**Week of November 18, 2018**

**Genesis 28:10-22**

**10** Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Harran.

**11** When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep.

**12** He 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.

**13** There above it stood the LORD, and he said: “I am the LORD, 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.

**14** Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.

**15** 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.”

**16** When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it.”

**17** He was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.”

**18** Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it.

**19** He called that place Bethel, though the city used to be called Luz.

**20** Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear

**21** so that I return safely to my father’s household, then the LORD will be my God

**22** and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God’s house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth.”

**Understanding the Scriptures**

The lesson this week continues with the family history and generation of Abraham’s family. The Bible has reserved and recorded for us the stories of Abraham’s generations. Now Jacob’s mother Rebekah convicted Isaac to send Jacob off with his blessing to his uncle’s home in Paddan Aram because of the conflict between the brothers. Jacob stopped at Bethel to rest, near the Luz. While Jacob was sleeping, he had a dream in which he saw a ladder stretching from earth to heaven. The ladder represented the connection between heaven and earth. There were angels going up and down the ladder which represented the connection between God and Man. At the top of the ladder stood God and he told Jacob that he was Lord and the God of Abraham and Isaac. God then gave Jacob the same covenant that he had given to Abraham and Isaac in which he told Jacob that he would give him and his descendants the land in which he was lying. Also, that his descendants will be plentiful like the dust of the earth and like the dust they will be spread through out the earth. Jacob was told that all people on the earth will be blessed through him and his descendants. God promised Jacob that he would be with him and never leave him. We know that Jacob was named Israel later in which he had twelve sons and through his lineage came Jesus in whom all are blessed and have access to God through him. When Jacob awoke from his dream, he knew that he had been in the presence of the Lord and he wanted to show honor to God. Jacob believed that Bethel was the gateway to Heaven. Jacob arose from his dream and took the stone in which he had rested his head and set it up as pillar and poured oil top of it. There are several interpretations on why he did this. We will go with this one “as a reminder of the place and his dream”. Jacob made a vow or a promise to give a tenth back to God of all that he is given.

