Preschool–Grade 6

# Jacob's Ladder

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

**Main point:** God is with us everywhere, and He meets us with grace even when we have made a mess of things. He keeps every promise.
**Bible passage:** Genesis 28:10–22 (with Genesis 27:41–28:5 for the setting). Students read it out loud themselves.
**Memory verse:** "And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." *Genesis 28:15 (KJV)* and "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" *Psalm 139:7 (KJV)*
**You need:** a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
**Before class:** read Genesis 27–28 and Psalm 139:7–12. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses.

## 1. Opening game: Most Alone (5–10 minutes)

Write five situations on the board: the first day at a new school; a night away from home; a hospital waiting room; right after a big fight with your family; moving to a city where you know no one. Students rank them from "most alone" to "least alone," then compare with a partner. Ask: *What makes a place feel lonely?* Say: "Tonight we meet a young man who was going through several of these at once."

## 2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

**Tell the setting:** Jacob had deceived his father Isaac, saying, "I am Esau thy firstborn" (Genesis 27:19), and took the blessing. Esau hated him and said in his heart that he would slay (kill) his brother (27:41). Their mother Rebekah sent Jacob away to her brother Laban in Haran (27:42–45), and Isaac sent him to find a wife there (28:1–5).
**Read out loud: Genesis 28:10–22.** Old words in this passage:

- **lighted upon** (28:11): came to; **tarried** (28:11): stayed
- **ascending and descending** (28:12): going up and coming down
- **Abraham thy father** (28:13): Abraham was his grandfather; **father** here means forefather
- **seed** (28:13–14): children and descendants; **spread abroad** (28:14): spread out in every direction
- **keep thee** (28:15): guard and protect you; **whither thou goest** (28:15): wherever you go
- **dreadful** (28:17): filled with holy fear and wonder
- **pillar** (28:18): a standing stone set up to mark a place
- **vowed a vow** (28:20): made a solemn promise; **raiment** (28:20): clothing; **the tenth** (28:22): one part out of ten


Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

**Talk it through:** Jacob went to sleep a deceiver on the run with stones for a pillow. God did not scold him in the dream. He gave him the same promises He gave Abraham and Isaac (28:13–14) and added, "I am with thee... I will not leave thee" (28:15). Jacob woke saying, "Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not" (28:16). His vow begins with "If God will be with me" (28:20): he was still learning to trust. Years later God reminded him, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar" (31:13). God kept His word.

## 3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. God met Jacob right after Jacob had lied and run away. What does that show you about God's grace? Does grace mean what Jacob did was fine? Why not?
2. "The LORD is in this place; and I knew it not" (28:16). Where in your life might God be present when you don't notice?
3. Genesis 28:15 has four promises. Which one means the most to you, and why?
4. Jacob's vow starts with "If" (28:20). Is it wrong to trust God a little at a time? What helps trust grow?
5. Jesus used the words of this dream about Himself: "ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man" (John 1:51). What does that tell you about Jesus?
6. Psalm 139:7 asks, "whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Is there anywhere you could go where God is not? How does that comfort you, and how does it challenge you?

## 4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words in Psalm 139:7: **whither** means where; **flee** means run away; **thy presence** means where You are. The psalm answers its own question: there is nowhere God is not (Psalm 139:8–10).
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Genesis 28:15 this week; keep working on Psalm 139:7 next week too.

## 5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "Jacob met God's grace at Bethel. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
*Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.*


Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

## 6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. Where do I feel most alone? Write Genesis 28:15 next to it.
2. What is one "Bethel" moment, a time I knew God was with me? How can I remember it?
3. Write a short prayer thanking God that there is no place where He is not.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

**This week:** each time you walk into a new place, say quietly, "Surely the LORD is in this place."

## 7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that there is nowhere we can go where You are not. Thank You for meeting us with grace when we have done wrong, and for keeping every promise. Open our eyes to see that You are with us, and help us trust You more each day. In Jesus' name, amen."

**If a student asks whether Jacob got away with lying:** no. Later Jacob himself was deceived by Laban (Genesis 29:25), and years later, when Esau came to meet him, he was "greatly afraid and distressed" (32:7). But God kept His promise, and the brothers made peace (33:4). God's grace and the results of our choices are both real.

**About the angels:** the Bible says only "the angels of God ascending and descending on it" (28:12). It doesn't describe them, so keep to its words.


Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post