

## **JACOB'S LADDER**

**Genesis 28:10-19**

### **I. A SURPRISING PERSON**

- A. *"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 descendants" ( 28:13).*
- B. Why did God pick Jacob for the vision and the promise?
  - 1. Jacob was a liar, a cheat, and a thief.
  - 2. He wasn't on a religious pilgrimage or in prayer. He was running away from his twin brother who wanted to kill him.
- C. What relevance does that have for us today?
  - 1. God speaks to those of us who are sometimes liars, cheats, and thieves.
  - 2. God places a ladder in the middle of our lives and invites us to see the angels and receive the blessing.

### **II. A SURPRISING PLACE**

- A. *"And he came to a certain place, and stayed there that night, because the sun had set" (Gen. 28:11).*
- B. What was special about this place?
  - 1. The holy vision did not happen in a particularly holy place.
  - 2. The vision did not happen in a temple or a sanctuary. It didn't even happen in God's home territory.
  - 3. God refuses to be locked up or boxed up in one location.
- C. *"Surely the Lord is in this place; and I did not know it" (28:16).*
  - 1. Jacob didn't expect to encounter God here.
  - 2. There are no boundaries for Bethel.
  - 3. Name the places where you have felt the presence of God.

### **III. A SURPRISING REACTION**

- A. *"So Jacob rose early in the morning and he took the stone which he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on top of it" (Gen. 28:18).*
- B. Why didn't Jacob line up with the angels and climb that ladder?
  - 1. *"How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17).*
  - 2. Maybe just knowing it was there was enough.
- C. Jacob never forgot the dream or that ladder.
  - 1. He did finally climb that ladder, but it wasn't in a dream.
  - 2. What gave him the right?
  - 3. *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him" can climb that ladder.*

**Prayer Concerns: Members** – Margaret Baker, Burney Biesel, Jeanette Boatright, Gordon Freeman, Ron Gathright, Ruth Dale Hurt, Maleia Lee, Fay McDowell, Mary Jo Moore ... **Friends** – Shirley Adkins, Pat Bryan, Doris Cursey, Bill Dean, Tina Gatlin, Nancy Godsey, Kathy Greer, Arvil Jones, Lucy Jones, Jeff Joyner, Ellen Kaplan, Lesli Kaplan, Dillon LaRue, Conner Overton, Peggy Shipman, Mike Thompson, Jayne Sorrell, Shirley Waldron ...

**Christian Sympathy** is extended to **Coleen Jamison and family** in the loss of her aunt, **Louise Wright**, who died on Thursday, June 14.

### PASTORAL PRAYER

Almighty God, who has created us out of the dust, but put within us the spark of eternal life, be with us, we pray, as we come here to praise your name.

O God, we know that you are with us now, for we have felt your presence as we have sung our hymns and bowed in prayer, and we know there is never a time that we do not need you. But Father, we pray for your presence in those moments when obedience isn't so easy, and commitment is not so convenient. We confess moments of doubt, when we simply don't believe any longer. We confess moments of self-centeredness, when our only motive is to get whatever we can for ourselves. We confess moments, even days, of weariness, when we simply get tired of trying, and settle down into the lines of easy compromise in our daily lives.

O God, that's when we need you most, when we are willing to settle for mediocrity, and to forget that spark of eternity buried within the dust of which we're made. Then be present to us in those times, and keep us climbing upward toward your redeeming presence. For this, O God, is our prayer in the name of him who came to lead us up out of our worst, and toward your best, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray ...

**THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### GENESIS 28:10-19

Jacob left Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he came to a certain place, and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! 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 descendants; and your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and by you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth bless themselves. 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 that of which I have spoken to you." Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I didn't 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."

So Jacob rose early in the morning and he took the stone which he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called the name of that place Bethel ...

### SERMON SCHEDULE

#### In the Sanctuary:

July 1	<i>Look Carefully at His Face</i> Holy Communion	Luke 9:51-62
July 8	<i>Sending Sojourners</i> <i>into a Strange Land</i>	Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

#### On the Radio (1450 AM):

July 1	<i>Christ-minded Christianity</i>	James 3:13-18
July 8	<i>Hold the Fort!</i>	James 4:1-12