

Group Study Outline

Genesis 28:10-22 Theme Sentence

God continues His plan to bless people through Jesus despite the sin of His people.

Launch Questions

What does it mean to be blessed? How do people think you get blessed?

READ Genesis 27:41-44

Why is Jacob travelling to Haran? What's happened to make him run away?
(see Gen 27:1-40 for the details)

How do think Jacob would be feeling as he fled?

READ Genesis 28:10-22

Describe what Jacob saw in his dream? (12-13a)

In Genesis 11, people tried to build a tower up to the heavens to show how great they were. How is this ladder (or 'flight of stairs') different to that? What does this tell us about how God wants to relate to Jacob?

How did God describe Himself? Why might that be significant? (13)

What three things does God promise to Jacob? (13-15)

How might these promises sound to Jacob, who was currently homeless, single, poor, alone and running for his life?

Where have we heard some of these promises before in the Bible?

(cf Gen 12:1-3, 6-7; 15:3-6; 26:2-5)

How do these promises to Jacob fit in with the story of the Bible so far?

Why might Jacob be surprised that God promised to bless him like this?

After all Jacob has done, does it surprise *us*?

How do these promises point forward to God's grace to us through Jesus?

What is Jacob's reaction to the dream? (17)

Where are their hints that Jacob is yet to be fully devoted to God?

Are there ways in which we're resisting God's commitment to us by not being totally committed to him?

If you had to explain how we 'discover Jesus in the Old Testament' through this passage, how would you summarise it?

READ John 1:43-51

Summarise the conversations between Philip, Jesus and Nathanael.

How does Jesus compare Nathanael to Jacob? (47)

Who (or what) does Jesus compare Himself to from our story? Surprising?

What does it mean that Jesus is the ladder?

How does He connect heaven and earth?

Summing up & applying it

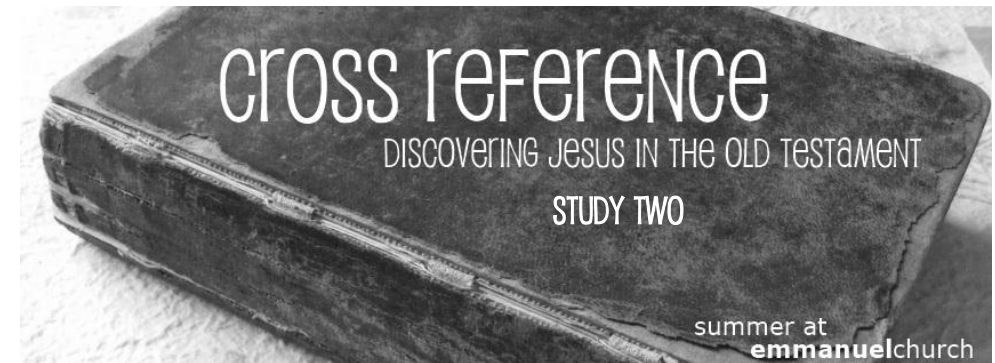
What have we learnt about how God blesses people through Jesus?

How does this challenge you?

How does this encourage you?

PRAY

Genesis 28:10-22



It's all about Jesus

2 Corinthians 1:20 tells us that all God's promises find their "YES" in Jesus. He is the focus and fulfilment of all the Old Testament expectations. Aspects of His life and ministry are foreshadowed as well, giving hints of what was to come. And as the eternal God, Jesus was right there active in the Old Testament too.

In this series of sermons and midweek Bible studies, we hope to discover more about how the whole Bible is a story about Jesus. Our aim is to see more about Him, who He is and what He came to do, especially in His work on the cross, so that we would know, love and serve Him more.

The stairway to heaven

Jacob was always trying to steal blessing. He fought with his twin, Esau, in the womb and was born grabbing his heel (his name means 'heel-grabber' or 'cheat!'). He tricked his dying father, Isaac, into blessing him rather than his older brother, so Esau wanted Jacob dead. Jeremy Kyle eat your heart out.

On the run, Jacob had a dream where God confirmed Isaac's ill-gotten blessing, saying that the promise to bless the world through Abraham's offspring (Jesus) would be fulfilled through Jacob's family. Jacob is encouraged but not totally convinced, building a pillar which, if God is good to him, might become a fully-fledged altar. Another link is made to Jesus being the 'ladder' who connects heaven and earth. Man can't climb up, but God will come down to bless.

[NB]

Genesis 28:10-22 Theme Sentence

God continues His plan to bless people through Jesus despite the sin and self-promotion of His people.

Application

- Marvel at how God keeps His promise to bless people, despite their sin and self-promotion.
- Recognise Jesus as the promised one who bridges heaven and earth.
- Be whole-hearted in responding to God's blessing.