him safe, and He always provided for him.

God kept all these promises. God will keep His promises to us.

### God promises us that:

**1.** If we trust in Jesus as our Savior, we will never die, and we will live forever (John 3:16).

**2.** If we confess our sins, He will forgive us (1 John 1:9).

**3.** Jesus will one day return to the earth (Colossian 3:4).

God continues to keep His promises.



**PRE-LESSON  
ACTIVITY**

▷ **Balance Beam Fun | *Supplies:*** Masking tape.

Create a balance beam with masking tape. Have the kids perform various “tricks” on the beam:

1. Walk forward slowly
2. Walk forward quickly
3. Walk backwards
4. Hop on one foot
5. Balance on one foot and bend to touch the beam

**MEMORY  
VERSE  
MEANING**

▷ **Genesis 28:13:** God’s promises to Jacob came true; therefore, we can be confident that God will keep all of His promises to us. Everything He says is true.

**POST-LESSON  
ACTIVITY**

▷ **Jacob’s Dream—The Ladder to Heaven | *Supplies:*** a large sheet of paper (6+ feet or so), paper for drawing, crayons, markers, scissors, glue or tape, and a pillow.

On the large sheet of paper, draw a ladder, and tape it to the wall. Have each child draw, color, and cut out an angel as they imagine it. Have the children cut out their angels and glue or tape them to the ladder. If there’s time left, place a pillow on the floor and each child can take turns pretending to be Jacob dreaming.



TAKE  
HOME

▶ Although people may fail to keep their promises, God always keeps His. God kept his greatest promise: sending Jesus to die for the sins of the world. How does this truth affect your life?

- 1. We can talk to God anytime.** The relationship that was once broken by sin is now fixed. We have direct access to talk to God, anytime, day or night.
- 2. God loves us, and He will never leave us.** No matter what we do, or don't do, He promises that nothing will ever separate us from His love. (Romans 8:38-39).
- 3. We will live forever.** Because Jesus died, He took on death for us, and because Jesus rose again, He is has the power to raise us, too. We will live with Him for all eternity.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 1



**Q1a:** What did Jacob trick Esau out of?

**A1:** Their father's blessing

**Q1b:** Have you ever pulled a prank on someone?

**TN:** Students may tell stories about funny things they've done. But what Jacob did to his brother and father wasn't over something little, and it was not funny. Jacob's trick had serious consequences; it changed the lives of Jacob and Esau.

### SLIDE 2



**Q2a:** What did Jacob see in his dream?

**A2:** A ladder stretching from heaven to earth

**Q2b:** Have you ever had a weird dream?

**TN:** This question is an opportunity to point out that there is a difference between normal dreams and God-given dreams. Jacob's dream was a communication from God.





## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 3



**Q3a:** How great in number did God say Jacob's descendants would be?

**A3:** As great in number as the dust of the earth

**Q3b:** Have you ever jokingly offered to pay someone a million bucks if they'd do you a favor?

**TN:** Such offers are an exaggeration, but not so when God makes promises. This question is meant to get students thinking about how enormous the statement "as great in number as the dust of the earth" truly is. How much dust is there on the planet? Whether measured by particles, volume, or weight, the amount is staggering. To have God promise something that huge is amazing! And here's the kicker: While we cannot begin to comprehend how large a number of descendants Jacob was promised, God knows the exact number. Not only does he know the amount of dust of the earth, He knows the number of stars in the sky, grains of sand on the beach, individual strands of hair on our heads. He knows every tiny detail of creation. His promises are not empty exaggerations.

### SLIDE 4



**Q4a:** Why was the land where Jacob slept no longer ordinary?

**A4:** Because God had been there, the land was now holy.

**Q4b:** Do certain places you visit trigger memories that mean something to you?

**TN:** For example, seeing a tree in a park where you found a stray dog who you took home and now is your best friend. Jacob was having one of those moments. He had seen something that changed his life, and he would never forget.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 5



**Q5a:** What did Jacob use to set up a memorial to God?

**A5:** The stone he used as his pillow the night before

**Q5b:** Name some ways people remind themselves about things that occurred or important figures in history.

**TN:** There are lots of instances throughout the Bible in which create a memorial of some sort to commemorate something happening. Today, we do the same thing by naming parks after people, or setting up monuments, such as those found in Washington, D.C. Holidays are also ways we celebrate or remember, such as Christmas and Fourth of July.

### SLIDE 6



**Q6a:** If God kept His promises, what did Jacob promise in return?

**A6:** He promised that the Lord would be his God.

**Q6b:** Which of the promises God made to Jacob does God promise to us?

**TN:** God's promise to make Jacob's descendants a great nation that would bless the whole world is specific to Jacob, but the other promises are things God promises to us. God promises to be with us always, keep us safe, and give us everything we need. The last promise God made to Jacob, to return him to his father's house, may not seem like a promise that applies to us, but it does—and it's a promise God has already fulfilled. By sending Jesus to die for our sins, He has made it so that we can safely return to our Father in Heaven's house.



**MEMORY  
VERSE**

- ▷ **Genesis 28:13:** And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring."
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**BIG IDEA**

- ▷ God kept His promises to Jacob, and He will keep his promises to us.
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**CLOSING  
PRAYER**

- ▷ Dear Jesus, I pray that this lesson will help us to trust in Your every word. Just like everything You promised to Jacob came true, every promise recorded in the Bible will happen exactly as You say. Thank You for keeping Your promises. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.





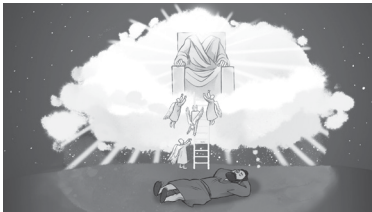
## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 1



Jacob was in trouble. The nonstop quarrel between him and his twin brother, Esau, had gotten worse ever since Jacob tricked Esau out of their father's blessing—a blessing that made Jacob both wealthy and the leader of the family. Esau felt less favored by God and by his mother, and he hated Jacob for what he had done. He despised Jacob so much that he wanted to kill him. Jacob's mother warned him of Esau's murderous intent and put together a plan that would take him far away from home to live safely with relatives. Jacob set off on his journey.

### SLIDE 2



After a long day of traveling, Jacob stopped for the night in a quiet and lonely area where he laid his head against a rock, and he fell asleep under the stars. While he slept, he had the most astonishing dream! In his dream, there was a ladder that reached down from heaven, and on that great ladder there were angels moving up and down the steps. The Lord God stood at the very top and He spoke to Jacob.

### SLIDE 3



God told him, "Your descendants will be as great in number as the dust of the earth, and they will spread out all over the land. All the families in the whole world will be blessed because of the nation that will come from you and your descendants." God reassured him, "I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I won't leave you, and I will accomplish what I have promised."



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 4



When Jacob awoke from his dream, he was amazed at the wonder of it. The door to heaven had been opened! He'd witnessed angels coming and going between heaven and earth, and he had seen and heard the voice of God. The night before, this land seemed ordinary and insignificant, but when he awoke, it was holy, because God had been there. Jacob said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

### SLIDE 5



Jacob got up early in the morning and took the same stone that had been a pillow for his head the night before, and set it up as a memorial to God. It would be a reminder of God's amazing promise to his family, and his descendants, and all the families of the world. He renamed the place Bethel, which literally means, "House of God."

### SLIDE 6



When he was done, he made this solemn vow, "If God keeps His promise to be with me, keep me safe, give me food to eat, provide clothes to wear, and return me safely to my father Isaac's house, then the Lord shall be my God!" And God kept His promise, as He has continued to keep His promises to this very day.