

Sermon Notes 3/28/21

“Jacob’s Ladder”

How should we respond to Genesis chapter 28?

1. Behold the _____ of Jesus.

Genesis 28:12-13

John 1:49-51

2. Behold the _____ of God.

Genesis 28:15-16

2 Peter 1:4

3. Be the _____ of God.

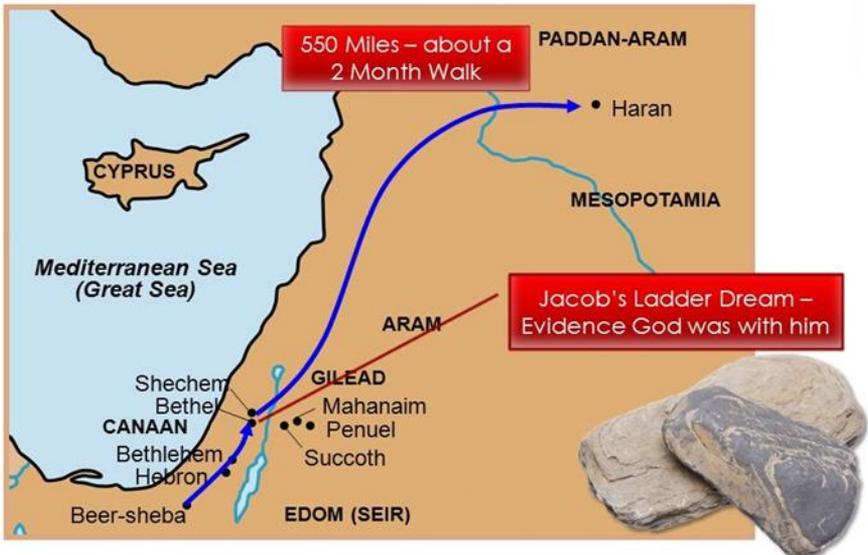
Genesis 28:17

Ephesians 2:21-22

4. Be fully _____ to Jesus.

Genesis 28:20-21

Luke 9:23-24



Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 28: March 28 – April 4

Genesis 28

It was over 500 miles from Beersheba to Haran, where Isaac and Rebekah would send Jacob to find a wife and escape the wrath of Esau. Jacob left alone with nothing but his father's blessing and the regrets of his past. But the journey in Genesis 28 would be the first in a series of lessons that would transform him into the man God was calling him to be. Life is like a long-distance journey to an unknown destination. Sometimes it may feel like you are traveling alone without anyone to help you. But as Christians we are never alone in our journey through life. Just as God was with Jacob, so He is with us, helping us to become the people He has called us to be.

Read Genesis 28:1-9

1. What did Isaac tell Jacob not to do in verse 1? Why? (see Genesis 24:2-4; 26:34-35; and 27:46)
2. Where did Isaac want Jacob to go to find a wife? (28:2)
3. What blessing did Isaac give to Jacob in verse 3?
4. What blessing did Isaac give to Jacob in verse 4?

Paul Kissling notes,

In his blessing Isaac uses the language of the creation mandate in Genesis 1:26-28 and the original promise to Abram in Genesis 12:1-7. Isaac calls down El Shaddai's creational blessing on Jacob so that, unlike his father and grandfather, he would be fruitful and increase in numbers until his descendants became a "congregation" of peoples. Isaac blesses Jacob with the wish that El Shaddai would transfer the promise of Abraham to Jacob, specifically as it relates to the promise of the land. Since Jacob was about to leave the Promised Land to find a wife, his father's reassurance of the ultimate fulfillment of the promise of the land for his descendants must have been important to Jacob.¹

¹ Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 288.

5. What did Esau learn about his father Isaac in verse 6?
6. What did Esau notice about his brother Jacob in verse 7?
7. What did Esau realize about his Canaanite wives in verse 8?
8. How did Esau try to correct his family problems in verse 9?

Read Genesis 28:10-22

9. What did Jacob use for a pillow on his journey north? (28:10-11)
10. What did Jacob see in his dream in verse 12?
11. What did God promise Jacob in verse 13?
12. What did God promise Jacob in verse 14?
13. What did God promise Jacob in verse 15?

James Smith describes how God was both encouraging Jacob and helping him to grow in his faith.

A voice spoke to Jacob in the dream. The speaker identified himself as the God of Abraham and Isaac. What had been promised to Jacob before his birth (25:23) and had been bestowed on him in two blessings pronounced by his father (27:27–29; 28:3–4) now was confirmed by God himself. He would have numerous descendants, though at the time he was seventy-seven and unmarried. God would give him Canaan, though at the moment he was a fugitive fleeing the land. Through Jacob all nations of the earth would be blessed, though within the past few weeks he had been anything but a blessing to his father and brother. God was challenging Jacob to believe the incredible!²

14. What did Jacob think when he woke up from his dream in verse 16?
15. How did Jacob feel about the place he was camping in verse 17?

² James Smith, *The Pentateuch* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1996), 183.

16. What did he do with the stone he was using as a pillow in verse 18?

17. What did Jacob name the place where he was camping in verse 19?

Jacob thought that the place where he camped was the “house of God” and the “gate of heaven.” Certainly, this encounter with God made it a special place, however, the purpose of this encounter was to assure Jacob that no matter where he was, God would be with him (v. 15). As Christians, we should remember that God is always with us. Kent Hughes writes,

Jacob rose from his stone pillow astonished... He was astounded because he was like the rest of us who naturally forget that God is present when we are in trouble, especially when it is our own fault. Surprise, fleeing sinner, God is there! Surprise, sinful sufferer, God is there! Surprise, evil schemer, God is there! Surprise, faithless one, God is faithful!³

18. What vow did Jacob make to God that day? (28:20-22)

The promises God made to Jacob came by God’s grace without any stated conditions. However, Jacob still needs to grow in his faith. His vow is conditional. God must take care of Jacob and bring him safely back to his father’s house. Kissling observes,

It is hard to know what to make of Jacob's vow. On the one hand Jacob does make a sort of commitment to God. On the other hand that commitment seems like bargaining. God must meet certain conditions and under those conditions, and only under those conditions, Jacob makes promises to the Lord.⁴

19. How can parents be a blessing to their children when their children move out?

20. How can children be a blessing to their parents when they start a family of their own?

21. What sort of bargains do people try to make with God?

22. For what blessings in your life do you want to praise God?

³ R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 360.

⁴ Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2*, 295.