

# Jacob's Exile

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The video version of this teaching is at: <https://youtu.be/SmhaRQU1qZs>

The scripture reading is Genesis 28:10-22

This Torah portion, Vayetze, means "And he went out." It tells the tale of Jacob's exile from the Promised Land. It begins with Jacob leaving the Promised Land and ends just as he is about to reenter the Land. It begins with Jacob fleeing from Esau and ends just before Jacob prepares to meet Esau. It begins and ends with a heavenly visitation. These events are like bookends of Jacob's time outside of the Land away from his inheritance. They signal that the events enclosed between them are about more than just Jacob's exile; they are about the coming of Messiah.

Jacob was born and grew up with Esau in Be'er Sheva, in the southern part of the Promised Land and the place where Isaac was living when Rebecca came to him as a bride. As Jacob prepared to leave the Land and go to Haran to claim a bride from his mother's relatives, Isaac sends him out with a blessing.

Genesis 28:3-4 NKJV 3 "May God Almighty bless you, And make you fruitful and multiply you, That you may be an assembly of peoples; 4 And give you the blessing of Abraham, To you and your descendants with you, That you may inherit the land In which you are a stranger, Which God gave to Abraham."

Isaac passed on the promise that God had given to Abraham and then, that Abraham had passed on to Isaac. Jacob was to inherit this promise but he was leaving the land!

Genesis 28:5 NKJV 5 So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

In order to travel to Haran, Jacob had to travel north through the Promised Land past Hebron, Salem and Shechem probably retracing Abraham's original route to and through the Land. Unlike the servant of Abraham who traveled with a large entourage when he went to Haran to find a wife for Isaac, Jacob traveled alone. When Jacob returns to the land with all his wives, children and livestock, he mentions this fact in a prayer to God.

Genesis 32:10 NKJV 10 "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies.

As Jacob traveled north, the day ended with Jacob still within the borders of the Promised Land. In fact, it probably took him several days of travel before he left the Promised Land.

Genesis 28:10-11 NKJV 10 Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.

He arrived at a certain place. The Hebrew word for this phrase is "ha-makome" or the place. This is the same phrase used for the place that Abraham looked up and saw when he was taking Isaac to be sacrificed. First Fruits of Zion in [Torah Club Volume One: Unrolling the Scroll](#) explains the connection.

Where was this place? Rashi identifies it with Mount Moriah, the place where Abraham nearly sacrificed Isaac. In that story, Genesis 22:4 says, "On the third day Abraham raised up his eyes saw the place (HaMakom) from a distance." Therefore, according to Rashi and traditional Jewish interpretation, the place where Jacob spent the night was on top of Mount Moriah, the future location of the holy Temple in Jerusalem. This is an exciting idea because it allows us to see the site of the holy Temple as an intersection between heaven and earth.<sup>1</sup>

When Jacob arrived at this place, the day was ending and he settled in for the night. The scriptures tell us the sun had set. It seems like a strange thing to say; of course the sun sets at night time. However, by pointing this out, we see that Jacob is entering a time or place of spiritual darkness. When he returns to the land, we learn that it is as the sun rises.

Genesis 32:31 NKJV 31 Just as he crossed over Penuel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip.

Yeshua warned his disciples that the night, a time during which no one can work the works of the Father, was coming.

John 9:4-5 NKJV 4 "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. 5 "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

At Yeshua's crucifixion and later, when the Jewish leaders rejected Yeshua and were exiled from the land, they entered a time of spiritual darkness and separation from their inheritance. At Yeshua's crucifixion, he faced the ultimate spiritual darkness of death and was victorious. This is emphasized in the account of Jacob's exile when we are told that Jacob lay down in "the place" to sleep. Sleep is often a metaphor for death. Yeshua rose from the dead to begin to form His Kingdom. Jacob will wake up to travel to Haran and begin to build his family.

As Jacob is sleeping with his head resting on a rock possibly at the same place where Abraham brought Isaac, he has a dream. I can imagine that Jacob was feeling uncertain about the future and anxious about his reception by his family in Haran. He is traveling on his own with only his staff for protection. The central object in the dream was a ladder.

Genesis 28:12 NKJV 12 Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

There at the place of where Jacob's father Isaac willingly gave his life up to God, where David interceded for the lives of his people and Solomon built the temple, Jacob saw a ladder joining heaven to earth. The word "ladder" is the Hebrew word "sool-lawm'," number 5551 in Strong's Concordance meaning staircase or ladder. This is the only place in the Bible that this word is used. It comes from the word "saw-lal'," number 5549 meaning to mound up. Rather than a ladder, it would be more like a series of terraces built up like a staircase. I can't help but think of the tower of Babylon which was probably a ziggurat built up of terraces reaching up to the sky. In that incident, the inhabitants of the earth wanted to build a tower that reached to the heavens! God descended to the earth to see the tower and prevented them from finishing it by confusing their language. What man tried to do and could not, God showed Jacob that only God could do.

Isaiah uses a derivation of the word "saw-lal'," meaning to mound up in his description of a path or a highway to Jerusalem. The Hebrew word Isaiah uses is "mas-lool'" number 4547 which is translated as highway. Like "sool-lawm" it is used only once in the Bible.

Isaiah 35:8 MKJV 8 And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The Way of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it. But He shall be with them; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err in it.

Any highway to Jerusalem must climb from either the Mediterranean Sea or the Dead Sea to the mountain upon which Jerusalem is built. Any highway to Jerusalem must, like the vision of the staircase God gave to Jacob, ascend to the heights!

God showed Jacob a staircase leading to heaven. Those who ascended and descended on it were angels. In Hebrew, there is no neuter pronoun for "it." The pronoun used for ascending and descending on the ladder is the masculine form "him." Further, the phrase "on it" is actually one word in the Hebrew with the preposition "on" coming from the Hebrew prefix "beit" which means on, for, by, or because of. The text of Genesis 28:12 could read that "the angels of God were ascending and descending on him or because of him." In this interpretation, the staircase between heaven and earth is the Messiah. Yeshua referred to this understanding of Genesis 28:12 in his discussion with Nathaniel.

John 1:51 NKJV 51 And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

In what way did Nathaniel see the angels of God ascending and descending on Yeshua? Nathaniel would see the way to heaven open and angels ascending and descending because of Yeshua! The angels came to bring news of Yeshua's birth to Zecharias, Mary, and the shepherds. They came to Joseph to warn him of the danger from Herod. They came to strengthen Yeshua in the garden of Gethsemane. The Psalmist tells us that the angels were with Yeshua at all times.

Psalms 91:11-12 NKJV 11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. 12 In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Yeshua could have called a legion of angels to protect Him from arrest and death on the cross. When Peter would have fought to protect Yeshua from arrest, Yeshua rebuked Peter with the words that He could call on legions of angels.

Matthew 26:53 NKJV 53 "Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?"

The alternate reading of Genesis 28:12 did not escape the eyes of the rabbis. While some said the ladder was the Messiah, others said that it was Jacob. First Fruits of Zion in [Shadows of Messiah](#) quote the *Genesis Rabbah*.

Rabbi Chiyah and Rabbi Yannai disagreed. One taught that [the angels in Jacob's vision] were "ascending and descending" on the ladder; the other taught: they were "ascending and descending" on Jacob.<sup>ii</sup>

In Jacob's vision, he saw God at the top of the staircase.

Genesis 28:13-14 NKJV 13 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. 14 "Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Again, we can read the pronoun “it” as “him” and understand this verse as saying that God stood above Him. In the case of standing above Jacob, God stands above Jacob as confirmation of the covenant promise given to Abraham and passed down to Jacob. Jacob would inherit the Promised Land! In the case of Yeshua, we see God approving of Yeshua at His baptism as the voice of God came out of heaven declaring that Yeshua was His son. We see God again standing above Yeshua as Yeshua enters Jerusalem and cries out that God sent Him for the purpose of glorifying the Father.

John 12:27-28 NKJV 27 "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again."

After Yeshua’s death, the Father waited at the gates of heaven for Yeshua to ascend.

John 20:17 NKJV 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'"

Before Jacob left his father and his family in Be’er Sheva, Isaac blessed him with the promise God gave to Abraham. Now, as Jacob is leaving the Promised Land, God confirms that the covenant He made with Abraham has passed to Jacob. Further, God tells Jacob that He will be with him during his time out of the land.

Genesis 28:15 NKJV 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 spoken to you."

The word “keep” is the Hebrew word “shaw-mar’,” number 8104 meaning to hedge about as with thorns, to guard and protect. God promised Jacob that He would guard and protect him especially while he was out of the land and out from under the protection of Isaac! As Jacob left the land, he had much more than a staff for protection! God would not leave Jacob until God fulfilled His promise to give him the land, make his descendant innumerable, and bless all the nations of the earth through him! God’s hand is still on Jacob!

When Jacob woke up, he acknowledged the presence of God in the place where he laid down to sleep.

Genesis 28:16-17 NKJV 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!"

When Jacob realized that God really was in that place, he became afraid. All of Jacob’s life, he dwelled in the tents of his father learning about the God of his grandfather Abraham and his father Isaac, but this encounter with God was beyond anything that he had experienced in the past. Jacob was in awe! He immediately anointed the stone that he had laid upon and set it up as a memorial.

Genesis 28:18-19 NKJV 18 Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. 19 And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously.

Jacob anointed the stone. This is the first anointing ceremony mentioned in the Bible. First events of uses of words in the Bible are important! The stone at the place that Jacob called the house of God and the gateway to heaven symbolizes the anointing of Messiah. Yeshua would be the stone that the builders rejected. He is the foundation stone upon which the kingdom of heaven is being built! The place where Jacob stayed the night was formerly called Luz. How do we reconcile this name of the place with the sages equating it with

Jerusalem and Mount Moriah? The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia gives a possible explanation for the name confusion.

We find that the name Bethel was given to “the place,” ha-maquom, i.e. “the sanctuary,” probably “the place” associated with the sacrifice of Abraham, which lay to the east of Bethel. The name of the city as distinguished from “the place” was Luz. As the fame of the sanctuary grew, we may suppose, its name overshadowed, and finally superseded, that of the neighboring town.<sup>iii</sup>

Before Jacob left the place, he made a vow to God. Jacob would return to the place and give a tithe of all that God would bless him with during his exile.

Genesis 28:20-22 YLT 20 And Jacob voweth a vow, saying, `Seeing God is with me, and hath kept me in this way which I am going, and hath given to me bread to eat, and a garment to put on-- 21 when I have turned back in peace unto the house of my father, and Jehovah hath become my God, 22 then this stone which I have made a standing pillar is a house of God, and all that Thou dost give to me-- tithing I tithe to Thee.'

As Jacob leaves the Promised Land, he goes confident that God is going with him, will prosper him, and bring him back to the land! Jacob arrives safely in Padan-Aram where his uncle Laban lives. He marries both Leah and Rachel and eleven of his twelve sons are born there. As promised, God blessed Jacob and prospered him. Jacob prospered so much that the sons of Laban become jealous and accuse him of stealing their birthright.

Genesis 30:43 - 31:2 NKJV 43 Thus the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys. 1 Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth." 2 And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and indeed it was not favorable toward him as before.

At that time, the LORD spoke to Jacob telling him to return home.

Genesis 31:3 NKJV 3 Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you."

If we look at Jacob leaving the Promised Land as being a foreshadow of Yeshua's first coming, then Jacob leaving Padan-Aram and returning to the Promised Land is a foreshadow of Yeshua's second coming. Jacob had lived peacefully with Laban and Laban's family for twenty years. In the twenty-first year, Laban and his sons turn against him. Yeshua has dwelt safely with the Gentiles for two thousand years. As we enter this new century, will the Gentiles turn against Yeshua and accuse followers of Yeshua of stealing their birthright?

Jacob listens to God and gathers up his household and all of the livestock that he painstakingly worked for even though Laban constantly changed the terms of their agreement. In spite of Laban's opposition, Jacob arrives safely back at the entrance of the Promised Land.

Genesis 32:1-2 NKJV 1 So Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. 2 When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's camp." And he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

The name “Mahanaim,” number 4266 means double camp. It was a camp of the both the family and livestock of Jacob, and the encampment of the heavenly angels. As Jacob readies to go into the Promised Land, he is met with a company of angels. When Yeshua returns to the Promised Land, He will be accompanied by a host of angels.

Matthew 25:31-32 NKJV 31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

Jacob began and ended his journey outside of the Promised Land with a visitation by heavenly messengers and the promise of God's presence to be with him. Yeshua began His ministry on Earth with a heavenly visitation. The Spirit of God came and rested on Him. It was on Him throughout His ministry on Earth and now is on us as we build His kingdom. When Yeshua returns it will be with the accompaniment of His family and the heavenly messengers.

#### Study Questions:

1. Where else does the scripture refer as "the place?" What is the significance of these places including those mentioned in the video?
2. How are the setting and the rising of the sun metaphors for spiritual darkness and spiritual light? What other instances are there in the Bible that use this metaphor?
3. What is the significance of Jacob seeing a vision of a staircase set up on earth reaching to heaven? Why did God give Jacob this vision as he was leaving the Promised Land?
4. How is God's presence with Jacob manifested while Jacob is in Padan-Aram?
5. How does Jacob's exile reveal a mystery of Messiah?
6. What new insight did you gain from this teaching? How do you respond to this new insight? How will you realign your life based on this new understanding?

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<sup>i</sup> Torah Club. Volume One Unrolling the Scroll. D. Thomas Lancaster. First Fruits of Zion. 800.775.4807. [www.ffoz.org](http://www.ffoz.org). Page 110.

<sup>ii</sup> Torah Club. Shadows of the Messiah. Book One. D. Thomas Lancaster. First Fruits of Zion. 800.775.4807. [www.ffoz.org](http://www.ffoz.org). Page 176.

<sup>iii</sup> Power Bible. International Bible Encyclopedia entry on Luz.