

# 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 can express confidence that God is with me.

### 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 study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

**MORE TIME** Read “Apologetics Helps” on the back page in preparation for the “Live” section.

**IN DEPTH** Read the study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible* for Genesis 37:5 and 40:8, as well as “Genesis, Book of Dreams” on page 74.

## SUPPLY LIST

### FOR THIS LESSON

- Sheets of paper
- Masking tape

### FOR EVERY LESSON

- Student copies of *Defend Journal*
- Bibles
- Pens
- Shareable images from digital resource center
- Supplies for bonus activities



### LEADER NOTE

As you discuss siblings, learners may talk about their personal relationships. Listen carefully and support those facing challenging circumstances.



### DEFEND JOURNAL

Hand out journals and turn to Lesson 5.



### LEADER NOTE

Let students read and discuss this narrative in pairs or trios, then come back to share results and discuss the questions.



### BONUS ACTIVITY

Make connections to the New Testament with “Jesus, the Way.”

# LAUNCH

## WALK-IN QUESTION

What was your craziest dream?

## SIBLING TALK

Ask each person to jot down a pair of siblings (famous, nonfamous, or even fictional).

**SAY** Which siblings would you describe as competitive? supportive? loving? Jacob and Esau didn’t always get along. The families in the Bible were not perfect. But God was with them. He promises to be with our families too.

**PRAY** Lord God, thank You for being with us, loving us, and guiding us. Help us turn to You when we feel aimless and alone. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

# LEARN

## READ “THE BIG PICTURE” AND TALK IT OUT

▷ Do you think it was fair that Jacob got the blessing? Why or why not?

### DISCUSSION POINTS

- No one did the right thing. Esau despised his birthright. Isaac was preparing to bless Esau, against what God had told him. Rebekah took things in her own hands. And Jacob lied to Isaac.
- God remained faithful to them all despite their sinfulness. In the end, God’s will was accomplished—Jacob received the promise given to Abraham.

## LEARN ABOUT “JACOB’S DREAM”

Read **Genesis 28:10–12** to the group, or ask a volunteer to read.

Ask youth to turn to the map at the back of their journals and find Beersheba, where Isaac’s family lived. Then have them find Haran, where Rebekah’s brother lived.

▷ **Imagine that you are Jacob. What are your thoughts and feelings?**

### DISCUSSION POINTS

- Most likely, Jacob was feeling alone and afraid. He had deceived his father and took the blessing from his brother, so he may have been feeling ashamed as well.
  - Jacob must have been awed by the dream God gave him.
- ▷ **What did the vision of descending and ascending angels mean?**
- The angels showed that God was with Jacob, coming down to care for him and taking his concerns to God. The ladder connected heaven and earth, pointing to the promised Messiah. Heaven also opened at Jesus’ Baptism (Matthew 3:16–17).

Read **Genesis 28:13–23**.

▷ **What promises did God give to Jacob? How do you think this vision from God changed Jacob?**

### DISCUSSION POINTS

- Jacob would receive the promise made to Abraham, this land to his many offspring.
- Through Jacob, God would bless the earth. He would send the Messiah through this family. God would be with Jacob to protect him and to bring him back to this land.
- Jacob may have felt wonder, awe, and joy when he knew the Lord was with him.

# LIVE

## DISCUSS “GOD WITH US”

Discuss the question below. Youth may feel more comfortable sharing their thoughts in pairs or small groups. They may want to write their own questions and thoughts in the *Defend Journal* as well. After about five minutes, gather everyone together and ask volunteers to share with the whole group. See the back page of this guide for tips to help equip them for some frequently asked questions.

► **Think about a time when you felt all alone. How can you, as God’s child, know that God is with you?**

### DISCUSSION POINTS

- Allow learners to share as they feel comfortable. Some youth may feel alone at school or even in youth group. Others may be going through a family situation such as sickness or divorce that makes them feel alone.
- God gives us many examples in the Bible of His faithfulness to His people. Even when God’s people turned away from Him, God forgave them and called them back to Himself. We can be assured that God loves us, no matter what.
- God promises us in His Word that He will always be with us:

**Joshua 1:9** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

**Psalms 23:4** Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

**Matthew 28:20** [Jesus said,] Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

**Romans 8:38–39** For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## CONSIDER “IMMANUEL”

God showed His great love for us when He came down from heaven to be born a human baby boy. Look up and read Matthew 1:18–23. Jesus is Immanuel, God with us.

► **Send a text to someone who could use the encouragement that God promises to be with him or her.**

## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Check for understanding by asking students to ask a partner, **How is Jesus with you?** Ask volunteers to share their responses with everyone. Thank those who share.

# LEAVE

Read the Bible Verse aloud together from the *Defend Journal*:

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

Ask youth to share prayer concerns, and include these in your closing prayer.



### CHRIST CONNECTION

Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s promise of salvation. As we go through challenges in this life, we know that God is always with us through His Word and Sacraments.



### LEADER NOTE

Before class, write the four Bible verses under “Discussion Points” on four sheets of paper and tape them to the walls. Encourage youth to walk around, read each one, and write it in their journal, if they wish.



### BONUS ACTIVITY

Equip youth to share comfort with “God’s with You.”



### SHAREABLE DOWNLOAD

Connect with youth before and after the lesson using shareable images from the digital resource center.

# APOLOGETICS HELPS

## DEFEND THE FAITH

A tall stone or pillar was often set in the ground in the ancient world to commemorate an important event or to serve as a marker. Jacob turned the stone pillow that he slept on upright and called it Bethel (House of the Lord) to mark the place where God appeared to him. Later, he would build an altar from that stone and others, preach about God, and sacrifice to God at that altar.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

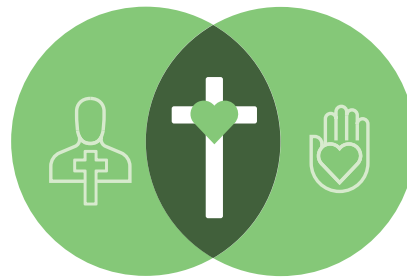
### ► How do I know God is with me?

Throughout the Bible, God shows that He wants to be near the people He has created. God walked with Adam and Eve in the garden. God promised Abraham and Jacob that He would be with them and their descendants. God led the Israelites out of Egypt and led them with a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. And in the ultimate demonstration of desiring to be with His people, God sent Jesus, Immanuel—God with us—to restore our relationship with God so we could be with Him one day eternally. God comes to you today in His Word and in the Sacraments.

### ► My friend is going through a hard time, but she doesn't believe in Jesus. How can I help her?

One of the ways God cares for people is through us—His Church. We are the physical “hands and feet of God” when we show genuine love and concern and when we care for people’s needs.

God’s love is for all people (see John 3:16). “God our Savior . . . desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:3, 4). Tell your friend that you care for her and that God does too. Share encouraging Bible verses with her, and offer to pray with her.



## 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

### JACOB'S LADDER

5–10 minutes

Bring in a “Jacob’s Ladder” toy or look online for pictures of one. These toys have blocks that seem to fall as they flip and rearrange. The origin of this toy is unknown. How do you think it got the name “Jacob’s Ladder”?

### JESUS, THE WAY

15–20 minutes

Look up **John 1:49–51** to make connections. Heaven opened in Jacob’s dream and at Jesus’ Baptism. The Lord spoke to Jacob from the top of the ladder. Jesus is God come down to be with us, and Jesus is the “ladder,” the way, to heaven.

### GOD'S WITH YOU

15–20 minutes

Divide students into pairs and ask them to role-play a situation where a friend needs assurance that God is with them in a difficult time. What would they say to that friend?