

The Essentials: The Book of Genesis

Session 6: Genesis 26-30

Opening Collect

Together: Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Watch Video

Read: Genesis 28:10-18 (out loud)

Discussion:

1. Like Abraham, Jacob is a morally complex character. Jacob steals from his brother, and runs away while his mother covers for him. Is it fair that God chooses Jacob?
2. At the beginning of the video, Colin describes the way Jacob flees from his brother and finds himself in a truly desperate place, alone in the wilderness, in a “non-place.” But then God shows up and makes it into a “crucial place.” Have you ever been in a desperate place where God showed up?
3. Do you think Jacob’s dream is a revelation of the world as it actually is? That is, do you think the story tells us that there is traffic between heaven and earth even now? What does that look like?
4. How did Jacob’s vision change his problems? How might it change our problems?
5. Colin closed his video by mentioning how the ultimate purpose of God is that all of the world would one day be completely the house of God (Bethel). How does this change the way we see the world?
6. In John chapter 1, Jesus identifies himself as the ladder between heaven and earth. How is Jesus the ultimate fulfillment of this vision—bridging heaven and earth?

Check in and closing prayers

Genesis 28: 10-19a

[10] Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. [11] And he came to a certain place and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. [12] 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! [13] 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. [14] Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. [15] Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." [16] Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." [17] And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

[18] So early in the morning Jacob took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. [19] He called the name of that place Bethel, (ESV)