



Sunday School Lesson
Gen. 27:41-28:22
 by Lorin L. Cranford
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Beersheba to Bethel



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With this lesson in the Smyth-Helwys Formations series the unit theme shifts to "Repairing Relationships." In a fourfold study we will study that general theme around the ideas of (1) with God (Gen. 27-28); (2) with my neighbor (Gen 20); (3) with my community (Gen 6-7); and (4) with the world (Gen. 9). All of these lessons are taken from the first book of the Bible, Genesis.

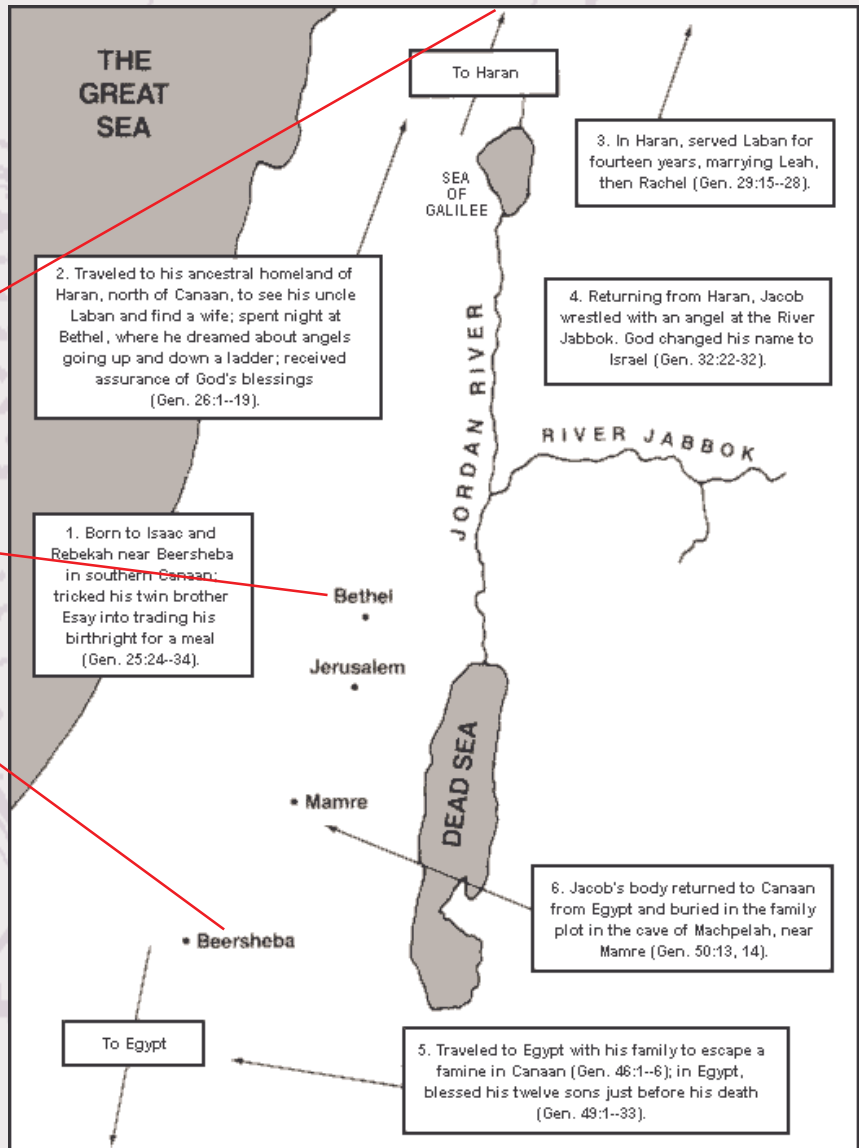
This first study zeros on Jacob's experience as he was going from Beersheba to Haran to get a wife after Esau planned to kill him over the birthright episode. At Bethel Jacob encountered God in a dream. See the map on the right for some idea of where this narrative takes place.

I. Context

As is always the case, the historical and literary settings for our passage are important to examine in the process of careful and accurate interpretation of the scripture text.

a. Historical

The **external history** (=compositional history) relates to the book of Genesis itself. In [a previous study](#) on Gen 25:19-34, we looked at the external history. I will use relevant

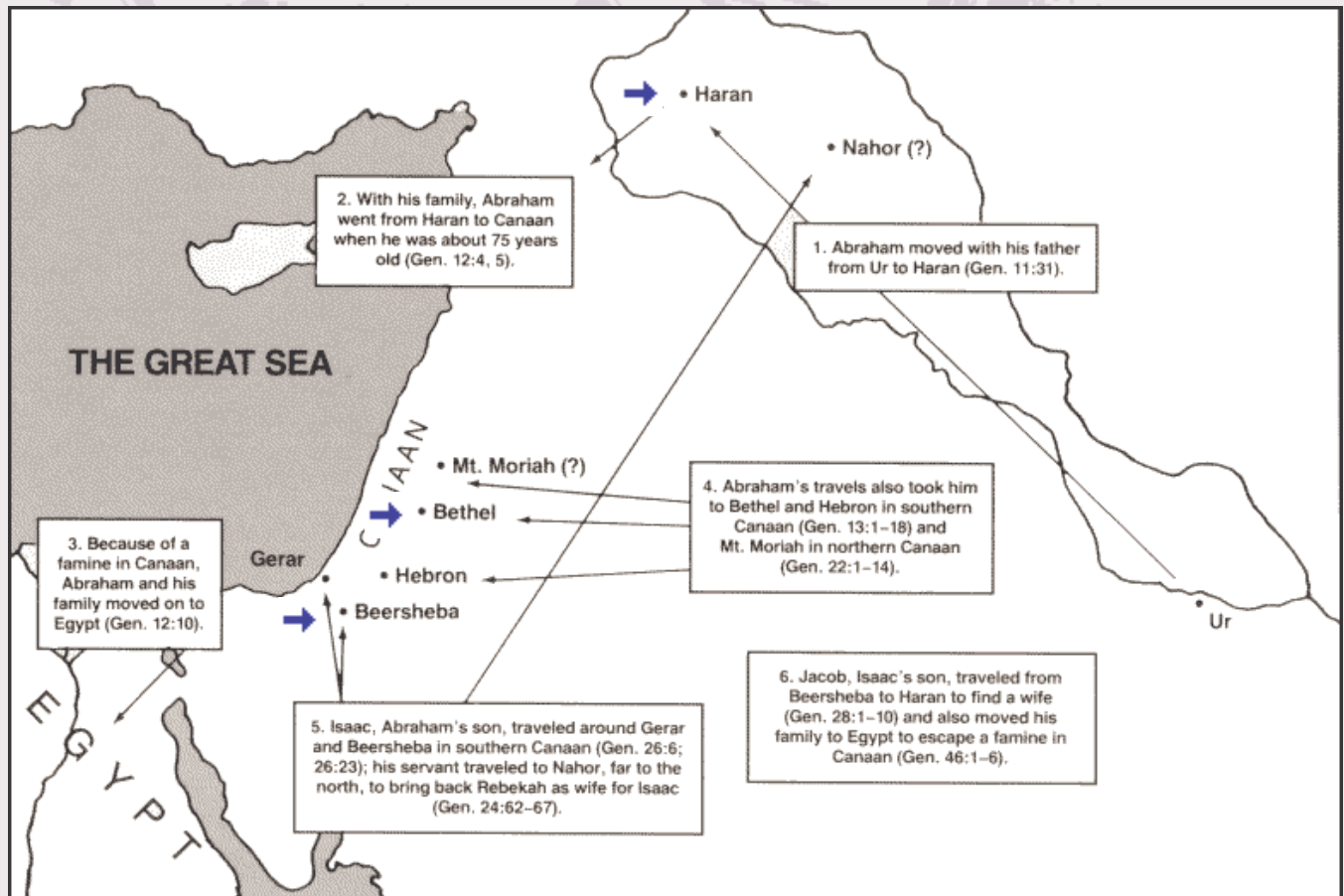


parts of that material here as a reminder from the earlier study.

The compositional origin of the document called Genesis in the English Bible is like the other OT documents; its origin is clouded in mystery. This document is the first of five documents which together are called the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). Frequently down through interpretative history they have simply been called the 'books of Moses.' This because Moses has been closely associated with these documents by virtue of his leadership of the Israelite people in their move from slaves to nation. These documents have also been labeled the Law of Moses as well.

Although Moses certainly had a lot to do with the materials found in these documents, several indicators inside them suggest that at least in their present form they came into existence much later than the lifetime of Moses himself. References such as to the Canaanites being in the land 'at that time' (Gen. 12:6) suggesting that 'now' they were no longer in that land, as well as Moses' own death narrated in Deut. 34 which is obviously narrated from another person's perspective rather than Moses' -- all these and many more began suggesting to Bible students -- both Jewish and Christian -- as early as the middle ages that the compositional history is more complex than simply assigning it to Moses would allow.

Beginning in the late 1500s Christian scholars began probing the origins intensely in light of the emerging emphasis on study of history, especially ancient history, in western culture. This intense analysis led to the development of the viewpoint that the Pentateuch emerged in its present form in the period from the late exile to the postexilic eras during the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E. Numerous sources of material were utilized in the composing of these five OT documents, leading to the most commonly adopted view of the J, E, D, P sources as being dominant. This, of course, doesn't deny that much of the source material goes back to Moses himself, but does demonstrate that the book we know as Genesis owes its present form to editors who lived and worked many centuries after the stories themselves took place. Their intent was to carefully preserve the story of 'beginnings,' of both humanity in general and of the Israelite people in particular. For that we can give thanks to God who providentially guided this process through to its culmination in this first document of our Bible.



The **internal history** of our passage covers two locations with a third one as the goal of Jacob's journey. These are Beersheba, Bethel, and Haran. See the location of these three places on the map on the preceding page. The history and background of these three sites are helpful to the understanding of our passage.

First, **Beersheba**. At the web site BiblicalPlaces.com one can find some pictures of this site as it has been explored by modern archaeologists. These are helpful for a visual picture of this place. Additionally, a number of hyperlinks to other web sites with pictures and information about Beersheba are available here. Also of particular interest is the web site, ebibletools.bigbible.org, which contains a streaming video -- in several formats -- of the various archaeological discoveries at Beersheba with a narration explaining the significance of each.

Throughout the Old Testament period this region did not become a major center of activity, as is indicated by W.J. Martin in the *New Bible Dictionary*. It was more significant during the patriarchal period:

Beersheba has many patriarchal associations. Abraham spent much time there (Gn. 22:19). It was probably a part of Palestine without an urban population, since the seasonal nature of the pasturage would not have been conducive to settled conditions. From here he set out to offer up Isaac. Isaac was dwelling here when Jacob set out for Haran (Gn. 28:10). On his way through to Joseph in Egypt, Jacob stopped here to offer sacrifices (Gn. 46:1). In the division of the land it went to the tribe of Simeon (Jos. 19:2).

In the familiar phrase 'from Dan to Beersheba' (Jdg. 20:1, *etc.*) it denoted the southernmost place of the land. The town owed its importance to its position on the trade-route to Egypt.

The reference to it in Amos (5:5 and 8:14) indicates that it had become a centre for undesirable religious activities.

Beersheba and its villages (Heb. 'daughters') were resettled after the captivity (Ne. 11:27).

The second village of importance for our study is **Bethel**, which has a little more significance in Israelite history as A. R. Millard in the *New Bible Dictionary* describes:

Identified by most scholars with Tell *Beit 1n* on the watershed route 19 km N of Jerusalem. Although traces of earlier occupation have been found, the city seems to have been established early in the Middle Bronze Age. During this period, Abram camped to the E of Bethel, where he built an altar to Yahweh (Gn. 12:8). After his visit to Egypt, he returned for this site (Gn. 13:3). For Jacob, Bethel was the starting point of his realization of God, who is for him 'God of Bethel' (Gn. 31:13; 35:7). As a result of his vision of Yahweh he named the place 'House of God' (Heb. *bêo'*) and set up a *PILLAR (Heb. *macc â*, Gn. 28:11–22). He was summoned to Bethel on his return from Haran, and both built an altar and set up a pillar, reiterating the name he had given before (Gn. 35:1–15). The site is perhaps *Bur!* *Beit 1n*, SE of Tell *Be 1 tin*, the 'shoulder of Luz' (Jos. 18:13).

Excavations yielded some Early Bronze Age traces, with the excavator claimed, a blood-stained rock high place. This seems to be an improbable interpretation, and the claim that a Middle Bronze Age shrine replaced it is also dubious. The Middle Bronze Age city was prosperous, destroyed about 1550 BC, and followed by well-built Late Bronze Age houses. These in turn were sacked, and the subsequent Iron Age buildings marked a complete cultural change, which the excavator related to the Israelite conquest (Jos. 12:16; Jdg. 1:22–26). Bethel was allotted to the Joseph tribes who captured it, particularly to Ephraim (1 Ch. 7:28), and bordered the territory of Benjamin (Jos. 18:13). The Israelites soon resettled the town, calling it by the name Jacob had given to the scene of his vision instead of Luz (Jdg. 1:23). When it was necessary for Israel to punish Benjamin, the people sought advice on the conduct of the battle and worshipped at Bethel 'for the ark ... was there' (Jdg. 20:18–28; 21:1–4). It was a sanctuary too in the time of Samuel, who visited it annually (1 Sa. 7:16; 10:3). The material remains of this period indicate an unsophisticated and insecure community. The settlement was twice burnt, possibly by the Philistines.

Under the early monarchy the city prospered, presently becoming the centre of Jeroboam's rival cult, condemned by a man of God from Judah (1 Ki. 12:28–13:32). The Judaeen Abijah captured it (2 Ch. 13:19), and his son, Asa, may have destroyed it (2 Ch. 14:8). Elisha met a group of the 'sons of the prophets' from Bethel but also the mocking boys (2 Ki. 2:3, 23). Amos condemned the rites of the Israelite royal sanctuary (Am. 4:4; 5:5–6; 7:13; *cf.* Ho. 10:15), and Jeremiah showed their futility (Je. 48:13). The priest sent to instruct the Assyrian settlers in Samaria settled at Bethel (2 Ki. 17:28), and worship evidently continued there until Josiah took advantage of Assyrian weakness to invade Israel and destroy its sanctuaries. No traces of Jeroboam's shrine have been unearthed; it may well have been outside the city proper on the site of the patriarchal altars. In the 6th century BC the city was destroyed by fire. Returning exiles settled in Bethel (Ne. 11:31), but their worship was centred on Jerusalem (Zc. 7:2–3). The city grew during the Hellenistic period until it was fortified by Bacchides c. 160 BC (1

Macc. 9:50). When Vespasian captured it in AD 69, there was a short break before it was rebuilt as a Roman township. It continued to flourish until the Arab conquest. (*BETH-AVEN.)

The final village in our narrative is *Haran*, located at the peak of the fertile crescent, now in modern Turkey. The word, Haran, has two meanings in the Old Testament, as D.J. Wiseman (*New Bible Dictionary*) describes:

1. The city c. 32 km SE of Urfa (Edessa), Turkey, on the river *Balikh*, lies on the main route from Nineveh to Aleppo. Terah lived there with Abram (Gn. 11:31; cf. Acts 7:2, 4) before the latter migrated to Canaan (Gn. 12:1). It was the home of Isaac's bride *REBEKAH. Jacob fled there to escape Esau (Gn. 29:4), married Leah and Rachel, daughters of Laban, and all his children (except Benjamin) were born there (Gn. 29:32–30:24).

Haran is referred to in texts from the Ur III period c. 2000 BC as a temple for the worship of *SIN the moon-god, and its occupation is confirmed by archaeological evidence. Its strategic position made it a focus for Amorite tribes according to *MARI texts of the 2nd millennium BC, and later an Assyrian centre fortified by Adadnirari I (c. 1310 BC) with a temple embellished by Tiglath-pileser I (c. 1115 BC). Haran rebelled and was sacked in 763 BC, an event used by Sennacherib's officials to intimidate Jerusalem (2 Ki. 19:12 = Is. 37:12). The city was restored by Sargon II, and the temple repaired and refurnished by Esarhaddon (675 BC) and by Ashurbanipal. After the fall of Nineveh (612 BC) Haran became the last capital of Assyria until its capture by the Babylonians in 609 BC. The Chaldean Dynasty's interest in the Babylonian temples led to the restoration of the Sin temples at Haran and at Ur. At the former the mother of Nabonidus (who lived to 104), and at the latter his daughter, were made the high priestesses. It was a thriving commercial city in contact with Tyre (Ezk. 27:23).

The site, excavated 1951–3, 1959, indicates clearly an occupation before the Assyrian period. The existing ruins are mainly from the Roman city near which the Parthians slew Crassus (53 BC) and from the later occupation by Sabaeen and Islamic rulers in Haran, then called Carrhae. In AV of Acts 7:4 the city is named Charran.

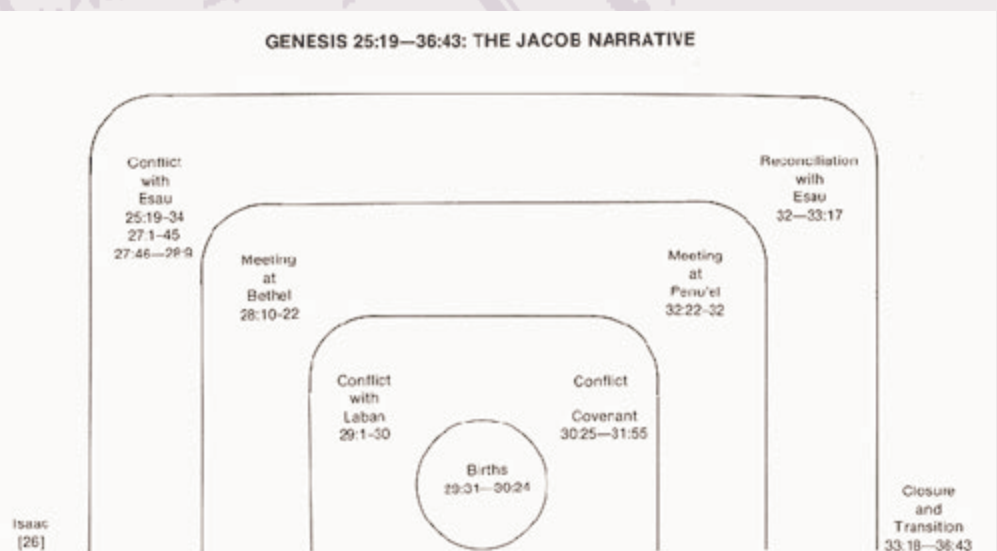
2. Haran is also a personal name. (a) The son of Terah, brother of Abraham and Terah, father of Lot, Milcah and Iscah, who died at *UR (Gn. 11:26–31); (b) A man of Judah, son of Caleb and his concubine Ephah (1 Ch. 2:46); (c) A Levite; son of Shimei, of Gershon (1 Ch. 23:9).

Of course, our concern is with the first meaning. Jacob is headed to his mother's brother's house in order to find a wife. Interestingly, this means that his wife is going to be a first cousin to him. But such inter-family marriages were the norm, not the exception, in the ancient world.

b. Literary

The general literary context for chapters 27–28 is that of the patriarchal history section found in chapters twelve through fifty in Genesis. Chapters one through eleven are the primeval history detailing beginnings of creation and humanity. The scope of these chapters is universal, that is, the history of humanity in general, beginning with Adam and concluding with Noah. The patriarchal history outlines the beginnings of the Jewish people with the stories of their founding ancestors, beginning with Abraham and ending with Joseph.

Within the patriarchal history section, the story of Abraham (precisely 11:27–25:18) looms largest since he is the founding father and the one who entered into covenant with God. This covenant would serve as foundation for all subsequent relationships of the Israelite people with Yahweh, and would be the basis of Paul's declaration of a new covenant through Christ in Romans 4 and Galatians 3. Most scholars



will call chapters 25 through 36 the Jacob story, with a brief insertion about Isaac in chapter 26. The Joseph story comprises chapters 37 through 50. Thus although there were several patriarchs, the dominate ones in the Genesis narrative are Abraham, Jacob and Joseph.

Inside the Jacob story the units of that story proceed along the following lines, as outlined by Barry L. Bandstra, *Reading the Old Testament* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1999), 111-120:

1. Jacob versus Esau: Stealing the Blessing, 25:19-28:22
2. Jacob versus Laban: Building a Family, 29-31
3. Jacob versus God, 32-35
4. Interlude: The Esau Toledot, 36

From this one can see that our passage comes at the end of the first segment, Jacob versus Esau.

II. Message

Our passage actually has two segments: (1) 27:41-28:9 which focuses on Esau and (2) 28:10-22 which makes Jacob the central focus. The first segment is usually grouped with 27:1-40 as a part of the lost blessing narrative (for detailed study of 27:1-40 see [previous Bible study](#) at Cranfordville). Our passage gives major attention to the consequences of Jacob stealing his father Isaac's blessing, which rightfully should have gone to Esau.

a. Holding grudges, 27:41-28:9

LXX

27:41 καὶ ἐνεκότει
Ἡσαυ τῷ Ἰακωβ περὶ τῆς
εὐλογίας ἧς εὐλόγησεν
αὐτὸν ὁ πατήρ αὐτοῦ εἶπεν
δὲ Ἡσαυ ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ
ἐγγισάτωσαν αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ
πένθους τοῦ πατρός μου
ἵνα ἀποκτείνω Ἰακωβ τὸν
ἀδελφόν μου ⁴² ἀπηγγέλη
δὲ Ρεβέκκα τὰ ῥήματα Ἡσαυ
τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτῆς τοῦ
πρεσβυτέρου καὶ πέμψασα
ἐκάλεσεν Ἰακωβ τὸν υἱὸν
αὐτῆς τὸν νεώτερον καὶ
εἶπεν αὐτῷ ἰδοὺ Ἡσαυ ὁ
ἀδελφός σου ἀπειλεῖ σοι
τοῦ ἀποκτεῖναί σε ⁴³ νῦν
οὖν τέκνον ἄκουσόν μου
τῆς φωνῆς καὶ ἀναστὰς
ἀπόδραθι εἰς τὴν
Μεσοποταμίαν πρὸς Λαβαν
τὸν ἀδελφόν μου εἰς
Χαρραν ⁴⁴ καὶ οἴκησον
μετ' αὐτοῦ ἡμέρας τινὰς
ἕως τοῦ ἀποστρέψαι τὸν
θυμὸν ⁴⁵ καὶ τὴν ὀργὴν
τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου ἀπὸ σοῦ
καὶ ἐπιλάθῃται ἃ
πεποίηκας αὐτῷ καὶ
ἀποστείλασα μεταπέμψομαί
σε ἐκεῖθεν μήποτε

NASB

27:41 So Esau bore
a grudge against Jacob
because of the blessing
with which his father had
blessed him; and Esau
said to himself, "The
days of mourning for my
father are near; then I will
kill my brother Jacob." ⁴²
Now when the words of
her elder son Esau were
reported to Rebekah, she
sent and called her
younger son Jacob, and
said to him, "Behold your
brother Esau is consol-
ing himself concerning
you *by planning* to kill you.
⁴³ "Now therefore, my
son, obey my voice, and
arise, flee to Haran, to
my brother Laban! ⁴⁴
"Stay with him a few
days, until your brother's
fury subsides, ⁴⁵ until
your brother's anger
against you subsides
and he forgets what you
did to him. Then I will
send and get you from
there. Why should I be

NRSV

27:41 Now Esau
hated Jacob because of
the blessing with which
his father had blessed
him, and Esau said to
himself, "The days of
mourning for my father
are approaching; then I
will kill my brother Jacob."
⁴² But the words of her
elder son Esau were told
to Rebekah; so she sent
and called her younger
son Jacob and said to
him, "Your brother Esau
is consoling himself by
planning to kill you. ⁴³
Now therefore, my son,
obey my voice; flee at
once to my brother Laban
in Haran, ⁴⁴ and stay
with him a while, until your
brother's fury turns
away— ⁴⁵ until your
brother's anger against
you turns away, and he
forgets what you have
done to him; then I will
send, and bring you back
from there. Why should I
lose both of you in one

NLT

27:41 Esau hated Ja-
cob because he had ston-
len his blessing, and he
said to himself, "My fa-
ther will soon be dead
and gone. Then I will kill
Jacob." ⁴² But someone
got wind of what Esau
was planning and re-
ported it to Rebekah. She
sent for Jacob and told
him, "Esau is threatening
to kill you. ⁴³ This is what
you should do. Flee to
your uncle Laban in
Haran. ⁴⁴ Stay there with
him until your brother's
fury is spent. ⁴⁵ When
he forgets what you have
done, I will send for you.
Why should I lose both of
you in one day?"

⁴⁶ Then Rebekah
said to Isaac, "I'm sick
and tired of these local
Hittite women. I'd rather
die than see Jacob marry
one of them."

28:1 So Isaac called
for Jacob, blessed him,
and said, "Do not marry

ἀτεκνωθῶ ἀπὸ τῶν δύο ὑμῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ

⁴⁶ εἶπεν δὲ Ρεβεκκα πρὸς Ἰσαακ προσώχθικα τῆς ζῶῃ μου διὰ τὰς θυγατέρας τῶν υἱῶν Χετ εἰ λήμψεται Ἰακωβ γυναῖκα ἀπὸ τῶν θυγατέρων τῆς γῆς ταύτης ἵνα τί μοι ζῆν

28:1 προσκαλεσάμενος δὲ Ἰσαακ τὸν Ἰακωβ εὐλόγησεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐνετείλατο αὐτῷ λέγων οὐ λήμψῃ γυναῖκα ἐκ τῶν θυγατέρων Χανααν ² ἀναστὰς ἀπόδραθι εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν εἰς τὸν οἶκον Βαθουηλ τοῦ πατρὸς τῆς μητρὸς σου καὶ λαβέσσεαυτῷ ἐκεῖθεν γυναῖκα ἐκ τῶν θυγατέρων Λαβαν τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρὸς σου ³ ὁ δὲ θεὸς μου εὐλογῆσαι σε καὶ αὐξήσαι σε καὶ πληθύναι σε καὶ ἔσῃ εἰς συναγωγὰς ἐθνῶν ⁴ καὶ δώῃ σοι τὴν εὐλογίαν Ἀβρααμ τοῦ πατρὸς μου σοὶ καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου μετὰ σέ κληρονομήσαι τὴν γῆν τῆς παροικησεώς σου ἣν ἔδωκεν ὁ θεὸς τῷ Ἀβρααμ ⁵ καὶ ἀπέστειλεν Ἰσαακ τὸν Ἰακωβ καὶ ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν πρὸς Λαβαν τὸν υἱὸν Βαθουηλ τοῦ Σύρου ἀδελφὸν δὲ Ρεβεκκας τῆς μητρὸς Ἰακωβ καὶ Ησαυ

⁶ εἶδεν δὲ Ησαυ ὅτι εὐλόγησεν Ἰσαακ τὸν Ἰακωβ καὶ ἀπώχετο εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν Συρίας λαβεῖν ἐπαυτῷ ἐκεῖθεν γυναῖκα ἐν τῷ εὐλογεῖν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐνετείλατο αὐτῷ λέγων οὐ λήμψῃ γυναῖκα ἀπὸ τῶν θυγατέρων Χανααν ⁷ καὶ ἤκουσεν Ἰακωβ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπορεύθη

bereaved of you both in one day?"

46 Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these, from the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

28:1 So Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and charged him, and said to him, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. 2 "Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and from there take to yourself a wife from the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. 3 "May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. 4 "May He also give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your descendants with you, that you may possess the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham." 5 Then Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram to Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

6 Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram to take to himself a wife from there, and that when he blessed

day?"

46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women such as these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

28:1 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, "You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women. 2 Go at once to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father; and take as wife from there one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. 3 May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and numerous, that you may become a company of peoples. 4 May he give to you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your offspring with you, so that you may take possession of the land where you now live as an alien—land that God gave to Abraham." 5 Thus Isaac sent Jacob away; and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

6 Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram to take a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he charged him, "You shall not marry one of the

any of these Canaanite women. 2 Instead, go at once to Paddan-aram, to the house of your grandfather Bethuel, and marry one of your uncle Laban's daughters. 3 May God Almighty bless you and give you many children. And may your descendants become a great assembly of nations! 4 May God pass on to you and your descendants the blessings he promised to Abraham. May you own this land where we now are foreigners, for God gave it to Abraham." 5 So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram to stay with his uncle Laban, his mother's brother, the son of Bethuel the Aramean.

6 Esau heard that his father had blessed Jacob and sent him to Paddan-aram to find a wife, and that he had warned Jacob not to marry a Canaanite woman. 7 He also knew that Jacob had obeyed his parents and gone to Paddan-aram. 8 It was now very clear to Esau that his father despised the local Canaanite women. 9 So he visited his uncle Ishmael's family and married one of Ishmael's daughters, in addition to the wives he already had. His new wife's name was Mahalath. She was the sister of Nebaioth and the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son.

εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν Συρίας ⁸ καὶ εἶδεν Ἡσαυ ὅτι πονηραὶ εἰσιν αἱ θυγατέρες Χανααν ἐναντίον Ἰσαακ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ ⁹ καὶ ἐπορεύθη Ἡσαυ πρὸς Ἰσμαηλ καὶ ἔλαβεν τὴν Μαελεθ θυγατέρα Ἰσμαηλ τοῦ υἱοῦ Ἀβρααμ ἀδελφὴν Ναβαιωθ πρὸς ταῖς γυναῖξιν αὐτοῦ γυναῖκα

him he charged him, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan," 7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Paddan-aram. 8 So Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan displeased his father Isaac; 9 and Esau went to Ishmael, and married, besides the wives that he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth.

Canaanite women," 7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and gone to Paddan-aram. 8 So when Esau saw that the Canaanite women did not please his father Isaac, 9 Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath daughter of Abraham's son Ishmael, and sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.



Notes:

This portion of scripture text picks up upon the [immediately preceding text](#) (vv. 30-40) that describes Esau's initial reaction when returning home to discover that Isaac had blessed Jacob instead:

30 As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, when Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of his father Isaac, his brother Esau came in from his hunting. 31 He also prepared savory food, and brought it to his father. And he said to his father, "Let my father sit up and eat of his son's game, so that you may bless me." 32 His father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am your firstborn son, Esau." 33 Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, "Who was it then that hunted game and brought it to me, and I ate it all before you came, and I have blessed him?—yes, and blessed he shall be!" 34 When Esau heard his father's words, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, me also, father!" 35 But he said, "Your brother came deceitfully, and he has taken away your blessing." 36 Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright; and look, now he has taken away my blessing." Then he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" 37 Isaac answered Esau, "I have already made him your lord, and I have given him all his brothers as servants, and with grain and wine I have sustained him. What then can I do for you, my son?" 38 Esau said to his father, "Have you only one blessing, father? Bless me, me also, father!" And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. 39 Then his father Isaac answered him: "See, away from the fatness of the earth shall your home be, and away from the dew of heaven on high. 40 By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; but when you break loose, you shall break his yoke from your neck."

Esau is understandably upset and confronts his father over this. Both realize that once this pledge of blessing, the birthright, has been given it cannot be revoked under any circumstance. At the end, vv. 39-40, Isaac provides Esau with something of a "blessing" although most of the content is negative. Now it should be noted that much earlier Esau in a moment of weakness had "sold his birthright" to Jacob, as 25:39-34 describes:

29 Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. 30 Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!" (Therefore he was called Edom.) 31 Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." 32 Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?" 33 Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

The concept of birthright is described by O.J. Baab in the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (iPreach):

[בכורה, right of the first-born]. While all a man's sons had his protection and some benefits, the FIRST-BORN son had a special inheritance. His was the principal inheritance of property and name. Through him the FAMILY line was continued.

The stories of Jacob's appropriation of Esau's birthright as the first-born are important, for they show how Jacob, rather than his brother, continued the line of Abraham and Isaac (Gen. 25:29-34). Birthrights might be taken away from the eldest son. The birthright of Reuben was taken from him and given to the sons of Joseph (I Chr. 5:1; cf. Gen. 49:4). At a meal the sons were seated in order of their ages, "the first-born according to his birthright" (Gen. 43:33). The kingdom was given to the firstborn as his right (II Chr. 21:3; cf. Ps. 89:27). Israel received the protection

of her God, who made her his first-born (Exod. 4:22-23; Jer. 31:9). Paul had the privileges of Roman citizenship as a birthright (Acts 22:28).

Thus the concept of a blessing attached to the birthright becomes clear from the above description. It entailed great honor for the recipient. This is what Esau lost through Jacob's deception.

Our passage, 27:41-28:10, picks up the narrative with Esau's plot to kill Jacob after the days of mourning for Isaac after his impending death.

Scene 1: *Rebekah and Jacob, vv. 42-45.* The boys' mother, Rebekah, learned of this plot and relayed it to Jacob, her favorite and the one she had helped in this deception. She encouraged Jacob to flee to her brother Laban in Haran and wait there until things have cooled down for Jacob. Rebekah realized that if Esau killed Jacob, he would be executed as well. Thus both her sons would die. Whether one can read sincerity out of her statement in v. 45 or not is questionable. Very likely because of the way she painted the trip for Jacob she is using deceit. A rather rosy picture of the trip to Haran is painted, and it is described in terms of a short stay.

Scene 2: *Rebekah and Isaac, v. 46.* Verses 46 through 28:5 set up the next sequence in the narrative. Jacob could not arbitrarily leave his father's tent. So Rebekah cooks up an excuse for Isaac to allow Jacob to go to Haran: to get a legitimate wife. Rebekah did not want Jacob marrying a Hittite woman. This negative label Hittite is used, rather than calling them Esau's wives (= "such as these"), since Esau had already married a couple of Hittite women who made life "bitter" for Rebekah and Isaac (26:34-35): "34 When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite; 35 and they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah." This bad experience made Isaac more disposed to hearing Rebekah's plea.

Scene 3: *Isaac and Jacob, vv. 1-5.* Isaac then called in Jacob and issued the command for him to go to Paddan-aram (the region where Haran was located) and find a wife from Rebekah's brother's daughters. That is, from his first cousins. The blessing of Isaac here is different from the earlier one, as this comparison illustrates:

Gen. 27:27-29:

27 So he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his garments, and blessed him, and said, "Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed. [1] 28 May God give you of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. [2] 29 Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. [3] Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. [4] Cursed be everyone who curses you, and [5] blessed be everyone who blesses you!"

Gen. 28:1-5

28:1 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, "You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women. 2 Go at once to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father; and take as wife from there one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. [1] 3 May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and numerous, that you may become a company of peoples. [2] 4 May he give to you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your offspring with you, so that you may take possession of the land where you now live as an alien—land that God gave to Abraham." 5 Thus Isaac sent Jacob away; and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

In the earlier blessing (vv. 28-29), related to the birthright, the emphasis is upon Jacob dominating others, both inside and outside his family. In this later blessing (vv. 3-4), the emphasis is upon God prospering Jacob with a family -- and lineage -- and the blessing given to Abraham that would lead to possessing the land of Canaan. G. J. Wenham in the *Word Biblical Commentary* has noted the differences:

Isaac's blessing on this occasion is very different from that he had planned for Esau (27:27-29). He describes this blessing as the blessing of Abraham. And it largely echoes the promises made to Abraham, for nearly every phrase is found in the Abrahamic promises (cf. 12:2-3, 7; 13:15, 17; 15:7-8, 18; 17:1, 6, 8, 16, 20; 22:17; 24:7) and in their recapitulation to Isaac (26:3-4, 24). However, this is the first time that Jacob has been designated heir of the Abrahamic promises, so it is not surprising that the closest parallels to the whole are in 35:11-12 and 48:3-4; cf. also 28:13, where the first promise made to Jacob is recalled.

The passage ends in verse 5 with Jacob leaving his father's tent to go to Haran to get a wife.

Scene 4: *Esau, vv. 6-9.* In typical fashion, Esau reacted in anger and spite against his father and mother. Already possessing at least two Canaanite wives (cf. 26:34-35), he decided to add some more to his harem out of spite against his father's instruction to Jacob to not marry a Canaanite wife. Whether this

is the first time Esau realized that his Canaanite wives were unpopular with his father is not clear. Whatever the case, this realization only fueled his determination to disobey his father's command. The going to Ishmael cannot mean Ishmael directly, since he had been long since dead. Rather the reference means to the Ishmaelites, the descendants of Ishmael. From them he added another wife, Mahalath, to his harem.

Is there something we can learn from these verses? At first it may seem not, since the culture is so very different from ours. Yet, in other ways there are some important lessons to be gleaned. One particularly important thing is the danger of parental favoritism. Isaac favored Esau, and Rebekah favored Jacob. This only led to family troubles. And these would plague both sons most all of their lives. Another possible lesson from these verses is the importance of parental approval. To be sure, the Semitic birthright tradition is very different -- thank goodness -- from our culture. But underneath this is something valuable. Every child needs affirmation from their parents. But what kind? Our current society suffers from shallow and phoney affirmation. Little Johnnie can do no wrong. Kids rule the situation at home, out in public etc. The godly parent helps their kids realize their worth to God and to their parents. That is, a healthy affirmation that builds a solid self esteem rather than arrogance. A third lesson that occurs to me is the importance of who we marry. The seeking of a wife out of the family of Laban has some question marks connected to it from our cultural view. We rightly frown on first cousins getting married to one another. But the concern about marrying a Hittite woman reflects a legitimate desire for Jacob to find a wife who would affirm him in his cultural and religious traditions. The choosing of a life long partner is one of the most important choices ever made. It needs to be the right choice! Fourthly, Esau stands as a negative example, especially in vv. 6-9. One never makes good choices when those decisions arise out of anger and spite. Esau's actions only drove more distance between himself and his father and mother. In one sense, Rebekah's nightmare came true: she did lose both sons. May we learn to make decisions carefully and prayerfully.

b. Meeting God, 28:10-22

LXX

¹⁰ καὶ ἐξῆλθεν Ἰακωβ ἀπὸ τοῦ φρέατος τοῦ ὄρκου καὶ ἐπορεύθη εἰς Χαρραν ¹¹ καὶ ἀπήντησεν τόπῳ καὶ ἐκοιμήθη ἐκεῖ ἔδω γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ἔλαβεν ἀπὸ τῶν λίθων τοῦ τόπου καὶ ἔθηκεν πρὸς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκοιμήθη ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἐκείνῳ ¹² καὶ ἐνυπνιάσθη καὶ ἰδοὺ κλίμαξ ἐστηρικμένη ἐν τῇ γῆ ἧς ἡ κεφαλὴ ἀφικνεῖτο εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ ἀνέβαινον καὶ κατέβαινον ἐπ' αὐτῆς ¹³ ὁ δὲ κύριος ἐπεστήρικτο ἐπ' αὐτῆς καὶ εἶπεν ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ τοῦ πατρός σου καὶ ὁ θεὸς Ἰσαὰκ μή φοβοῦ ἡ γῆ ἐφ' ἧς σὺ καθεύδεις ἐπ' αὐτῆς σοὶ δώσω αὐτήν καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου ¹⁴ καὶ ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου ὡς ἡ ἄμμος

NASB

10 Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place. 12 He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descen-

NRSV

10 Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. 12 And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 And the Lord stood beside him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring shall

NLT

10 Meanwhile, Jacob left Beersheba and traveled toward Haran. 11 At sundown he arrived at a good place to set up camp and stopped there for the night. Jacob found a stone for a pillow and lay down to sleep. 12 As he slept, he dreamed of a stairway that reached from earth to heaven. And he saw the angels of God going up and down on it. 13 At the top of the stairway stood the LORD, and he said, "I am the LORD, the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of your father, Isaac. The ground you are lying on belongs to you. I will give it to you and your descendants. 14 Your descendants

τῆς γῆς καὶ πλατυνθήσεται ἐπὶ θάλασσαν καὶ ἐπὶ λίβα καὶ ἐπὶ βορρᾶν καὶ ἐπ' ἀνατολάς καὶ ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐν τῷ σπέρματί σου ¹⁵ καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μετὰ σοῦ διαφυλάσσω σε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, πάσῃ οὐ ἂν πορευθῆς καὶ ἀποστρέψω σε εἰς τὴν γῆν ταύτην ὅτι οὐ μὴ σε ἐγκαταλίπω ἕως τοῦ ποιῆσαι με πάντα ὅσα ἐλάλησά σοι ¹⁶ καὶ ἐξηγέρθη Ἰακωβ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπεν ὅτι ἔστιν κύριος ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ ἐγὼ δὲ οὐκ ᾔδειν ¹⁷ καὶ ἐφοβήθη καὶ εἶπεν ὡς φοβερὸς ὁ τόπος οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν τοῦτο ἀλλ' ἡ οἰκὸς θεοῦ καὶ αὕτη ἡ πύλη τοῦ οὐρανοῦ

¹⁸ καὶ ἀνέστη Ἰακωβ τὸ πρῶτον καὶ ἔλαβεν τὸν λίθον ὃν ὑπέθηκεν ἐκεῖ πρὸς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔστησεν αὐτὸν στήλην καὶ ἐπέχεεν ἔλαιον ἐπὶ τὸ ἄκρον αὐτῆς ¹⁹ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν Ἰακωβ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου Οἶκος θεοῦ καὶ Ουλαμλους ἦν ὄνομα τῇ πόλει τὸ πρότερον ²⁰ καὶ ἠῴξατο Ἰακωβ εὐχὴν λέγων ἂν ἡ κύριος ὁ θεὸς μετ' ἐμοῦ καὶ διαφυλάξῃ με ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ταύτῃ ἢ ἐγὼ πορεύομαι καὶ δῶ μοι ἄρτον φαγεῖν καὶ ἱμάτιον περιβαλέσθαι ²¹ καὶ ἀποστρέψῃ με μετὰ σωτηρίας εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρός μου καὶ ἔσται μοι κύριος εἰς θεόν ²² καὶ ὁ λίθος οὗτος ὃν ἔστησα στήλην ἔσται μοι οἶκος θεοῦ καὶ πάντων ὧν ἔαν μοι δῶς δεκάτην ἀποδεκατώσω αὐτά σοι

dants. 14 "Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." 16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." 17 He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

18 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top. 19 He called the name of that place Bethel; however, previously the name of the city had been Luz. 20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, 21 and I return to my father's house in safety, then the LORD will be my God. 22 "This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. 15 Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." 16 Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!" 17 And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

18 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. 19 He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first. 20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, 21 so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, 22 and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you."

will be as numerous as the dust of the earth! They will cover the land from east to west and from north to south. All the families of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants. 15 What's more, I will be with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. I will someday bring you safely back to this land. I will be with you constantly until I have finished giving you everything I have promised." 16 Then Jacob woke up and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I wasn't even aware of it." 17 He was afraid and said, "What an awesome place this is! It is none other than the house of God – the gateway to heaven!"

18 The next morning he got up very early. He took the stone he had used as a pillow and set it upright as a memorial pillar. Then he poured olive oil over it. 19 He named the place Bethel – "house of God" – though the name of the nearby village was Luz. 20 Then Jacob made this vow: "If God will be with me and protect me on this journey and give me food and clothing, 21 and if he will bring me back safely to my father, then I will make the LORD my God. 22 This memorial pillar will become a place for worshiping God, and I will give God a tenth of everything he gives me."

Notes:

This second part of the larger scripture passage takes place while Jacob is traveling from Beersheba to Haran. As the [map on page one](#) indicates, it is located north of the present Jerusalem. In the internal history section on page three, we looked at some of the history of *Bethel*. This narrative describes a dream that Jacob had about reaching God on a ladder stretching from earth into the sky.

These verses fall into the following scenes:

Scene 1, *Preparation for sleep, vv. 10-11.* The situation is set up in these two verses with the notation that Jacob decided to spend the night at Bethel because it was dark and he didn't need to travel during the night. His sleeping with his head on a rock, although appearing uncomfortable to us, was a fairly normal custom of sleeping in those days. G. J. Wenham in the *Word Biblical Commentary* suggests another configuration of the stones, "Because v 18 speaks of one specific stone, it is often surmised that Jacob used the stone as a pillow. However, passages like 1 Sam 26:11-12; 1 Kgs 19:6, where the same phrase, "round his head," appears, suggest the stones were placed round his head to protect him rather than to lie on. There is no suggestion that the stones were particularly large." What is more significant is that he was sleeping under the stars away from any town or settlement of people, which would have been the usual pattern. This was a personal journey and he avoided much contact with local peoples.

Scene 2, *the Dream, vv. 12-15.* His dream contains several important elements. The word translated as "ladder" can be rendered from the Hebrew to mean also stairway or ramp as the footnote in the NRSV indicates. The role of the angels going up and down the ladder is suggested also by Wenham as

Angels in the OT are conceived of as looking after different nations and their territories and as patrolling the earth (Job 1:6; 2:1; Zech 1:8-17; cf. Deut 32:8). So Rashi suggests that the ascending angels are those responsible for Jacob's homeland and descending ones are those responsible for the foreign land to which he is going. In other words, this vision of the angels is an assurance of God's protection of Jacob even though he is leaving home. This is an attractive idea in that the vision thus anticipates the verbal assurances given in v 15. In a similar way, Abraham's night vision (15:11-12) anticipated the prophecy in 15:13-16.

With God at the top of the ladder Jacob found assurance of God's presence. God's promise to Jacob echoes what Isaac had said to Jacob earlier but now becomes the promise of the Almighty rather than that of Jacob's father.

Scene 3, *Waking up, vv. 16-17.* Upon waking up, Jacob realized the sacredness of not only this experience but where it occurred. Upon realizing that he had been in the presence of God, his reaction was typical to others in the Bible who experienced an epiphany, that is, an unusual experience of God's presence. He was afraid. And he confessed this fear.

Scene 4, *the Commitment, vv. 18-22.* The next morning Jacob took appreciative action to his dream and confession: he took the stone used the night before and turned it into an altar for a religious ritual (v. 18). He renamed the town from *Luz* to *Bethel*, which means "house of God" (v. 19). He then made a vow to God that he would faithfully serve God all the days of his life (vv. 20-22). This vow shows up later in 31:13 and 35:1-3, 7, and thus reflects here an important turning point in Jacob's life. In this final episode in Gen 35, God will change Jacob's name to Israel (cf. 35:10). Thus Bethel takes on a special significance in Jacob's life.

What can we learn from this? Sometimes it takes a crisis to awaken us to the crucial role of spiritual commitment to God. Jacob was fleeing for his life, but he met God in a life changing experience. This, however, didn't mean that Jacob's troubles were over. He deception of his father would be returned by Laban in the matter of gaining a wife after reaching Haran. We're not excused from the consequences of our sins, just the guilt before God for our sin.

When we come face to face with God a sense of awe and fear are natural responses. Jacob was privileged to have a sense of the divine that most people do not experience. But as we reach out to God through faith in Christ we can come to know the presence and blessing of God none the less.

Our encounter with Almighty God demands commitment to serve Him faithfully the rest of our lives. It won't always be a perfect service, as the remainder of Jacob's life demonstrates. But it must be a commitment that reaches deep into our soul and stands as the foundation of our life from that point on. Without such, we have no authentic commitment and relationship with God, and will suffer the horrible consequences of such in eternal banishment from God's presence.

Hebrew

WTT Genesis 27:41 וַיִּשְׁטֹם עֵשָׂו אֶת־יַעֲקֹב עַל־הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר
בָּרַכּוּ אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו בְּלִבּוֹ יִקְרְבוּ יָמָיו אֲבִל אָבִי וְאֶהְרֹגָה
אֶת־יַעֲקֹב אֹחִי⁴² וַיַּגִּד לְרַבֵּקָה אֶת־דְּבָרָיו עֵשָׂו בְּנֵה הַגְדֵּל
וּתְשַׁלַּח וּתְקַרְא לְיַעֲקֹב בְּנֵה הַקָּטָן וּתֹאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה עֵשָׂו
אֹחִיךָ מֵתַנַּחֵם לָךְ לְהַרְגֶךָ⁴³ וְעַתָּה בְּנֵי שָׁמַע בְּקִלְי וְקוּם
בְּרַח־לָךְ אֶל־לְבָן אֹחִי חַרְנֵה⁴⁴ וַיִּשְׁבֹּת עִמּוֹ יָמִים אֲחָדִים עַד
בְּרַח־לָךְ אֶל־לְבָן אֹחִי חַרְנֵה⁴⁴ וַיִּשְׁבֹּת עִמּוֹ יָמִים אֲחָדִים עַד
אֲשֶׁר־תָּשׁוּב חַמַּת אֹחִיךָ: ⁴⁵ עַד־שׁוּב אַף־אֹחִיךָ מִמֶּךָ וְשָׁכַח אֶת
אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתָ לוֹ וְשַׁלַּחְתִּי וּלְקַחְתִּיךָ מִשָּׁם לָמָּה אֲשַׁכַּל
גַּם־שְׂנִיכֶם יוֹם אֶחָד: ⁴⁶ וּתֹאמֶר רַבֵּקָה אֶל־יֶצְחָק קַצְתִּי בְּחַיִּי
מִפְּנֵי בְנוֹת חַת אִם־לָקַח יַעֲקֹב אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת־חַת כְּאֵלֶּה
מִבְּנוֹת הָאָרֶץ לָמָּה לִּי חַיִּים 28:1 וַיִּקְרָא יֶצְחָק אֶל־יַעֲקֹב
וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ וַיִּצְוֶהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן²
קוּם לָךְ פְּדִינָה אֶרֶם בֵּיתָה בְּתוֹאֵל אָבִי אַמְּךָ וְקַח־לָךְ מִשָּׁם
אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת לְבָן אֹחִי אַמְּךָ: ³ וְאֵל שְׂדֵי יִבְרָךְ אֶתְךָ וַיִּפְרֹךְ
וַיִּרְבֶּךְ וְהָיִיתָ לְקַהֵל עַמִּים: ⁴ וַיִּתֵּן־לָךְ אֶת־בְּרַכְּתָאֲבֵרָהֶם לָךְ
וְלִזְרַעְךָ אֶתְךָ לְרִשְׁתֶּךָ אֶת־אֶרֶץ מִגְּרִיךָ אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן אֱלֹהִים
לְאֲבֵרָהֶם: ⁵ וַיִּשְׁלַח יֶצְחָק אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיֵּלֶךְ פְּדִינָה אֶרֶם אֶל־לְבָן
בֶּן־בְּתוֹאֵל הָאֶרְמִי אֹחִי רַבֵּקָה אִם יַעֲקֹב וְעֵשָׂו⁶ וַיֵּרָא עֵשָׂו
כִּי־בָרַךְ יֶצְחָק אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וְשַׁלַּח אֹתוֹ פְּדִינָה אֶרֶם לְקַחְתִּי־לוֹ
מִשָּׁם אִשָּׁה בְּבָרְכּוֹ אֹתוֹ וַיֵּצֵא עָלָיו לֵאמֹר לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה
מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן⁷ וַיִּשְׁמַע יַעֲקֹב אֶל־אָבִיו וְאֶל־אִמּוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ
פְּדִינָה אֶרֶם⁸ וַיֵּרָא עֵשָׂו כִּי רָעוֹת בְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן בְּעֵינָיו יֶצְחָק
אָבִיו⁹ וַיֵּלֶךְ עֵשָׂו אֶל־יִשְׁמַעֲאֵל וַיִּקַּח אֶת־מַחְלַת בַּת־יִשְׁמַעֲאֵל
בֶּן־אֲבֵרָהֶם אֲחֹת נְבוֹת עַל־נְשָׁיו לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה ס¹⁰ וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב
מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ חַרְנֵה: ¹¹ וַיִּפְגַּע בְּמָקוֹם וַיֵּלֶן שָׁם כִּי־בָא
הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲבֵנֵי הַמָּקוֹם וַיִּשָּׂם מִרְאֲשֹׁתָיו וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּמָּקוֹם
הַהוּא: ¹² וַיַּחְלֵם וְהִנֵּה סֹלֶם מִצַּב אֶרֶץ וְרֹאשׁוֹ מִגִּיעַ
הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וְהִנֵּה מְלֹאכֵי אֱלֹהִים עֹלִים וְיֹרְדִים בּוֹ¹³ וְהִנֵּה
יְהוָה נֹצֵב עָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֵרָהֶם אָבִיךָ
וְאֱלֹהֵי יֶצְחָק הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֵתָּה שָׁכַב עָלֶיהָ לָךְ אֶתְנַנֶּה

וּלְזַרְעֶךָ: ¹⁴ וְהָיָה זֶרְעֶךָ כְּעֵפֶר הָאָרֶץ וּפְרָצְתָּ יָמָה וּקְרָמָה
וּלְפָנֶיהָ וּנְגִיבָה וּנְבָרְכוּ בְךָ כָּל־מְשַׁפְּחַת הָאָדָמָה וּבְזַרְעֶךָ ¹⁵
וְהָיָה אֲנֹכִי עִמָּךְ וּשְׁמִרְתִּיךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־תֵּלֵךְ וְהִשְׁבַּתִּיךָ
אֶל־הָאָדָמָה הַזֹּאת כִּי לֹא אֶעְזָבְךָ עַד אֲשֶׁר אִם־עָשִׂיתִי אֶת
אֲשֶׁר־דִּבַּרְתִּי לְךָ: ¹⁶ וַיִּיקָץ יַעֲקֹב מִשְׁנֵתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲכֵן יֵשׁ יְהוָה
בְּמָקוֹם הַזֶּה וְאֲנֹכִי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי: ¹⁷ וַיִּירָא וַיֹּאמֶר מִה־נֹּרָא
הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה אֵין זֶה כִּי אִם־בַּיִת אֱלֹהִים וְזֶה שַׁעַר הַשָּׁמַיִם ¹⁸
וַיִּשְׁכַּם יַעֲקֹב בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הָאֲבָן אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם מִרְאֲשֵׁתוֹ וַיִּשֶׂם
אֹתָהּ מַצְבֵּה וַיִּצַק שָׁמֶן עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ ¹⁹ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם
הַהוּא בַּיִת־אֱלֹהִים וְאוֹלָם לִזְוֵי שִׁסְהַעִיר לְרֹאשֶׁנָּה ²⁰ וַיִּדַּר יַעֲקֹב
נָדָר לֵאמֹר אִם־יְהִיָּה אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי וּשְׁמֵרֵנִי בַּדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר
אֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ וְנָתַן־לִי לֶחֶם לֶאֱכֹל וּבְגָד לְלַבֵּשׁ ²¹ וְשִׁבַּתִּי
בְּשָׁלוֹם אֶל־בֵּית אָבִי וְהָיָה לִי לֵאלֹהִים ²² וְהָאֲבָן הַזֹּאת
אֲשֶׁר־שָׁמַתִּי מַצְבֵּה יְהִיָּה בַּיִת אֱלֹהִים וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר תִּתֵּן־לִי עֲשֵׂר
אֶעֱשֶׂרְנֶהּ לְךָ

27:41 καὶ ἐνεκότει Ησαυ τῷ Ιακωβ περὶ τῆς εὐλογίας ἧς εὐλόγησεν αὐτὸν ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ εἶπεν δὲ Ησαυ ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ ἐγγισάτωσαν αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ πένθους τοῦ πατρός μου ἵνα ἀποκτείνω Ιακωβ τὸν ἀδελφόν μου ⁴² ἀπηγγέλη δὲ Ρεβεκκα τὰ ῥήματα Ησαυ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτῆς τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου καὶ πέμψασα ἐκάλεσεν Ιακωβ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν νεώτερον καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ἰδοὺ Ησαυ ὁ ἀδελφός σου ἀπειλεῖ σοι τοῦ ἀποκτείνειν σε ⁴³ νῦν οὖν τέκνον ἄκουσόν μου τῆς φωνῆς καὶ ἀναστὰς ἀπόδραθι εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν πρὸς Λαβαν τὸν ἀδελφόν μου εἰς Χαρραν ⁴⁴ καὶ οἴκησον μετ' αὐτοῦ ἡμέρας τινὰς ἕως τοῦ ἀποστρέψαι τὸν θυμὸν ⁴⁵ καὶ τὴν ὀργὴν τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου ἀπὸ σοῦ καὶ ἐπιλάθῃται ἃ πεποίηκας αὐτῷ καὶ ἀποστείλασα μεταπέμψομαί σε ἐκεῖθεν μήποτε ἀτεκνωθῶ ἀπὸ τῶν δύο ὑμῶν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ

⁴⁶ εἶπεν δὲ Ρεβεκκα πρὸς Ισαακ προσώχθικα τῇ ζωῇ μου διὰ τὰς θυγατέρας τῶν υἱῶν Χετ εἰ λήμψεται Ιακωβ γυναῖκα ἀπὸ τῶν θυγατέρων τῆς γῆς ταύτης ἵνα τί μοι ζῆν

28:1 προσκαλεσάμενος δὲ Ισαακ τὸν Ιακωβ εὐλόγησεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐνετείλατο αὐτῷ λέγων οὐ λήμψῃ γυναῖκα ἐκ τῶν θυγατέρων Χανααν ² ἀναστὰς ἀπόδραθι εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν εἰς τὸν οἶκον Βαθουηλ τοῦ πατρός τῆς μητρός σου καὶ λαβὲ σεαυτῷ ἐκεῖθεν γυναῖκα ἐκ τῶν θυγατέρων Λαβαν τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρός σου ³ ὁ δὲ θεὸς μου εὐλογήσῃ σε καὶ αὐξήσῃ σε καὶ πληθύνῃ σε καὶ ἔσῃ εἰς συναγωγὰς ἔθνων ⁴ καὶ δώῃ σοι τὴν εὐλογίαν Αβρααμ τοῦ πατρός μου σοὶ καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου μετὰ σέ κληρονομήσῃ τὴν γῆν τῆς παροικήσεώς σου ἣν ἔδωκεν ὁ θεὸς τῷ Αβρααμ ⁵ καὶ ἀπέστειλεν Ισαακ τὸν Ιακωβ καὶ ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν πρὸς Λαβαν τὸν υἱὸν Βαθουηλ τοῦ Σύρου ἀδελφὸν δὲ Ρεβεκκας τῆς μητρός Ιακωβ καὶ Ησαυ

⁶ εἶδεν δὲ Ησαυ ὅτι εὐλόγησεν Ισαακ τὸν Ιακωβ καὶ ἀπόχρητο εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν Συρίας λαβεῖν ἐπαυτῷ ἐκεῖθεν γυναῖκα ἐν τῷ εὐλογεῖν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐνετείλατο αὐτῷ λέγων οὐ λήμψῃ γυναῖκα ἀπὸ τῶν θυγατέρων Χανααν ⁷ καὶ ἤκουσεν Ιακωβ τοῦ πατρός καὶ τῆς μητρός αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν Συρίας ⁸ καὶ εἶδεν Ησαυ ὅτι ποιηραὶ εἰσιν αἱ θυγατέρες Χανααν ἐναντίον Ισαακ τοῦ πατρός αὐτοῦ ⁹ καὶ ἐπορεύθη Ησαυ πρὸς Ισμαηλ καὶ ἔλαβεν τὴν Μαελεθ θυγατέρα Ισμαηλ τοῦ υἱοῦ Αβρααμ ἀδελφὴν Ναβαιωθ πρὸς ταῖς γυναῖξιν αὐτοῦ γυναῖκα

¹⁰ καὶ ἐξῆλθεν Ιακωβ ἀπὸ τοῦ φρέατος τοῦ ὄρκου καὶ ἐπορεύθη εἰς Χαρραν ¹¹ καὶ ἀπήνησεν τόπῳ καὶ ἐκοιμήθη ἐκεῖ ἔδου γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ἔλαβεν ἀπὸ τῶν λίθων τοῦ τόπου καὶ ἔθηκεν πρὸς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκοιμήθη ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἐκείνῳ ¹² καὶ ἐνυπνιάσθη καὶ ἰδοὺ κλίμαξ ἔστηριγμένη ἐν τῇ γῇ ἧς ἡ κεφαλὴ ἀφικνεῖ το εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ ἀνέβαινον καὶ κατέβαινον ἐπ' αὐτῆς ¹³ ὁ δὲ κύριος ἐπεστήρικτο ἐπ' αὐτῆς καὶ εἶπεν ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς Αβρααμ τοῦ πατρός σου καὶ ὁ θεὸς Ισαακ μὴ φοβοῦ ἡ γῆ ἐφ' ἧς σὺ καθεύδεις ἐπ' αὐτῆς σοὶ δώσω αὐτήν καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου ¹⁴ καὶ ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς γῆς καὶ πλατυνηθήσεται ἐπὶ θάλασσαν καὶ ἐπὶ λίβα καὶ ἐπὶ βορρᾶν καὶ ἐπ' ἀνατολάς καὶ ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐν τῷ σπέρματί σου ¹⁵ καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μετὰ σοῦ διαφυλάσσω σε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ πάσῃ οὐ ἂν πορευθῆς καὶ ἀποστρέψω σε εἰς τὴν γῆν ταύτην ὅτι οὐ μὴ σε ἐγκαταλίπω ἕως τοῦ ποιῆσαι με πάντα ὅσα ἐλάλησά σοι ¹⁶ καὶ ἐξηγέρθη Ιακωβ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπεν ὅτι ἔστιν κύριος ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ ἐγὼ δὲ οὐκ ᾔδειν ¹⁷ καὶ ἐφοβήθη καὶ εἶπεν ὡς φοβερός ὁ τόπος οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν τοῦτο ἀλλ' ἡ οἶκος θεοῦ καὶ αὕτη ἡ πύλη τοῦ οὐρανοῦ

¹⁸ καὶ ἀνέστη Ιακωβ τὸ πρῶν καὶ ἔλαβεν τὸν λίθον ὃν ὑπέθηκεν ἐκεῖ πρὸς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔστησεν αὐτὸν στήλην καὶ ἐπέχεεν ἔλαιον ἐπὶ τὸ ἄκρον αὐτῆς ¹⁹ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν Ιακωβ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου Οἶκος θεοῦ καὶ Ουλαμλους ἦν ὄνομα τῇ πόλει τὸ πρότερον ²⁰ καὶ ἠῤῥατο Ιακωβ εὐχὴν λέγων ἐὰν ἦ κύριος ὁ θεὸς μετ' ἐμοῦ καὶ διαφυλάξῃ με ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ταύτῃ ἢ ἐγὼ πορεύομαι καὶ δῶ μοι ἄρτον φαγεῖν καὶ ἱμάτιον περιβαλέσθαι ²¹ καὶ ἀποστρέψῃ με μετὰ σωτηρίας εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρός μου καὶ ἔσται μοι κύριος εἰς θεόν ²² καὶ ὁ λίθος οὗτος ὃν ἔστησα στήλην ἔσται μοι οἶκος θεοῦ καὶ πάντων ὧν ἐὰν μοι δῶς δεκάτην ἀποδεκατώσω αὐτά σοι

NASB

27:41 So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob." 42 Now when the words of her elder son Esau were reported to Rebekah, she sent and called her younger son Jacob, and said to him, "Behold your brother Esau is consoling himself concerning you *by planning* to kill you. 43 "Now therefore, my son, obey my voice, and arise, flee to Haran, to my brother Laban! 44 "Stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury subsides, 45 until your brother's anger against you subsides and he forgets what you did to him. Then I will send and get you from there. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?"

46 Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these, from the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

28:1 So Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and charged him, and said to him, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. 2 "Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and from there take to yourself a wife from the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. 3 "May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. 4 "May He also give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your descendants with you, that you may possess the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham." 5 Then Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram to Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

6 Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram to take to himself a wife from there, *and that* when he blessed him he charged him, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan," 7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Paddan-aram. 8 So Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan displeased his father Isaac; 9 and Esau went to Ishmael, and married, besides the wives that he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth.

10 Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place. 12 He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. 14 "Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." 16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." 17 He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

18 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top. 19 He called the name of that place Bethel; however, previously the name of the city had been Luz. 20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, 21 and I return to my father's house in safety, then the LORD will be my God. 22 "This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

NRSV

27:41 Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob." 42 But the words of her elder son Esau were told to Rebekah; so she sent and called her younger son Jacob and said to him, "Your brother Esau is consoling himself by planning to kill you. 43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; flee at once to my brother Laban in Haran, 44 and stay with him a while, until your brother's fury turns away— 45 until your brother's anger against you turns away, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send, and bring you back from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?"

46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women such as these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

28:1 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, "You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women. 2 Go at once to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father; and take as wife from there one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. 3 May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and numerous, that you may become a company of peoples. 4 May he give to you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your offspring with you, so that you may take possession of the land where you now live as an alien—land that God gave to Abraham." 5 Thus Isaac sent Jacob away; and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

6 Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram to take a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he charged him, "You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women," 7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and gone to Paddan-aram. 8 So when Esau saw that the Canaanite women did not please his father Isaac, 9 Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath daughter of Abraham's son Ishmael, and sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

10 Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. 11 He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. 12 And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 And the Lord stood beside him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; 14 and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. 15 Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." 16 Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!" 17 And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

18 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. 19 He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first. 20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, 21 so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, 22 and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you."

NLT

27:41 Esau hated Jacob because he had stolen his blessing, and he said to himself, "My father will soon be dead and gone. Then I will kill Jacob." 42 But someone got wind of what Esau was planning and reported it to Rebekah. She sent for Jacob and told him, "Esau is threatening to kill you. 43 This is what you should do. Flee to your uncle Laban in Haran. 44 Stay there with him until your brother's fury is spent. 45 When he forgets what you have done, I will send for you. Why should I lose both of you in one day?"

46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I'm sick and tired of these local Hittite women. I'd rather die than see Jacob marry one of them."

28:1 So Isaac called for Jacob, blessed him, and said, "Do not marry any of these Canaanite women. 2 Instead, go at once to Paddan-aram, to the house of your grandfather Bethuel, and marry one of your uncle Laban's daughters. 3 May God Almighty bless you and give you many children. And may your descendants become a great assembly of nations! 4 May God pass on to you and your descendants the blessings he promised to Abraham. May you own this land where we now are foreigners, for God gave it to Abraham." 5 So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram to stay with his uncle Laban, his mother's brother, the son of Bethuel the Aramean.

6 Esau heard that his father had blessed Jacob and sent him to Paddan-aram to find a wife, and that he had warned Jacob not to marry a Canaanite woman. 7 He also knew that Jacob had obeyed his parents and gone to Paddan-aram. 8 It was now very clear to Esau that his father despised the local Canaanite women. 9 So he visited his uncle Ishmael's family and married one of Ishmael's daughters, in addition to the wives he already had. His new wife's name was Mahalath. She was the sister of Nebaioth and the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son.

10 Meanwhile, Jacob left Beersheba and traveled toward Haran. 11 At sundown he arrived at a good place to set up camp and stopped there for the night. Jacob found a stone for a pillow and lay down to sleep. 12 As he slept, he dreamed of a stairway that reached from earth to heaven. And he saw the angels of God going up and down on it. 13 At the top of the stairway stood the LORD, and he said, "I am the LORD, the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of your father, Isaac. The ground you are lying on belongs to you. I will give it to you and your descendants. 14 Your descendants will be as numerous as the dust of the earth! They will cover the land from east to west and from north to south. All the families of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants. 15 What's more, I will be with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. I will someday bring you safely back to this land. I will be with you constantly until I have finished giving you everything I have promised." 16 Then Jacob woke up and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I wasn't even aware of it." 17 He was afraid and said, "What an awesome place this is! It is none other than the house of God – the gateway to heaven!"

18 The next morning he got up very early. He took the stone he had used as a pillow and set it upright as a memorial pillar. Then he poured olive oil over it. 19 He named the place Bethel – "house of God" – though the name of the nearby village was Luz. 20 Then Jacob made this vow: "If God will be with me and protect me on this journey and give me food and clothing, 21 and if he will bring me back safely to my father, then I will make the LORD my God. 22 This memorial pillar will become a place for worshiping God, and I will give God a tenth of everything he gives me."