

Gen. 27:46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these *which are* of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?

Gen. 28:1 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Gen. 28:2 Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

Gen. 28:3 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

Gen. 28:4 And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.

Gen. 28:5 And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padanaram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother. So Rebekah conceived a plan to get Isaac to bless Jacob's leaving. Remember, Esau had two Hittite wives who were a source of grief to his parents. Rebekah lets Isaac know that she would rather die than have Jacob marry a Hittite woman. The next thing you now Isaac is sending Jacob to his maternal grandfather's house to marry one of the daughters of his uncle Laban. (Wonder where he got that idea!) He commanded him not to marry a Canaanite woman. Then he blessed him again and asked that God would give Jacob and his descendants the blessing of Abraham--that they would possess the land of Canaan (where they were now considered outsiders). So Jacob went.

By cross-referencing with Genesis 26:34, we know that Jacob was past 40 at this time.

Gen. 28:6 When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;

Gen. 28:7 And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padanaram;

Gen. 28:8 And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father;

Gen. 28:9 Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.

Esau heard what had happened, especially about Jacob being told not to marry a Canaanite woman. We're told that then Esau realized how displeased Isaac was with his wives. My guess is that there was enough distance between Esau's tents and his parents that they didn't interact daily as a family. When they were together, his parents were polite—never rude—or he would have already known. So now, he goes and does more wrong in trying to make it right for his parents. He marries the daughter of Ishmael, his father's half brother—in addition to his other wives.

Gen. 28:10 And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran.

Gen. 28:11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put *them* for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

Gen. 28:12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

Gen. 28:13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, *I am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

Gen. 28:14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Gen. 28:15 And, behold, *I am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of.

After looking at the map, it looks like Jacob was on a pretty long journey. After a long day of walking (I assume), he stops to sleep and uses a stone for a pillow. Then he has a dream. He sees a stairway reaching from the ground to heaven and angels are going up and down it. The Lord is standing at the top. He identifies Himself as “the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. It’s interesting that He didn’t identify Himself as the God of Jacob. I’m not sure how well Isaac has taught his children about God.

That makes me pause and really think. If the Lord were to speak to my children, would He identify Himself as the God of their mom. Has my life reflected that truth? I guess this would be a perfect example of intent vs. action. No matter how much I say or feel I desire that to be the truth, I know my actions don’t always reflect that. All I can do is ask you Lord to help me make my actions an unquestioning reflection of You working in/through my life.

Back to the story—then God restates His promise to multiply his descendants as the dust of the earth and bless all peoples on earth through him and his offspring. He promises to be with Jacob and bring him back to this land.

Gen. 28:16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew *it* not.

Gen. 28:17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful *is* this place! *this is* none other but the house of God, and *this is* the gate of heaven.

When Jacob woke up, he was afraid because he felt this was a very special place—maybe the very house of God and gateway to heaven.

Gen. 28:18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put *for* his pillows, and set it up *for* a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

Gen. 28:19 And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city *was called* Luz at the first.

When Jacob got up in the morning, he took the stone he had used for a pillow and placed it as a pillar or special place and poured oil on it. Then he named it Bethel. I thought it was very interesting that when looking at the map, this place

appears to be pretty close to where Jerusalem is. Wonder if this “certain place” (vs 11) could be the location of the temple, the holy of holies? I’ve never heard it talked about, but I’m sure it’s been studied by someone. (11/07) I decided to do some research and found that there was a rabbinic tradition connecting the location of Jacob’s dream with the site of Abraham’s intent to sacrifice Isaac and the location of the temple. One site made reference to its possible connection to the location of Ezekiel’s temple.

Gen. 28:20 And Jacob vowed 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 raiment to put on,

Gen. 28:21 So that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God:

Gen. 28:22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

So Jacob made a vow that if God would watch over him on his journey and provide him with food and clothes and return him safely to his father’s home, THEN the Lord would be his God, this stone would be God’s house ☺, and he would give a tenth of all that God gives him back to God.

In my mind there are still many unanswered questions! It’s like the more you read in the scripture and really try to understand, the more truth you discover about God and His love for us, but then Satan always attacks with thoughts on other things that are confusing and left unanswered. I think this past week I’ve just been hiding out so I wouldn’t have to confront these questions and feel like such an ungrateful, wicked person for always having questioning thoughts. Then, I tried to hide in the TV so I wouldn’t have to deal with my thoughts or the Savior. I’m so grateful that His love for me is unconditional. My heart’s desire is to be what He wants me to be, where He wants me, when He wants every minute of my life. But my biggest enemy in achieving this desire is me! Lord, I need you to give me a simple childlike faith. Satan knows my weaknesses too well. I don’t want to question. I just want a simple, unwavering faith that is reflected in my life.