

(Heb. 1:14), convey communications between earth and heaven. Christ gave the explanation of this vision as a type of Himself (John 1:51).

V. 13. *And behold the Lord stood above it.* The three-fold repetition of the exclamation "behold," makes striking the character of the objects of which Jacob became successively aware, and fixes attention upon the glory of the vision. *And said.* This is the first divine revelation to Jacob. It confirms him as in the line of blessing. *I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac.* God declared His covenant name because He came to renew the covenant promises made to Abraham and Isaac (ch. 12:2, 3; 26:2-5). *The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it.* God first renews the promise of the land to him (ch. 13:15).

V. 14. *And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth.* God renews also the promise of the seed or nation. They were to spread to the four quarters of the earth. 'This promise looks forward to the universal spread of Christ's kingdom. *And in thy seed shall all families of the earth be blessed.* The privileges of his descendants were not for themselves, but for all mankind. "The history of God's revelation becomes now the history of Jacob." (Dods.)

V. 15. *And behold I am with thee.* The tense is present. No matter where he should go, God would be close beside him; henceforth. So God spake to Isaac (26:24) and again to Jacob (ch. 31:3). *And will bring thee again into this land.* This guaranteed his safe return. *And will not leave thee;* all the time between. This verse constituted "an addition to the original promise and is made in consideration of Jacob's circumstances."

III. Makes a Solemn Vow to God, 16-22.

Vs. 16, 17. *Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.* Jacob is astonished, for he has not thought of God manifesting Himself

apart from the sanctuaries of his father. He had thought himself alone, but now God is beside him. *And he was afraid;* filled with solemn awe at the presence of God. (Compare Judg. 6:22; Isa. 6:5.) *This is none other but the house of God;* because here God had shown Himself as at the sanctuary. *The gate of heaven;* the way of entrance into communion with the spiritual world.

* V. 18. *Jacob rose up early . . . took the stone . . . set it up for a pillar;* an ancient mode of marking significant events. (Chap. 31:45; Josh. 4:8, 20; 1 Sam. 7:12.) *And poured oil upon the top of it;* to consecrate it as a memorial of the mercy that God showed him there, and to indicate the holy associations that afterwards should be connected with it.

V. 19. *And he called the name of that place Beth-el;* "house of God." It was here that Abraham erected his first altar in the land, possibly near this spot (ch. 12:8; 13:3). *But the name of that city was called Luz at the first;* the old Canaanitish name.

Vs. 20, 22. So profound was the impression made upon Jacob that he *vowed a vow*—solemnly promised what he would do upon God's fulfillment of His promise. The *if* of the vow is apparently no mercenary bargaining. The "if" seems to have the force of "since," indicating a faith to appropriate the promise and anticipate its fulfilment. The terms were very real terms to Jacob. *God with him; bread to eat and raiment to put on,* his most pressing wants. *To return to his father's house in peace,* freed from Esau's thought of revenge. His consecration was hearty and without reserve, *then shall the Lord be my God;* receiving all my worship and service. *This stone . . . shall be God's house;* Jacob would there erect an altar for divine worship. A promise fulfilled in ch. 35:1, 15; this vow of the tenth is the second recorded voluntary offering of the tithe, Abraham's being the first, ch. 14:20.

APPLICATION

And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, v. 10. At last the time had come for the breaking up of the home, and a separation has to take

place. It is usually a sad day in the home when the first one has to go out from the circle. The unity is broken. Many causes