

Scripture Reading: Mark 5:21-43

Look back and thank God; look forward and trust God.

In Willa Cather's novel, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, she tells the story of the Ácoma Indians, some of whom lived on a certain high mesa.

One day, Bishop LaTour set out with a guide from Santa Fe to visit some missions to the west. They traveled by mule through plains with long vistas, and spectacular spires of red rocks, passing through juniper and pinon, until they came upon two mesas.

Atop one of these flattop rocks used to be an Ácoma village, Jacinto the guide told the bishop. The only access to the top was a staircase, easily defended.

The bishop asked Jacinto why the Ácoma had thought to flee the earth and climb this rock and settle a village there. Jacinto explained that the Ácoma had enemies. There were periodic manhunts, and the Ácoma, tired of running, fled not to the north, south, east or west, but up. *There on this rock they found safety.*

They grew crops on the plain *around* the rock, and *came off the rock to hunt*, but there was always a place to turn. They were always able to ascend the rock in which they found security.

Today, the Ácoma Pueblo is a National Historic Landmark. It's about 60 miles west of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and it still sits atop a mesa that rises more than 350 feet above the plain. On this solid rock, the Ácoma have lived for hundreds of years.

A rock, a mesa, a cleft in a cliff, a mountain and the hills — all of these are mentioned in the Bible as places of refuge.

The ancient Israelites lived in country that was in many places similar to the territory in the southwest United States. Sometimes, they had enemies which consisted of roving bands of tribal warriors, or armies from small neighboring nations. Having a place to hide was important.

No wonder the psalmist writes, "You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the LORD, 'My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust'" (91:1-2).

When we are distressed, we can cry to God. God is our mesa, our rock and refuge.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: O God, you have been my help in ages past, and you are my hope for the years to come. But I thank you for your strength and help in the present. Amen.

*Blessings,
Lisa & Pastor Ben Motz*

Daily Bible Readings:

- Sunday: John 18-21
- Monday: Isaiah 10-12
- Tuesday: Isaiah 13-15
- Wednesday: Isaiah 16-18
- Thursday: Isaiah 19-21
- Friday: Isaiah 22-24
- Saturday: Psalms 67-69

Biblical Dreamers

Directions: Many stories in the Bible involve dreams. Can you match the dreamers on the right with the correct clues on the left?



- _____ 1. His brothers were irritated when he told them of his dreams.
- _____ 2. He saw angels going up and down a ladder.
- _____ 3. This ruler dreamed about some skinny cows eating fat cows.
- _____ 4. She had an unpleasant dream about Jesus and told her husband to have nothing to do with him.
- _____ 5. He saw a statue whose feet were smashed by a stone.
- _____ 6. He was warned to take his family to Egypt.
- _____ 7. He saw a vine produce grapes and he squeezed their juice into a cup.
- _____ 8. They were warned in a dream about Herod's evil plan.

- A. Pharaoh, Genesis 41:17-21
- B. The Magi, Matthew 2:12
- C. Jacob, Genesis 28:12
- D. Pharaoh's cupbearer, Genesis 40:9-11
- E. Joseph, Matthew 2:13
- F. Joseph, Genesis 37:9
- G. Pilate's wife, Matthew 27:19
- H. Daniel, Daniel 2:31-35

Verse to Remember

"These things are written so that you might come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name."

—John 20:31

FIND A WORD

How many common words of four or more letters can you find from the letters of the word below? A letter may be used only as many times as it appears in the given word. Proper names, abbreviations, contractions and foreign words are not allowed. We found 36 words (see below). If you find more, let us know! And the word is (in honor of the holiday coming next week):

INDEPENDENCE



Answers to Biblical Dreamers: 1F, 2C, 3A, 4G, 5H, 6E, 7D, 8B.
Find a Word: cede, ceded, decide, deed, deep, deepen, deepened, deice, deiced, depend, dependence, dice, diced, dine, dined, dimmed, ended, epee, epic, iced, indeed, need, needed, nice, niece, nine, peen, pence, pend, pended, penned, piece, pieced, pied, pine, pinned.