



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Pass The Promise Series, Lesson 18

Lesson Title: Jacob's Dream

Take Home Point: God helps us through big family problems.

Warm-Up:

The story goes that several years ago, a teenage girl got fed up with what she considered her parents' overbearing strictness. So one day she took all the money she could find in the house and ran away, hitching a ride to a nearby city. Her money quickly ran out and she ended up on the streets, hungry and tired, with no place to go and no one who cared. Finally, not knowing what response she would get, she called home and asked if she could return. Her father agreed to pay her bus fare, and when she arrived at the bus station in her home town, there were dozens of people – family and friends – waiting to welcome her. At the very front of the crowd was her father, who wrapped her in his arms and said, "Let's go home."

Read: Genesis 28:12-29:1

Observation (What happened?):

What was Jacob doing that caused him to be at Bethel that night?

What did God promise Jacob in the dream?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why do you think God gave Jacob his promises while Jacob was "on the run?"

What did God say to Jacob about his deceitful actions at this time? How do you think Jacob felt about this?

Insight:

Unfortunately, over the centuries, many people have developed a view of God as a stern deity, ready and willing to accuse and punish when we sin. Nothing could be further from the truth! In fact, it is Satan, the enemy of our souls, who is called the Accuser in Zechariah 3:1 and Revelation 12:10. It is Satan who eagerly denounces our faults and failures, tempts us to give up, and encourages us to carry our load of guilt without relief. He delights in our misery! Our loving God is the one who comes to us just as he did to Jacob – not to rebuke and condemn, but to remind and promise. Jesus speaks of his true nature in parables such as the Good Shepherd, the Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son (all in Luke 15). He says in Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest."

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Can you think of a time in your life that God came to you in difficult circumstances? What promises did he bring?

Pray for the children in your small group to be confident of God's presence and promises.