

General Church Education



Jacob's Ladder

Genesis 28:10-22

Lesson 7

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Introductory Level: The Lord Is Our
Heavenly Father

For ages 5-6 years

Jacob's Ladder

Genesis 28:10-22

OVERVIEW OF THE STORY

Jacob started out on a long journey, leaving his family behind. He was alone and afraid. The Lord comforted him with a beautiful dream about angels. Jacob made a covenant with the Lord.

CONCEPTS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

- ❖ You may remember that Abraham pictures our natural reasoning ability during early childhood, that is, we judge by how things appear. His son, Isaac, pictures the spiritual reasoning ability that develops later from learning the teachings of the Word. Now we come to Esau and Jacob who picture the practical or natural plane of life as we approach adulthood.
- ❖ Esau represents the natural desires that motivate us in our daily life. Jacob represents our thoughts or the truth that inspires us. Their conflicts are like our mental battles between what we want and what we know we should do.
- ❖ Traveling to Haran represents times of uncertainty as we begin something new in life and we follow the Lord out of simple obedience. By obeying we come to love His commandments. This allows us to return to our true spiritual home in Canaan, which represents heaven.
- ❖ Jacob's comforting dream shows that the Lord is always with us and takes care of us.
- ❖ After the dream, Jacob set up a stone and poured oil on it. This is a picture of turning to the truth (stone) when doubts and fears arise and then coming to love (oil) the truth by using it in our lives.

JACOB'S LADDER

Important Ideas for Children

One of the wonderful jobs of angels is to help connect people on earth with the Lord.

Jacob saw angels going back and forth from heaven and earth.

LET'S REMEMBER:

- ♦ What letter from the Hebrew name, Jehovah, did the Lord add to Abram and Sarai's names? (H.)
- ♦ Abraham and Sarah had a son in their old age. Do you remember his name? (Isaac.)
- ♦ When Isaac was a young boy, what did Abraham start to do to show how much he loved the Lord? (Sacrifice Isaac.)
- ♦ Did the Lord let Abraham do this thing? (No.)
- ♦ What did the Lord provide for Abraham to sacrifice instead? (A ram.)

This reminds us that the Lord is always with us, watching over us.



OUR STORY FOR TODAY:

When Isaac grew up he became a great man like his father Abraham. The Lord led him to find a wife who was just right for him. Her name was Rebekah and she came from Haran, from his own relatives. She believed in God just like Isaac did. The Lord did not want him to marry any of the women in Canaan because they worshiped strange gods and idols. Idols are statues made of stone or wood.

Isaac and Rebekah wanted to have children and the Lord gave them twin sons. Some twins look alike, but these twins were very different. Esau, the oldest or firstborn, grew up to be a hairy man who loved most to go out into the fields and hunt with his bow and arrows. Jacob, who was born second, was a "smooth" skinned man, which means he was not covered with a lot of hair. He stayed around the tents more and looked after the herds and sheep.

In these times the firstborn son would normally become the new head or leader of the family when he grew up and the father died. He would inherit or get most of his father's possessions. This was his birthright because he was born first. The father would also give the best blessing to the oldest son. These were both important things that the firstborn would receive.

Esau and Jacob did not get along well because they were so different. One day Esau foolishly traded or sold his birthright to his brother Jacob when he was hungry and wanted some of Jacob's stew. Now Jacob would inherit the leadership of the family and most of his father's things. Later Jacob tricked their father Isaac into giving him the best blessing as well. Now Esau would get almost nothing. You can imagine how angry Esau became. He wanted to kill Jacob.

So Jacob had to leave his home for a while. He had to go on a long journey to his relatives in Haran by himself. He was sent to Haran to visit his uncle and hopefully find a wife there. He was sad to leave his home. He loved it there. He was probably afraid. He did not know where he would find food, whether he would be safe or how he would get back home again.

On the first night he stopped near the town of Bethel and had a wonderful dream. You may remember that Abraham built an altar there. Listen carefully to see where he slept and who was in the dream.



Read **Genesis 28:10-15**.

Jacob slept on the ground. What did he rest his head on? (A stone.) What did he see in his dream? (A ladder with angels.) The bottom of the ladder was set up on earth. Where did the top of the ladder go? (It reached to heaven.) Who were going up and down the ladder? (Angels.)

The Lord spoke from above this ladder. He reminded Jacob that He was the God of Abraham and Isaac, Jacob's grandfather and father. He made the same promise to Jacob that He had made to Abraham and Isaac.



Do you remember what that promise was? (To give this land to them and to their descendants.) The Lord also told Jacob that He would be with him on his journey and bring him safely home. How do you think that made Jacob feel? (Good or happy.) Now let's see what Jacob did when he woke up.



Read **Genesis 28:16-22**.

What did Jacob do when he woke up the next morning? (Took the stone, set it up as a pillar or little altar and poured oil on it.) Jacob made a vow there. A vow is a promise. Do you remember what a covenant is? (A two-way promise.) The Lord had promised to be with Jacob and bring him safely home. Now Jacob promised that the Lord would also be his God and he would give one tenth of all he had back to the Lord. So they made a covenant.



We also have a "Jacob's Ladder" where we get messages from the Lord. The messages are in His Word. When we hear the stories in the Word, our thoughts go up to the Lord and His thoughts come down to us—just like the angel messengers going up and down the ladder.

So if you ever feel lonely or afraid, like perhaps at night when you are alone in bed and it is dark, you could remember stories from the Word or say something from the Word that you have learned by heart. That might help you feel the Lord close to you and you will be comforted also.

WHAT DID WE LEARN TODAY?

- ♦ **What is a birthright?** (The right of the firstborn or oldest son to inherit most of his father's things.)
- ♦ **Why was Esau very angry with Jacob?** (Because Jacob bought Esau's birthright and stole his blessing from their father.)
- ♦ **When Jacob started on his journey, where did he stay the first night?** (At Bethel.)
- ♦ **Where did he sleep?** (On the ground.)
- ♦ **What did Jacob see in his dream?** (Angels going up and down from heaven to earth.)
- ♦ **Who spoke to Jacob?** (The Lord.)
- ♦ **How do you think Jacob felt about his journey now?**

JACOB'S LADDER

ACTIVITIES



Recitation: Learn the recitation by heart and earn an award. Awards are on the last page of this lesson.

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."

Genesis 28:16



Project choices:

Jacob's Ladder Dream project
Color a picture of Jacob



Songs:

This is my Father's World—Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-this-is-my-fathers-world/>

Heavenly Father, You are Near—Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-heavenly-father-you-are-near/>



Additional Activities:

- ❖ Think of ways you could act like an an angel by doing thoughtful things for others—perhaps setting the table or sharing your toys with a friend. This is really carrying the Lord's message to love our neighbor into our life.
- ❖ At night when you pray, thank the Lord for keeping you safe. Think about the new things you did at school, at home or outside and thank the Lord for giving you courage to do new things.

Jacob's Ladder Dream

This project helps children visualize Jacob's dream.

Supplies:

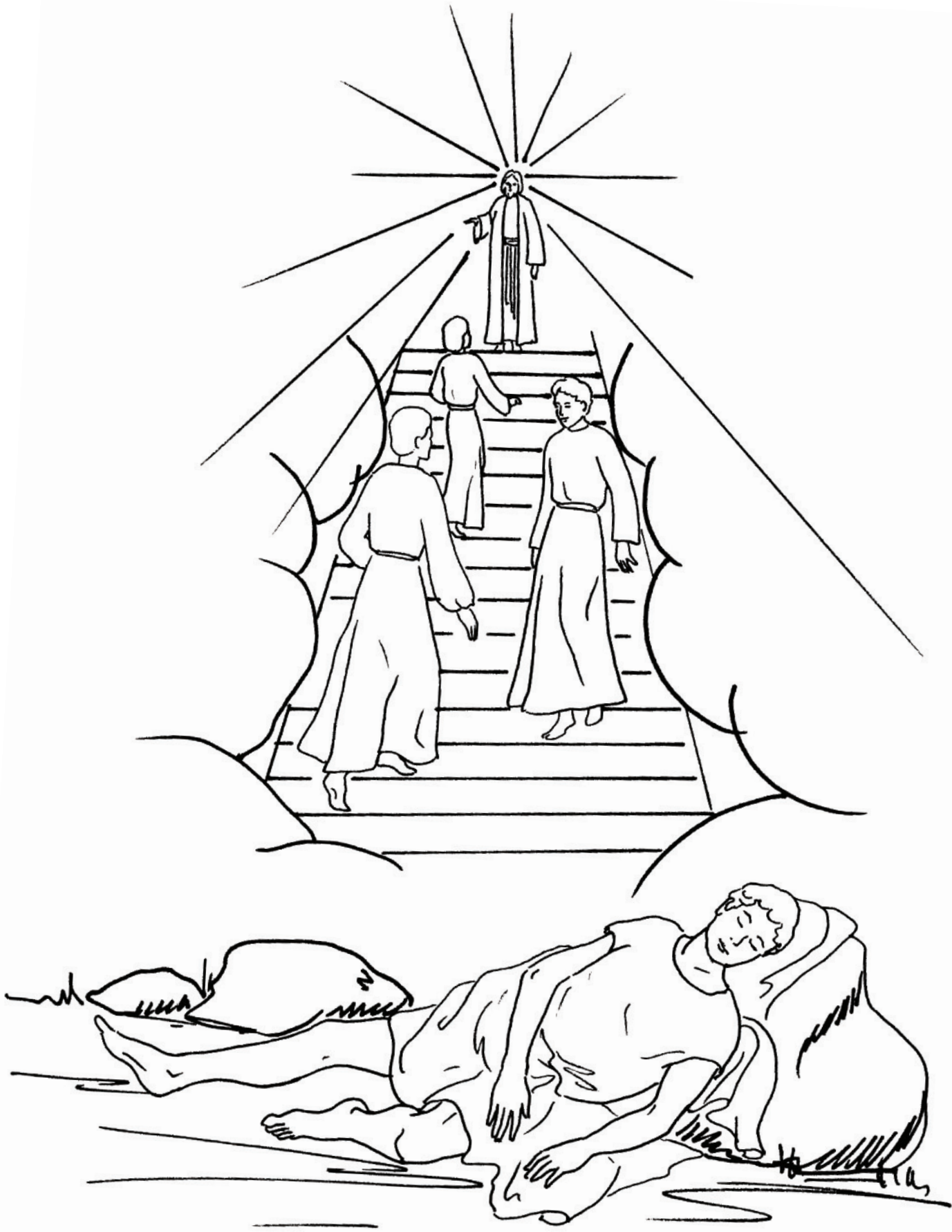
1 printed page
1 piece of purple or black construction paper
oil pastels or crayons
watercolor paints
paintbrush

Project instructions:

1. Place the page vertically and use oil pastels or crayons to draw Jacob sleeping at the bottom. Remember, Jacob's head was resting on a stone. Make each shape and then fill it in completely.
2. Use oil pastels or crayons to draw a stairway or ladder.
3. Add angels in white garments to the ladder. Some should go up, others come down. It is difficult to see white on white. To see them better, outline the angels in yellow. Be careful to color them in completely. If the oil pastels smear draw over them with a different color to hide the smear.
4. Draw yellow rays of light at the top of the ladder or stairway to show the Lord speaking to Jacob in heaven.
5. To make a blue background that will look like the night sky, mix blue and black watercolor paints in a cup or on a plate. Use a brush to make long strokes across the page. Cover all of the paper using light strokes. Be careful not to scrub the paper. The oil pastels will shine through the paint! To remove extra paint, gently blot the figures with a tissue.



Jacob's Dream



Recitation Award: Jacob's Ladder

Purchase a wide colorful ribbon. Attach each recitation award to the ribbon as it is learned. Multiple copies of the award are provided for classes.

