

Jesus said... **“Search the scriptures...they are they which testify of me.”** (John 5:39)



INTRODUCTION

Last week, we saw how Isaac’s willing self-sacrifice perfectly pictured our Lord Jesus Christ’s willingness to die on the cross. This week, we’ll explore a story that’s easy to overlook in the Bible: Jacob’s ladder. We’ll see that Jesus Himself declares that He’s the ladder and the door to heaven.

1. The historical application. **Genesis 28:1-5, 10-22**

✓ God made His power known to Abraham’s grandson.

- 1) God heard Isaac’s prayer. What Isaac prayed for Jacob in faith, God _____ him.
 - *And God Almighty bless thee ... that thou mayest be a multitude of people;*
 - *And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad ...*
 - *And give thee the blessing of Abraham ... that thou mayest inherit the land ...*
 - *... the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;*

Analyzing the Faith

Where before have we seen such faith? **Gen 24:1-28; Heb 11:8-10**

How did meeting God affect men’s faith? **John 4:46-53; Acts 9:1-6**

- 2) Jacob was afraid when he realized that he witnessed the gate of heaven.
 - *And Jacob ... said, Surely the LORD is in the place; and I knew it not.*
 - *And he was afraid, and said, ... this is the **gate of heaven**.*

Analyzing the Fear

Why did Jacob feel fear, rather than shock and surprise?

How did his father’s faith affect his attitude toward this encounter with God?

- 3) Jacob set up a simple pillar and sanctified the place he was promised for God.
 - *And Jacob ... took the stone ... for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar ...*
 - *And he called the name of that place Bethel ...*

Analyzing the Place

Bethel became a place of great significance to Israel. **Gen 31:13, 35:1-6**

When the children of Israel went through Bethel, they’d remember this story and its significance.

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2. The doctrinal (or prophetic) application.

✓ Jesus Christ is Jacob’s ladder: the gate of heaven. He is the _____ way.

- 1) Jesus personally draws the connection between Jacob’s ladder and Himself.
 - **John 1:45-51** – Jesus describes angels ascending and descending upon Himself.
 - **Mat 7:13-14; Jn 14:6** – Jesus is the gate of heaven!
- 2) Jesus describes Himself as the door that His sheep pass through.
 - **John 10:1-10** – *I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved ...*
- 3) Jesus makes it clear that there is no other way but through Him.
 - If you’re not with God, you’re against Him. There’s no middle ground.
 - God’s own will enter through Him. Only thieves try to get in another way.

Matthew 12:30
He that is not with me is against me; And he that gathered not with me scattereth abroad.

3. Some practical (devotional) applications.

✓ God is able to perform exceeding abundantly above that which we ask or think.

- 1) God answers prayers. Please don’t forget the significance of that!
 - **Neh 2:4** – Nehemiah prayed to God in a moment. The king heard his request.
 - **Jdg 16:30** – Samson, though in sin, was granted his last request for strength.
 - **Jonah 4** – Jonah asked God to take His life, and God spoke to Him.
- 2) We must not allow our faith to grow stale.
 - **Mat 19:13-15, 18:1-6** – Jesus loves children! He points out their faith and humility.
- 3) God will work with us _____ we are, if we let Him.
 - **Joshua 1:7-9** – God will be with us no matter what!
 - **John 10:29** – *My Father ... is **greater than all**; and **no man is able** to pluck them out ...*
 - **Acts 1:8** – *... ye shall be witnesses unto me ... **unto the uttermost** part of the earth.*

Have we lost our childlike wonder and faith? Do we yawn or start to drift or daydream when we hear of the miraculous works that God has worked in the past? Has the devil so completely affected us that God’s power and glory are boring and commonplace?

With the new building, we will have the opportunity to reach a new community of people. Let’s remember that, so long as we follow God and His commands, He will work out all of the details! Amen!