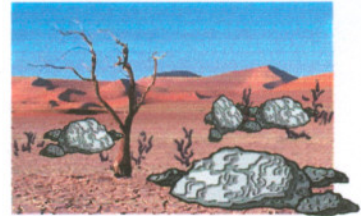


Genesis 28-29

Have you gone on a vacation or a trip to town with your mother or father? Have you ever gone on a trip all by yourself? Well, our story today is about a young man who went on a very long journey all by himself. Jacob was the young man who had to leave his home and go by himself to find his Uncle Laban who lived very far away. Jacob had packed some food and clothes on a little donkey and waved goodbye to his parents. He was sad to leave home but also a little excited about seeing some new places and making new friends.

After walking and walking for many miles, Jacob became very tired. It was getting dark and so Jacob began to look for a place to rest. The country was very rocky and full of thorns and weeds. Jacob would have liked some nice, soft, green grass to lay down and sleep on, but instead he had to pick a flat place with a hard rock for a pillow. How would you like to sleep on a rock for a pillow? Jacob got his blanket off of the donkey and put it over the rock, then giving a sigh, he lay down to sleep. Jacob wondered if he would ever see his home again.



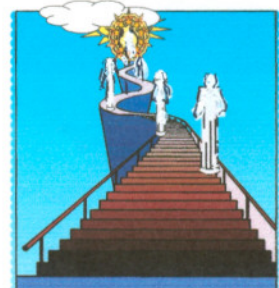
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2.

That night when Jacob was sound asleep he had a strange dream. Do you ever have strange dreams? Do you have good dreams or bad dreams?

Jacob's dream wasn't about monsters or scary things, his dream was good. He saw a tall stairway that reached from the ground clear up into the sky. He saw angels going up and down the stairs and at the top he saw God standing. God said to Jacob, "I am the God of your fathers, Abraham and Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be as many as the dust of the ground (that's a lot of people isn't it)? God said, "all peoples on the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants and I will be with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land."

Jacob was so happy when he heard God's promise! He would see his home again, God would take care of him and bless him and through his children, all other nations would one day be blessed too. What a great promise!



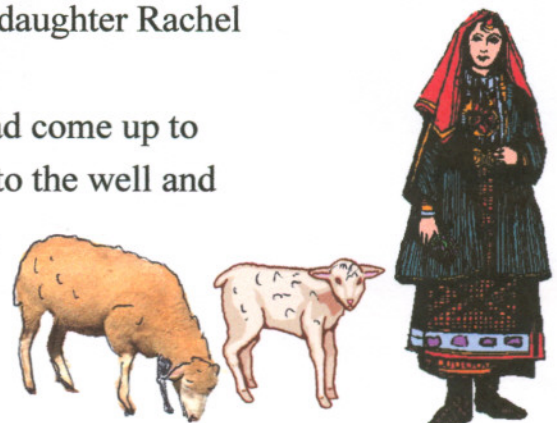
When Jacob woke up in the morning he remembered his good dream. He didn't feel lonely or unhappy anymore. God promised to be with him and take care of him, and Jacob knew that one day he and his people would live forever in this land. This was the same kind of promise that God had given his father and his grandfather long ago. Jacob knew he wouldn't live forever in heaven, for that was where God and the angels lived, but God had promised him land here on the earth when it will be beautiful and full of fruit and flowers and birds and butterflies. A time when nothing will hurt us, not even the wild animals. A time when no one will ever be sad or sick or die. The Bible tells us about all of these things and gives us some wonderful promises if we love God and try to do what is right.

Jacob wanted to remember his dream, so he called this place Bethel, which means "house of God." Jacob took the rock he had been sleeping on and set it upright then he poured some special oil on it to "annoint" it. This was something people did in those days, to show the place was very special.



Jacob packed his things on the donkey and traveled on toward the town where his uncle Laban lived. After many days Jacob arrived outside the town at a well. He was very thirsty but there was a large rock over the well. Some shepherds were sitting nearby on the grass, so Jacob went over to them and asked, "Why aren't you watering your sheep and taking them back to the pasture?" The shepherds answered, "We have to wait until all the sheep have come in from the fields, because the stone is so heavy, we can't lift it off to water our sheep." Then Jacob asked them, "Do you know a man named Laban?" "Yes, we know him," they answered. "Could you tell me where to find him?" Jacob asked. "Here comes his daughter Rachel with Laban's sheep, you can ask her," they answered.

While he was talking with the shepherds, a beautiful girl had come up to the well, leading a large flock of sheep. Jacob quickly ran to the well and with a mighty heave, he lifted that heavy stone off the well and helped Rachel water her sheep. She was surprised to see this handsome young man who came to help her.



Jacob told Rachel who he was and he helped her take the sheep back to pasture, then they went to her home where he met her father Laban and her sister Leah and several of her brothers. The family welcomed Jacob into their home and that night they had a big dinner and all sat around and listened to Jacob as he told about his mother and father and his twin brother Esau. In those days families didn't have mailboxes or computers with email. They had to learn the news about their distant families only when someone came to visit, so they were very happy to hear all of Jacob's news.

That night Jacob said a prayer of thanks to God for bringing him safely to his uncle's home. He would be staying here for a long time and he was very thankful that Laban's family seemed to like him. Do you sometimes say prayers to thank God for taking care of you and your family? God is very pleased when we thank him. We can give thanks to God in prayers and also show God how much we love him by being good to each other, can't we?

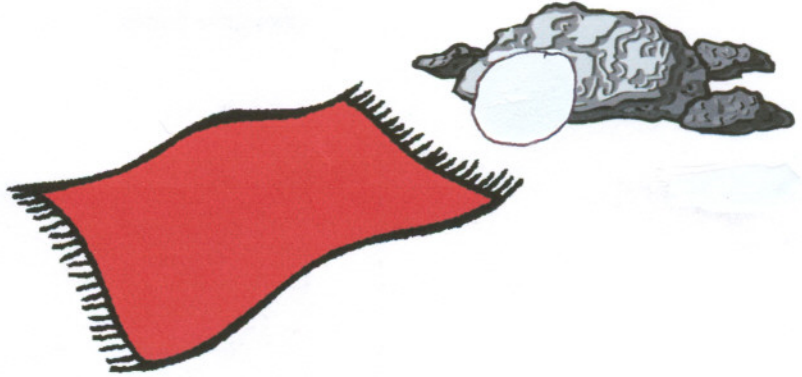


Question Page

1. When Jacob went on a long journey and got very tired, what did he use for a pillow?
2. What did Jacob dream about that night?
3. Who was at the top of the stairway that Jacob dreamed about?
4. Did God promise Jacob a place in heaven or did God promise Jacob that he would take care of him and one day Jacob would own the land he was sleeping on?
5. The next morning Jacob set up the rock pillow and poured oil on it. Was this to show it was a special place or to show the rock was extra hard?
6. Why didn't the shepherds water the sheep when they came to the well?
7. What kind of animals did Rachel lead to the well...camels, lions, or sheep?
8. How did Jacob water Rachel's sheep when there was a heavy rock over the well?
9. Did people in Bible times have computers or mailboxes? How did they learn the news?
10. Did Laban's family tell Jacob to go away, or did they welcome Jacob to their home?
11. Laban had two daughters, Rachel and Leah...which one took care of the sheep?
12. How can we show God that we love him?

15

I've left a place on this rock for Jacob's head and I've given him a blanket...can you draw Jacob sleeping with his head on the rock and his body under the blanket, but draw his hands and feet sticking out of the blanket.



15

After Jacob dreamed about a stair to heaven and heard God's promises he set up the rock and poured oil on it. Can you connect the lines to show Jacob pouring oil on the rock?



15

God promised Jacob land to own and many blessings. In the picture color some more grass then draw butterflies, flowers, birds and fish to make it more beautiful. Be sure and make some fruit trees and animals also.



15

Rachel took care of sheep at the well, but something is wrong in this picture ...how many funny things can you find in this picture?

