

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 Review Genesis 15–28 to get caught up on what's happened in the lives of God's people between Lesson 4 and this lesson. Read the notes for these chapters in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

IN DEPTH Read pages 9–25 in *Concordia's Complete Bible Handbook* to get an understanding of the bigger picture as well as the details of Genesis.

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

- A rock and a pillow
- Recording device
- Paper for drawing
- Crayons or markers

FOR EVERY LESSON

- Device with downloaded music
- Pens or pencils
- Student copies of *Explore Bible Guidebook*
- Bible
- Copies of downloadable activity page
- Supplies for bonus activities
- cph.org/digitalcontent



LEADER NOTE

Show a big rock and a pillow. Talk about which would be better to sleep on. Then move on to the opening “Say” questions in the lesson.



GUIDEBOOKS

Hand out student copies of the *Explore Bible Guidebook* and turn to Lesson 5.



LEADER NOTE

If you have confident readers, have them read this account directly from their Bibles. Or use a Bible app to listen to the audio version.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Check out the “Drawing” activity on the back page of this guide.

LAUNCH

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.

SING “I Shall Dwell in the House of the Lord Forever (Psalm 23)”
“We All Believe in One True God”
Music can be found in the digital resource center.

SAY 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?

LEARN

READ “A PROMISING DREAM”

Read the Bible narrative aloud to your students, or ask volunteers to take turns reading sections.

DO SOMETHING

FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS Review the who, what, where, and wow of this story through actions. Start by having everyone stand up. Ask, **Who is the main character in this story?** (Have students pretend to be Jacob by pretending to hold a shepherd’s staff.) **What was Jacob doing?** (He was going on a journey, so have students walk around the room.) **He was tired, so what did he do next?** (Have students lay down on the floor or put their heads on a desk.) **Then something amazing happened. Wow! God appeared to him in a dream.** (Have students act out being in awe.) **What was the promise that God made?** (God promised that Jacob’s family and his descendants would be blessed. Have

students give themselves a hug.) **What did Jacob do when he woke up?** (He set up a pillar to worship God and called the place Bethel, which means “house of God.” Have students pretend to build an altar and worship God.)

FOR OLDER STUDENTS 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.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Jacob and his family are a bit of a mess, just as our families are less than perfect. God can take the mess that we make and bring His saving grace into the middle of it. Jacob was fleeing his brother who wanted to kill him, and amidst all that, God comes to Jacob and gives him the promise of salvation—not just for Jacob, but for us too.
- This is a true story. Even though seeing God in a dream isn’t what usually happens to us, it is how God chose to speak to Jacob.
- Jacob’s response to God’s promise was to worship God. We, too, respond to the Good News of the Gospel by worshipping God.

LIVE

EXPLORE THE CONTEXT

Before you start the discussion questions, use the *Explore Bible Guidebook* for a more in-depth look into this lesson about Jacob and God's promises.

TALK ABOUT IT

- ▶ Can you think of how communication has changed throughout history?
- ▶ What's your favorite way to talk or communicate with other people?
- ▶ How does God communicate with us today? (God's Word—this has not changed. Even though we can read the Bible on digital devices that are new, the Word itself has not changed.)
- ▶ How do you talk to God? (Prayer—this hasn't changed either.)

SAY THE BIBLE VERSE TOGETHER

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

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Read **John 1:51**: "And He said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.'"
- Read **Genesis 28:13**: "The LORD stood above it." This references a preincarnate Jesus.
- Read the note on John 1:51 from *The Lutheran Study Bible*: "Heaven opened in Jacob's dream at Bethel and also at Jesus' Baptism. God has revealed and continues to reveal the way to Himself through Jesus, the Word made flesh."
- Read **Matthew 28:20**: "[Teach] them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." This verse and the lesson's memory verse remind us of our Lord's promise to be with us wherever we go.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students their favorite part of this story.

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.

SING "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"
"The Lord's Prayer"
Music can be found in the digital resource center.

PRAY Thank You, heavenly Father, for fulfilling Your promise of a Savior in Jesus. You still fulfill Your promise by being with us always. In Your name we pray. Amen.



DOWNLOADABLE PAGE

Extend learning by printing the downloadable activity page, found in the digital resource center. See the back page of this guide for details.



CHRIST CONNECTION

In case anyone thinks that Jesus is only in the New Testament, here we see again an example of the preincarnate Christ, similar to what we discussed in the creation lesson.



LEADER NOTE

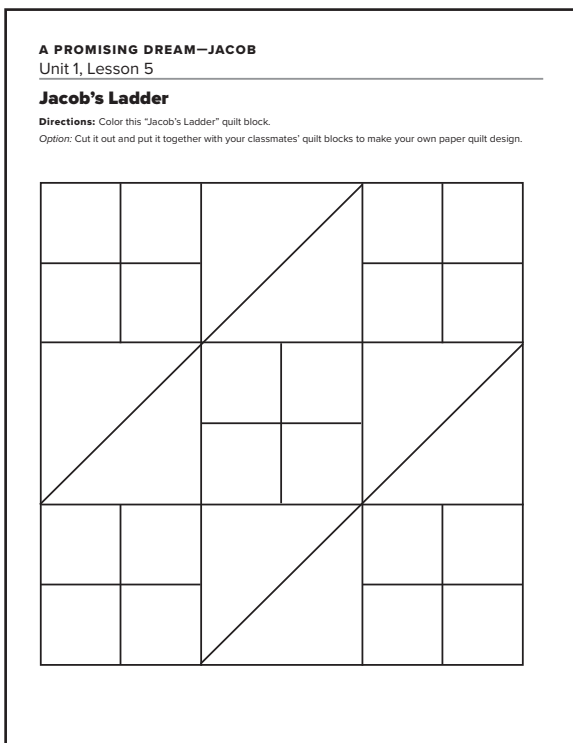
The idea of a preincarnate Christ may be too abstract and complex for younger students, but older students can begin to understand the idea of the Second Person of the Trinity before He came to earth in human form.

DOWNLOADABLE PAGE HELPS

Make copies of the downloadable activity page by accessing the digital resource center. Use the helps below as a guide.

This is the quilt block called “Jacob’s Ladder.” Make copies of this historic and popular block and talk about why it might be called this name. Talk about why quilters would want to make a quilt like this.

Have students color the blocks, cut out the blocks, and then put them all together on the wall to make a bigger design. You could also find examples online of finished quilts in the this pattern to show students.



CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I ?

God calls me His precious possession; He is near to me even when I feel that He is far away.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I worship God and always remember that He is with me and cares for me.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on learning for each age.

ADULT

I can identify multiple ways God is with us, His human creatures and redeemed children.

YOUTH

I can express confidence that God is with me.

ELEMENTARY

I understand that God is with me all the time.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

I know God is with me.

BONUS ACTIVITIES

DRAWING

10 minutes

Have students draw their own picture of what they think Jacob's dream might have looked like.

LADDER SNACK

10 minutes

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

FAMILY TREE

Times may vary

Make a family tree from Adam 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) depending on your class.