

# Genesis 28:1-22

Genesis 28:1-5 –

Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him, “You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women. 2 Arise, go to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel your mother's father, and take as your wife from there one of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. 3 God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. 4 May he give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your offspring with you, that you may take possession of the land of your sojournings that God gave to Abraham!” 5 Thus Isaac sent Jacob away. And he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

7235 [e] wə·yar·be·kā; וַיַּרְבֵּךְ and multiply you Conj-w   V-Hifil-ConjImperf-3ms   2ms	6509 [e] wə·yap·rə·kā וַיַּפְרֵךְ and make you fruitful Conj-w   V-Hifil-ConjImperf-3ms   2ms	853 [e] 'ō·tə·kā, אֶתְּךָ you DirObjM   2ms	1288 [e] ye·bā·rêk יְבַרְכֶּךָ bless V-Piel-Imperf-3ms	7706 [e] šad·day שַׁדְּדַי Almighty N-proper-ms	410 [e] wə·'ēl וְאֵל And May God Conj-w   N-ms	3
				5971 [e] 'am·mîm. עַמִּים of peoples N-mp	6951 [e] liq·hal לִקְהַל an assembly Prep-I   N-msc	1961 [e] wə·hā·yî·tā וְהָיִיתָ that you may be Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjPerf-2ms

- 28:5 – Isaac cannot leave “Canaan since he alone is heir after Abraham dies
- Isaac gives Jacob permission to leave since Isaac is still in the Promised Land
- The term “Aramean” appears also:
  - Topographical list on a funeral temple of Amenophis III in Thebes from 1353 BC
  - In 1100 BC in Tiglath-pileser I's annals of historical records
  - Isaac pronounces the Abrahamic Covenant on Jacob. Isaac has accepted Jacob as the heir.
  - Rachel has told Jacob to flee. She will never see Jacob again.  
Isaac does not fully understand the problem and tells Jacob to “Go” find a wife.

Genesis 28:6-9 –

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 directed him, “You must not take a wife from 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 Isaac his father, 9 Esau went to Ishmael and took as his wife, besides the wives he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth.

1 [e] 'a·biw.	3327 [e] yiš·hāq	5869 [e] be·'ē·nē	3667 [e] ke·nā·'an;	1323 [e] be·nō·wṭ	7451 [e] rā·'ō·wṭ	3588 [e] kī	6215 [e] 'ē·śāw,	7200 [e] way·yar	
אָביוֹ	יִצְחָק	בְּעֵינַי	כְּנָעַן	בָּנוֹת	רָעוֹת	כִּי	עֵשָׂו	וַיַּרְא	8
his father	of Isaac	in the eye	of Canaan	the daughters	[were] displeasing	that	Esau	And saw	
N-msc   3ms	N-proper-ms	Prep-b   N-cdc	N-proper-ms	N-fpc	Adj-fp	Conj	N-proper-ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms	
1323 [e] bat-	4258 [e] mā·hā·lat	853 [e] 'et-		3947 [e] way·yiq·qah	3458 [e] yiš·mā·'ēl;	413 [e] 'el-	6215 [e] 'ē·śāw	1980 [e] way·yē·lek	
בַּת	מַחֲלַת	אֶת-		וַיִּקַּח	יִשְׁמָעֵאל	אֶל-	עֵשָׂו	וַיֵּלֶךְ	9
the daughter	Mahalath	-		and took	Ishmael	to	Esau	so went	
N-fsc	N-proper-fs	DirObjM	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms	N-proper-ms	Prep	N-proper-ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms		
	802 [e] s		802 [e] nā·śāw	5921 [e] 'al-	5032 [e] ne·bā·yō·wṭ	269 [e] 'ā·hō·wṭ	85 [e] 'ab·rā·ham	1121 [e] ben-	3458 [e] yiš·mā·'ēl
	לְאִשָּׁהּ	לּוֹ	נָשָׁיו	עַל-	נְבִיּוֹת	אָחֻת	אַבְרָהָם	בֶּן	יִשְׁמָעֵאל
-	be his wife	unto him	the wives [already]	in addition to	of Nebajoth	the sister	of Abraham	son	of Ishmael
Punc	Prep-l   N-fs	Prep   3ms	N-fpc   3ms	Prep	N-proper-ms	N-fsc	N-proper-ms	N-msc	N-proper-ms

28:9

- Esau realizes the mistake of marrying the Canaanites/Hittites
- Esau tries to make it right by marrying a descendant of Abraham through Ishmael
- Nebajoth** (brother) also spelled Nebaioth, Nebajoth) means “heights and was the first-born son of Ishmael (gen. 25:13; 1 Chron. 1:29). His tribe became a pastoral tribe originally settling in the land southeast of Canaan (Israel) and eventually came to Kedar and were known as the Nebat of Chaldea. Isaiah 60:7 mentions the “rams of Nebaioth”. Jerome identified these people as the Nabathaeans recorded in Greek and Roman history. Petra was their capital.
- Mahalath**
  - Daughter of Ishmael in 28:9 -  
“so he went to Ishmael and married Mahalath, the sister of Nebaioth and daughter of Ishmael son of Abraham, in addition to the wives he already had.”
  - Daughter of Eon the Hittite in 26:34 -  
“When Esau was forty years old, he took Judith the daughter of Beerī the Hittite to be his wife, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite

Genesis 28:10-17 –

**Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 And he came to a certain place and stayed there that 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 to sleep. 12 And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder [or, flight of steps] set up on the earth, and the top of it reached 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 Abraham your father and the God of Isaac.  
The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring.

14 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 in you and your offspring 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 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."

Egyptian headrests for sleeping:



Egyptian headrest from 2300 BC in British Museum made of calcite (called Alabaster by Egyptians)

Limestone carving of an Egyptian woman sleeping while using a headrest.

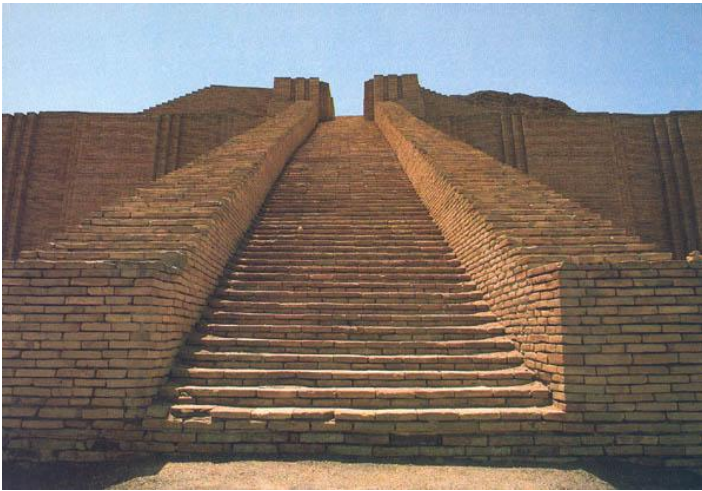
8064 [e] haš·šā·mā·yē·māh; הַשְׁמָיְמָה to heaven Art   N-mp   3fs	5060 [e] mag·gī·a' מָגִיעַ reached V-Hifil-Prtcpl-ms	7218 [e] wə·rō·šōw וְרֹאשׁוֹ and its top Conj-w   N-msc   3ms	776 [e] 'ar·šāh, אֶרֶץ on the earth N-fs   3fs	5324 [e] muš·šāb מִשָּׁב [was] set up V-Hofal-Prtcpl-ms	5551 [e] sul·lām סֻלָּם a ladder N-ms	2009 [e] wə·hin·nēh וְהִנֵּה and behold Conj-w   Interjection	2492 [e] way·ya·hā·lōm, וַיַּחֲלֹם And he dreamed Conj-w   V-Qal-Conseclmpf-3ms	12
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סֻלָּם

/sool-lawm/ meaning "ladder", "stair-case".  
The word refers to an incline structure connecting earth with heaven as the builders of Babel intended and like the ancient ziggurats were built with an exterior stairway to connect the temple with the heavenly realms. This "was set up" by God.

bōw. בָּו: on it Prep   3ms	3381 [e] wə·yō·rə·dīm וַיֵּרָדוּ and descending Conj-w   V-Qal-Prtcpl-mp	5927 [e] 'ō·līm עֲלִים were ascending V-Qal-Prtcpl-mp	430 [e] 'ē·lō·hīm, אֱלֹהִים of God N-mp	4397 [e] mal·'ā·kē מַלְאָכֵי the angels N-mpc	2009 [e] wə·hin·nēh וְהִנֵּה and there Conj-w   Interjection
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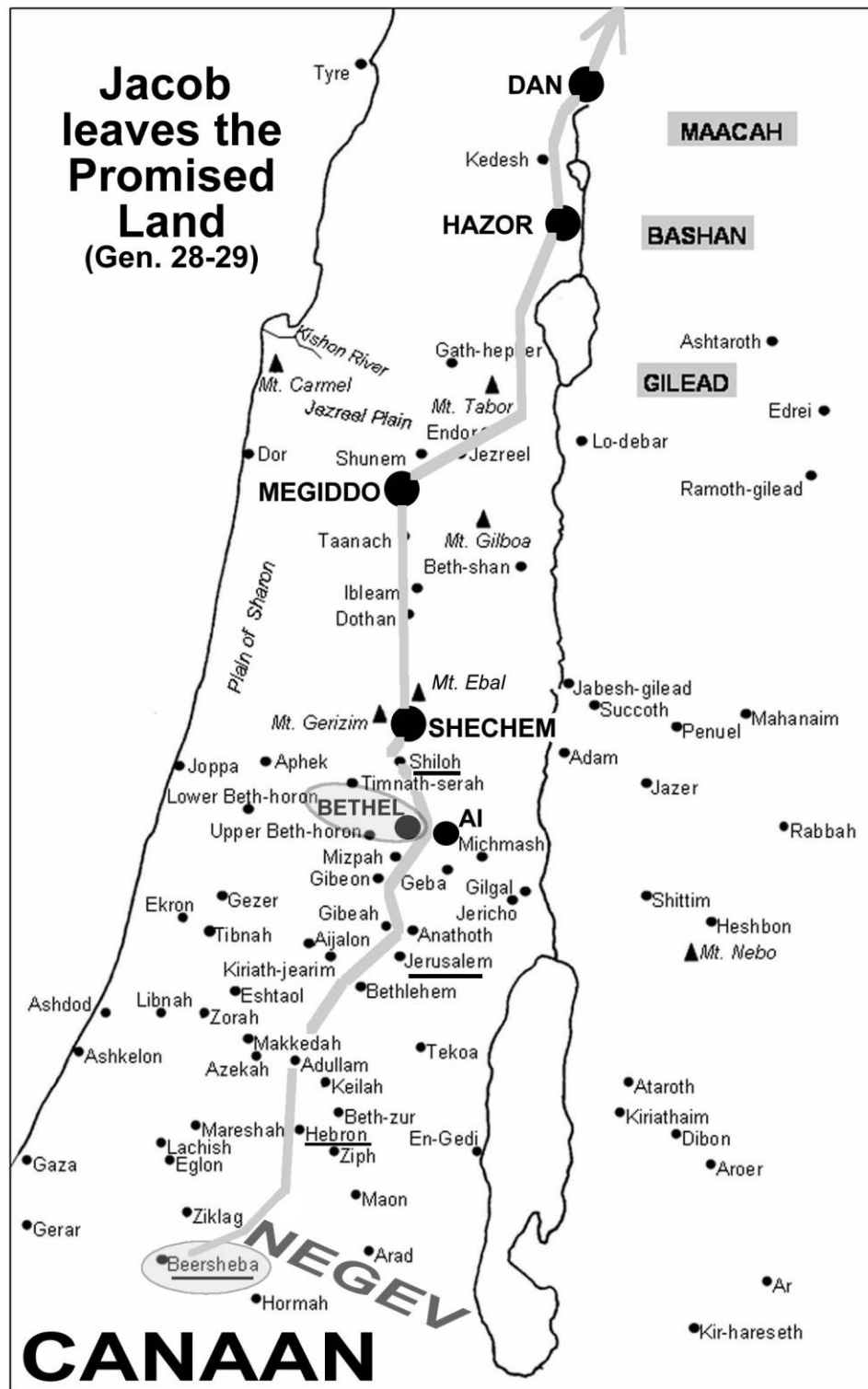
Staircase on ziggurats leading up to the deity

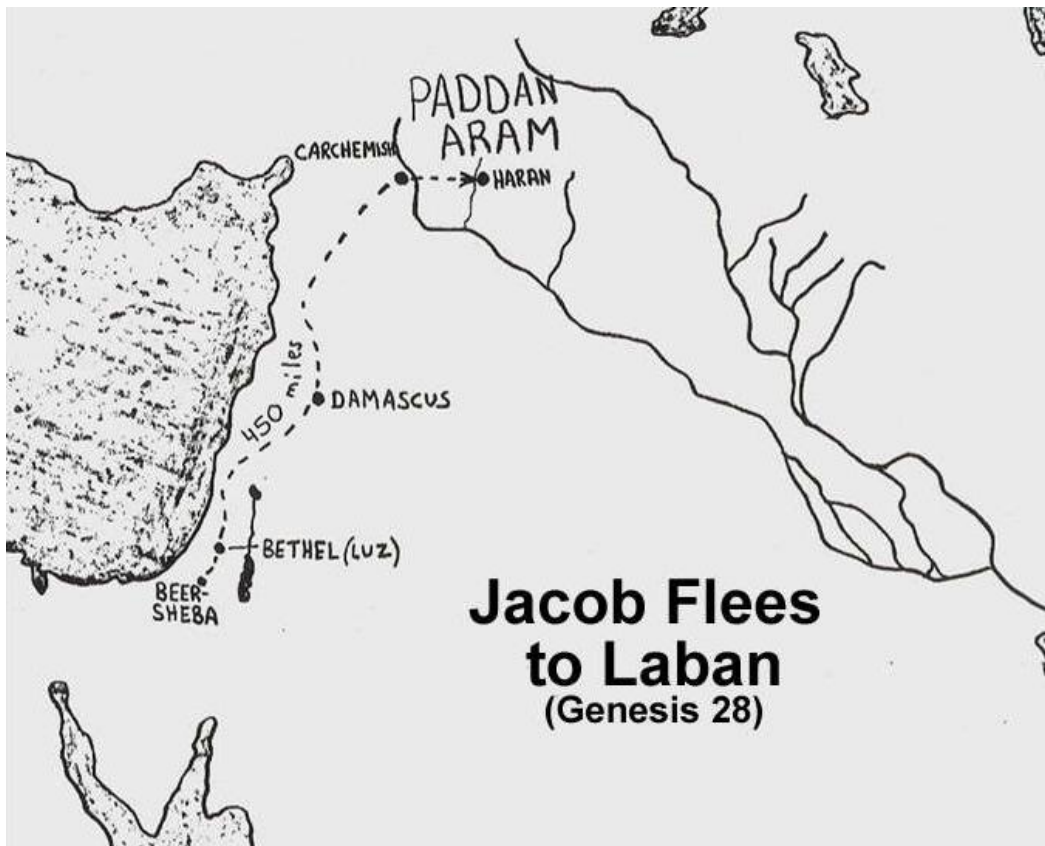
1. Beersheba to Bethel is 55 miles. Jacob arrives on the 3<sup>rd</sup> night.
  - a. Passed just west of Hebron, Bethlehem and Jerusalem on the main road.
2. The Hebrew wrd **sullam** “ladder”, “staircase”
  - a. Only occurs here in the Bible
  - b. May be connected to the verb **salal** meanin “heap up”
  - c. This suggests a “ramp” or “ascending pavement”
  - d. The Hebrew word **sullam** is likely connected to the Addadian word **simmiltu** which means “stairway”
  - e. Also, this place is a location, but a “ladder” is transportable
3. Babel was man making a stairway to heaven. This is God revealing a stairway from heaven.
4. The staircase to the heavens matches:
  - a. The culture of the day
  - b. Staircases on ziggurats which were a stairway for gods to come down
  - c. This is a portal to heaven
5. The image is of angels using the stairway, not multitudes of angels standing on the stairway

1 [e] 'ā·bî·kā, אָבִיךָ N-msc   2ms	85 [e] 'ab·rā·hām אַבְרָהָם N-proper-ms	430 [e] 'ē·lō·hē אֱלֹהֵי N-mpc	3068 [e] Yah·weh יְהוָה N-proper-ms	589 [e] 'ā·nī אֲנִי Pro-1cs	559 [e] way·yō·mar וַיֹּאמֶר Conj-w   V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms	5921 [e] 'ā·lāw עָלָיו Prep   3ms	5324 [e] niš·šāb נָשָׁב V-Nifal-Prtcpl-ms	3068 [e] Yah·weh יְהוָה N-proper-ms	2009 [e] wə·hin·nēh וַהֲיִנֵּה Conj-w   Interjection
your father	of Abraham	God	Yahweh	I [am]	and said	above it	stood	Yahweh	And behold
2233 [e] ū·lō·zar·'e·kā. וְלִזְרָעְךָ Conj-w, Prep-l   N-msc   2ms	5414 [e] 'et·tə·nen·nāh אֶתְנַנֶּה V-Qal-Imperf-1cs   3fse	le·kā לָךְ Prep   2ms	5921 [e] 'ā·le·hā, עָלֶיהָ Prep   3fs	7901 [e] šō·kēb שָׁכַב V-Qal-Prtcpl-ms	859 [e] 'at·tah אַתָּה Pro-2ms	834 [e] 'ā·šer אֲשֶׁר Pro-r	776 [e] hā·'a·reš, הָאָרֶץ Art   N-fs	3327 [e] yiš·hāq; יִשְׁחַק N-proper-ms	430 [e] wē·lō·hē וְאֱלֹהֵי Conj-w   N-mpc
and to your descendants	I will give	to you	upon	lie	you	which	the land	of Isaac	and the God

6. “stood above”
  - a. “above” is from ‘al which means “to stand on top of something (Ex. 17:9; 33:21; 34:2)
  - b. Also means “to stand beside” or “to stand over” (Ex. 7:15; Num. 23:6, 17; 1 Samuel 19:20; 22:9)

- c. In Gen 18:1, 2 Abraham sat while three men stood by (over) him. As did Abraham's servants.
- d. Point: Here YHWH may be "standing over" Jacob, but be very near him. He may be standing over the sleeping Jacob.
- e. This would explain why YHWH "said" to Jacob instead of "calls to Jacob"





Genesis 28:18-22 –

**18 So early in the morning Jacob 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 the name of that place Bethel [“house of God”], 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 give a full tenth to you.”**

1. “House of God” would indicate the location of a temple to access the temple-palace of the deity.
  - a. The temple on earth and the temple-palace in heaven were like the downstairs and upstairs of the same house (or, same temple).
  - b. This is the concept of:
    - i. Tower of Babel
    - ii. Ziggurats
2. Ancient world set up pillars
  - a. One archaeologist documented 142 standing stones in the Negev alone

- b. 36 from Israel 1200-600 BC
- c. After the tabernacle and Solomon's temple these were forbidden and became "high places"
- d. Most standing stones are uncut, rough stone
- e. Poured oil to consecrate stone
- f. Israel came here to worship YHWH Judges 20:18
- g. Jeroboam I set up Golden Calf temple here 1 Kings 12:28-30
- h. Pillars and stones forbid in Ex. 23:24; 34:13; Lev. 26:1; Dt 16:22



- 3. Jacob has just slept in the opening area of a temple at the base of the stairway, so he marked the spot
- 4. An Aramaic treaty from 800 BC had stone pillars engraved to say "House of God"
- 5. Jacob's vow matches the current deity covenants of his time
  - a. The god would make a promise (protection, provision, return to land)
  - b. At the fulfillment of these promises Jacob promises to offer a tithe of all he gained during his absence
    - i. This tithe is not imposed, but offered by Jacob
    - ii. Jacob returns to Bethel in Genesis 35:1 to pay his tithe. He builds an altar.
      - 1. If there were priests at the location they would be given the tithe
      - 2. In Jacob's case the tithe was sacrificed most likely on the altar he built
- 6. John 1:51 -

***"Jesus answered him, 'Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these.' And he said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you,[plural] you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.'"***

- a. "you" is plural addressing at least Nathaniel, Andrew, Peter and Philip
- b. Must allude to Jacob's dream
- c. POINT: Jesus is now the means of accessing Heaven:
  - i. Jesus is the priest (as in book of Hebrews)
  - ii. Jesus is the stairway