

March 30th

THE LADDER DREAM

“And he dreamed, and behold, 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 offspring.”

Genesis 28:12-13

Auctions. We’ve got lots of them in Snyder County. We bid on livestock. We bid on furniture. We bid on tools. We bid on household items. We even bid on guns! If you want something bad enough, you can find an auction that has it. Just don’t expect to win the bidding war against an Amish man that brought a whole wad of cash. But the idea is the same...you exchange money to get something that you want. It’s the American way. How in the world does this apply to a story of Jacob and some strange dream about angels and ladders? Well, stay tuned to see what God wants to say to us as His men.

This event in Genesis 28 is God’s first appearance to Jacob. We’ve seen only the bad side of Jacob so far...and this event doesn’t really help us with our opinion of him. But if you look closer, you’ll see that you’re more like Jacob than you first realize. Jacob is running from his problems. He’s got a brother that wants him dead and I’m sure that his father isn’t very fond of him either. But God. God meets Jacob in his desperation. Jacob is alone. His anxiety and burden is so vivid that he collapses exhausted at night, using a stone as a pillow! But God. God meets Jacob here at the lowest point.

Jacob’s dream involved a ladder, but not just any ladder that you could buy at the nearest hardware store. The ladder was used by angels to go from heaven back to earth and back again. What did this show Jacob? God is always working for His people! Even when Jacob had tried his own ways to manipulate his blessing, God was always working to further bless Jacob. Jacob’s own statement confirms what he was thinking, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.” God is always involved in our lives even when we don’t see it or recognize it! Let this be lesson number one for you, men! There’s no such thing as luck or coincidence...it has always been God’s work on your behalf.

God gives grand promises to Jacob. The same promise that He gave to Abraham and Isaac. Did you notice the “I wills” again? This is powerful truth that Jacob needs at his lowest point. This isn’t secondhand information that God has delivered through his father Isaac. He already received that. God gives it to him personally. How does Jacob respond? He bargains with God. Did you notice what he says here? “Then Jacob made a vow, saying, ‘If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house. And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you.’” This is tragic and foolish!

Are we as men much different than Jacob here? How many times have we made promises on our end to God that are conditional. It goes something like this...”God if you show me this and give me that, then I’ll follow you with my life.” We use a lot of “ifs” with God, and we are just as dumb as Jacob. What can we give God that would somehow make Him owe us? God only owes us eternal damnation because of our sin. Instead, we owe Him our worship because He’s God. He’s our King! It’s only by His grace that we are where we are today. Will you worship Him today with all of your heart?

Spend some time confessing to God ways that you may have bargained with Him. Ask Him for courage to serve Him without any conditions.

For Further Reading: Genesis 28:10-22

