

Lesson II.

JACOB AT BETHEL

April 13, 1913

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—Chs. 27 : 46 to 28 : 9 tell the story of Jacob's leaving his home to go to Haran.**GOLDEN TEXT**—I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest.—Genesis 28 : 15 (Rev. Ver.).**Memorize vs. 20-22. THE LESSON PASSAGE**—Genesis 28 : 10-22. Read Genesis, chs. 28-31.

10 And Ja'cob went out from Beershe'ba, and went toward Har'an.

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.

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

13 And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord, God of A'braham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

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.

15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee

Revised Version—one; the; it under his head, the city was Luz; up.**Daily Readings**—(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Secretary, 26 Old Bailey, London, England.)—M.—Jacob at Bethel, Gen. 28 : 10-22. T.—The safety of the righteous, Ps. 91 : 1-12. W.—Israel encouraged, Isa. 41 : 8-14. Th.—Jacob at Bethel again, Gen. 35 : 1-7. F.—Confidence in God, Ps. 62. S.—The people's vow, Josh. 24 : 22-28. S.—The Lord is thy Keeper, Ps. 121.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED



BETHEL AS IT NOW APPEARS

I. JACOB'S DREAM.—10, 11. From Beersheba; a city at the extreme south of Palestine, the home of Isaac, ch. 26 : 23. Seven ancient wells still exist here, and a modern town has sprung up, the residence of a Turkish sub-governor. **Toward Haran;** a city of Padan-aram (v. 6), a district in northwest Mesopotamia. The position of Haran on the main trade route from Babylonia to the Mediterranean gave to it great commercial importance. From Beersheba to Haran was over five hundred miles in a northerly direction. **A certain place;** literally "the place," probably signifying either the place appointed by God, or the place henceforward to be so famous from God's appearance to Jacob.

12. **He dreamed;** like the lad Joseph, ch. 37 : 5-10. (Compare Job 33 : 14, 15; Jer. 23 : 28.) **A ladder.. on the earth.. to heaven.** The word translated

again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of

16 And Ja'cob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

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.

18 And Ja'cob 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.

19 And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

20 And Ja'cob 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,

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God:

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.

and; the; whithersoever thou; under his head, and;

"ladder" means rather a stair. The form of the dream was likely suggested by the appearance of the nearby hill, which, in shape, resembled a huge flight of steps. The dream stair pictured the real facts, that God can come to man and man can mount up to God. **Angels.. ascending and descending;** God's servants and messengers, ever watching over His people (compare Heb. 1 : 14). Our Lord teaches that the stair pointed to Himself as the way to God and heaven (see John 1 : 51).

II. GOD'S PROMISE.—13-15. The Lord stood above it (Rev. Ver. Margin, "beside him"); bending over the sleeping emigrant. **The Lord God of Abraham.. and.. of Isaac.** Jacob was leaving the land of his fathers; but he was not going away from the God of his fathers. That God would ever be as near to him in his wanderings as in his boyhood's home. **The land whereon thou liest,** etc. Jacob was a solitary and homeless fugitive, and yet he and his descendants should own the whole of Palestine. **As the dust;** whose grains cannot be counted. **West;** the Mediterranean. **East;** to the Jordan and far beyond. **North;** to where the Jordan took its rise. **South;** to the Arabian desert. **All.. families.. be blessed;** a fingerpost passage pointing to Christ and the spread of His gospel.

16, 17. **Jacob awaked;** no longer a lonely wayfarer; the place all around him was full of God. **The Lord is in this place;** as really as where his father Isaac had pitched his tents. **I knew it not.** He had thought of God as limited to a special locality. **Afraid;** filled with awe and reverence. **Dreadful;** terrible. **House of God;** a beautiful name for the church, but also for any place where God and His people meet and hold communion. **The gate of heaven;** like the