

Lesson

3

Jacob Worships God

BIBLE BASIS

Jacob dreams of a ladder to heaven and worships God at Bethel (Genesis 28:10-22)

BIBLE TRUTH

We can worship God everywhere we go.

MEMORY VERSE

"The Father himself loves you." John 16:27

LESSON AIM

That your students will know that they can praise God and talk with Him wherever they are.

3

1

LIFE NEED (5 MINUTES)

- Name some favorite places children go

Materials: "People and Places" Teaching Aid 3

2

BIBLE LEARNING (10-15 MINUTES)

- Tell the story of Jacob's dream
- Review with questions and an activity

Materials: Bible, "Jacob Worships God" Teaching Aid 5, *Storytime* for Lesson 3, crayons or pencils

3

BIBLE APPLICATION (10 MINUTES)

- Practice the memory verse with an action poem
- Make a card about worship

Materials: *Early Elementary Make-It/Take-It* for Lesson 3 and add-on figures of wheels, crayons, paper fasteners

4

LIFE RESPONSE (10 MINUTES)

- Read a story of how a family worshiped God while traveling
- Children will name places where they can worship God

Materials: *Storytime* paper for Lesson 3

Understanding Your Students

Young children often have the misconception that God "lives" at the church and can be worshiped only there. This week's lesson emphasizes that God is always with us and can be worshiped anywhere and anytime.

Some students may also be confused by the true meaning of worship. They may think that worship consists of certain familiar songs or prayers. Today they will learn that worship is really the praise and thanks we give to God to show the love we feel in our hearts.

Today is Father's Day.
Some students may not have a father who is present in their lives. Adapt the lesson as needed to fit the various family situations in your class.



This symbol means extra preparation or supplies are needed.

Understanding the Bible

John 1:51 is based upon the story of Jacob's ladder in Genesis. Jacob in the Old Testament had been a trickster. By deceiving his father, Isaac, Jacob obtained the blessing that was due Esau, his older twin brother. Seeing Esau's anger, their mother, Rebekah, persuaded Isaac to send Jacob to Haran to find a wife.

Haran was some 450 miles north of Jacob's home in Beersheba, a ways to travel in Bible times. Beersheba in Genesis 28:10 is usually thought of as the southernmost point of Israel. For later Israelites, north to south was said to be "from Dan [in the north] . . . to Beersheba [in the south]" (1 Kings 4:25).

Much of the journey was through dangerous land. However, his father had prophesied that the "blessing given to Abraham" would belong to Jacob if he walked in the ways of the Lord (Gen. 28:4).

One night when Jacob was some 50 miles from home, he was sleeping outdoors and began to dream.

Jacob dreamed about angels of God moving on a ladder reaching to heaven. In the dream, God promised to watch over Jacob and give him the land he was lying on. God also promised to give Jacob many descendants, and He renewed the promise made to Abraham and Isaac that one day all nations would be blessed through their families (Gen. 26:1-5; 28:14).

When Jacob awoke, he was so moved by God's

communication with him and the evidence of God's presence that he put up a stone pillar to mark the spot as holy and named the place Bethel, meaning "house of God" (Gen. 28:18-19). He took oil and anointed the stone he had used as a pillow. The stone was a permanent reminder of Jacob's personal commitment of his life, as well as a promise to give God a tenth of his possessions. However, Jacob still lacked total trust in God. Jacob made a conditional vow to serve the Lord if God would protect and provide for him.

Years later, Jacob and his family settled in this same area, where he wanted to "build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone" (Gen. 35:3).

Nathanael, in the New Testament, was told by Jesus that he would see "the angels of God ascending and descending upon"—not the ladder, but—"the Son of Man [or Jesus Himself]" (John 1:51). In other words, just as Jacob's ladder extended up to heaven, so Jesus is our ladder up to heaven. One hymn says, "So seems my Savior's cross to me a ladder up to heaven." Jesus is the ladder or "one mediator [or go-between] between God and mankind" (1 Tim. 2:5).

Also remember that the old song, "We are climbing Jacob's ladder" is based upon this Scripture.

Classroom Tips

To help your students discover meaningful ways and places to worship God, try the following ideas.

- Share some special things that happened in your family during the past week, and let the children do the same. Talk about how we can stop to thank God for all things, any time of day.
- Encourage the students to use different prayer postures during class. Remind your students that God hears our prayers when we bow our heads, when we are on our knees, when we raise our head and hands to heaven, etc.

Worship Activities

- Play or sing a song from the DiskIt CD found in your Creative Teaching Aids packet.
- Have a student helper collect offerings. Then say a prayer of thanks for the offering.
- Ask God to help your students show their love for Him. **Dear God, You are with us everywhere we go. You're here with us now, and You'll be with us at home. Help us remember that we can worship You wherever we are. In Jesus' name. Amen.**



Before Class

Some of your students may be returning from a trip. Let them know how much you missed them. For those children who have been away on a trip, emphasize that God has been with them wherever they went.

We will learn today how our loving God can be worshiped everywhere we go.

Guide the students to the offering container and attendance chart. Have students mark their attendance with a small sticker, a happy face, or by coloring in a square.

Lead children to the first activity of the day.

Getting Started

The following activities will prepare the children for the story of Jacob worshipping God.

- **Blocks:** Make a tall ladder out of wooden blocks or plastic interlocking blocks. Use play people to climb up and down. **In our story today, a man dreams about a ladder that goes all the way to heaven.**
- **Rock Shop:** Let the children get ready for the lesson by making paper bag “rocks.” Show them how to stuff paper into paper lunch sacks. Tape the sacks closed. **In our story, a rock became a reminder that God can be worshiped everywhere.**
- **Dramatic Play:** Display a Bible, offering basket, and hymnal. Place chairs in rows so students can pretend to have a worship service. **We can worship God at church, home, and everywhere.**

3



Life Need 5 minutes

Objective: That your students will name some of their favorite places they have gone.

This activity will prepare students for today’s lesson that teaches they can worship God everywhere they go.

Bring out the “People and Places” Teaching Aid. **The people in these pictures look like they might be at some of their favorite places. What are the children doing?** (Having a picnic with family, playing soccer, swinging, having fun with friends, praying to God.)

Print at the top of your whiteboard: Favorite Places You Go. Ask the children to list some of their favorite places.

What are your favorite places? (Print the names of the favorite places on your board.)

What are more of your favorite places? (Print their favorite places. You might tell the children about one of your favorite places and include it on your list. Save your list. It will be used later in this lesson.)

You have a lot of places you like to go. Let’s talk more about going to these places.

When have you gone to your favorite places? (The children might name different times of the day or year, vacation times, mealtimes, and so on.)

Who are the people who have gone with you to these places? (It’s okay if some people are named more than once. Let the children know everyone’s answer counts.)

Is there anyone who goes with you everywhere you go? If yes, who? If no, why? (Let the children talk and explain their thoughts. Accept what they say.)

We go to a lot of places and a lot of others go with us. Our Bible story is about a man named Jacob. He was going to a place. He thought he was going by himself—but he wasn’t. Listen to learn who was with Jacob.



“People and Places”
Teaching Aid 3

2

Bible Learning 10–15 minutes

Objective: That your students will hear how God promised to be with Jacob wherever he went.

Prepare the “Jacob Worships God” Teaching Aid 5 as directed on the back of the poster. Open your Bible to Genesis 28. Show the children where today’s Bible story comes from in Genesis.

BIBLE STORY

A man named Jacob was on a trip. *(Show the teaching aid figure of Jacob walking.)* He was going to stay with some relatives who lived far away from his home. Jacob was also getting away from his brother Esau, because Esau was very angry with him.

Jacob had to walk because that was the only way he had to travel. Jacob walked all day long, so he was very tired at the end of the day. Jacob did not have a blanket or a pillow to sleep on that night, so he found a big rock and used it for a pillow. *(Show poster with stairway folded down, out of view.)* He lay down and put his head on the rock pillow, and went to sleep. *(Show Jacob sleeping; insert figure into the slits on the bottom of the poster.)*

While Jacob slept, he had a dream. In the dream, he saw a stairway. *(Unfold the poster to show the stairway.)* This stairway went from the ground where Jacob was sleeping up into heaven. In Jacob’s dream, angels were going up and coming down the stairway.

God was standing above the stairway and He said to Jacob, “I am the Lord. I am the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will bring you and your children back to this land. I will give you this land. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go. I will not leave you. I will keep my promise.”



“Jacob Worships God” Teaching Aid 5

(Lay the stairway back down to hide it.)

Then Jacob woke up from his sleep. It was still nighttime. *(Remove Jacob figure and turn it over.)* He thought to himself, “God is here with me and I did not even know it.”

In the morning, Jacob remembered his dream and God’s promise to be with him wherever he went. Jacob wanted to remember that place because of what God had promised him. He took the stone he had used for a pillow and stood it up in a special way to be a marker. It was to be a place to worship God. The stone would help Jacob remember God’s promise to be with him wherever he went.

Jacob named the place Bethel, which means “God’s house.” That was a good name because Jacob knew that God was right there with him. God promised to be with Jacob wherever he went, because God loved Jacob. God loves us, too. He promises to be with us wherever we go.

BIBLE STORY REVIEW

- What did Jacob use for a pillow when he slept? (He used a rock for a pillow.)
- What did Jacob dream? (A stairway from the ground going up to heaven with angels going up and down.)
- What did God promise Jacob? (To be with Jacob wherever he went. God promised to give Jacob and his children the land.)
- What did Jacob do with the rock he used for a pillow? (He set it up as a marker. A place to worship God and to remember God’s promise.)

Distribute *Storytime* for Lesson 3 and help children do the activities on page 4.



Storytime, Lesson 3, page 4

3 Bible Application 10 minutes

Objective: That your students will learn that they can worship God wherever they go.

MEMORY VERSE

Help students find the memory verse on page 4 of *Storytime*. Read the verse together.

■ **Who loves us more than anyone else?** (The Father, God.)

God is a father to us. He is our heavenly Father. We can worship Him wherever we are. Just like Jacob in our Bible story did. Let's say our memory verse together again: "The Father himself loves you" John 16:27.

Listen for this verse as we say our rhyme.

God made the green grass under your feet,
(Touch ground.)

And God made the sky so blue.
(Wave arms overhead.)

God will keep you safe every day.
(Point to children.)

"The Father himself loves you."
(Hug self.)

God is our heavenly Father, and He loves to hear you worship Him wherever you are.

Collect the *Storytime* papers and put them away until the end of class.

HANDCRAFT

Today we're going to make cards to remind us that we can worship God wherever we go.

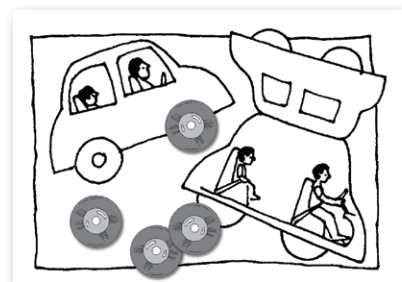
Before class, remove Lesson 3 and the add-on figures of wheels (from the middle of the book) from each student's Make-It/Take-It.

Provide crayons for your students to color the project. They may want to make the child in the picture look like themselves. Help each student punch out the car and windows. Then help them use paper fasteners to attach the wheels to the Xs on the page. Show children how to fold the car back on the broken line to form a card.

Each student can sign his or her name on the inside of the card. Read the sentence on the car to your students: **We can worship God everywhere we go.**

■ **Where?** (Everywhere.)

You may suggest to children to give this project to their father or a special man in their life such as an uncle, older cousin, church friend, neighbor, or even their pastor.



Make-It/Take-It, Lesson 3



4 Life Response 10 minutes

Objective: That your students will name different places where they can worship God.

Read aloud to your students “A Long Trip Home” from pages 2 and 3 of *Storytime* for Lesson 3.

PRESENT-DAY STORY

The Williams family was driving home from vacation. They had seen some mountains. Their vacation had been fun, but the drive home was not fun at all. For miles and miles, they drove over flat land with nothing to see but cows and row after row of corn.

David had listened to all of his story CDs. Maya had read all her picture books. They had both eaten too many grapes and crackers.

“How much longer?” asked Maya.

Mama sighed. She was ready to get home, too. “A few more hours,” she said.

“How about some music?” asked Daddy. “That would help the time go faster.”

“But I am tired of the CDs we brought,” said David.

“I know!” Maya said excitedly, “Let’s make up our own songs! Let’s sing the song we sang when we were on the top of the mountain.”

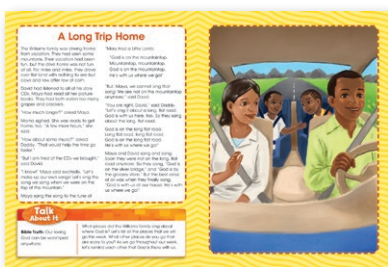
Maya sang the song to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb:

“God is on the mountaintop,
Mountaintop, mountaintop.
God is on the mountaintop.
He’s with us where we go!”

“But, Maya, we cannot sing that song! We are not on the mountaintop anymore,” said David.

“You are right, David,” said Daddy. “Let’s sing about a long, flat road. God is with us here, too. So they sang about the long, flat road.

God is on the long, flat road,
Long, flat road, long, flat road.



Storytime, Lesson 3, pages 2-3

God is on the long, flat road.

He’s with us where we go!”

Maya and David sang and sang. Soon they were not on the long, flat road anymore. So they sang, “God is on the silver bridge,” and “God is by the grocery store.” But the best verse of all was when they finally sang, “God is with us at our house. He’s with us where we go!”

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

- What places did the Williams family sing about where God is? (Allow responses.)

We know that we can worship God everywhere we go.

- Can you name some places where you can worship God? (Allow for responses.)

Let’s thank God for being with us everywhere. Dear God, You are with us here, and You’ll be with us as we go home today. We can worship You everywhere! (Name places the children mentioned.) Thank You! In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Make sure students have their Make-It/Take-It cards and the *Storytime* papers.

Say a personal goodbye to each student. **Worship God everywhere you go.**



Storytime, Lesson 3, page 1