

Jacob's Dream

Key Verse: “*When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it.*”
—**Genesis 28:16,**
New International Version

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 28:10-22

AFTER ISAAC GAVE HIS blessing to Jacob, Esau became angry and said that after their father died, he would kill his brother. (Gen. 27:41) When their mother Rebekah found this out, she instructed Jacob to flee to her brother Laban and stay there. Later, when Esau's anger would hopefully subside, she would send word to Jacob to return.—vss. 42-45

During Jacob's journey to his uncle Laban, he stopped one evening in a certain place, using some stones as a pillow, and went to sleep. While asleep Jacob had a “dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.”—Gen. 28:12, *NIV*

God was at the top of the ladder. He said to Jacob, “I am ... the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth. ... All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”—vss. 13-15

At the beginning of his earthly ministry, Jesus referred

to this dream of Jacob. After Nathanael declared Jesus to be the “Son of God” and the “King of Israel,” the Lord replied, saying, “You shall see greater things than that. ... You shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”—John 1:47-51, *NIV*

According to these words of Jesus, the “ladder” in Jacob’s dream was a picture of Jesus, “the Son of Man.” (John 8:28) Because Jesus “gave himself a ransom for all,” all mankind will have an opportunity to “learn righteousness,” and come back into harmony with God. (I Tim. 2:5,6; Heb. 2:9; Isa. 26:9) In Jacob’s dream, the bottom of the ladder pictures the earthly phase of God’s kingdom, the top of the ladder the heavenly phase.

In the books of Isaiah and Micah it is said, “In the last days, ... the mountain [kingdom] of the LORD’S house shall be established; ... and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, ... let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; ... for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”—Isa. 2:2,3; Mic. 4:1,2

“Zion” pictures the spiritual phase of God’s kingdom—the glorified Christ, head and body. (Ps. 48:2; Rev. 14:1) “Jerusalem” pictures the earthly phase of the kingdom. The chief representatives of this phase will be Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, along with many other men and women who demonstrated a life of faith in God prior to Jesus’ ransom sacrifice.—Ps. 45:16; Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:28,29; Heb. 11:1-40

The angels ascending and descending the ladder in Jacob’s dream might symbolize the fact that there will be some type of communication between leaders of the heavenly and earthly phases of the kingdom. In some manner, the specifics of which we presently do not know, the heavenly “Zion” class will provide all the necessary instructions and encouragement for mankind, so that they may “learn righteousness” and come to “know the LORD.”—Isa. 26:9; Jer. 31:34 ■