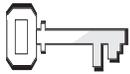


## Angels on a Ladder



### References

Genesis 28:10-22;  
*Patriarchs and Prophets*,  
pp. 183-188



### Memory Verse

"I am with you and  
will watch over you  
wherever you go"  
(Genesis 28:15, NIV).



### Objectives

The children will:  
**Know** that no matter  
what happens in our  
earthly families, we  
still belong to God.

**Feel** assured that we  
are members of God's family.

**Respond** by asking God to  
help us and our families  
in good times and bad.



### The Message

I belong to God's  
family no matter  
what happens.

### Monthly Theme

We belong to God's family.

### The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Because Jacob tricked his father into giving him the birth-right, Esau is so angry that he threatens to kill Jacob. Following Rebekah's suggestion, Jacob leaves home to live for a while with his mother's family. On the way, Jacob dreams of a stairway with angels walking up and down, reaching from earth to heaven. From the top of the stairway God promises to bless Jacob. Jacob names the place Bethel, which means "the house of God."

### ***This is a lesson about community.***

Sometimes trouble disrupts our happy families, and may even cause us to separate from family members. Jacob's story helps us realize that God continues to watch over us even in unpleasant circumstances. God promises to bless us wherever we are, and we, like Jacob, are inspired by His continuing presence, which assures us that we belong to His family.

### Teacher Enrichment

"Jacob felt that God had claims upon him which he must acknowledge, and that the special tokens of divine favor granted him demanded a return. So does every blessing bestowed upon us call for a response to the Author of all our mercies. The Christian should often review his past life and recall with gratitude the precious deliverances that God has wrought for him, supporting him in trial, opening ways before him when all seemed dark and forbidding, refreshing him when ready to faint. He should recognize all of them as evidences of the watchcare of heavenly angels. In view of these innumerable blessings he should often ask, with subdued and grateful heart, 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?' Psalm 116:12.

"Our time, our talents, our property, should be sacredly devoted to Him who has given us these blessings in trust. Whenever a special deliverance is wrought in our behalf, or new and unexpected favors are granted us, we should acknowledge God's goodness, not only by expressing our gratitude in words, but, like Jacob, by gifts and offerings to His cause. As we are continually receiving the blessings of God, so we are to be continually giving" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 187, 188).

### Room Decorations

See Lesson 10.

## Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
<b>1</b> Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Time to Go</i> B. <i>Peeking Into Heaven</i>	none stepladder, screen, large picture of Jesus, picture of heaven, chalkboard/whiteboard
<b>Any Time</b> Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> well from Lesson 10 none
<b>2</b> Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story  Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes, blankets, man with deep voice, tape recorder, small container of olive oil. Optional: A-frame stepladder, white sheet, spotlight, white Christmas lights or large paper angels none Bibles, stepladder, tape, paper, marker
<b>3</b> Applying the Lesson	up to 15	A. <i>Family Portrait</i>  B. <i>Climbing Jacob's Ladder</i>	bulletin board, family portrait, large picture of Jesus, glue, thick yarn, scissors, heart shapes (one per child) (see p. 140) or camera stepladder
<b>4</b> Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Jacob's Angels</i>	two paper angels per child (see p. 144), scissors, glitter glue, markers

**\*Prayer and Praise me be used at any time during the program.**

# TEACHING THE LESSON

## Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Listen to last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



## Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

### A. Time to Go

This activity is best done outdoors, but it can be done indoors if there is enough space.

Have the children choose a partner and line up against one wall. Choose one person to be Esau and one to be Jacob. Tell the children to listen for you to say “Run.” When they hear “Run,” Jacob is to run and Esau is to run after him or her. To begin have all Jacobs start walking to the other end of the room. After a few seconds call out, “Run.” Jacob will run and Esau will run after him. Remind “Esau” that he shouldn’t catch Jacob.

### Debriefing

Ask: **Did you like it when you were being chased? After he lied to Isaac, Jacob had to leave home. As he traveled, he was afraid of being caught and killed by his brother. He probably felt as if he were being chased. But God sent him a special message. And Jacob learned something important that we want to remember too. That’s what today’s message is about.**



**I BELONG TO GOD’S FAMILY NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.**

Say that with me.

#### You Need:

- stepladder
- screen
- large picture of Jesus
- picture of heaven
- chalkboard/whiteboard

### B. Peeking Into Heaven

In advance, set up a picture of heaven and one of Jesus beside the words “I will be with you wherever you go.” Put a high screen in front of the pictures. Put a stepladder in front of the screen. Ask: **Who would like to peek over the screen and see what is there?** Invite volunteers to climb the ladder and look. Say: **Don’t say anything until everyone has looked. When all have had a turn, ask: What did you see?** (picture of heaven, picture of Jesus, and a message)

### Debriefing

Ask: **How would you feel if you really could climb a ladder to see Jesus, and peek into heaven?** (It would be wonderful.) **What would you want to tell Jesus?** Allow answers. **What would you like to hear Jesus say?** (He loves me. I can stay in heaven, etc.) Allow discussion time.

**In our story today Jacob had a peek into heaven. He saw angels, and learned something very important. Today’s message tells us that he learned . . .**



**I BELONG TO GOD'S FAMILY NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.**

**Say that with me.**

## Prayer and Praise **Any Time**



### Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



### Suggested Songs

"Come and Praise the Lord Our King" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 5)

"Psalm 66" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 11)

"Praise Him, Praise Him" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 12)

"In His Time" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 42)

"O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 28)

"We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 126)



### Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize that we all belong to God's family in both good times and bad. God never leaves us alone.



### Offering

Have the children put their offering in the container at the well. Explain that our offering goes to help people living in (name the world field receiving the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering).

#### You Need:

- well from Lesson 10



### Prayer

Ask the children to think of people who are separated from their family. It may be for a short trip or because of something more serious. Pray that they will feel God's presence and know that they are not alone.

## Bible Lesson

### You Need:

- Bible-times costume for each child
- blanket for each child
- man with deep voice
- tape recorder
- large stone
- small container of olive oil

### Optional items:

- A-frame step-ladder
- white sheet
- spotlight
- white Christmas lights or large paper angels

### Experiencing the Story

In advance, have a man with a deep voice tape the words of God, or read them from behind the screen.

Put the ladder in the corner. Wrap the Christmas lights around it and loosely cover with a white sheet. When you get to Jacob's dream, light the ladder from behind with the spotlight and turn on the Christmas lights. If Christmas lights are not available, you may want to pin large angels on the sheet.

Let all of the children play the part of Jacob. Have them dress in Bible-times costumes and give each a rolled-up blanket. Have an adult or one of the older children stand at the front and have the others follow their actions.

### Read or tell the story.

Esau and Jacob had never liked each other very much. But now the situation was much worse. Esau was so angry at Jacob that he wanted to kill him. So Rebekah decided to send Jacob away to his uncle Laban's house. "Stay with him for a while, until your brother's anger cools and he forgets what you have done," she said sadly.

*[Children take up bedrolls and begin to walk. Look around, look scared, and occasionally jump as if startled.]* Jacob started out on the very long trip. It was almost 500 miles (830 kilometers) through strange and dangerous country to Uncle Laban's home. Jacob was frightened. He was all alone. He had no servants to protect him from wild beasts or robbers. And he wasn't used to sleeping on the hard ground. He traveled as fast as he could because he was running from his angry brother.

*[Children look weary. Roll out bedroll, look for a place, and lie down.]* In a day or two Jacob arrived at a special place. It was a place where his grandfather Abraham had once built an altar to worship God. Jacob was so tired that night that he may not even have known he was in such a special place. He just lay down and went to sleep with his head on a rock.

That night Jacob had a dream. Not an ordinary dream. A special dream from God. *[Have adult helper turn light on behind ladder as you point in direction of ladder.]* In his dream Jacob saw a huge ladder or stairway. It reached all the way from the earth up to heaven. Jacob saw angels going up and coming down on it.

God smiled at Jacob and said, *[taped voice]* "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham and Isaac. . . . I will be with you and protect you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you" (Genesis 28:15, ICB).

*[The children sit up, look excited.]* Jacob woke up when his dream ended. "The Lord is here!" he exclaimed. "He is in this place, and I didn't know it!"

Jacob got up very early the next morning. The stars were fading away, and the sun was just beginning to light up the eastern sky. Jacob wanted to do something special to mark this place—the place where the Lord Himself had spoken to him. *[One child takes the stone, pours oil on it, and kneels as if to pray.]* He took the stone he had used for a pillow and set it upright in the ground. He poured oil over it and dedicated it to God. And then he named this special place Bethel, which means "House of God."

*[All look happy and walk away from*

that place.] So Jacob continued on his journey, feeling much better. He was no longer afraid of his brother. He was not afraid of wild beasts or robbers. He knew for sure that the Lord was with him. The Lord was protecting him. God had told him so!

### Debriefing

Ask: **What was Jacob thinking when he went to bed?** (He was afraid of his brother; sad because he had to leave home; wondering what would happen when he reached his uncle Laban's.)

**What did God say to Jacob?** (God would be with Jacob and protect him.)

**How do you think Jacob felt when he woke up?** (happy, relieved, grateful to God, no longer afraid)

**Even when bad things happen in our earthly families, we are still part of God's family. He has promised always to be with us and take care of us. We can say with Jacob . . .**



**I BELONG TO GOD'S FAMILY  
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.**

### Memory Verse

Read the verse together. Be sure the children know that this was God's message to Jacob, and that it is His message to them also. Repeat the verse several times, using the following actions:

<b>I am</b>	Point upward.
<b>with</b>	Put arm around an imaginary person.
<b>you</b>	Point to others.
<b>and will watch over</b>	Shade eyes with hand.

**you** Point to others.

**wherever you go.** Walk fingers of right hand up left arm.

**Genesis 28:15, Palms together, then NIV** open them.

### Bible Study

Attach one or more of the references listed below on each rung of the ladder.

Say: **God promised to be with Jacob and protect him. Let's discover some of God's promises to us.**

Have volunteers choose a reference from the ladder, find it in their Bibles, and read it aloud. Talk about each verse and be sure the children understand its meaning. Have adults help as needed. Add other promises as desired.

Psalm 91:14, 15

Joshua 1:9

Proverbs 3:5, 6

Psalm 119:105

John 3:16

Matthew 7:7, 8

John 14:1-3

#### You Need:

- Bibles
- ladder
- tape
- paper
- marker

### Debriefing

Ask: **How does reading God's promises make you feel?** (happy, encouraged, confident)

**Sometimes things go wrong in our families or in our communities. We make mistakes, or people do things that hurt us. No matter what happens, we can always be sure that God loves us, and that we are still part of God's family. Let's remember our message for today:**



**I BELONG TO GOD'S FAMILY  
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.**

# 3

## Applying the Lesson

### You Need:

- bulletin board
- family portrait
- large picture of Jesus
- glue sticks
- thick yarn
- scissors
- heart shapes, one per child (see p. 140)
- camera

### A. Family Portrait

Show the family portrait to the class. Tell them about the people in the picture and when it was taken. Say: **This morning we are going to make a family portrait of part of God's family.**

If possible, take a picture of each child and let them glue it to the bulletin board. Or give each child a paper heart (see p. 140) and have them write their names, draw a picture of themselves, and glue their heart near Jesus. Connect the hearts/pictures to Jesus with yarn.

### Debriefing

Ask: **Have you ever had a family portrait taken?** Allow discussion time.

**How do we feel when everything is going well in our families and communities?** (OK, content, no worries)

**There are times things may go wrong in our families or even in our church or school family. However, nothing can keep us from being part of God's family. He has promised always to be with us and take care of us.**

Let's say our message together:



**I BELONG TO GOD'S FAMILY  
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.**

### B. Climbing Jacob's Ladder

Invite the children to stand in a line and, one at a time, climb up a couple of steps on "Jacob's" ladder and say one good thing about being in God's family. If they want to say more than one thing, they can join the line again.

### You Need:

- ladder

### Debriefing

Ask: **What do you think when you hear so many good things about being in God's family?** (Glad I'm a member; I'm part of a good thing.)

**Can anything change so God excludes you from His family?** (no) **No, unless we choose to tell God we don't want to be part of His family. Even when we make mistakes, we are still part of His family. Let's say our message again:**



**I BELONG TO GOD'S FAMILY  
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.**

## 4

## Sharing the Lesson

### Jacob's Angels

Give each child two paper angels (see p. 144) and have them cut them out and decorate them. Write the memory verse on the back of each.

Ask: **Where did Jacob see angels?** (He saw them on the ladder going from heaven to earth.) **What did God tell Jacob at that time?** (He would be with Jacob and protect him.)

**Find a partner and tell them of a time you felt afraid, or when something happened and you felt very alone. When your partner has finished sharing, hold up your angel and read your memory verse to him or her. Then reverse roles.**

### Debriefing

Say: **God never leaves even one member of His family alone. He is always with us, ready to help.**

**This week, take one of your angels and share it with someone you think looks sad, is troubled, or needs to be reminded that they can be part of God's family.**

**And let's share today's message with others. Let's say it together:**



**I BELONG TO GOD'S FAMILY  
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.**

### Closing

Stand in a circle and sing "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139). Close with a prayer that includes the children's families and the worldwide family of God.

#### You Need:

- two paper angels per child (see p. 144)
- scissors
- glitter glue
- markers

## Angels on a Ladder

### References

Genesis 28:10-22; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 183-188

### Memory Verse

"I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go"  
(Genesis 28:15, NIV).

### The Message

I belong to God's family no matter what happens.

*Have you ever felt lonely? Really alone? Or felt that there was no one you could talk to? That was how Jacob felt when he had to leave home. Then God shared a special time with him. After that, Jacob never felt lonely.*

Isaac and Rebekah's twins, Esau and Jacob, had never liked each other very much. But now the situation was much worse. Jacob had tricked their father into giving him a special blessing. It was a blessing that Esau should have received.

Esau was so angry at Jacob that he wanted to kill him! So their mother, Rebekah, decided to send Jacob to his uncle Laban. "Stay with your uncle for a while, Jacob. Give your brother time to cool his anger," she said sadly. Little did she know that she would never see Jacob again.

So Jacob started out on the long trip to Laban's home. His mother's brother, his uncle Laban, lived a long way from

Jacob's parents. It was almost 500 miles through strange and dangerous country. Jacob was all alone, and he was frightened. He had no servants to protect him from wild beasts or robbers. And

he wasn't used to sleeping on the hard ground. He traveled as fast as he could. He knew he was running for his life. He knew his brother wanted to kill him.

In a day or two Jacob arrived at a special place. His grandfather Abraham had once built an altar there to worship God. Jacob was so tired that night. He may not even have known he was in such a special place. He just wrapped up in his blanket and went to sleep with his head on a rock.

That night Jacob had an unusual dream. Not an ordinary dream, but a special dream from God. In his dream Jacob saw a huge ladder or staircase. It reached all the way from the earth to heaven. Jacob saw angels going up and down the ladder. God spoke to him. "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham and Isaac. . . . I will be with you and protect you wherever you go. And I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you" (Genesis 28:15, ICB).

Jacob sat up and looked around. "The Lord is here!" he exclaimed. "He is in this place, and I didn't know it!"

Jacob got up early the next morning. The stars were just beginning to fade away. And the sun was just beginning to light the eastern sky. Jacob wanted to do something to mark this special place. The Lord Himself had spoken to him there. So he took the stone he had used for a pillow and set it upright in the ground. He poured oil over it and dedicated it to God. And then he named this special place Bethel, "The House of God."

So Jacob continued on his journey. He was no longer afraid of his brother. He was not afraid of wild beasts or robbers. He knew for sure that the Lord was with him. The Lord was protecting him. God had told him so!



## Daily Activities

### Sabbath

- Jacob walked about 500 miles (830 kilometers) to his uncle Laban's home. Go for a walk with your family today. Figure out how far you walked. Divide the distance you walked into 500 (or 830). How long would it take your family to walk 500 miles (or 830 kilometers)?
- As you walk, imagine Jacob's feelings. Try to appear happy, anxious, sad, tired. Ask your family to guess what you are feeling.
- Is it always good to run away when bad things happen? Thank God for being with you in good and bad times.

### Sunday

- During worship, read and discuss Genesis 28:10-15. Talk about different ways God speaks to you. Then ask God to help you listen to His voice.
- Draw and cut a ladder shape from a piece of paper. Write your memory verse on the rungs. Use this to teach the verse to your family. Review your memory verse every day.
- Climb some stairs and imagine that you are climbing Jacob's ladder to heaven.

### Monday

- With your family, read and discuss Genesis 28:16-22. Why was Jacob glad? What did he promise God he would do? Ask your family to lie on the floor for a few minutes. Ask: How well do you think Jacob slept on the lumpy ground? Thank God for your bed.
- Survey your family. When does each person usually go to bed? When do they get up? How many hours does each one sleep? Ask God to watch over your family as you sleep.
- Jacob used a stone for a pillow. Feel your pillow, then replace it with a large book. How do you think you would sleep on the book?

### Tuesday

- With your family, read and discuss God's prom-

ise in Joshua 1:9. Is it for you and your family? How is God's family different from your family at home? (For example, it's bigger; people choose to belong to God's family.)

- Make a card for a friend. Tell them you are glad they are part of God's family.
- Thank God you belong to His family.

### Wednesday

- For worship today, read and discuss Proverbs 3:5, 6. What does this text mean to you and your family? Ask to see your birth certificate. What does it tell you? What do people do when they join the church? What kind of certificate do they get? Ask an adult to show you their certificate.
- Make a model angel to remind you that God sends angels to help us. Show it to your family.
- Sing "We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 126). Thank God for Bible stories that teach us His promises.

### Thursday

- Share the lesson story with your family. How much did Jacob say he would give as a thank offering to God? Discuss how your family can give a thank offering to God. Does it have to be money? What special project could your family do?
- Count the number of steps on the stairs in your house. Imagine there is an angel on each step. Could there be? Why?
- Thank God for His protecting angels.

### Friday

- Read Genesis 28:10-22 together during worship today. Be Jacob as you act it out for your family. Ask someone to say God's words. Tell three things you have learned from this story. Ask your family to tell something too.
- Sing some praise songs, then say your memory verse together. Thank God for His promises.