

(Genesis) Genesis 28:12-15

by J. Vernon McGee

God's promise to Jacob in Genesis 28:12-15 is a reminder that we have access to His presence through Christ, and that He disciplines us to help us grow and become more like Him.

Duration: 5:25

Scripture: Genesis 28:12-15, Matthew 3:17, John 1:51, Ephesians 2:18

Topics: "Genesis"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Jacob's dream of a ladder reaching up to heaven. God appears to Jacob in the dream and reaffirms the promises He made to Abraham and Isaac. God assures Jacob that He will be with him and bring him back to the land. The ladder in the dream is interpreted as a representation of Christ, through whom we have access to God. The preacher emphasizes the importance of coming to God through Christ and the need for discipline and courage in our lives as believers.

Transcript

And we are told, As he lay that night, and he was asleep, he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac, the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.

And it was right in that area, by the way, is where God first appeared to Abraham there in the land. Verse 14, And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, to the east, to the north, and to the south. And in thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Now, God is giving to this man. You see exactly what He'd given first to Abraham. He repeated it to Isaac.

Now He confirms it and reaffirms it to Jacob that He'll do this. Now God says to him, verse 15, And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places, whither thou goest. And I'll bring thee again into this land, for I'll not leave thee until I've done that which I've spoken to thee of.

Now, you can see how this would be comforting and helpful to a lonesome, homesick boy that has really had to leave home in a hurry, and he's on the way to a far country. And this was a great comfort and help to him. God says, I'm going to be with you, Jacob, and I'm going to bring you back in this land.

But the vision that He gave him in that dream was of a ladder that reached up to heaven, and God spoke to him. Now, what does that ladder mean? Well, our Lord interpreted that when He called Nathanael. Nathanael was a wise acree, by the way.

He said, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? And our Lord, I tell you, He dealt with this fellow, and when He said, How in the world do you know me? I said, I saw you under that fig tree. Well, He said, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel. The Lord Jesus said, You're pretty easy to convince.

And He was. He was a skeptic at the beginning of the ministry of Christ. It took Thomas three years before he got the light.

But notice this man, Nathanael. The Lord Jesus said to him, Because I sat unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree. Believeest thou, thou shalt see greater things than these.

Well, what will he see? And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. Now, what is that ladder? Well, that ladder is Christ. And God, from the top of the ladder in heaven, a voice out of heaven said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

And God is speaking to man through Christ today. You can't come to God directly. I hear people say today, every now and then in a testimony, somebody said, Well, when I was converted, I just came directly to God.

I have access to God. You do not, my friend. You come through Christ.

We have access through Christ, through the grace that we have in Christ. That's the only way you and I get into God's presence. This is the ladder let down from heaven that sinners might not climb while the angels of God are ascending and descending on it.

You see, they come from Him, the Lord Jesus Himself. Now, it is first given to old Jacob, usurper. Nathanael, our Lord said to him, You are an Israelite in whom there's no guile.

That is, there's no Jacob. He's no trickster. Nathanael wasn't.

He's just a wiseacre. He's just being humorous. But this man, Jacob, God is going to have to deal with him.

And He gives him this wonderful, glorious promise. But now listen to Jacob. Oh, he has so much to learn.

And isn't that true of all of us today? No wonder God has to school us. No wonder God has to discipline us. Every son He receives, we're told that He scourges him.

He disciplines him. He did Abraham. He did Isaac.

He's going to do Jacob. Everything's been going Jacob's way. You know, so many people, they're just members of the church.

They don't know the Lord at all. They're just church members and just the biggest hypocrites in the world. And the Lord has to shake us, you see.

And these things come to us. They discipline us. They put iron in our backbone.

They put iron in our blood, too. And they put courage in our lives and enable us to stand for God.

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