

Jacob's Ladder

Genesis 28



**Was it
a ladder or stairway ?**

up and down at the same time



Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob."

Genesis 27:41

When dad dies,
I'll kill him.
(he's looking
forward to both !)
– evil in the heart

So Jacob will
have to leave !



When Rebekah was told what her older son Esau had said, she sent for her younger son Jacob and said to him, "Your brother Esau is planning to avenge himself by killing you. Now then, my son, do what I say: Flee at once to my brother Laban in Harran. Stay with him for a while until your brother's fury subsides. When your brother is no longer angry with you and forgets what you did to him, I'll send word for you to come back from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?"

Genesis 27:42-45



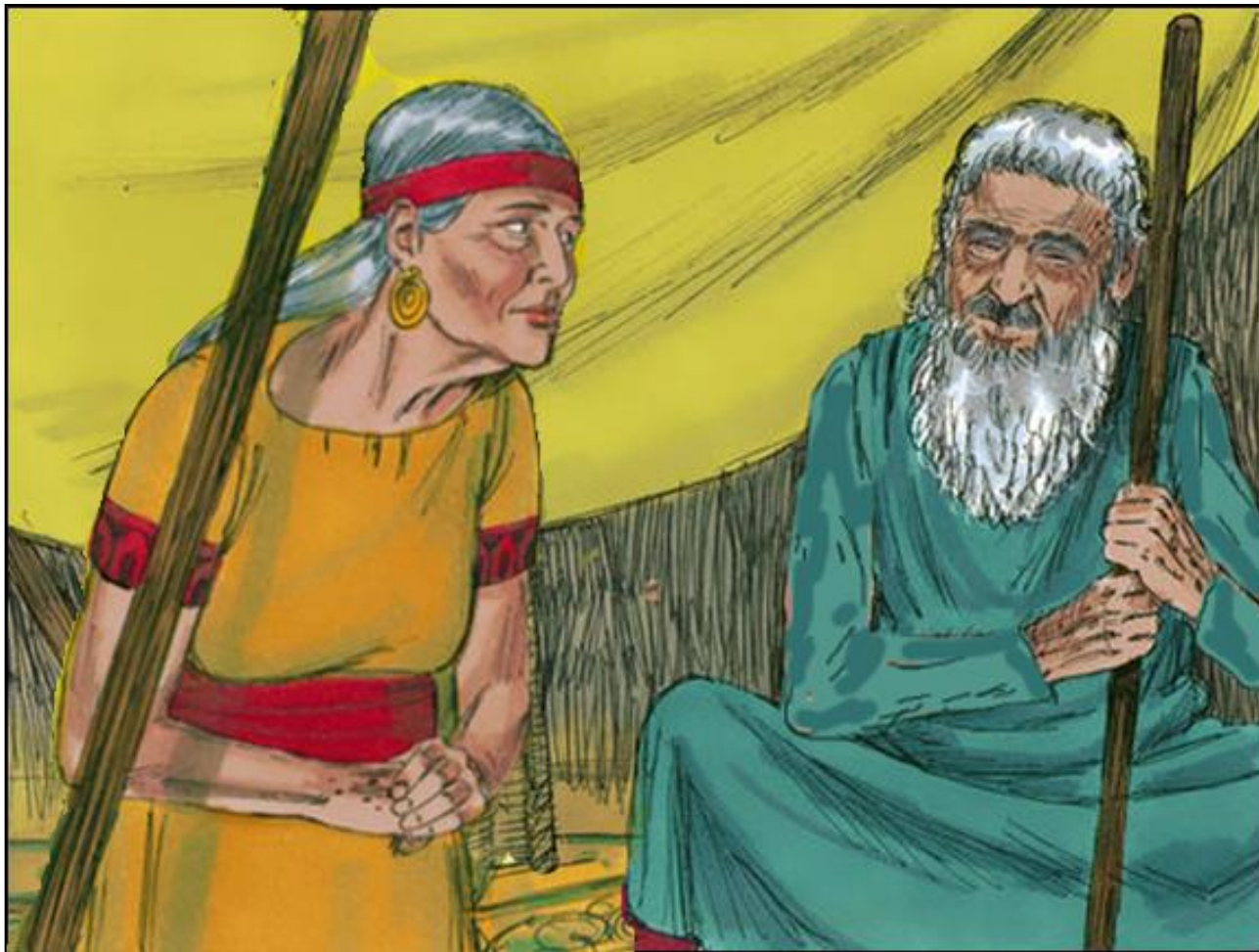
How did she find out ?

“I got you into this so I’ll get you out.”

Next plan

Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I'm disgusted with living because of these Hittite women. If Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, my life will not be worth living."

Genesis 27:46



One reason to cover another.

She knew that Isaac thought the same as her about them.

So Isaac called for Jacob and blessed him. Then he commanded him: "Do not marry a Canaanite woman. Go at once to Paddan Aram, to the house of your mother's father Bethuel. Take a wife for yourself there, from among the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother.

Genesis 28:1 -2



He blessed him !
– He's come to terms

God's plan for the family just like Abraham and Isaac was they were not to marry with idolatrous people.

How did he know about the family in Padam-aram

May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples. May he give you and your descendants the blessing given to Abraham, so that you may take possession of the land where you now reside as a foreigner, the land God gave to Abraham." Genesis 28:3-4

The blessing confirmed by Isaac:

God's blessing

Many descendants

Abraham's blessing (includes Messiah's line)

His land (even though a wanderer)

Then Isaac sent Jacob on his way, and he went to Paddan Aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, who was the mother of Jacob and Esau. Genesis 28:5



He obeyed and went to **visit** uncle Laban !

Now Esau learned that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him to Paddan Aram to take a wife from there, and that when he blessed him he commanded him, "Do not marry a Canaanite woman," and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and had gone to Paddan Aram. Esau then realized how displeasing the Canaanite women were to his father Isaac; 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.

Genesis 28:6 - 9



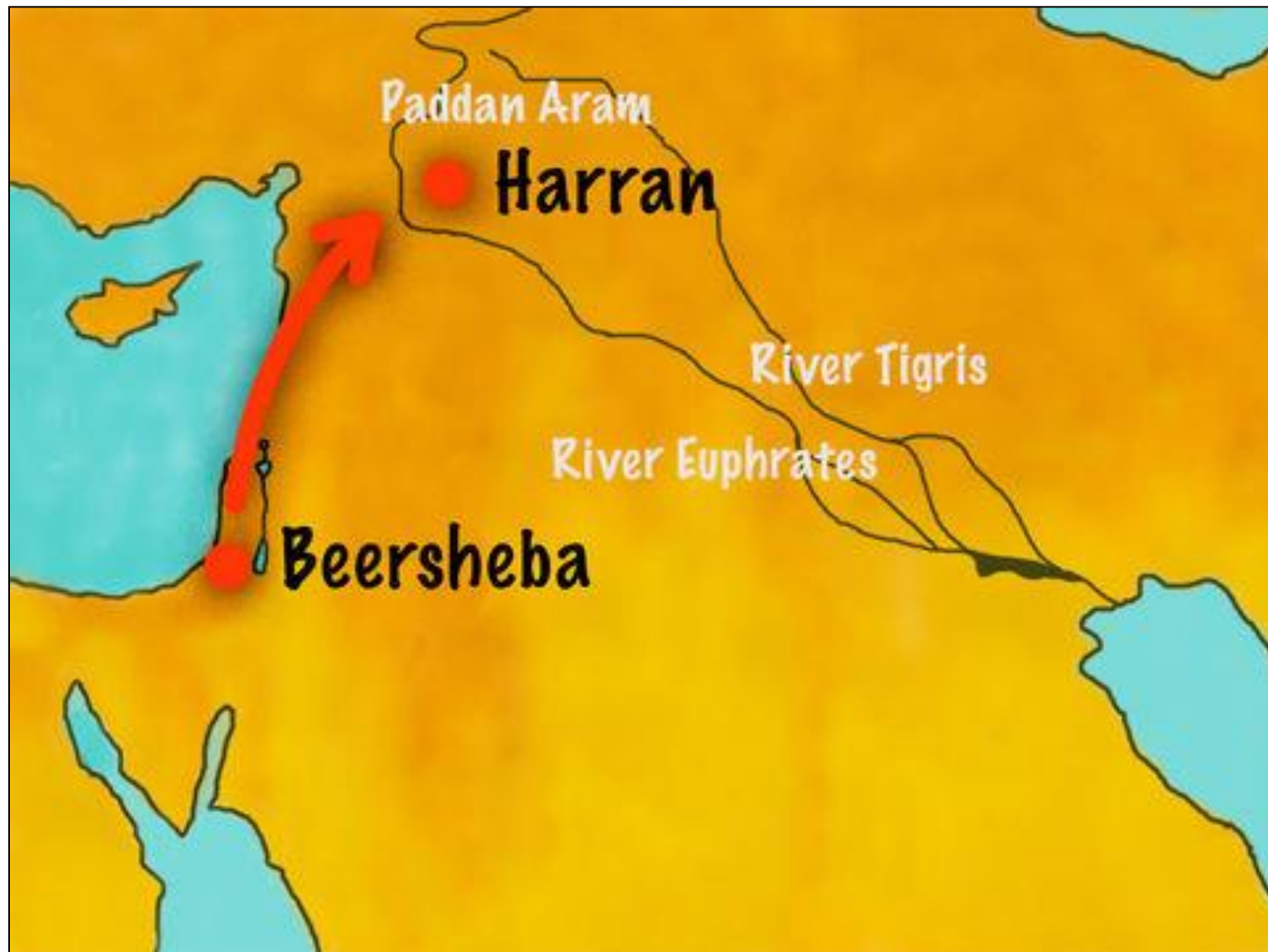
Esau now realises he had upset his parents and that Jacob had got their approval, so he marries a relative.

Cover a bad mistake by adding something better?

Bandage the disease – the sinner's way

What could he have done ?

Harran is where the family moved to after Abram left Ur



When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. Genesis 28:11

How low can you go ?

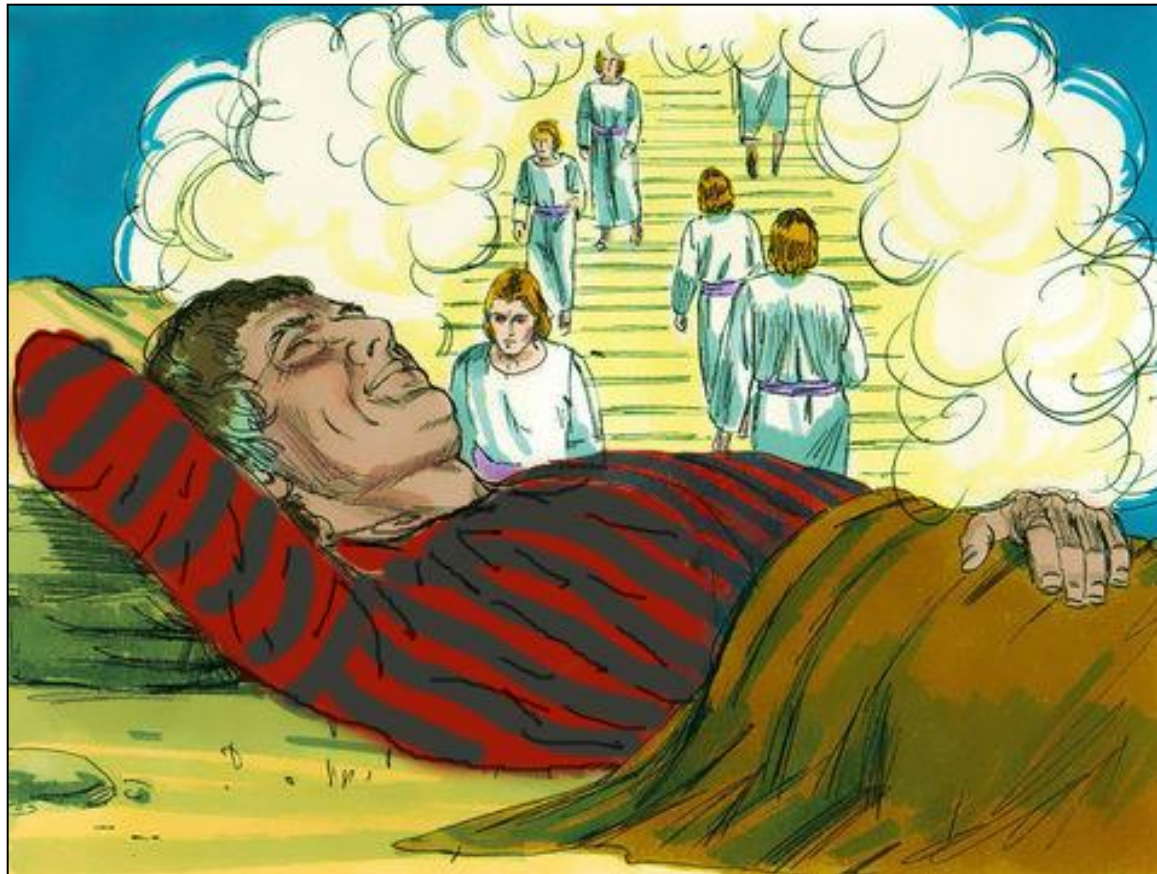


On his own
On the run
Tired out
A hard pillow

**Does he
deserve the
blessing ?**

He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

Genesis 28:12



He has a God given dream -
a stairway (heaven is open for business)

**God in grace
reaches down to
man and men may
approach God**

There above it stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying.

Genesis 28:13

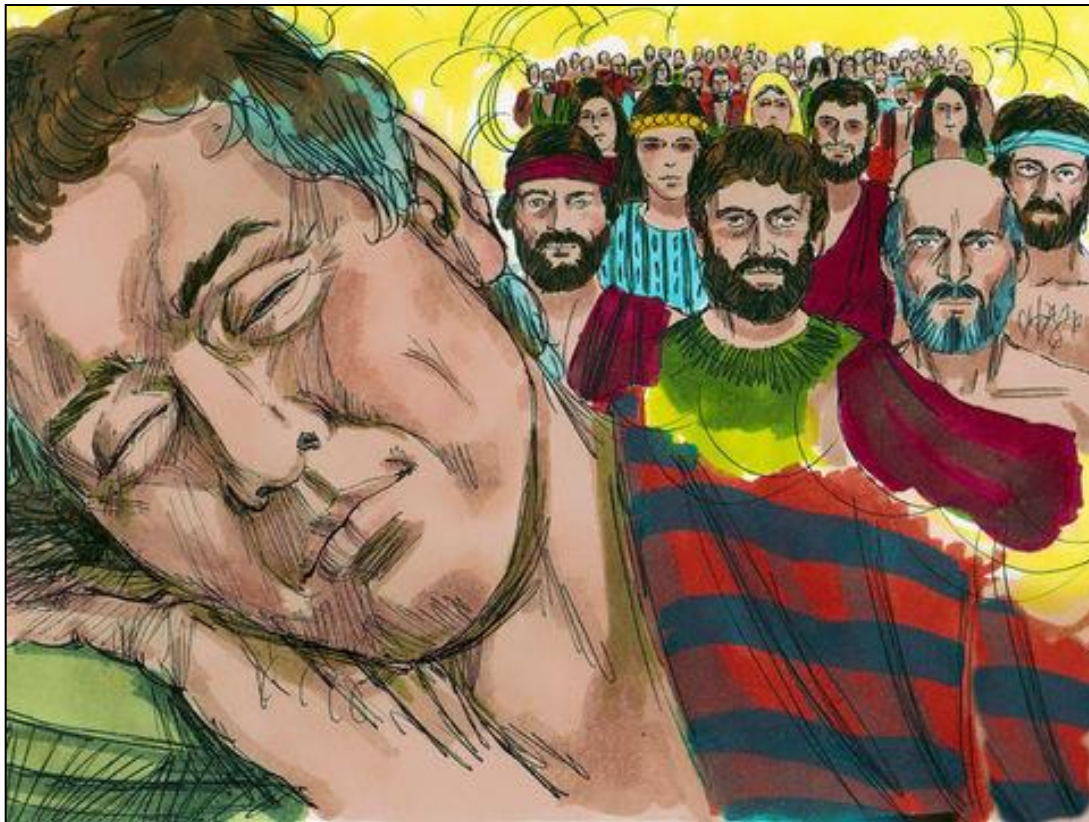
The blessing confirmed by the LORD:

**God promises to give Jacob
the land he is just about to leave**

God gives encouragement to trust – he will need it

Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.

Genesis 28:14



fruitful

Through you all families (nationalities) will be blessed

What has God given to the world through the Jews ?

(material) Science, agriculture, arts etc.

(spiritual) the Bible, the Messiah (Romans 9:4-5, John 4:22)

I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Genesis 28:15

His Promised presence (unseen but felt ?)
This runs throughout the Bible message
Promise of his return home
My guarantee !



When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it." Genesis 28:16



He woke up
– not just a dream

He is starting to
realise things
about God he
hadn't before.

Do we always get it ?

He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven."

Genesis 28:17

A bigger view of God now
Access point - not a building



Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it.

Genesis 28:18 -19



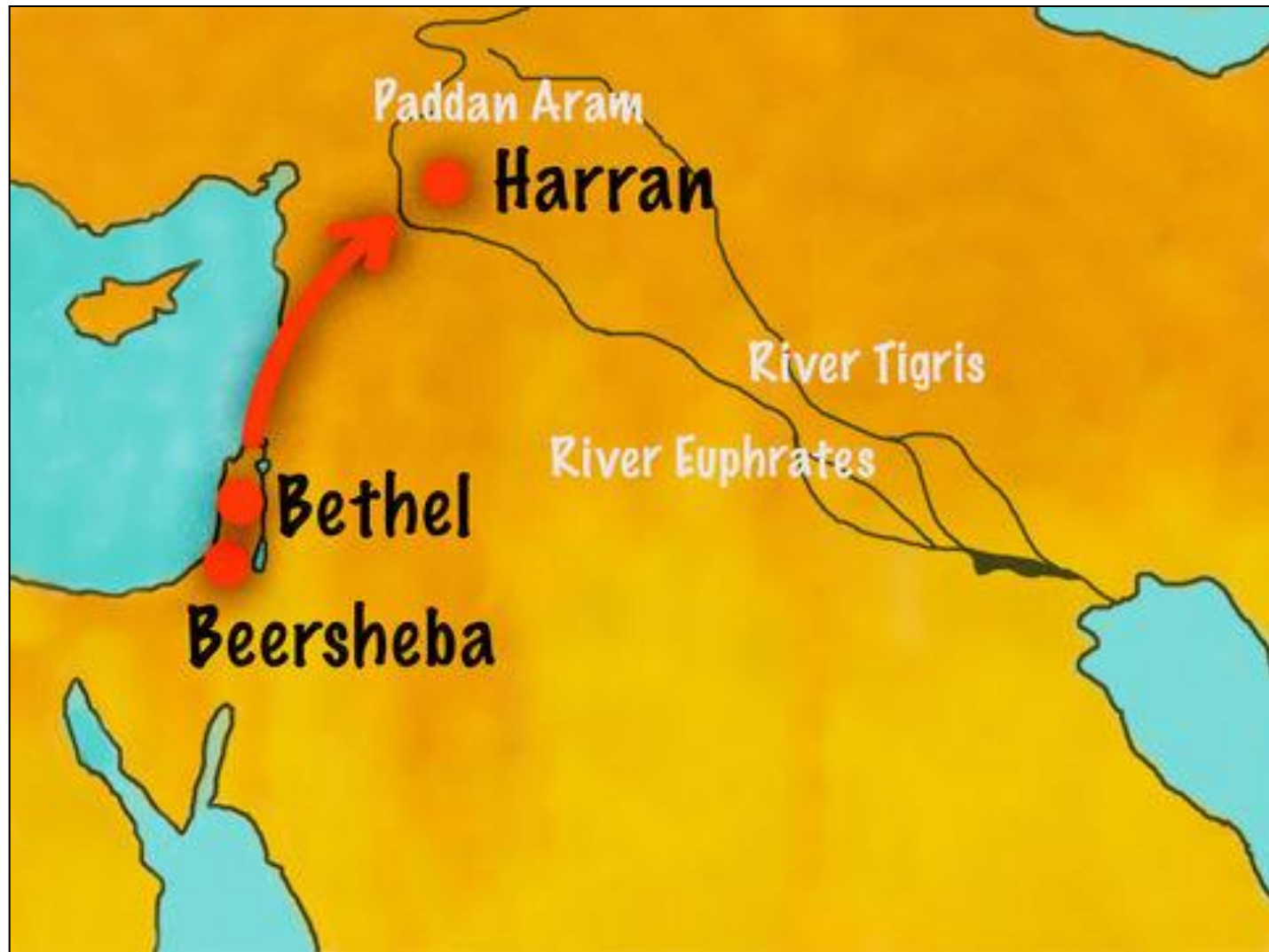
Back to sleep
but not forgotten

He consecrated
the place as
somewhere
special to
remember.

**Do you have
those special
places ?**

He called that place Bethel, though the city used to be called Luz.
Genesis 28:18 -19

Nearby town first called Luz -> Bethel



Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my father's household, ...

Genesis 28:20-21



He made a vow

If then the LORD will be my God and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth."

Genesis 28:22



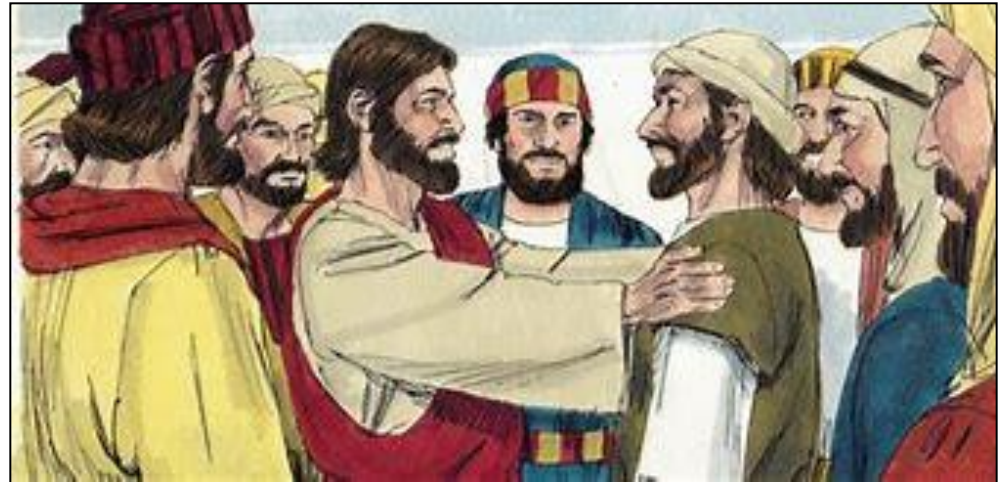
The LORD will be my God
– commitment !

A place to worship

Do a deal or is it an expression of thanks ?
My contribution (Who would he give it to ?)

Jacob is an amazing example of God's grace to sinners

What is the significance of the “stairway” ?



We need to move forward to the time when Jesus called his disciples.

What or who is the “stairway” ?

Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

"Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip. When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you." Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel." Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."

John 1:45 - 51



This was an essential starting point on Jacob's journey

Have you started yours?

It begins with meeting Jesus