

12341

GLENLOCK BIBLE CAMP

PREVAILING WITH GOD - A STUDY OF JACOB

Speaker: Bro. John Martin

Study #3

The Vision of Beth-el

Reading: Genesis 28

My beloved brethren and sisters and young people.

We left the family of Isaac, b&s, with Isaac himself in that stuttering impact of knowing he had been deceived and realizing that the hand of God was behind all of these things; that despite the deception, the lack of confidence, the lack of trust that Rebekah and Jacob may have had in God, Isaac knew, b&s, that God Almighty, the covenant God of the fathers had overshadowed all those circumstances, and was man enough to bow before the mighty will of God; and despite the beseeching of his favourite son, he withstood that emotional appeal, b&s, and was determined to bless this boy, Jacob.

One can only stand in awe of Isaac's reaction, because whilst we may, b&s, have looked as it were, a little ensconced at his attitude towards Esau, of the blindness he exhibited, one can only stand and admire him when we read in the first few verses of chapter 28, the terminology he used to Jacob, his son, when he fully realized that this was indeed, the true seed of Abraham! The prophecy which he gave him, wasn't given with any hesitancy or with tongue in cheek, in was given in a full-hearted way, in which it marked Jacob out as the true seed of Abraham, which Isaac had truly accepted and proved him truly to be, what Paul says he was, a man of faith. You listen to what he told that boy!

Genesis 28, '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'. That, b&s, was in itself an absolute admission on the part of Isaac, that Esau was unfit for that position; it was in itself an admission at that point. Then he says, 'Arise, go to Padan-aram to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father' (and there's another admission, b&s, in the very terminology that he used there, that he recognized Rebekah's part in the whole transaction) 'thy mother's father' acknowledging the kinship, the affinity that existed between mother and son was right, because although they had acted wrongly, their motives were higher, and that in itself was another admission by this very great man, the man that had previously said to Esau, 'be lord over your mother's son', and she only had one other son and that

was Jacob. And then he said in verse 3, 'And God Almighty bless thee' and as we pointed out before, b&s, here now he was calling upon the covenant God of the fathers, as Moses was caused to write in the 6th chapter of Exodus and verse 3, 'By my name, God Almighty I was known to them; I was not known to the fathers by the name of Yahweh, but by my name, God Almighty, was I known unto them'. This was the covenant God of the fathers.

We might puzzle at that, b&s, I don't think it's any puzzle at all! Why wasn't God known to them as Yahweh? Didn't they know the name of Yahweh? I think they did, I don't think there's any doubt about that, but it wasn't the name that God revealed Himself to the fathers. There was a difference and the difference was this, in the name of Yahweh we have a name prophetic of God's purpose to involve into His own being, as it were, a multitude of people. That's the whole expression of the name of Yahweh, is it not? He Who Will Be, involving within His own self, His characteristics, His very physical being, you might say, in the age to come and we'll become co-substantial with the Deity; it's prophetic of that wonderful purpose. But when that purpose is accomplished, b&s, the name of Yahweh being prophetic will no longer be applicable in the kingdom. We will go through the life of the kingdom under the shadow and the protection of God Almighty, and as our hymn says and I believe rightly says, hymn 240, 'that those that receive the pebble and the holy name of El' and that's what they will receive! It will no longer be 'He Who Will Be' but the 'Mighty One Who Is'. Now then you go back over the history of the fathers, isn't it applicable then in their case, when God was not calling the multitudes, was He? what God was doing was establishing the 'seed', through whom that multitude would be established, and therefore, He was laying the foundation of power. And what is power? but faith! FAITH IS POWER, b&s, and so these three men had God revealed to them as 'God Almighty', the power in the lives of an individual, out of which was developed the multitude. And of course, the seed of Abraham was Jesus Christ our Lord, and He came upon the earth, b&s, and manifested unto us, God Almighty! He was POWER WITH US, ImmanuEL He was called; that's what they said He would call Him, ImmanuEL, not Yahweh, though He was Yahweh, no doubt about that! but in a very, very peculiar sense, the boy that was born of Mary, was EL (power with us) because He was the seed, and out of that seed was going to be developed, the Yahweh name, the multitude of people!

And so God says, 'I didn't reveal Myself to them as Yahweh, it wasn't My purpose at that stage to develop the multitude, but to promise the multitude, on the basis of individuals having faith in God Almighty. And Paul picks that point up, b&s, when he says, 'Abraham when he considered his own body now dead, and the deadness of Sarah's womb, he gave credit to God that what He had promised He was able (or had the power) to perform'. And that's faith and that's faith in God Almighty, that's why I believe the Yahweh name was not so much that it wasn't known to them, it was known alright, it just wasn't applicable to the circumstances. This was power being established out of which the Yahweh name would be developed, and that power was seen in the lives of three individuals from whom a great multitude was to be called to their sides, as the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So 'God Almighty bless thee', he said, and he linked that boy with his own name, with Abraham's name for all time; he accepted him, b&s,

and then he went on to tell him, 'that God would multiply thee and make thee a multitude of people'. And that's an important phrase because it's the word 'qahal' the word 'multitude'; the first time it's used in the bible. Whereas Abraham was promised that he would be a multitude of nations, what God was saying was this of course, that when Abraham's seed became fully manifested, Abraham would be the father, not only of Jewish people, he would be the father of many nations, and the Jews made an awful mistake by considering that they were descendants from Abraham, that showed that they were in the kingdom. Rubbish! God said he was the father of many nations; but here's a different word. Here's a word that means a 'congregation of people called out' an ecclesia, and Jacob was to be developed into an ecclesia of people. So as a father, Abraham offered up his only begotten, Isaac and developed through Jacob into a multitude of people, as I said before, there was the whole plan and purpose of God expressed in those three men; they're God Almighty, they've power, b&s, upon which the purpose of God is operating. And so Jacob is promised a multitude, and of course, it was fitting wasn't it? that that promise was given to him, that particular promise of the multitude, he of course, had the 12 tribes. Out of him sprang the 12 tribes of Israel.

Now you take what Isaac goes on to say, notice the full..there's no hesitancy with Isaac, 'therefore, and give thee the blessings of Abraham', you know, he couldn't be more specific than that, could he? whereas he'd been cloudy before in the blessings he gave to Esau (when he thought he was blessing Esau) now there's an openness about this. He said, 'Look, God give thee, Jacob, the blessings of Abraham'. You boy, you take it! there was no hesitancy there. Now what was He giving him? What is the blessing of Abraham, b&s? Well, we say immediately, every time we think of Abraham's blessing, land, land that's what comes to our mind and rightly so; it's true, because in Genesis 3 and 15, it's the conqueror of sin and death, in Genesis 12 it's the land, and when we come to 2 Samuel 7 it's the throne. And that's the plan and purpose of God with ourselves, One would come and conquer sin and death for us, give us an inheritance and let us rule in that inheritance; that's the three great promises, but here's the land, of course, which is important. But there's far more than that involved in the blessing of Abraham, and this is wonderful. We won't turn all these scriptures up because they tell me I'll be talking for a long time, but the thing is, when we come to this point, what is the blessing of Abraham?

Now Abraham looked into the stars of heaven and God said, 'So shall thy seed be' and Paul gives us a word picture of what Abraham did; he went out there under that Palestinian sky, he looked up there, b&s, and he looked down there and he diligently considered that body, dead! Now dead, and having considered it diligently his body being dead, he looked up there and believed implicitly that his seed would become a multitude, and God says 'that's righteousness!' What's righteousness? Righteousness, b&s, is a belief in God to do something that you can't do, that was accounted unto him, what was it? A belief in a human impossibility, that's righteousness! we hear a lot said about righteousness, that's righteousness, a belief in what is humanly impossible, I'm dead but I believe it! That was accounted unto him for righteousness, now then, in the very next few verses in Genesis 15, Abraham proposes the question to God, 'Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? and many people see in that a contradiction, they say,

on the one hand we say Abraham believed this, now he's saying whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? But what Abraham was asking was not as a matter of doubt, otherwise God would never have said, 'that it was counted unto him for righteousness', because he believed God. What he wanted to know b&s, was this, having diligently considered that body and that promise, what was troubling Abraham was this fact, how was God going to do that in the light of Abraham being a sinner? and God immediately brought forth the sacrifice, and the blessings of Abraham was seen in sacrifice and included the forgiveness of sin. And when the apostle Peter just after the day of Pentecost, in the second speech that he made in the 3rd chapter of Acts, spoke to the Jewish people, he said, 'unto you first God, having said His promise which He made to Abraham, in turning every one of you away from his iniquities', so the blessing of Abraham, b&s, was the almighty blessing of God in our lives, of the only power available to us to overcome sin, namely the forgiveness of it. And of course, the motive, power and force to resist it, true; no one's suggesting that we just go on sinning and just being forgiven, but if we had not that power of forgiveness in our lives we could never be released from the stranglehold of sin. So when Isaac told Jacob, 'God give thee the blessing of Abraham', that boy stood in relationship to God where he could now go forth with every conviction, that ultimately God could perfect him, by giving him the forgiveness of sin. And in that light, what did Paul say 'The Redeemer shall come to Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob', and that's almost the very words that Peter used when he talks about the promises made to Abraham, 'He will turn every one of you away from your iniquities through the blessing of Abraham. 'The Redeemer shall come to Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob', boy, says Isaac, the blessing of Abraham is yours and that was a wonderful position that Isaac put him in. But the blessing of Abraham was not with Esau, as Hebrew 12 says, 'he was rejected', that's what Paul says, 'he was rejected', but this boy stood in relationship to God whereby the forgiveness of God was offered to him.

There is something else involved in the promises made to Abraham, b&s, and being passed on to Jacob. You see, they couldn't be passed on formally, they just couldn't be passed on formally without some moral connection. Paul makes that point, 'nobody can stand in relationship to the promises made to Abraham, merely because they go through the waters of baptism' as a mere mechanical act, after answering a set of questions by an academic knowledge. Paul never says that! he says, 'So they that be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham', that's his point. If a person hasn't got Abraham's faith all the knowledge in the world and the baptism he undergoes is useless; 'those that be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham, so when Isaac said to Jacob, the blessing of Abraham be with thee, he acknowledged him as a faithful man. That's what he was doing and he went on to say, 'that thou mayest inherit the Land wherein thou art a stranger'. He acknowledged him as being separate, he acknowledged the life of Jacob (wherein thou art a stranger) not will be, and he marked him out in those words as utterly distinct from all those around him.

And he went on to tell him, and he sent him away, 'And Isaac sent away Jacob and he went to Padan-aram to Laban' (now listen to this), 'unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob and Esau's mother', and there was the final

vindication of Isaac's mind on the whole question. Not that those are Isaac's words, but the record of scripture is inspired, b&s, (I fully believe that, and the more I study it the more that conviction is embedded in my heart, that book is inspired), and there's a comment that tells us Isaac's mind as he sends that boy away. Now it's no longer Esau and Jacob, it's Jacob and Esau and the relationship is to the mother! He sent him away to Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob and Esau's mother! And there was a full-blooded confession of his own weakness, a full-blooded, full-hearted, emotional confession of his weakness and of the power of the strength of God, and of the wonderful character of that boy, and of the good influence of his mother. And if that's not faith, b&s, I've never seen it! and when you read that record carefully through there, Isaac called Jacob unto him, it's moving, b&s, it is to me, it's moving to see that, to see the way the boy was blessed!

And then as if, to prevent the contrast before he finally leaves the land of Canaan , we have once again, introduced into the record, a classic example of the thinking of the flesh. You know, when the Lord Jesus Christ confounded the Scribes and Pharisees, they were talking about parenthood and Jesus pointed out He was the Son of God and also the son of Abraham, and they disputed it and they said they were the sons of Abraham. And so the conversation went on and on and on, in the 8th chapter of John and they just couldn't understand the Lord; they just couldn't grasp what the Lord was saying, so the Lord finally said, 'Look, why cannot ye understand My Words? He said, 'I'll tell you, because it's impossible. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lust of your father ye will do'; he was a murderer from the beginning and was not in the truth, because there never was any truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks out of his own fleshly heart, he's the father of a lie, and he's your father!' In other words, He was saying, you're on a different wave length to Me, you'll never understand my mind because our minds are different'. Now you have a look at the mind of Esau! have a look at the mind of Esau as set forth in the next few verses. Now you just take this fellow just standing there, this great brute of a fellow covered all over with red hair, huge individual, rough, coarse, greedy, uncouth, irreligious, a fornicator. Now let's read it carefully, 'When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob', #1. he saw it, he didn't understand it, he just saw it. 'And sent him away to Padan-aram, 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. And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram. And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father (it didn't please his mother either, but he didn't care about that) Then went Esau unto Ishmael and took unto the wives which he had'. Now notice the way that he thinks! here's this great brute of a fellow and he can't work all this out. What's going on here? he thinks about it, the carnal mind; he's blessed him, yea, and he's sent him away to Padan-aram and what for? what did he go to Padan-aram for? to take a wife, Oh, yes! oh, he'd love to take a wife of the daughters of Canaan, why? can't understand that? got to go over there to get a wife! not going to take these women here! The silly guy he's gone and done what his mom and dad said, and that seemed to please them; dad doesn't like my wives! Honestly, the way that record is written, and the way it's punctuated with 'and he saw', he only saw it with his eyes, it never dawned on him why his father didn't like the daughters of Canaan! Aholibah, 'out of a harlot's tent', wouldn't

that be a good tart to have around the place? It never dawned on him, there's not a suggestion in those verses, b&s, not one suggestion at all, of the real reason behind why his father didn't like those women. He didn't care about his mom, notice that! his father didn't like his wives. His mother's opinion didn't count for an atom with him; now there's the thinking of the flesh! and he had to see it with his eyes and there were 5 things he had to see before it dawned on him, and mark you, he married them at 40, this is 16 years after he married those women, finally, it dawned on him that they weren't popular in the house! It's incredible, and there is the thinking of the flesh! But what does the flesh do? Well, they sent him to Padan-aram, 600 miles, just to marry a different type of woman, well, I'll fix that (he's got one on either side of him) so he goes to Ishmael (here's the extent of the carnal mind towards the Word of God). He goes to Ishmael! his dull intellect says, 'I don't understand this, but he sees that we've got to marry relations!' so he goes to Ishmael, and he says, I've got to be careful here, I want to get back into dad's favour because there may be a little blessing left; I better marry the purest strain, so he takes to himself Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son (that's deliberately mentioned because he's got to get some connection with Abraham) and she is the sister of Nebajoth'. Now that's twice repeated in the record, not here but back in chapter 25, it's repeated that she's the sister of Nebajoth, what's the point? Well you see, Nebajoth was the firstborn of Ishmael, and what this fellow wanted to do, he wanted to get to the purest strain; you see, let's get a girl that was of Ishmael's first wife Now that's the extent of his knowledge. But look, incredible, he thought that was going to put him on the pinnacle of glory! B&S, Ishmael was the son of an Egyptian bondservant, and Nebajoth was the son, of course, of Ishmael and Hagar went and got for Ishmael another Egyptian wife; of all things, she was an Egyptian producing the son of the slave, as it were, and she gave as a gift to him in Genesis 21 and verse 21, she marries Ishmael off to another Egyptian woman, and she has Nebajoth and another girl, his sister Maralath; and so this fellow thinks that he's got to the very heart of the promises to Abraham! What an idiot and what does Paul say about Ishmael? 'he was cast out. Now there's the extent of the thinking of the flesh.

And if that's not evidence of the dull intellect and the brute thinking of Esau, I've never seen it! and it took him 16 years to come to the knowledge, that Isaac required some remote connection with Abraham. Now there, b&s, if ever you've seen in those first few verses of Genesis, there is, I believe, abundant proof of what we've been saying all along, when Rebekah was told 'two manner of people shall be separated from your bowels'; and we are separated from the world, aren't we, b&s? We're separate from the world because we've perceived not by our own strength or by our own might, but by the grace of Almighty God, we've perceived a connection with Abraham on a spiritual principle; and the world outside even though they may be religious as far as their external appearances are concerned, through that connection it is made absolutely unnecessary, and if necessary at all, then it has to be remote. Now there is the absolute difference between the two of them!

And so Jacob leaves home and what do we read in verse 10, 'And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran'. You know, that's expressive, oh, that's expressive! He went out of Beer-sheba and he went towards Haran, and God Almighty,

b&s, was taking him into Syria to get Syria out of him! For he had Syria in him, it was born in him; he'd seen it in his mother, he'd never perceived it but she was a true Syrian. They were full of schemes, true as I said, she was a wonderful woman, we don't want to defecate the character of Rebekah; but no one's perfect, no one's perfect except the Lord Jesus. She was not perfect, she was a marvellous woman but she was a Syrian; now this boy's got to go to Syria to get Syria out of him. And it's rather beautiful, he went out from Beer-sheba and he went towards Haran. Beer-sheba means 'the well of the oath' and that's just what had been given him, the oath of God. The word for 'oath' in this place by the way, is the same word for 'seven'; the number 7 is the number of the covenant; Beer-sheba was a well established by Abraham, b&s, he fought hard to maintain it against the Philistines, it was lost for awhile to the Philistines, Isaac came on the scene and he went back and dug that well again and renamed it 'Beer-sheba' because his father had called it Beer-sheba; so it was a well in the land of the Philistines that the patriarchs had grappled for, struggled for and maintained, and it became their well! And it was around that well that Jacob spent the best part of his younger life; he only moved around that well, the well of the covenant and now he's gone out from that and he's gone to Haran which means 'dry and arid'. So leaving a well of water where the covenant had sprung up into life as far as he was concerned, he had now to face a dry and arid wilderness as far as spirituality was concerned, and he's off to Syria!

He went off to Syria, and you know, b&s, in chapter 32 and verse 10 there is proof that Jacob went alone. He went alone and it says in verse 10, 'I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff' (and the RSV says 'with only my staff') I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands'. So when he went out, b&s, it is pretty obvious that Jacob traveled alone; rather odd that is, because he didn't come from circumstances of absolute poverty. And it wasn't the custom of the time, to send them along on their own, but you see, it was the extremity of the situation that demanded haste for him to get out. Rebekah pressed the issue with Isaac, she never mentioned the threat of murder, but she mentioned the fact of the danger of him marrying outside the truth; after all said and done, let's bear this in mind, they were twin brothers. Esau was married at 40 so now that 16 years had past, it was time Jacob was married, and there was a danger, b&s, now that this man had reached this age, that he would marry. And so Isaac saw the urgency of that, but behind Rebekah's mind was this threat of murder; so it's obvious because of the urgency of the situation, the boy left quickly and he left on his own. And there he went away with only his staff.

And we read in verse 11 of chapter 28, 'He lighted upon a certain place' and that also is expressive; you know, in the AV it would seem that he just sort of arrived there, but in the Hebrew the word 'certain place' means 'the place'. And three times in that verse we have mention of it, and every time the definite article is there; 'he arrived at the place, and the place was Beth-el, which of course, is north of Jerusalem, and he traveled from Beer-sheba and he'd gone to Beth-el, and he alighted at the place. Now it would read, would it not? that he arrived there at the first night, that's how I read it. It would seem to me that the record is telling us that he arrived there the first night; if he did, then he had

traveled that day 40 miles, where in an earlier record we read, 'that from Hebron, Abraham traveled when he sacrificed Isaac unto the regions of Jerusalem and it took him three days'. But this boy traveling alone, evidently was pressing on and it seems to me, b&s, that he was anxious to arrive at not a certain place but the place, and here was a very sacred place, a place at Beth-el, which are only seconds as far as the patriarchs are concerned, to Shechem! Shechem, of course, holds pride of place as far as the historical records are concerned and the principle of Shechem is beautiful (don't get me sidetracked onto that, because the principle of Shechem is separation on the basis of promises and that's seen right throughout the bible in a remarkable way) but here at Beth-el the principle was established by Abraham, when he stood there, b&s, with locked view looking down over the plains of Jordan, which in those days was like the garden of Eden. And looking back towards the hills of Judea towards Beth-el, seeing down there 'ruin', Hai, seeing up here 'the house of God', and Abraham made that immortal choice, and he chose the house of God, and let Lot go to the plains of Sodom with his evil neighbours. And he had immortalized that place by that very act, and established an altar there, and that altar became a famous altar in Israel, and there Abraham's faith was seen! An outstanding man, he had chosen the house of God above all else, and that was the choice that Jacob wanted to make, and I believe that's what drove him 40 miles, a tremendous journey, driving him towards that place that he may lay down his head that night at a certain place.

Now I want you to pull these little leaflets out and compare the visits to Beth-el, the first and the last, and how interesting this is, b&s, and we can just by comparing them, you can see the principles involved. This is not haphazard this is quite designed in the record of truth, as you will easily see.

1. Jacob visited Beth-el on the first occasion in Genesis 28 and on the second occasion when he came back in Genesis 35.
2. He visited Beth-el first of all as Jacob the Supplanter, and when he finally came back to Beth-el, he was Israel, power with God. We're told by Hosea 'that He found him in Beth-el and there He spake with us, and that was the second occasion, because we're going to see when we come to chapter 35, God revealed Himself to Jacob, as a personality in a very personal and intimate way, and that's the point that Hosea is making. It's remarkable how that's done! You wait till you come to that chapter and read that record carefully, and how that God seems to appear there, not of course, personally, God does not appear to men like that; no man could see Him and live, but the manifestation was very, very personal. But here at Beth-el, the first time, it's all visionary! And the pilgrimage of Jacob was from Beth-el to Beth-el. Now look at the contrast!
3. First of all, we have Jacob arriving here alone; when he came back he had two bands of people.
4. He arrived here, fleeing from his brother; when he comes back, b&s, he was a terror to all the cities round about him, by the very power that he manifest.



5. He came to Beth-el on this occasion on his own volition; but he was finally commanded to return there.

6. There were no special preparations to come here this time, but before he went there the last time, he purged his whole company of idolatry.

7. He had a revelation of Elohim here, but he finally came back and saw the manifestation of El.

8. He named the place first of all, Beth-el, but when he arrived there the last time he called it El-Beth-el, the strength of the house of God.

9. On this occasion he says in the 16th verse, 'I knew not that Yahweh was in this place' but Hosea tells them on the second occasion 'He found Him there'.

10. He slept and he dreamt we read here, but later on, God appeared unto him; he erected a pillar here, but later on he establishes an altar.

11. He anoints this pillar here, but later on, he not only anoints it but he pours a drink offering to it, which is very significant as we shall see.

12. Here he was given the promise of protection, and when he came back to Beth-el the second time, he repeated that promise and says that 'God has fulfilled it'!

13. And this place was called on this occasion, the house of God, but he said if I ever come back here, I'll call it 'the house of the mighty ones'; because he had with him a multitude of beings.

It's not difficult, is it, b&s, by that simple comparison to perceive the lessons of Beth-el. Not difficult at all, and so he alighted on this place, this certain place. Now what do we learn? Well, Genesis 28 and verse 11 we read that he tarried there all night and because the sun was set, 'he took of the stones of that place and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep'. Now in the Hebrew, the Hebrew has it, 'he took one of the stones of that place' or one of the stones of the place, as if to point out that he picked up a particular stone. Now nobody's going to suggest that there was one particular stone there, but it could be a suggestion that he did pick up portions of Abraham's altar; I don't know, but the Hebrew is very expressive, he picked up one of the stones of that place, and he laid his head upon that, and he did wonderful things with that stone. And God said to him, 'In this place, all the land upon which thou liest to thee will I give it'; and he thought, I believe, God was making a special point about that stone, because Jacob saw the point and he immediately anointed that stone, and God promised him a fruitful house. And it was David, the Psalmist in Israel, who in the latter portion of his life said this, the sweet Psalmist of Israel, he referred to the Rock of Israel and he called Him 'the anointed of the God of Jacob'. And then he went on to speak about, my house, that God would establish; and so Jacob was laying on his house as it

were, and that stone became the foundation stone of Jacob's house. And when he brought Joseph before him, and gave the blessing upon Joseph, he said to Joseph concerning the blessing, 'that from Joseph would come a Shepherd the stone of Israel'. There were wonderful connections here at Beth-el, b&s, marvellous connections, hazily understood by Jacob at the first but revealed in a remarkable manner at the second visit. That second visit is absolutely wonderful and will, of course, be our last study together, beautiful study, in which we will see all the promises of God verified in his life, and the house of God established in Jacob's life as never before! with a multitude of people. And so there he lays with one of the stones of that place!

And then we read about the ladder in verse 12, 'He dreamed and behold, a ladder set up on the earth', now it wasn't a ladder in the sense that we understand a ladder; the only occurrence of the Hebrew word, b&s, the Hebrew word means 'to mount up like terraces'; what he saw was a staircase, a wide, I believe, a very wide and wonderful staircase. If you've ever been to Beth-el, probably few of you have, I've been there and they say, and I can understand it too, of course, the topographical changes would have made it difficult I suppose, but they say earlier on that Beth-el would give you the appearance, by the limestone and the ridges of limestone that run around in circles in those places, and the hills are almost like circular rims of limestone building up to a pinnacle, that it looks like terraces, and it does! Maybe the very suggestion of the topography of the land imprinted itself on Jacob's mind as he laid down to sleep, and maybe that was the basis on which God used it because He wanted to impress upon him, that the staircase belonged to the house of God. Maybe it was so, whatever it was, b&s, he saw this staircase, 'to mount up like terraces', the root word is a word which means 'a way cast up' which is used in the prophets as a highway to the kingdom. The way cast up because they use to take the stones out of the way, pile them up on either side of the road, to mark the roads out, and so it became a well marked, well defined highway to Jerusalem. And Isaiah the prophet particularly speaks about the highway cast up, cast up the highway; 'set up a signpost' he says, 'pointing to the kingdom, that people may know the way'.

And so Jacob saw this, so he saw a great staircase, b&s, but look what he saw! He saw it stand up on earth; God had set up that staircase on the earth, true it reached to heaven, but that's not the important point. The important point as far as Jacob was concerned, I'll show you in a minute, no doubt about this whatever, the important point was that God had set that up on the earth, and that God had established a connection between heaven and earth; and although, of course, everybody knew God's connection with heaven, 'the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S, but the earth hath He given to the children of men'. They all knew that God abode in heaven, what people have always doubted is that God has forsaken the earth; but Jacob saw that staircase established on the earth and he was being told that God Almighty was taking cognizance of his situation. Hadn't abandon the earth at all, but had established a great connection with it. That was the magic of Beth-el, b&s!

And then of course, he saw these things at a time of great anxiety; you know, b&s, the visions of the Word of God that are given to faithful men are always given, you'll notice,

in times of great anxiety and distress! They're not just given sort of hap-hazardly, you take even for example the life of the apostle Paul, he, several times, saw Christ in a vision; you turn the record up and find the circumstances in which he was in when he saw that vision, and in every case you'll find Paul in dire extremity. At Corinth when he was about to leave the city in utter disgust, the Lord appeared to him and said, 'don't you go; I've got much people in this city', it was necessary! Jacob was in dire extremity, here he is, b&s, ringing in his ears, God is telling him through Isaac, he's going to become a multitude of people! and that's all he's got, a staff; you can't produce children from wood. That man's got to believe that, and he's off to this land 600 miles away, he doesn't even know if he's going to get a wife. As his mind would have been in absolute turmoil, no wonder he hurried to that place, that he might find some connection with Abraham, the mighty one, who stood before him as an example of faith; he needed it, b&s, he needed that example, and I believe that in seeking the example of Abraham, God added to him that blessing. God showed him that his attitude of mind was right, he was running to Abraham for solace and consolation, and for the example of that man of faith; and God says, 'Look Jacob, I'm with you in that', and He put that staircase on the earth!

And then to impress Jacob that He was with him He says, 'Behold, he saw the angels of God ascending and descending on it'. Notice the order, they weren't descending and ascending for if they were, (take the staircase) if they were descending and ascending on it, it would mean they were in heaven and not with Jacob, and when they would visit him they would leave him again. Oh, no! they were ascending and descending, 'I will be with thee in all places whither thou goest', there was the message, b&s, they were ascending and descending, in other words, they were with Jacob to start with and they finished with him! That was the message of Beth-el, the angel of Yahweh encampeth around about those that fear Him, and if Jacob didn't believe it then, when he came back to Beth-el or towards Beth-el on the last occasion, he saw a vision of God's host, and he called the name of the place Mahanaim, God's encampment; the angel of Yahweh encampeth around about those that fear him. You take Paul's comment, he says, 'who are the angels?' 'They are ministering spirits (now listen to this) sent forth to minister unto the heirs of salvation'; wasn't he an heir? He was an heir in a pre-eminent sense, he was an heir of the promise of Abraham and Isaac, and those angels were sent to minister to the heirs of salvation. And there was an heir, so the message was as in verse 15, 'Behold, I am with thee and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest', in other words, b&s, God had established a connection with the earth, He would never leave Jacob in any circumstance, He would never leave him! and it's rather significant that when Jacob left Padan-aram that he was met by God's host, as if some day he would understand that some of the host stayed in the land of Canaan while he was in Syria; not at all, he had no sooner left Laban after Galeed and severed his connection once and for all with Laban, than God's host appeared to tell him, 'Jacob, all your schemes, peeling the strips of bark off pieces of wood, and putting them in troughs that the cattle might gender and have diverse kine; all your schemes and planning-they're useless Jacob, we were there all the time. 'I WILL BE WITH THEE IN ALL PLACES', ascending and descending upon that place, now there was the great message!

Now then look at this in verse 13 we read here and this is absolutely beautiful, 'And behold, Yahweh stood above it' (but He didn't stand above it at all) that's incorrect, b&s, the Hebrew is, 'Yahweh stood by it' and we'll prove this in a minute, as Rotherham has it, 'Yahweh was standing by' supported by the RSV margin as well. In chapter 18 and verse 2, the same expression is used 'by him', when Abraham was talking to the great manifestation of Yahweh, 'Yahweh stood by him'. He wasn't above the ladder at all, He was on the bottom of it! He had established a connection with the earth, we know He lives in heaven but does He live on the earth? Of course, He does! He's on the earth, He's with men, b&s, and He stood by that ladder! Now there's an absolute wonderful application of this, a wonderful application, because the Lord Jesus Christ applied that lesson; have a look at this in John chapter 1 and see whether or not Yahweh was standing above it or by it. In John chapter 1, here's the Lord Jesus Christ's own application of this particular vision; you know the incident, verse 43, 'The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no (jacob)!' An Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile, and you know, that word 'guile' in the Septuagint version is the very Greek word chosen for what Isaac said to Esau, 'thy brother has taken with subtlety thy blessing'; and Jesus said, 'here comes a man who is named Israel indeed, in whom there's no Jacob'. And Nathanael was amazed at what the Lord told him, and it says in the 48th verse, 'Nathanael saith unto Him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou was under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto Him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believeth thou? thou shall see greater things than these. And He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man'. B&S, Jacob saw the angels ascending and descending upon that place, not himself but that place and he was leaning his head on that stone which laid on the anointed. And that stone he called, the stone of Israel, which David called the anointed of the God of Jacob. Here He is, and the Lord identified Himself with the very stone, and said 'you'll see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man'. But He said to Nathanael, 'you'll see greater things than these, why? Because in effect, b&s, he did see greater things; he never saw the angels of God ascending and descending on Him really at all; what Jesus is doing is bringing forth the vision which was the type to show the absolute fulfillment. Now have a look at verse 33, John said, 'For He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptiseth with the Holy Spirit'. So here was John seeing the Spirit descending, and stay with Him; Nathanael was seeing greater things than these; for there was Jacob, b&s, asleep with his head on a pillow, the angels of God were ascending and descending not on Jacob, but upon that pillow. Upon the place, not Jacob but Jacob later established an altar there and called it, the power of the house of

God; here He is, is He not the foundation stone, b&s, isn't that the power of the house of God? The greater things that Nathanael saw was this, John saw the Spirit descend but it never left Him, it abode with Him and there He was, God manifest in the flesh, and God stood by Nathanael!

Now then, why would Jesus use that expression with Nathanael? Why would he even talk about an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no Jacob? I believe the clue to that is the fact that Nathanael was under a fig tree; what was he doing under that fig tree, if he wasn't thinking about that incident in Beth-el? What would be the point of the Lord mentioning that to him, if that was not the meditation of Nathanael? You know, it's pretty wonderful, isn't it? you see Jesus moving up to Galilee and He's gathering together His disciples. Philip and Andrew and Peter, and there was five of them, and they rush off to get the other disciples and the man the Lord picked was a fellow sitting under the very symbol of Israel! thinking about the vision of Beth-el. And Jesus catching him in that mood from a distance by the power of God that He had, seeing that, seeing him come towards Him, immediately picks upon the scene to say to him; 'there is an Israelite indeed, a man whose name is really Israel, and in whom is no Jacob'; and the vision of the ladder as far as he's concerned will be manifest to him and he'll come to understand that those angels of God were ascending and descending upon the Stone; I'm that Stone! You'll see greater things than these! I believe, b&s, that there's a wonderful touch there, shows you doesn't it, that the Lord is cognisant of our thoughts?

You know when people say, when is the best time to study? People say I do that in the morning, I'm fresher, or some say I do mine at night because all the toil of work is behind me, some people even have time off during the day to come home and do a bit of study, but I don't care what you say, I can tell you now, that the best time to study is when you've been at it for hours! Whether it be morning night or noon, when you've been at it for hours, because God knows your thoughts like Nathanael; he was under a fig tree, thinking of, I believe, obviously thinking about that scene, and the Lord added to that thought. And you know, you can come home and start off your studies, because you're probably like me and you've got phones ringing in your ear; people wanting this and wanting that, and kids running into your office and it just gets crazy mad; and you leave work and you're just glad to get home and talk to your wife. Then into your study and you look at the concordance and you see there an invoice, and you shake your head. So what I do is I start off mechanically and I think, I'm not going to get anything out of this for a couple of days, so I look up a few Greek and Hebrew words. Good practice, looking up Hebrew words which can be done easily without any deep meditation, so as you express this word and that word and relate this word to that, and you read the record carefully (so invoices become smaller and smaller and smaller) and you get deeper into your study and you're in another world. You might be tired but you're in another world; and it's true! I'm not talking about fantasy, I'm factual here, what we're doing is simply a bible principle 'that which is flesh is flesh, that which is of spirit is spirit; speaking of the carnal mind is enmity with God, it's not subject to the LORD God and never can be. You can't go home and immediately think, I'm going to close my eyes and spirituality will jump out of the bible! It won't! but when you've been at it, b&s, the best time is Saturday because you can get up without distraction, start in the morning

and go right through to midnight that night, and by the time you get to midnight, you're thinking nothing else but bible, and you get out of that bible, in the last few hours of that study, what others won't get out of it in months! because you've got your mind on it! so that your brain is becoming saturated with your study, and then it really comes out at you!

Now that's what Nathanael was doing! he was thinking about things, and what did he get? He got a rich reward he was pondering the vision of Beth-el under the fig tree, the symbol of Israel, thinking about those angels ascending and descending, Jacob etc. and he's pondering this! And it's in his mind, and he approaches the Lord, and the Lord picks up what he's thinking, and He enriched him! enriched him, and my word, don't we get enriched, b&s? You get into lengthy study and you do get enriched! because you get thoughts that you'd never think about! And the words are just going to leap out of those pages at you, as if to say, 'have a look at that!' And really I believe, an exhortation is in Nathanael's attitude of mind there, an Israelite indeed, in whom there's no Jacob! That was an elusive commendation! Let's bear it in mind, b&s, and let not anybody despair and say I can't understand the word of God; it's because you don't spend long enough at it, that's the problem! God will bless effort, God will not bless anything else but effort; that's why Rebekah says, 'if I do thus, why can't I ask God for the blessing?' as if it would come any other way! So this is what Jacob had to learn, and as he laid his head upon that pillow, God was impressing on him that He would never leave him!

These are wonderful things, b&s. Alright, let's move on in the record to Genesis 28, the time we've spent on the ladder, and I think the understanding of the Lord Jesus Christ there is, sufficient explanation to show its meaning. So we come back to Genesis chapter 28 and we read in verse 13, 'And behold, Yahweh stood by it' (stood alongside it, that is the place and I believe, the rock in particular) and said, I am Yahweh Elohim of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed', now you try and make a mental picture of what's going on, and you'll get the point! The angels of God ascending and descending upon it, not Jacob. So what is 'it'? I believe the subject matter of the verse is that stone; so standing right alongside Jacob's head and standing alongside of his head is Yahweh, and he's lying upon that stone. 'Upon which thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed' and the seed of promise was the Lord Jesus Christ in the singular sense, and there was God standing alongside that stone. And look how He addresses him, Yahweh Elohim of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac' but Isaac was his father; you see, once again b&s, read it loosely and you miss the point. Why would He say that? because he truly was the son of Abraham, this is what God was trying to impress upon him, he was truly the son of Abraham. If He'd called him the son of Isaac, He might have given nominal recognition of his relationship with his father. If He said, Isaac thy father, well that's true, he was Isaac's son; but He didn't say that, He said Abraham thy father. And look, if that's not important, you take Paul's comment, 'He's the Father of them that walk in the steps of our father Abraham', there he was walking in the steps of that faithful man, that's why it says, 'Abraham thy father'. And there's another reason for it too, where was he? He was at Beth-el, this was a holy place, made holy not by Isaac, Isaac probably has never been there! This is a holy place made holy by Abraham's faith, which now Jacob was

exhibiting. Abraham had made Beth-el famous and so there is God's recognition, three things I believe, 1. the place Beth-el was blessed in Abraham's memory, 2. that God was impressing upon Jacob that he was the promised seed of Abraham, 3. and thirdly, it shows Jacob's relationship to Abraham was a true relationship on the basis of faith. That's what God was telling him at Beth-el, and telling him that the ground whereon thou liest was setting before him, b&s, the great promise of the seed that was to come, upon whom the Spirit would not only descend but would remain! 'I will be with thee in all places whither thou goest'. A marvellous vision!

When we come to verse 14, we have the promise broadened out. Now you look at this, 'And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad (look at the margin, 'thou shalt break forth'). What does that mean? Well, the word in the Hebrew means that if you've got a boundary and you want to go over that boundary-that's the idea of the word-you cross the boundaries. What God is telling him is this, 'your seed, Jacob, will be a multitude but it will be so great that it'll cross the boundaries of your nation'. It'll break the boundaries of your nation, it'll go beyond the natural seed of Israel. 'And they shall 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'. There's the gospel! and when the Lord Jesus Christ saw a faithful Gentile come to Him, amidst unfaithful Israelites, He said, 'many shall come from the west, from the east and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom and ye yourselves cast out', and I believe He used that expression there! So Jacob's going to break forth, b&s, (whether Jacob truly understood that I don't know whether Jacob grasped the significance I don't know), but there it was!

And what happened? Well, there was his seed, me and my staff, a piece of wood, and he crossed the Jordan with that; he came back with two bands. Where did he get them? He didn't get them out of the household of Isaac, he was 600 miles away; they were all Syrians. He'd broken the bounds, he'd gone out of the borders of the Land and he brought a multitude back in with him! Isn't that the principle of God with Jacob, isn't that the lesson? Isn't this the multitude, the ecclesia? brought from outside the Land and gathered there; Isaac never left the Land, never set foot outside of it, and Abraham only did when he was chastened; but this one man went out alone and brought back a crowd of people with him and he was spreading abroad and breaking forth the boundaries of the Land. You take Isaiah 14 and its context, have a look at this conversation, in Isaiah 14 in verses 1 and 2 the prophet says, 'For Yahweh will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the Land of Yahweh for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were, and they shall rule over their oppressors'. It doesn't mean to say, b&s, in the prophecy of Isaiah, that he's asking 'who's the victor of war?' they haven't taken them captive because they've gone to war, it says that these people shall cleave to the house of Jacob. It's not a conquest by war, it's a conquest by faith; here is a volunteer wanting to join them, and they come to Israel and Israel accepts them and work with them. And here's Jacob spreading abroad and bringing those people to him, and you will

remember no doubt, the 44th chapter of Isaiah which we referred to earlier, when strangers will come and shall want to surname themselves by the name of Jacob and by the name of Israel, eager to join Jacob's spreading band. Spreading forth, it was a wonderful time at Beth-el, here we are today, b&s, what are you doing? what am I doing? but trying as desperately as we can, to get Jacob surnamed upon us! Aren't we? Wouldn't you like to go to the kingdom, wouldn't you like to go to the Lord Jesus Christ and be recognized as Jacob's? Wouldn't it be wonderful to go there and the Lord to look upon us as he would look upon Jacob and say, 'You've got the character of Jacob's son; why you're Jacob, you're his seed! his spiritual seed! Look, our whole life is pressing into that family; he's broken forth the boundaries of the Land; Jacob's dead and buried, b&s, we're living thousands of miles away from Canaan, we're all Syrians. But we're going back to the house of God with Jacob later on; he won't go back with a staff, a dead stick, he'll go back with a multitude of people!

And this is the wonderful promise of Beth-el, 'thou shalt stretch forth your boundaries, Jacob!' And coming back to the 28th chapter of Genesis, we move on now through this chapter, and look at the promise that God leaves with him. He says in that 15th verse, 'Behold, I am with thee and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this Land. I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of'. You take those words 'I will not leave thee', you know, b&s, those words are found about 4 or 5 times in the bible; God told the children of Israel in the wilderness, 'I will not leave thee during your journey', He repeated that same phrase to Joshua when Joshua went to fight the Canaanites, 'I will not leave thee' when he was fighting for the truth. He repeated that same phrase when Solomon built the temple, 'I will not leave thee' when Solomon was building the temple. And the phrase is picked up in the book of Hebrews when Paul quotes it in the 13th chapter of Hebrews to the Hebrew Christians who were having a desperate fight in living the truth, God said, 'I will not leave thee'. So here is Jacob, the providence of God would not leave him in all circumstances of life, the providence of God would carry Israel on their journey, Joshua in his fight, Solomon in his building, and Hebrew Christians in their living! God will never leave us in whatever vocation we're in, providing, b&s, providing it's God's vocation; if we're walking in the wilderness, if we're building the temple, if we're fighting God's enemies or if we're living the truth or like Jacob living a pilgrimage on the earth, we can be assured of this that God will never leave us! Never will He leave us! and that phrase, a beautiful phrase is repeated in those circumstances, when God's work was being done!

Until, notice that! Now the word 'until' doesn't necessarily mean that God would be with him until a given point in time and then abandon him, but it's nonetheless true, and this is rather remarkable, that when Jacob came back to Beth-el for the second time, that's the last occasion that we have a vision of angels associated with Jacob. Why? because they were no longer necessary! and He said, 'I will not leave you until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of'. What had He spoken to him of? Well, Jacob had his head on a pillow, he laid his head on a Stone of Israel, and Yahweh stood right alongside that Stone; and the angels came to that point, and from that point and back to that point. And what God was telling him was this, 'Jacob, I'm manifesting Myself to you, and I'll continue to do so until, Jacob, I've accomplished in you what I'm after'. And



what's He after? Wasn't He after to make Jacob himself a manifestation of God? And when Jacob came to Beth-el the next time, God made him personally, as I'll show you, (as I say, not literally God Himself but in a personal manifestation; He made him in a personal manifestation and the record states, that God went up from him and left him alone, why? Because, no longer was it necessary for angels ascending and descending on him; but the promise of God was always with him, but in that sense it was no longer necessary. He was not now Jacob, he was Israel, he had power with God, and it could be said in that sense of the word, that there was the Stone of Israel, the Anointed of the God of Jacob, in that man himself! 'I will not leave thee until I have done with you that which I've spoken of'. And, b&s, God has said the same to us, unfortunately, there's not one of us will reach that standard of faith, but in the kingdom age we shall be, we pray, the manifestations of the mighty power, no longer needing God's providence but being in ourselves the very embodiment of all that God is, and providence to other people!

That's the message of Beth-el a wonderful message and as I said, the word in the Hebrew 'until' does not mean 'to a given point of time and not thereafter' but it is nonetheless true, that after Beth-el, Jacob has no more dealings with angels! because he had established that principle in his own household, and is now, a providential angel to all under his own care! God has spoken to him, and spoken to him of His purpose and He's spoken to you and I, and that's the purpose that God has with us!

And so now, we come to the last portion of this chapter, and Jacob awakens out of his sleep and says, 'Surely Yahweh is in this place: and I knew it not'. He didn't know it, b&s, now it doesn't mean to say that he was ignorant of the fact that it was a sacred place, nor does he deny the vision that he had, what he said wasn't that he didn't understand but he hadn't comprehended it; he didn't see it this way, he never realized before that God was with him in such a fashion. Why? he was an old man! assuming you had that revelation, b&s, you and me, you think what we are, think that we are quick to realize it, quick to grasp it that God was ascending and descending upon you and standing alongside and saying, 'I'll never move from that position'? Jacob says, I can't understand that, I never saw it that way! and he didn't; and later on you'll see how he still didn't see it. He comes to God and prays that he set 5 droves of cattle eastward before him to Canaan; and he prays and he sets forth his children in order, and every strategy was taken, one after another and he didn't realize that God would be with him; and so Jacob is working out scheme after scheme after scheme, until God says, 'I've had enough!' touched his thigh and said, 'I've had enough of it, now cease!' Ah, powerless, ah, limps on his side, God said, 'Look, I meant what I said, I will be with thee in all places whither thou goest', and it was then and only then, that Jacob stopped scheming. And he was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile; but he never understood that in its fullness; he could never accept it, he was loathed in his life to accept that God was with him in all circumstances! In Laban's household, scheming with Laban all the time, scheme after scheme after scheme, and peeling those strips of bark off the timber to try and get the cattle to gender this diverse kind, and having done all that, God appears in a dream and says, 'look at what you're seeing in the dream and he saw the cattle breeding the diverse kinds; all his schemes and bits of wood, useless! God said I'm doing that, Jacob!' And all through his life, you have Jacob scheming first

and God revealing afterwards that what came to pass was not because of the scheme but because of God! And so the lesson, I knew it not! had to be impressed upon him.

'How dreadful is this place' (how awesome is this place) He didn't see it that way when he came back the next time. 'El-Beth-el', the strength, the strength of the house of God; there's only one strength, but now there's two, Jacob and God; God can do a lot but He needs my help! I've got to help Him out with my scheme, together we'll work wonders! But when he came back the next time, the strength of the house of God! 'So he rose up early in the morning and he anointed that pillow with oil, and he went on his way'.

And we have in the last couple of verses, b&s, what would seem to be, a bargain on the part of Jacob, that he vowed a vow and said, if God would be with me, and will keep me and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on. So I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall Yahweh be my God'. But really that doesn't do Jacob justice when the record is properly considered and really what he's doing is not so much 'here' but 'when', and if you read Young's Literal Translation, he translates it in that way. 'When God shall do this for me', when this shall be done; true it was that Jacob never truly comprehended or was loathed to believe that God would do, in every circumstance what He promised, when the circumstance came of course, it was different! Like us, we say, 'you know, we've got to worry about this business, we've got a problem coming up'. A brother comes to me and says, 'what are you worried about? it'll be alright, God is with us!' and who can deny it? and the fellow goes away and you think to yourself, 'boy, I'm sure some sort of weak chap, but oh, I know that's right but, I don't know if I can believe it'. But the same brother with all his bravado, you put him in a given circumstance and he'll scheme like mad to get out of it; he'll scheme like crazy with all sorts of schemes! Not unlike Jacob, he didn't disbelieve; he wasn't a man to lack faith in that sense, his faith had to be protested by trial. He believed that God was with him every situation, 'when God does this, I will do this to Him, I will give Him a tenth of all that I own; I'll do that!' and he meant it, b&s, and he did it; but it was only after 40 years of disciplinary action on God's part that brought that spirit out!

So he says in verse 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'. What was He promised? Well, you go back to the promises; the thing that God promised him was a multitude of people, so he said that stone should be God's house. And he's not using the word 'house' in the sense of a building (we'll find that out later on). Noah was told to go into the ark, he and all his house', he didn't take a building into the ark! He took his sons and his daughter-in-laws and his wife; and so God had promised him a house and he said, 'this stone shall be God's house', and John the Baptist said, 'God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham'. And Jacob, I believe, saw that, I believe he saw that stone as being a symbol of the foundation of a family that God had just promised him; so he said, I'm going to come back to this place and it'll be called 'God's house', and he brought back with him what the record calls 'all his household and all the people that were with him'. He brought a multitude there! two classes, one who'd made up his own household and all other people attached to him, and they became God's house. And then he said, 'I'll give a tenth unto Thee' and in that expression, of course, a tenth, b&s, it wasn't as if a person says I got so much so I'll give God a tenth

of that! NO, the idea of giving the tenth, the idea of the tenth is that when you gave a person a tenth of your possessions, you've virtually told that person that he owned everything you have, and therefore, the nine-tenths that you retained was by his grace. That's what you did! that's the idea of the tithe, it wasn't so much that I've got so much, so I'd better give God back some more; the fact was that God had given you everything, all you did was give Him back a tenth to acknowledge that; and that's what Jacob was saying, that when I come back to this place, this stone shall become God's house; it was a stone then, but he came back with a multitude of people. And he built that altar, b&s, and he offered unto eternal God (and although there is no record of Jacob giving a tenth of his spoils or of his household) but there's no doubt about this, that when Jacob finally came back, the expressions that he made at Beth-el, EI-Beth-el, were of this nature; that of everything that happened in his life, of all that he had, of his cattle, his goods, his wives, his children, his menservants, his maidservants, everything that that man had, he acknowledged he had it because God was with him, and in that sense, a better sense than giving Him material tithes, he gave in a very great way, a spiritual way, the acknowledgement to Almighty God, that God indeed, had been with him, in all places whither he'd gone!