

Gen28:10 Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran.

28:11 So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.

28:12 Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

28:13 And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: "I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.

28:14 "Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

28:15 "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you."

28:16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."

28:17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

28:18 Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it.

28:19 And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously.

28:20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on,

28:21 "so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God.

28:22 "And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

[From today's sermon.

We jumped around a lot from last week's passage to the story of Jacob and the ladder of the Lord. Isaac was sacrificed on the altar by Abraham, but he married Ribekah, a strong woman. He is blessed with two sons, Esau and Jacob, but the parents' differing agendas cause a great deal of turmoil when it comes time to give him the right to be the firstborn son. Jacob, the younger brother, flees when he learns of his older brother's intent to kill him. Along the way in the wilderness, the Lord speaks to him.

Although not translated into Japanese, the word "Behold" is found twice in verse 12 and once in verses 13 and 15. Behold, the ladder is set up."

Jacob was a fugitive from God because he was cheated out of his firstborn son's right to life, but God brought down a ladder from heaven for him. The Bible tells us to look at that fact. The ladder was set in place. There is a saying, "Remove the ladder and isolate them," but God puts a ladder on those who have failed, who have sinned, who are isolated. And "behold," angels from heaven are going up and down that ladder. Angels are with us in the low places at the beginning, first going up, and then coming down again at God's command. Here again we see the figure of Jesus.

Behold," says the Lord, standing by his side. Behold," He says, standing beside him, "I am with you and will protect you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land. I will never leave you, and I will do the things that I have spoken to you. This is God's house.

Good morning everyone. It is a cold morning with snow on the ground.

It is now February and the cold weather has reached its peak. Please take care of yourselves in these cold days. Please be careful with your footing.

Now, we have jumped a long way from last week's passage and are now talking about Jacob and the ladder of the Lord. Isaac was dedicated to the altar by Abraham, but he married Ribekah, a strong woman. He is blessed with two sons, Esau and Jacob, but the parents' differing agendas cause a great deal of turmoil when it comes time to give him the right to be the firstborn son. Jacob, the younger brother, flees when he learns of his older brother's intent to kill him. On his way in the wilderness, the Lord speaks to him.

28:10 Now Jacob left Beersheba and went to Haran,

28:11 And when he arrived at a place, it was dark, and he spent the night there, and took a stone from the place and made it his pillow, and lay down there to sleep.

What a lonely wandering journey! Away from home, alone and in danger. He takes his will and lies down in the wilderness as a pillow. Couldn't he have found a softer pillow? We know that it was a desolate land with nothing but stones lying around. From Canaan to Haran. It was the opposite of the journey to the Promised Land that God had told his grandfather Abraham. The journey northward. It was his journey of escape and flight.

28:12 At times he had a dream. He saw a ladder standing above the earth, the top of which reached to heaven, and the messengers of God were going up and down it.

Although not translated into Japanese, the word “behold” is found twice in verse 12 and once in verses 13 and 15. Behold, the ladder is set up.”

Jacob was a fugitive from God because he was cheated out of his firstborn son's right to life, but God lowered a ladder from heaven for him. The Bible tells us to look at that fact. The Bible tells us, “A ladder is standing on the earth. The ladder has been set up. There is a saying, “Remove the ladder and isolate them,” but God puts a ladder on those who have failed, sinned, and are isolated.

Behold, a ladder is set up from the ground, reaching to the heavens. What a magnificent story! This is the ladder sent down from heaven. As we will see later, in Babylon, man built a tower that reached to the heights of heaven, threatening God's domain and challenging Him to accept his wishes, but in vain. But here, a ladder has been passed from heaven, where God is, to the ground. The ladder connecting heaven and earth was handed to Jacob, who had sinned and become a wanderer by cheating his brother out of his right to the tune.

And “behold,” he saw in his dream, “the messengers of God going up and down it.

It is interesting that they are going up and down, not down and up.

Before he knew it, the heavenly messengers had already descended and were on the earth with him, and as he lay there alone, wandering and desolate with a hard stone as his pillow, the angels ascended to heaven, taking with them all his remorse, his regret, his penitence, his loneliness, and his heart, and they brought him from the heavenly world, which is full of light and life. They are angels descending from the heavenly world, which is overflowing with light and life.

This image reminds us of Jesus Christ. He was rich, but became poor for our sake, was bruised and became our Redeemer, descended to the life of the world, and returned to heaven. In this way, He experienced everything as our predestined substitute who had to die for our sins, be punished, and be cast down to a very low place. He descends, and descends some more, and then raises us up.

There is a hymn, “Lift up His Name,” which in English beautifully describes Jesus' descent to the earth, His crucifixion, His tomb, His descent to the dead, and His ascension to heaven.

We lift up Your name, we praise You.

For salvation You came to save us.

You came down from heaven to give us the way of salvation.

Through the cross, you gave your life, and rose again.

Lord, I lift Your name on high

Lord, I love to sing Your praises

I'm so glad You're in my life

I'm so glad You came to save us

You came from heaven to earth to show the way

From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay

From the cross to the grave

From the grave to the sky

Lord, I lift Your name on high

And behold, I saw the messengers of God going up and down it.

Luke 2:13 And there appeared at once a great multitude of the heavenly host, and they were with the angel, and they were praising God, saying, "High is the Lord, and high is His name,

2:14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to whom he will.

God gave Jesus Christ to usher in His Kingdom on earth.

John 1:36 And Jesus, as He walked, caught His eye and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God."

1:47 When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, He said of him, "Behold, he is the true Israelite. There is no deceit in his heart.

1:48 Nathanael said, "How do you know me? Jesus answered and said, "Before Philip called you, I saw you under the fig tree.

1:49 Nathanael answered, "Teacher, you are the Son of God. You are the king of Israel."

1:50 Jesus answered and said, "Do you believe me because I said that I saw you under the fig tree? Greater things than these thou shalt see.

1:51 And again He said, "I say to you well and truly. You will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

See that the heavens are opened and salvation is opened. Behold the angel of God sent by him. Behold, and behold the salvation of God. This was the message spoken to Jacob, and it is also

the message spoken to us.

The ladder, the symbol of that salvation, is set down. We should see that salvation and hold fast to God's Son, Jesus Christ, God's angel, who dwells with us and raises us up above.

28:13 And the Lord stood by him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham, the God of Isaac. I will give the land in which you lie down to you and to your descendants.

28:14 And thy seed shall be many as the dust of the earth, and shall spread out to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and the families of the earth shall be blessed by thee and thy seed.

God then told this brother, Jacob, who had betrayed his father and cheated him out of his right to be the firstborn, the promise to the nation that God had told his grandfather Abraham.

Behold," says the Lord, standing by his side.

The Lord is standing by his side. He redeems him, forgives him, heals him, stands by him, promises him inexhaustible blessings, and reveals God's plan of blessing throughout the world.

As we have repeatedly read, we too are redeemed, saved, and blessed for that purpose, for the blessing of all nations and peoples of the earth. Its ultimate purpose is the blessing of the peoples of the earth. Through us, all the peoples of the earth will be blessed. The Bible teaches this again and again. The Bible teaches again and again that God's goal for us as His people is to remember that we are His people. That is, our goal is not our own peace and blessings, but God's grace and blessings flowing through us and overflowing to the world. To that end, we must be willing to accept God's salvation that is provided by Jesus Christ. That is why we preach the salvation of God, the breadth of God's salvation given to us through Jesus Christ.

28:15 I will be with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee back to the land. I will never leave thee, and I will do the things that I have spoken to thee.

Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee back into the land. I will never leave thee, and I will do the things that I have spoken to thee.

God speaks directly to us, "Behold," "I am," "I am," and "I will be with you," "I will keep you," and "I will bring you back" from the land of exile. How great was the comfort and strength of these words, "I will not forsake thee," to the lonely Jacob! I will never forsake you until you keep this promise of mine, which means that I will keep my promise to help you.

28:16 And Jacob awoke from his sleep, and said, "Truly the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not.

28:17 And he was afraid, saying, "What a terrible place this is! This is the house of God. This is the gate of heaven.

28:18 And Jacob arose early in the morning, and took a stone that was for a pillow, and set it up as a pillar, and anointed the top thereof with oil,

28:19 And he called the name of the place Bethel. And the name of the city was Luz at first.

For truly the Lord was in this place, and I did not know it.

In the very midst of grace, we may make a similar confession. I was all alone. When I almost thought God had abandoned me, I received God's inspiration, and I thought God had abandoned me and He was not with me, but "Behold," God's ladder was set up for me, "Behold," His angels went up and down to intercede, redeem, and save, "Behold," "I am with thee; I will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, Wherever thou goest, I will keep thee, and will bring thee back to the land. When we know the God who says, "I will never leave thee, but will do the things which I have spoken unto thee," we realize that thou art here with us, and that thou hast not left us alone.

"The Lord and I have walked this road together, and our footprints are two.

But before I knew it, only one of us was gone.

Lord, where have you gone?

I am here. I have walked with you on my back.

You have nothing to fear, for I am with you."

Footprints

One night I had a dream.

I was walking along the shore with the Lord.

The dark night sky reflected my life so far.

In each scene, two footprints were left on the sand.

One was my footprint and the other was the Lord's footprint.

When the last scene of my life so far was projected,

I looked at the footprints on the sand.

There was only one footprint.

It was the most painful and sad time of my life.
I asked the Lord about it,
I asked the Lord about my trouble.
He said, "O Lord! When I made up my mind to follow You,
You promised to walk with me in all my ways and to talk with me,
You promised that You would walk with me and talk with me in all my paths.
And yet, at the most difficult time of my life, I had only one footprint,
I had only one footprint.
When I needed you the most,
Why did you abandon me when I needed you the most?
I do not know."
The Lord whispered.
My precious child, I love you.
I love you. I will never abandon you.
Nor in a time of suffering or trial.
When your footprints were one,
I walked with you on my back."

FOOTPRINTS

One night I dreamed a dream.
I was walking along the beach with my Lord.
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand, one belonging to me
I was walking along the beach with my Lord.
and one to my Lord.
When the last scene of my life shot before me
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.
There was only one set of footprints.
I realized that this was at the lowest and saddest times in my life.
This always bothered me and I questioned the Lord about my dilemma.
"Lord, you told me when I decided to follow You, you would walk and talk with me all the time.
You would walk and talk with me all the way.
But I'm aware that during the most troublesome times of my life there is only one set of
footprints.
I just don't understand why, when I needed You most, You leave me.
You leave me."

He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you.
I love you and will never leave you
never, ever, during your trials and testings.
When you saw only one set of footprints
It was then that I carried you."

28:20 Jacob swore an oath, saying, "God was with me and will protect me on this road I am going, and will give me bread to eat and clothes to wear,

28:21 If he will let me return in peace to my father's house, I will make the Lord my God.

28:22 And I will make this stone which I have set for a pillar the house of God. And I will surely give you a tenth of all that you give me.

Is this a vow? If you accept my request, I will acknowledge you as my God, and this stone will be your house, and I will worship you here as a memorial and offer you an offering. This may be due in part to his exuberance. He will suffer from his uncle Laban, wrestle with God, and offer his apologies to his brother. There are still shortcomings and much to learn. But God's grace is unconditional. We do not receive it because we are worthy and deserving. Because He is such a God, we can entrust ourselves to Him with our whole being in gratitude.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for today's worship. I am with you. Wherever you go, I will protect you and bring you back to this land. Thank you so much for your words, "...I will never abandon you. God set up a ladder for Jacob, who sinned and fled, and sent His angel up and down. He sent Jesus for our sins and sent Him down to the Yomiuri to complete the redemption and make us God's children who live in heaven. Bless our families and the people in our community. Use us. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.