

Part 7 "Going out" אֵלֵךְ "New Life" or "Soldiering" 28.10-32.3

INTRODUCTION

The Hebrew word אֵלֵךְ simply means "to go out" but with the associations of "birth" it means to "flow out" or even "to rush out". It is often used of soldiers speeding out to face a foe. Jacob leaves the comfort of home as a baby leaving the warmth and support of the womb. He is destined to struggle and fight for his corner in Haran. His life becomes a model of the righteous warrior or the Christian soldier as presented in Paul's letter to the Ephesians Chapter 6

The section records the Bethel and Peniel experiences (cf Judges 8.8 et alii)

This section is characterised by the birth of all the sons of Jacob-much "new life". It also records the "spiritual beginnings" of Jacob and the spiritual soldiering required both in the life of Jacob and his wives during a singularly hard & demanding family life. The NT soldier is not using carnal weapons but like Jacob is embroiled essentially in a spiritual battle. (2Corinthians 10.4 & Ephesians 6.12)

JACOB AT BETHEL; A SUPERLATIVE OF "NEW LIFE" 10-15

Jacob left Beersheba and came to Haran. And Jacob "struck" (Hebrew [גָּפַח] within the borders or "house" of a significant place and tarried or lodged there because the sun had set. *It was a good day's journey -about 65 miles. The place was to become well known in the hills north of Jerusalem. It became one of three great centres of Israel's religion under Samuel.* And he took of the stones of the place and set them for his **pillows** and lay down to rest in that place. *The concept of a single pillar which over the ages has been preserved -whose provenance now sees it beneath the English throne is no more credible than that the cross of Christ rests within a number of cathedrals.* And he dreamed and **behold** an appointed or oversight ladder or staircase (Hebrew בִּמְנוֹת heaven's "garrison station) lifted up[Hebrew בִּמְנוֹת(MUZAB)Hophal-"it had been caused to be appointed or erected or fixed or planted-the Hophal effectively makes this "way" a fixture -a way to heaven long since established by God and indeed this way still stands and Christ is its pivot and base] from earth and its head touched or reached heaven and **behold** the messengers of God going up and coming down upon it. This is **prophetic TORAH** indicative of salvation through Christ the Way. And **behold** the LORD was settled firmly upon it. And He said, "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the land on which you are resting I will give to you and your descendants. Your descendants will be as the dust of the earth and you will spread out to the east and west, north and Negev and in your seed (singular) all families of the earth will bless themselves." *This latter phrase is a reference to Christ the Messiah who will bring blessing to those who choose Him.* And I will be with you every place you go and bring you back to this red and fertile land for I will not loosen my bands of burdensome commitment until I have done everything I promised you."

JACOB AND THE STAIRCASE OF ANTIQUITY & POSTERITY 16-17 JACOB'S SPIRITUAL BIRTH

When Jacob awoke from his sleep he said, "Surely (as by constitution) the LORD is present and ready in this special place and I did not know". *The fact that where Jacob lay God was active draws from him the verdict that this land and its vicinity is a place where God is constantly active and ready to do great things in the future. The Hebrew verb for a staircase "set up"(v12 Hophal of בִּמְנוֹת) is passive-this way between heaven and earth had been long since devised and planned for Judea. Our LORD speaking to Nathaniel said in John 1.51 "You will see greater things, you will see heaven opened". The apostles had to come to where Jacob was spiritually and know that God would be with them always and fulfil their mission too and be vigilant as from a garrison over them. How reverent and wonderful and terrible is*

this place, this is nothing but the dwelling of God and the gate of heaven. *That God should dwell on earth hereabouts and that man should have a way opened to him to heaven in Judea was Jacob's fundamental thought. It was not his "dream" that was the gate. This "staircase" which featured the LORD at its head or beginning and involved in making such a way is explained only by the Person of Christ and His plan to come to Judea and die to redeem. Jacob formerly knew nothing about this and now he grasps the Redemptive plan and receives the divine blessing.*

JACOB'S ANOINTED PILLAR-MARKS OF HIS SPIRITUAL BIRTH

And Jacob rose in the morning and took the stone which was there under his head and set it up for an altar and poured oil on its head. *The stone was one which was substantial in size. Jacob set it up as a pillar or monument and poured oil on its head. This action is **TORAH in its prophetic intent** signifying something very great which in 35.7 he understands more fully later when he builds an altar. This "gateway to heaven" is terrible to the sinner and required a stupendous awesome sacrifice on the part of the Saviour. From its head Christ the Anointed One here revealed would come the blessing of the Holy Spirit which is signified by the outpoured oil. Jacob was aware of divine anointing and found standing with God along with an awareness of the God of providence and salvation in his life. We should always treat with respect the place where God revealed Himself in our lives as Saviour.*

JACOB'S VOW-HE COMMITS TO BE A SOLDIER -SAINT 20-22

And Jacob made a vow saying, "If the LORD God will be with me and watch over me in the way I take and give me bread to eat and clothes to wear and I return in peace to the house of my father the LORD God will also belong to me (like my father) And this stone which I have set up as a pillar will be the house of God and of all you give me I will give a tenth. *The family history was deeply in the mind of Jacob at this point. He contemplated his father and grandfather and the deep commitment demanded of God in their case. He vowed that he would be no different. The burden of divine commitment to him was made clear in the dream. Here he makes his commitment to God. Wherever he might wander the land of promise was still his home and this Judean area its spiritual centre where God dwelt and would dwell. There was no time to linger but the altar of Jacob would stand there and offerings would be made there in future. Jacob from now on would be a man of tithe. He would offer one tenth of his sheep on the altar to God. This must have related to the offering of the ram on Moriah. It is humbling to see this saint ask only food and sufficient clothing. The faith of the man of God is very evident in his vow!*

JACOB REACHES HARAN : HIS 400 MILE MARCH 29 1-8

Jacob lifted (*the burden of*) his feet [*Hebrew מַלְגָּרָם*] Jacob unlikely as it might seemed apparently travelled from Bethel to Haran on foot. He probably had a camel. He reached the land of the sons of the east. He looked and behold a well in a field and three flocks of sheep lying down in repose on it. The shepherds would roll from that well the great stone and water the sheep and then return the stone to its place at the mouth of the well. And Jacob asked the shepherds, "My brothers, where are you from?" They replied, "We are from Haran!" He said, "Do you know Laban son of Nahor?" They said, "We know him!" He asked, "Is it well with him? (*Hebrew מַלְגָּרָם*)" They said, "He is well-and behold Rachel his daughter is coming with his flock." And he said, "It is still day, the sun is high, it is not time to gather the flocks to the fold. Water the flock and take them to pasture. They said, "We are not able until all the flocks are gathered and the stone is rolled from the face of the well and they water the flocks.

JACOB MEETS RACHEL: THE START OF A DEEP LIFE-LONG AFFECTION 9-12

He continued to speak with them and Rachel came with the flock of her father for she was a shepherdess. And it came to pass when Jacob saw Rachel daughter of Laban brother of his mother and the flock, of Laban brother of his mother Jacob drew near and rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. Jacob kissed Rachel (*Hebrew קָרַב*) "set her

on fire [with love]) and lifted up his voice and wept. *This is not an affront or an unwarranted liberty in the light of what follows and indeed in the light of his parent's intent for him and the evident initial blessing of God on his 400 mile adventure.* For Jacob had told Rachel that he was a nephew of her father and son of Rebekah her father's sister. And Rachel ran hastily and told her father. *We get notice of the "strength" of Jacob as he rolls back the stone. He is at this stage a man of considerable power. He is a man of passionate heart and he is deeply sensitive of God's leading too. He is a transformed man.*

Laban's warm welcome turns into the first of several contracts 13-30

And it happened as Laban heard the report of Jacob son of Rebekah his sister he hastened to meet him and he embraced him over and over and kissed him repeatedly and brought him to his home. Jacob added to recount to Laban all these matters (*which Moses has retailed-doubtless not merely about his arrival -but most importantly his Bethel experience and his Father's blessing and mother's prayer*) And Laban said, "You are my bone and my flesh" and Jacob stayed with him for a month of days. And Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative should you serve me for nothing, state your wages!" Laban had two daughters the older Leah (*Wearied*) the younger Rachel (*Ewe*) and the eyes of Leah were "weak" or "sore" but Rachel was handsome in appearance and beautiful to look upon. And Jacob loved Rachel and said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter". And Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than some other man, stay here with me" And Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed like (seven) single days because of his love for her. And Jacob said "Let her become my wife for the days are complete!" And Laban gathered all the men of the place and made a feast. And when it was evening Laban brought his daughter Leah to him and he lay with her. And Laban gave her Zilpah as her handmaid. And when morning broke behold it was Leah and he said to Laban, "Why have you done this to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why have you defrauded me?" *The wording expresses a terrible disappointment. There he was caressing Leah and calling her his beloved Rachel while she was party to her father's deceit. The plot was thicker even than that contrived by Laban's sister Rebekah-but had Jacob not known already that there was a streak of over-shrewdness in the family he was now convinced of it.* And Laban said, "It is not what is done based on our community to give the younger before the elder. Fulfill this daughter's week and we will give you that daughter also for your service which you will serve with me-an additional seven years to follow. *The hand of the LORD was upon Jacob and clearly Laban prospered at this time. Jacob was now the husband of two wives in a bigamous relationship not of his choosing. There was on Laban's part a deep desire to hold on to Jacob who had served him well. Besides all this we would not have had the twelve tribes of Israel outside of this act or the tribe of Judah into which Jesus Christ was born, nor indeed the Levites.*

LEAH-NEW LIFE THAT BRINGS UNION AND PRAISE 31-35

And the LORD saw that Leah was despised or neglected He opened her womb and Rachel was barren. And Leah became pregnant and gave birth. She bore a son whom she called Reuben (*"See, a son"-the significance was that he was the "firstborn"*) because she said, "Because the LORD sees into my affliction therefore my husband will love me. *She had enough awareness of the LORD'S care of her to realise that He was promoting true love for her too.* And she conceived again and bore a son and said, "It is because the LORD listens when I am by-passed and he has given me also this child" and she called him Simeon (*hearing with acceptance*). *She knew that God heard all that went on in the life of her husband Jacob who may have been unfairly cold towards her but she prayed about it and she was accepted before God and gained Jacob's attention and a second son was born.* And she conceived again and bore a son and said, "Now with **this blow** (*Hebrew m[p-which breaks hardness*) my husband will join (*Hebrew hml*) himself to me for I have borne him three sons and she called his name **Levi** (*"joining" "adherence"*)

And she conceived again and bore a son and said, "With **this blow** I will praise the LORD" and she called his name **Judah** and she stopped bearing or ministered apart from bearing. (*The Hebrew dm[bears twin significances -"to stand as a minister" and "to desist or stop"*) *In all of this the character of Leah was deeply improved and the compassion of Jacob was kindled and genuine affection for his growing batch of little sons-now four in number. This prophetic TORAH song heralds the LORD*

JACOB'S WIVES PRAY& THE LORD ENDS THEIR BARRENNESS 30 1-22

Rachel like the soldier -saint struggles for inner victory.

By contrast Leah is satisfied with reputation and happiness

And Rachel saw that she was not bearing to Jacob and she was jealous of her sister and said to Jacob, "Place sons for me for if not I will die". And Jacob became wroth with Rachel and said, "Am I God who has restrained the fruit of your womb. Then she said, "Behold my handmaid Bilhah, come into her and she will bear for my blessings and I also will build a family from her. *The action proposed was a long term concubinage aimed at producing a series of children.* And she gave him her handmaid for a wife and Jacob went in to her. *The idea of "handmaid" recurs in the NT when the **Mary says to the LORD, "Behold the 'handmaid' of the LORD"**. She is not denying her engagement to Joseph but she is giving herself to the seed Christ to be used so that He may build the family of God.* Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. And Rachel said, "God has been arbiter and has heard my voice and given me a son; for which reason she called him **Dan** (Hebrew "one who strives" "ruler" or "defender") And Bilhah Rachel's handmaid conceived again and bore a second son to Jacob. And Rachel said, "**My strugglings with my sister are struggles of God and I have won** and she called his name '**Naphtali**'" (Hebrew Niphal- "my strugglings within myself") *this is a very deep expression. It throws light on Gethsemane. It demonstrates a preparedness to make great sacrifice and go to extreme limits*

When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children she took her handmaid and gave her as a wife to Jacob. And Zilpah Leah's handmaid bore a son to Jacob. And Leah said, "A troop is coming" and she called him **Gad** "fortunate" or "cutting in on the enemy"(hence "troop") And Zilpah Leah's maid bore Jacob a second son. And Leah said, "I am happy because the daughters will keep calling me "happy" and she called his name **Asher** "happy."

READING No.4 THE PRAYERS OF LEAH AND RACHEL

Like the soldier-saint Leah is assured of "reward" and "inheritance by the gift of God.

We observe that through many years Leah and Rachel both continued to pray about increase of family as they vied in juxtapose for the attentions of Jacob. Their prayers are constantly referred to by Moses cf 29.32-33; 30.4, 30.17, 30.22. Whatever the paternal religion of Laban and it appears to have been spiritualism or divination (30.27) these women remained faithful to the God of Jacob. He was spiritually the mentor and guide of his family and had introduced his womenfolk to the living God and His dealings. We must therefore not consider them unfaithful but holy. The women had a deep problem as they lived bigamous but they remained on speaking terms(30.14) and Rachel, who knew she was more deeply loved, had some sympathy for the position of Leah(30. 15-16)

During the harvesting of wheat Reuben went out into the field and found some "love apples"(Hebrew *myddid* which are apples of a sort derived from a plant with carrot like root and with reddish white blossom like our apple tree. The apples are yellow and appear May to July. Orientals attribute to them sexual attributes.) And he brought them to his mother. Reuben is the eldest of eight sons by this stage. He is still quite young-perhaps in his teens. And Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me of the mandrakes of your son". And she said, "Is it a little thing that you took away my husband? Will you also take away my son's mandrakes?" And Rachel said, "For the sake of right he will sleep with you tonight in exchange for the mandrakes." *Rachel displays an understanding of the heart of Leah and indeed a lack of jealousy too for she must have been acutely aware that Leah might thereby have further offspring.* And Jacob came in from the fields that evening and Leah went out to meet him and said, "Come for I have hired you with the hire of my son's mandrakes" and he slept with her that night. God listened to Leah and she bore to Jacob a fifth son. And Leah said, "**God has given me my hire** for giving my maidservant to my husband. And she called his name **Issachar** (He bears reward) Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son to Jacob. And she said, "God has bestowed on me a good dowry -with **this blow** my husband will give me dowry for I have borne him six sons and she called his name **Zebulon** (dowry) And afterward she bore a daughter and called her Dinah (Judged or defended and freed) Leah was sure that after this long time her compliance with her father to deceive Jacob and her right by suffering and

childbirth to a place in the future of Jacob was secure. The word "blow"(Hebrew *m[p* occurs in verse 20 and earlier in 29. 33 & 34 and is indicative of "blows on the anvil" to bend iron or to bring Jacob over to promoting Leah's offspring besides giving her his attentions) **Then God remembered Rachel** and heard her and opened her womb All this time Rachel had committed the matter to prayer for she enjoyed time with her husband but never conceived since the early days. Years had gone by-but Jacob still loved her. And she conceived and bore a son and said, "God has taken away or **taken to Himself** my reproach-a fascinating **prophetic TORAH**. She called his name **Joseph** and said, "May the LORD add to me another son" Two matter of interest occur here. First, Rachel feels God is sympathetic to her reproach and has taken it upon Himself. This is a great kernel truth which she has come by through her prayer life and experience. The LORD indeed has borne our reproach as the prophet Isaiah said. Secondly Joseph was named with future hope and so the attachment naturally of Joseph to Benjamin is seen even in the later story of the family.

READING No.5 "HE WENT OUT" אַחַי "THE SOLDIER-SAINT"

JACOB'S DESIRE FOR ANOTHER COUNTRY 25-30

And it happened after Rachel had borne Joseph that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me and I will go to the special place of my land."Give me now my wives and my children for which I have served you in these things and I will go-for you know the service which I have given you. And Laban said, "If now I have found grace in your eyes **-it is my divination** -by your rolling away of things heavy for me the LORD blessed me through you. Now it appears clear that there was a secret reliance in the life of Laban which disturbed Jacob. The use of enchantment or augury or sorcery was no way to discover blessing. Laban should have known that quite simply-that was the point Jacob made in v26.

THE HOLDING MECHANISM DEvised BY JACOB 31-36

"Specify your wages and I will give them to you", he said. Jacob said, "You know well how I have served you and what has happened to your livestock with me. For the little you had before I came has divided into a great number and the LORD has blessed you wherever my foot has watered and now when will I be able to do something for my own household? *Jacob was chiding Laban on the evident divine blessing numerically and showing that he knew very well without diviners and sorcerers that the Lord's blessing attended the work of his (Jacob's) hands and his active shepherding.* Jacob said, "Don't give me anything whatever but do this one thing for me. I will return to shepherding your flocks and watching over them.

Let me go through your flocks today and separate from them every one with an eye pecked out by the ravens and every sheep with large spots and every dark one among the lambs and every goat with lost eye and spots-they shall be my wages. *Jacob was willing to take the sheep and goats that men count inferior and make something of them. He knew they were just as precious. It is even so among men. Those with disablement and those who look less beautiful can be gold in God's hands.* And when you come in future to check my wages my righteousness will testify for me. Any goat which has not had its eye pecked out or which is not spotted or lamb that is not dark will be considered stolen by me." *In a second manner Jacob was rebuking Laban for going to the sorcerer and saying "Don't do this again". I have a watertight way by which you can tell what is yours.*

JACOB'S PROVES A SOLDIER WITH A STRATEGY -HE INCREASES HIS FLOCKS 37-43

Jacob took a fresh white branch of the poplar, almond and plane tree and peeled white strips on them-white from the (outer) bark which was on the rods. Then he left the rods he peeled in the watering troughs before the flocks and they were in heat as they came to drink. And the flocks mated before the branches and the flocks bore young that were banded with stripes or marked with little spots (and short legged)(Hebrew *dqñ*) or spotted with large patches. Jacob set apart the lambs of the flock but gave the faces of the flock to all the striped and dark of the flock of Laban and made for himself separate flocks which he did not place with Laban's flock. And it happened that when all the stronger ewes were in heat

Jacob placed the rods in the troughs before their eyes and they mated. And the weak of the flock he would not place there. So the weak went to Laban and the strong to Jacob. And the "Man who was a soldier" (*Hebrew vja*) spread out (his herds) greater and greater (*Hebrew dam dam*) and he had great herds maidservants and menservants camels and donkeys

JACOB SEES LABAN'S ANTIPATHY 31 1-9

Jacob heard what the sons of Laban were saying, "Jacob has taken all this that belonged to our father and from what was our father's he has made all this glory... And Jacob saw that the face of Laban was not with him as three days or years before. And the LORD said to him, "Return to the land of your fathers and family and I will be with you". So Jacob sent to call Rachel and Leah from the field of the flocks. And Jacob said to them, "I see that the face of your father is not with me as it had been three years ago but the God of my fathers has been with me. *Jacob testified that God had come to advise him in the day of estrangement of Laban.* And you know that with all my strength I have served your father. Your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times yet God has not given it to your father to do anything evil against me. If he said, "Those marked with little spots shall be your wages", all the flock bore spotted offspring. If he said, "Those with bands or stripes will be your wages", all the flock bore striped offspring. God has stripped your father of livestock and given to me.

A DREAM IN THE BREEDING SEASON 10-18

And it happened in the breeding season I lifted up my eyes in a dream and behold the male goats leaping upon the flock were streaked and spotted in dark spots and in white spots. *The angel of the LORD said to me in the dream, "Jacob" and I said "Behold here I am". And He said, "Lift up your eyes now and behold all the male goats leaping upon the flock are streaked or those with black or white spots, for I have seen all that Laban has done to you. I am the God of Bethel where you "Messiah-ed" the pillar where you made your vow. Now rise up from this land and return to the land of your family.* And answering Rachel and Leah said, "Do we have any share or inheritance in our Father's house. Does he not think in himself that we are foreigners for he sold us and has consumed all his money (silver). All the wealth that God took from our father is ours and our children's. You do all God told you to do. *We are given an insight into the mismanagement of Laban. He is a fraudulent man and earlier we were told he was a spiritualist-which seriously disturbed Jacob. He seems to have come to penury. Satan does not look after his own as the idiom goes but God does!* Then Jacob arose and put his sons and wives on camels. And he urged on all the livestock and all the goods or horses which he had acquired for himself in Padan Aram to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.

JACOB HASTES AWAY TOWARD GILEAD.19-21

When Laban went to shear his sheep Rachel stole his household gods. And Jacob deceived the heart of Laban by not informing him that he was fleeing away. And he rose up and crossed the river (Euphrates) and set his face towards the hill country of Gilead.

LABAN PURSUES JACOB HIS ENEMY. THE LORD DEFENDS HIS SOLDIER JACOB 22-25

And it was told Laban in the third day that Jacob had fled. And he pursued as a persecutor after Jacob for seven days and followed hard and cleaved fast to him in the hill of Gilead. *This "cleaving" (Hebrew qbd) suggests virtual arrest. Then God came to Laban in a dream by night and said to him, "See that you say nothing good or bad to Jacob."* Jacob had pitched tent in the hill of Gilead when Laban overtook him and Laban and his family (cf Sons) pitched there too.

LABAN REBUKES JACOB AND STRIVES OVER HIS GODS 26-35

And Laban said to him, "You have deceived my heart; you have urged away my daughters as prisoners of war why did you decide on going by flight and deceive me? Why did you not inform me and I could have sent you off with joy and with songs of tambourines and harps? And you should not have abandoned me as to kissing my grandsons and my daughters. You have done a foolish act. It is in my hand to do you harm but last night *the gods of your fathers spoke to me saying, "See that you speak not good or evil to Jacob."* Now you have left because you greatly desired the house of your father - why did you steal my gods? Jacob answered, "I was afraid, lest you would take your daughters away from me by force" "Anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In the presence of our family amaze yourself at what I have and take what belongs to you for Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them. And Laban went in to the tent of Jacob and of Leah and of the two handmaids and found nothing. *We are advised about the tenting arrangements of Jacob. Leah had a separate tent but the handmaids lived together. Laban executed a thorough search. He searched Leah's tent first and then Rachels.* And coming out of Leah's tent he entered Rachel's. Now Rachel had taken the teraphim and put them inside the saddle of her camel and was sitting on them. Now Laban groped through everything in the tent and did not find them. And Rachel said to her father, "Do not grow angry with me because I do not rise before you and he searched (*Hebrew* *vpj* "to search by digging the ground") but did not find the gods. *The Hebrew is a virtual parable-the gods are sought in the ground. They are dead and buried.*

JACOB CHALLENGES LABAN TO BE OPEN WITH HIS FAMILY 36-37

And Jacob was angry and strove with Laban and Jacob answered and said to Laban, "What is my transgression, what is my sin that you pursued after me?" "For you have touched all my household goods and what have you found that is from your household items? Place it before my family and your family and let them dispute altercate or judge between us both. *It is notable that Jacob does not even mention the word Teraphim or grace these idols with the name gods. He calls them "effects which are in use."* (*Hebrew* *y/k*)

JACOB TESTIFIES TO HIS HARSH LIFE UNDER LABAN

He endured as a soldier (cf 2Tim2.3, James 5.2, Heb 10.32, 12.2-3,

Jacob is now in a position to be absolutely candid with Laban. He shows that there are very genuine reasons why he would no longer tolerate life in Padan Aram.

These twenty years I have been with you. Your sheep and goats have not aborted. I have not had any of your flock to eat. *There were no special gifts or celebratory meals.* I did not bring you animals torn by wild beasts. I kept replacing that myself. You kept (over 20 years) requiring that stolen by day or night to be paid for or sought. *Jacob was indemnifying Laban against theft-he was his insurance policy. This often meant chasing thieves and seeking the lost sheep of Laban.* Heat consumed me by day and at night icy cold and deep dream sleep (*Hebrew* *tnv*) fled from my eyes This was what happened to me for twenty years in your house and I served for fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flocks and you changed my wages ten times. If God who belonged to my father and Abraham -He who was the fear of Isaac had not been his and mine (*Hebrew* "belonged to me and to him") you would have sent me away empty. But God saw and foresaw my affliction and my being smitten in battle (*Hebrew* *[gn]*) and last night rebuked you. *The endurance of the Christian soldier is encouraged by the life of Jacob who was ever under the watch-care of God while long years of hardship lasted.*

READING SEVEN 31 43 -54

Laban answered Jacob and said, "These daughters are my daughters and these sons my (grand) sons and yet what can I do today about either these daughters or the sons of these?" *Laban is lamenting the loss of family perhaps more than he is bemoaning his inability to provide inheritance for them.* Come now, let us make a covenant; I and you; and let it be a witness between me and you. And Jacob took a stone and raised it high (*on Mt Gilead*) as a pillar. He said to his family, "Take stones and make a circle" and

they took stones and made a heap and ate there (*in fellowship*). And Laban called it Jegar Sahadutha - (*Stone heap of which I was an eye witness*) but Jacob called it Galed (*circle of witness or "hard"*) And Laban said, "This heap is witness between me and you today and he called its name "Galed" *Laban settled for the name Galed as "heap of witness" but Jacob thought of it as witnessing the "hard years his family had gone through"* And "the watch-tower" because he said, "The LORD(Yahweh) watch between me and you when we are living each man hiding ourselves or living separate lives from his friend. *These are tell-tale words. They show a man who has come to himself. They show a man who knows he has been hard. They show a man who has come to see the power and reality of Yahweh-God of Abraham and guide of his father.* If you afflict my daughters or take wives in their place when no man is with us God sees and is witness between me and you. And Laban said, "Behold this circular heap, Behold this pillar which I have raised up between me and you. I will not pass this heap and this pillar if you will not pass this heap and this pillar for harm. The Gods of Abraham and the gods of Nahor -the gods of their fathers-may they judge between us" ***And Jacob took an oath in the name of the fear of his father Isaac. And Jacob offered a sacrifice in the hill and called his family to eat bread and they ate bread*** and they lodged overnight in the mountain. *In the final analysis Laban was captive to the gods of Ur as well as to the God of Abraham. He was a polytheist and could only come so far as acknowledging Yahweh as one among many gods. Jacob stood steadfast as a soldier of faith and offered sacrifice to the LORD and called on the "fear of Isaac" -ever remembering the principle of substitution that through God's provision not our works we are accepted by the LORD. In the end Jacob was an "obedient" soldier of the LORD who left Laban as a man with whom he had little in common. He withstood him to the face on the matter of his "divination" and refused to call his gods more than "utensils" and would have none of Laban's syncretism but instead called on the "Fear of Isaac" and in accordance with **prophetic TORAH** offered worship through a substitutionary atonement offering.*

CONCLUSION 1-3

And Laban arose early in the morning and kissed his grandsons and his daughters and blessed them and left and returned to his place. And Jacob left to be on his way and the angels of God came upon him suddenly. *As in 28.11 where Jacob chances suddenly on a special place-Bethel-so now the angels meet Jacob at a special place.* When Jacob saw them he said, "This is as the camp of God and he called the name of the place Mahanaim (*two hosts or two camps*) there was his host and there were very many angels so he could by parallel speak of a regular army. The angels were drawn up in order. The appearance of Angels is foundational to one of the greatest types of the OT. Just as angels appeared when Christ was born and God sent His Son and appeared in serried ranks so they appeared here. The equivalence is because this passage finds Jacob ready to "share all he has" and be God's messenger. It spells out the revelation of God in the Peniel experience to which there is notable reference in other OT contexts-an experience which entitles Jacob by intimacy to be an intercessor and chief promoter of the glorious messiah in his time. For very good reason we sing "O God of Jacob by whose hand thy people still are fed, Who through this weary pilgrimage hast all our fathers led". Besides all this Jacob is just shortly come from his stalwart defence of the "fear of Isaac" in his last meeting with Laban. He is a confessor of the name of the God who through Abraham taught Israel and the world the doctrine of "substitutionary sacrifice"-a doctrine which the two spies were able to use to convince Rahab that her life was safe in their hands- when they said, "Our lives for yours if we do not stand good to our word"

The end of part 7: "The soldier-saint"