GENESIS 28

Jacob Goes to Laban

1 So Isaac called Jacob and blessed him. Then he gave him a command. He said, "Do not marry one of the daughters of Canaan. **2** Get up. Go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father. Marry one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. **3** May El Shaddai[i] bless you, and give you many children. May your descendants become a great nation. **4** May He give Abraham's blessing to you and your descendants with you.[ii] May you inherit the land that Elohim gave to Abraham in which you are a foreigner."[iii]

5 Then Isaac sent Jacob away. So Jacob went to Padan Aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

6 Esau heard that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram, to get himself a wife from there. He also knew that as Isaac blessed Jacob and gave him a command, "Do not marry one of the daughters of Canaan." **7** Esau also saw that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother and had left for Padan Aram. **8** Moreover, Esau could see that the daughters of Canaan did not please Isaac his father. **9** So he went to Ishmael and married Mahalath in addition to the wives that he already had. She was the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth.

The Gateway to Heaven!

10 Jacob left Beer Sheba and went toward Haran. **11** When he came to a certain place, he stayed there all night because the sun had set. He took a stone from that place, and used it as his pillow. Then he lay down to sleep. **12** And he dreamed. He saw a stairway set up on the earth. The top of the stairway reached heaven. He saw the angels of Elohim going up and down on it. **13** He looked and saw Yahveh standing above the stairway. He said,

"I AM Yahveh, the Elohim of your father Abraham and the Elohim of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land where you are sleeping. **14** Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth. You will spread abroad to the west, and to[iv] the east, and to the north, and to the south. I will bless all the families of the earth through you and your Descendant.[v] **15** "Now look, I will be with you and will protect[vi] you in all the places where you go. I will bring you back to this covenant[vii] land. I will never leave you[viii] until I have done what I have told you."

16 Then Jacob woke up out of his sleep. He said, "Surely Yahveh is in this place, and I did not know it."

17 Then fear filled him, and he said, "How awe-inspiring[ix] this place is! This has to be the house of Elohim! This is the gateway to heaven!"

18 When Jacob got up early in the morning, he took the stone that he had used for his pillow and set it up for a pillar. Then he poured[x] oil on the top of it. **19** He called the name of that place Bethel,[xi] but the name of that city was Luz at first.

20 And Jacob made a vow. He said, "If Elohim will be with me and will protect me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and clothes to wear, **21** So that I come back to my father's house in peace, then Yahveh will be my Elohim. **22** "And this stone that marks the covenant,[xii] which I have set up as a pillar, will be Elohim's house. I will surely give You back a tenth of all that You give me."

[i] The Hebrew וְאֵל שַׁדַּי means "El Shaddai" = "God Almighty." (See Gen 17:1, 35:11, 48:3). God Almighty established the covenant with Abraham (Gen 12:1-3, 1 Kings 19:10-14).

[ii] God's blessing (Gen 12:1-3) continues down this line. Jesus will eventually fulfill all these promises.

[iii] Jacob received this blessing from his father by assuming the identity of the firstborn son. We too receive a blessing from God the Father by assuming the identity of Jesus, His firstborn Son.

[iv] The literary technique of Polysyndeton uses multiple "and to"s (or other conjunctions) in a series. It slows the reader and gives emphasis to each item.

[v] The Hebrew לְזַרְעֶךָ is a masculine singular noun. Word plays are impossible to translate with few words. It applies to the one nation of Israel and to the one King Jesus who will rule the earth during the Millennium. The reader should see both national Israel and King Jesus at the one same time.

[vi] The Hebrew שָׁמַר (*shaw-mahr*) means guard, keep, preserve, protect, watch over.

[vii] The Hebrew זֹאת is a Zayin-**Aleph**-**Tav**. Its basic meaning is to cut, either as a blessing or a judgment. This translation routinely renders this 3-letter word in terms of covenant. See the article "The **Aleph**-**Tav**."

[viii] Hebrews 13:5.

[ix] The Hebrew יָרֵא (*yaw-rey*) expresses fear that arises from encountering overwhelming majesty, combining emotional shock with reverential awe rather than panic or terror. Its semantic range includes fear, awe, and majesty-induced dread, but in divine contexts the emphasis falls on being overcome by the presence or significance of what is seen. Modern American English cannot carry this full range with a single word. "Awe-inspiring" preserves the fear-based root while remaining clear, natural, and non-archaic.

[x] The Hebrew יָצַק (*yaw-tsahk*) means to pour, to cause to flow, or to cast forth. It describes a steady and deliberate act of pouring with controlled precision.

[xi] The Hebrew בֵּית־אֵל means "Beth-El = "House of El." Bethel was known as Luz at the time of Abram (Gen 28:19, Josh 18:13, Judges 1:23).

[xii] The Hebrew זֹאת is a Zayin-**Aleph**-**Tav**) means to cut, either as a blessing or a judgment. This translation routinely renders this 3-letter word in terms of covenant. See the article "The **Aleph**-**Tav**."