

Jacob's flight and dream



Genesis 27: 41-46; 28

Esau hated his brother Jacob and intended to kill him after Isaac's death. Rebekah heard about this and she and Isaac advised Jacob to flee to their homeland, Mesopotamia, and find a wife there.

One night, during his flight, Jacob had a dream. He saw a ladder reaching into heaven. Angels of God ascended and descended on this ladder. God himself stood at the top. God promised Jacob many descendants, as well as the land on which he lay. The Lord also told him that he would be with him until all these promises had been fulfilled.

The next morning Jacob erected a memorial stone and named the place "Beth-El" which means "house of God". Jacob made a vow to God.

The children perceive that God is close to us and blesses us.

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Esau is very angry that Jacob has robbed him of his firstborn-blessing.

1

Esau secretly tells his friends: "I am going to kill Jacob after my father's death." Rebekah hears of this threat and immediately hurries off to tell Jacob. She warns him: "Jacob, your brother Esau has threatened to kill you! Flee as quickly as possible! I don't want to lose either one of you." Shocked and frightened, Jacob whispers: "I will go." Rebekah discusses Jacob's future with Isaac. She is very worried. Isaac calls Jacob to his tent and says: "Jacob, it is my wish that you go to the homeland of your mother. Once you are there with Laban, your mother's brother, you must look for a wife. May God protect you and bless all your descendants." "Very well, Father, I shall leave at once." Sadly, Jacob says farewell to his parents. He flees before his brother's revenge and leaves his homeland.

That evening, after the sun had gone down, Jacob took a stone which he used as a pillow and fell asleep. Whilst sleeping, he had a dream. He saw a ladder standing on the

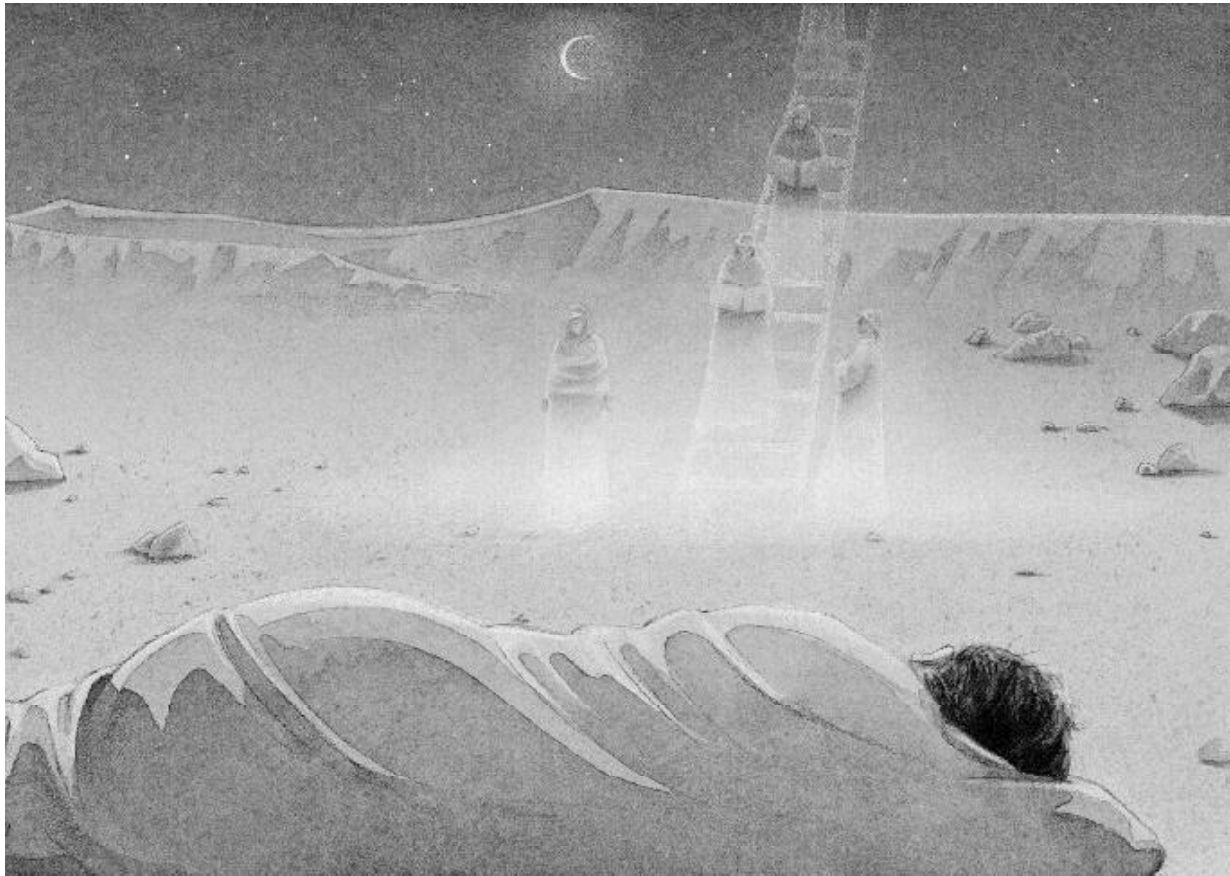
ground, the top of which reached into heaven. Angels ascended and descended on this ladder and God himself stood at the very top. God said to Jacob: "I am the Lord God of Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you and your descendants the land on which you lie. Your descendants will be very numerous and will spread out in all directions. Through you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. I will protect you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land."

2

Jacob awakes the next morning. Gratefully he dedicates the stone which he has been using as a pillow to be a memorial stone by pouring some oil over it. Jacob calls this place "Beth-El", which means "House of God". He then makes a vow to God: "If you, Lord, are with me and will keep me wherever I go, will give me enough to eat and clothing to wear, so that I can come back to my father's house in peace, then you shall be my Lord and God. This stone which I have set as a memorial, shall be God's house: and of all that you will give me, I will surely give you the tenth."

3

God blesses – Esau and Jacob



*Jacob left his homeland. During his flight, he had a dream. He saw a ladder reaching into heaven and he heard the Lord speak to him:
"Behold, I am with you and will keep you on all your ways!" God is with us too!*

- 1 The children relate how Jacob received the blessing of the firstborn.**
- 2 Although Jacob had gained the blessing through cunning and even had to flee because of it, God still took care of him. How does Jacob feel now? (He is confident and assured, for God is with him.)**
- 3 We discuss the picture together. We explain to the children why Jacob is so happy. We repeat Jacob's vow.**