

General Church Education



Family Lesson: Genesis 28

Jacob's Dream

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Family Lesson 1 - L

Jacob's Dream
Genesis 28

Family Talk:
THE STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

by the Rev. Frederick L. Schnarr

One of the most beautiful dreams in the Old Testament is the dream Jacob had as he fled towards Haran from the wrath of his brother Esau.

Through the use of pressure and deceit Jacob had taken Esau's birthright and blessing. Esau was so angry about this he was planning to kill Jacob. So, at the advice of his mother, Rebekah, Jacob fled towards the city of Haran along the upper Euphrates River. This was the home of Abraham and Sarah's cousins.

We can picture Jacob with only a few supplies he could carry, travelling along the narrow little roadway that went north up and down over the mountains of Canaan. In those days there were no hotels or sleeping places along such roads, so when night came you had to sleep out in the open with only your cloak to cover you and protect you from the chilly night air.

So Jacob took some stones to use for a pillow and went to sleep. Then he saw a great stairway going from the earth to heaven. On the stairway were angels going up and down, and the Lord Himself was standing at the top.

Jacob was so awed by the beauty and power of his dream, that as soon as he woke up, he took a stone he had used for a pillow, and made a marker to remember this wonderful place. He called the place Bethel, because that name means the house of God, and Jacob certainly believed that God dwelt there on the mountain top.

Jacob was a shepherd boy who knew very little about the Lord or heaven. Remember, in his day there was not the Word as we know it. The Old and New Testaments had not been written. And the Ancient Word had long since been misused and finally lost. Only a few of its stories were spoken about and remembered.

Wouldn't Jacob have been surprised if he had known the real meaning of his dream?

What is it that connects our minds on earth with the minds of the angels in heaven, and in fact, with the Lord Himself? What is it that not only connects our lives with their lives, but actually makes it possible for them to send us feelings of love and affection? It is the WORD.

The Word, besides its stories, contains hundreds and thousands of goods and truths. There are high or spiritual good and truths, and there are lower or natural goods and truths. They are hidden in the Word like a stairway because this is how the Lord sends down His life to us, from high things all the way down to worldly things.

When we use the knowledges from the Word then our mind not only receives the loves and affections of angels, but we in turn have our loves rise up to give happiness to the angels. This is why Jacob saw angels “ascending and descending.”

The Lord’s life comes down to us through the Word, and goes back to Him through our use of the Word. The Word is the starting place for everything that is good about our lives.

This truth is so important that it is awesome.

It was “terrible” only in the sense of being terribly important. This is why Jacob wanted to be sure to remember this place. So he set up a stone as a pillar from the ones he had used for his pillow. And called the name of the place BETHEL — the house of God.

The Word is the place where the Lord lives — it is His house. Because the angels love the Word and want it in them and with them, they come down to us whenever we are in the same idea and love. They come to us as we sleep at night, and bring spiritual presents from the Lord, that we too may know the blessings of His love.

Amen.

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LEVEL 1 – BECOMING AN ANGEL



Jacob had a dream. He saw angels going up and coming down from the Lord.

Wouldn't you like to be an angel someday?

As you grow up and read the Word, and do what it says, you can be an angel.

Would you like to see someone who could be an angel?

(Take your child to a mirror and have your child look in the mirror.)

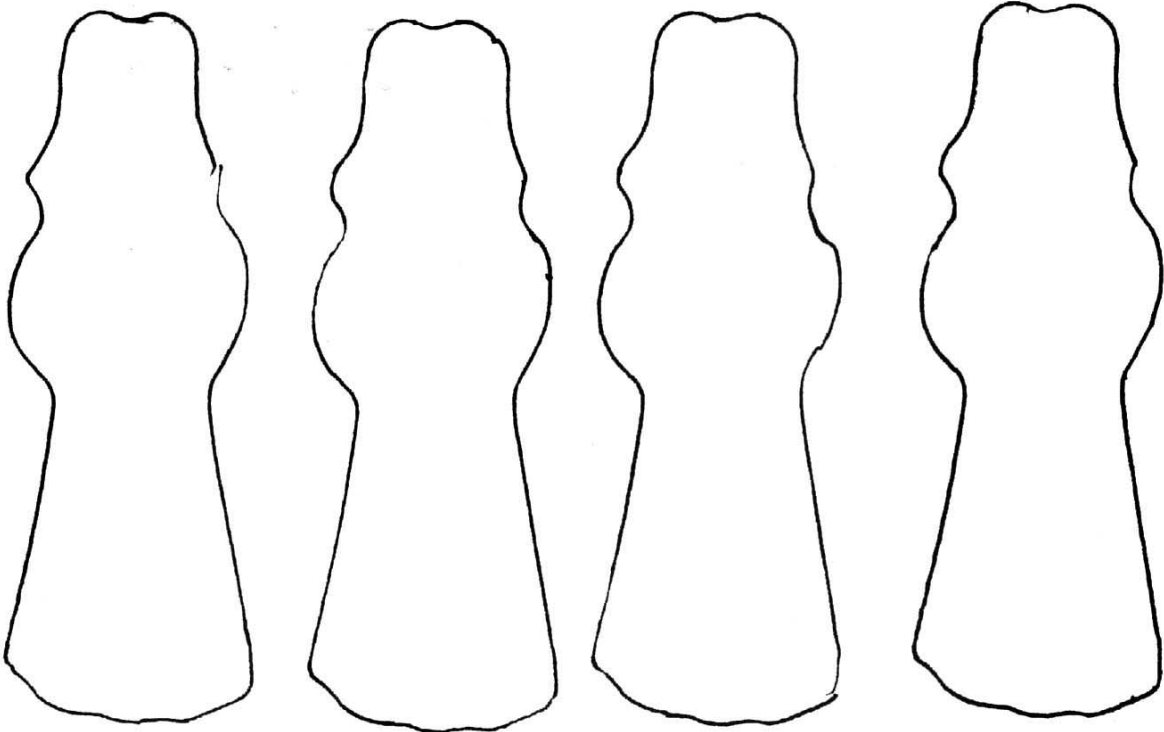
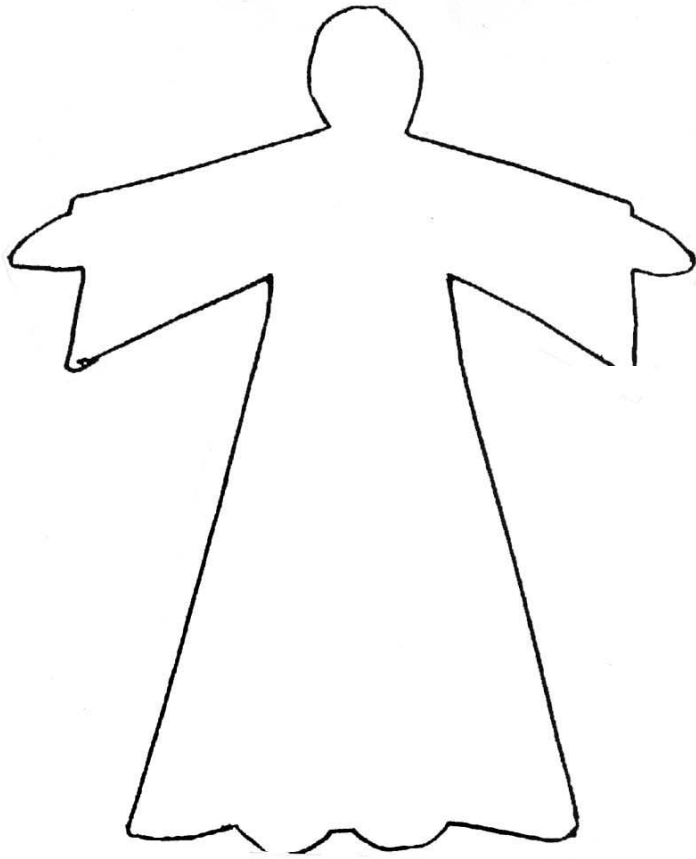
Project

Materials Needed:

Construction paper
Scissors, glue, and crayons
Glitter (optional)

- ◆ On a piece of construction paper, draw a ladder.
- ◆ Cut out the figures (on the next page) of the Lord and four angels.
- ◆ Draw a face on two of the angels, and draw hair (back of head view) on the other two angels.
- ◆ Glue the Lord at the top of your ladder (you may like to put some glitter on the figure of the Lord).
- ◆ Glue the angels going up and down the ladder.





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LEVEL 2 – AS JACOB SLEPT

You have just heard a story from the WORD about Jacob's lying down and sleeping out-side under the sky. While he was asleep, do you remember what happened?

Yes, Jacob had a beautiful dream, didn't he?



Jacob saw the LORD standing on the top of a ladder (stairway).

Angels were going up to the LORD and coming down.

The LORD promised Jacob in his dream that he and his family would live in the land right around where Jacob was sleeping.

Here are three things for you to do:

1. Included on page 4 of this lesson is a picture of Jacob's Dream for you to color and display. Perhaps you could display it near your bed where you can see it before you go to sleep.
2. On the next page is a song for you to sing about that beautiful stairway. While you sing, you can think about how someday you will see the LORD when you go to heaven and become an angel.
3. Also included is another special song for you to learn, by Lori Odhner.*

** Some of Lori's Songs are available on tape and in a binder of sheet music, from the General Church Book Center, Cairncrest, P.O. Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009, Telephone (215) 914-4920, e-mail bookctr@newchurch.edu*

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of two systems of two staves each. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The first system has a C chord above the first measure, a G chord above the second measure, a G7 chord above the third measure, and a C chord above the fourth measure. The second system has a C chord above the first measure, a G chord above the second measure, an F chord above the third measure, a C chord above the fourth measure, a G7 chord above the fifth measure, and a C chord above the sixth measure. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and dynamic markings like 'd'.

1. *We are climbing Jacob's ladder,
We are climbing Jacob's ladder,
We are climbing Jacob's ladder,
Children of the Lord.*
2. *Every round goes higher, higher,
Every round goes higher, higher,
Every round goes higher, higher,
Children of the Lord.*
3. *Children, do you love your Jesus?
Children, do you love your Jesus?
Children, do you love your Jesus?
Children of the Lord.*
4. *If you love Him, why not serve Him?
If you love Him, why not serve Him?
If you love Him, why not serve Him?
Children of the Lord.*
5. *We are climbing higher, higher,
We are climbing higher, higher,
We are climbing higher, higher,
Children of the Lord.*

Jacob's Ladder

Based on Genesis 28: 10-17

Lori Odhner



1. Now Ja - cob was tra - vel - ing toward Ha - ran,
 2. Now the Lord was speak - ing in Ja - cob's dream,



And he came to a cer - tain place when night be - gan,
 "I am the Lord, the God of Ab - ra - ham!"



And he used a stone to pil - low his head,
 Be - hold I am with you wher - ev - er you go."



And he laid down to sleep on a gras - sy bed.
 "The Lord was in this place and I did not know!"



The an - gels went up, up, up, The an - gels went down, down, down,



On the lad - der to hea - ven in Ja - cob's dream.

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Jacob's Dream



Jacob's Dream
Genesis 28
LEVEL 3 – THE LORD IN HEAVEN

MATERIALS NEEDED

Scissors, Ruler, Tape or Glue
Markers or Crayons

Jacob saw something very important in his dream. He saw the Lord in heaven and angels going up and down a ladder or stairway between the Lord and the earth.

Jacob's dream represented how people on earth communicate with the Lord. The angels stand for the good and true things from the Lord.

The Lord's truth comes down to us. When we learn it and follow it, we do His good. Its like we send good back to the Lord.

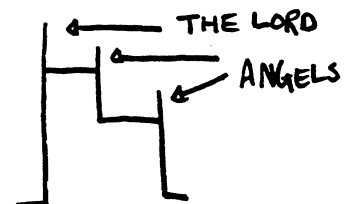


Project

You are going to build a model of Jacob's dream. When you look at the model, remember that you can communicate with the Lord by learning the stories of the Word.

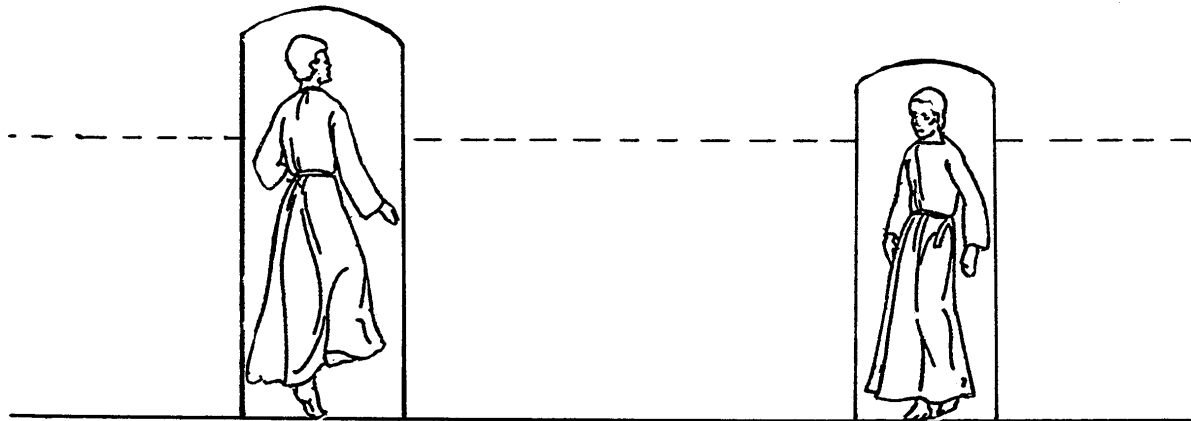
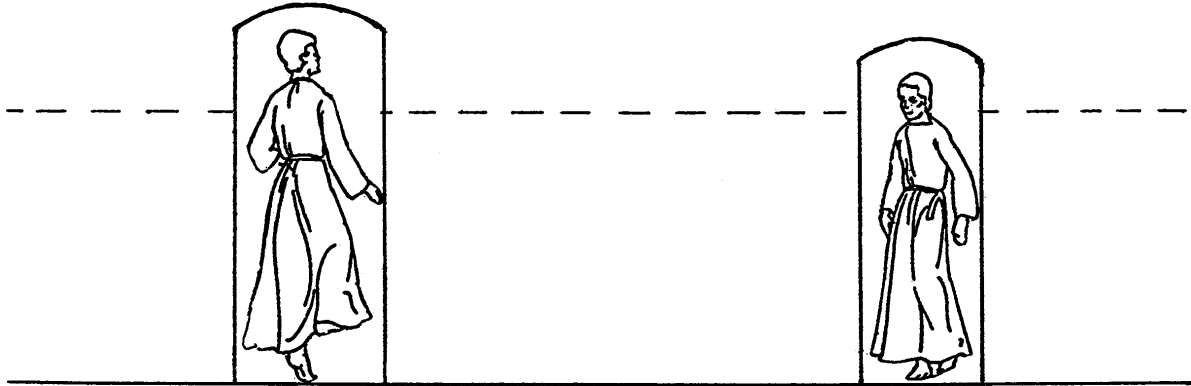
Look at the next two pages. You will find pictures of angels on one page and a picture of the Lord on the other page.

1. You may color these pictures first.
2. On the page with the pictures of angels—cut out each angel on the line around *three* sides, leaving the bottom of the angels attached to the solid line.
3. On this same page, you see solid lines and broken lines.
 - a. Starting at the bottom of the page fold the bottom part of the paper forward on top of the front of the page along the broken line.
 - b. Fold the next solid line backward under the back of the page.
 - c. Fold forward on the other broken lines and backward on the solid lines.
4. At the bottom of the page with the picture of the Lord is a solid line. Fold the bottom part of the page backward under the back of the page along this line.
5. Glue or tape the top fold of the angel page along the dotted line under the picture of the Lord. Keep the angels facing forward.
6. When the glue is dry stand up your model. You will have made Jacob's ladder, the stairway of communication with the Lord.



(side view of finished model ↑↑)

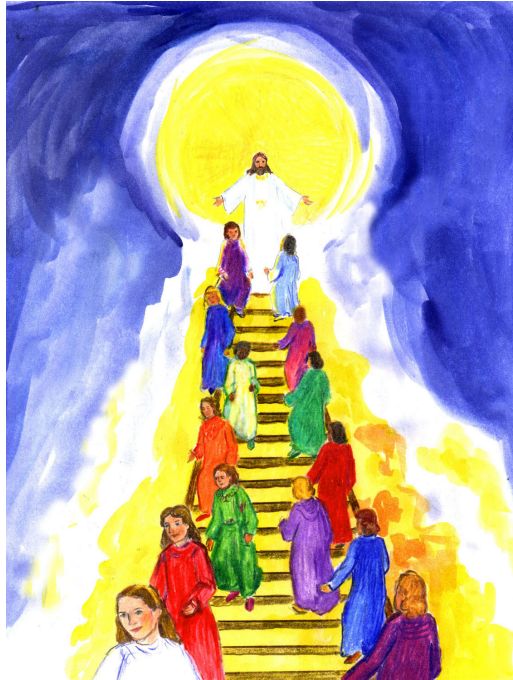




Jacob's Dream

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LEVEL 4 – SURELY THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE



To put the story of Jacob's dream in context, let's review what was happening:

1. Jacob and Esau were twin brothers, sons of _____
and _____.
2. Jacob had tricked Esau into selling him his _____
for a bowl of stew.
3. Now Jacob tricked Esau out of something else that was rightfully his.
With help from _____, he fooled _____
into giving him Esau's blessing.
4. Esau was angry. He said that after the period of mourning their father's
death he would _____.
5. So Jacob left home, both to get away and to go to _____
to find _____.

Think for a minute how it would feel to be Jacob. Think of a time you might be in a similar state. When Jacob left home, all was not calm. He had to leave. People were angry enough to want to kill him. But he wasn't just running away. He was also starting on a new phase of his life—going to find a wife and start his own family.



Right between these two—between a troubled past and a promising future—he lay down to sleep, with nothing to lay his head on except a rock. With his head on that rock, he had a wonderful dream—angels ascending and descending a ladder (or stairway) from earth to heaven. The Lord stood above it and promised to be with Jacob.

When Jacob awoke the first thing he said was:
(copy the verse as beautifully as you can)

Genesis 28:16

Sometime you might be in a situation similar to Jacob's. You might be in trouble—with people you care about mad at you. Maybe you've done something you regret, or maybe you have just grown out of something. The future may be bright, but far away. At the time all is dark.

You have nothing to lay your head on except the cold hard truth.

When you do rest on the truth, what do you see?

The Lord speaks to you. What does He say?

If you should feel as alone as Jacob was out in the desert, be still and listen for the Lord.

When you awaken to the world of your own life, you will see, as did Jacob, that:

“Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.”

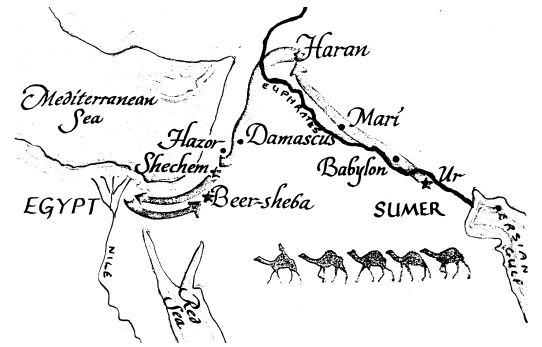
Jacob's Dream

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LEVEL 5 – TRAVELING TO HARAN

The Fertile Crescent

The Fertile Crescent was a strip of land in which most of the important ancient civilizations developed. The land was shaped like a quarter moon turned upside down. One point was in Egypt and the other point in Chaldea where the Euphrates River joins the Persian Gulf.



Abraham's Travels

Abraham traveled from Ur up the Euphrates River. He passed the great ancient cities of Babylon and Mari. For 25 years he stopped at Haran. Then, when his father Terah had died, he journeyed to the land of Canaan. He probably passed through the ancient Syrian city of Damascus, crossed the River Jordan below the Sea of Galilee, and stayed for a time near the city of Shechem. Then he stayed briefly at a spot between Bethel and Ai, before a famine finally drove him to Egypt.

The Word and the Fertile Crescent

The Writings tell us that the Most Ancient and Ancient Churches had existed in the Fertile Crescent, and that their wise people had given names to rivers, seas, mountains, and even cities that represented heavenly things. The whole story of the Word was also lived and written down in the land of the Fertile Crescent. This is why it is important for us to know some of its history and geography.

Project:

(A) Match each one of the names below with its correct number on the map on the next page

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| _____ Persian Gulf | _____ Dead Sea |
| _____ Nile River | _____ Tigris River |
| _____ Sea of Galilee | _____ Caspian Sea |
| _____ Euphrates River | _____ Great Sea |
| _____ Red Sea | _____ Black Sea |
| _____ Jordan River | |

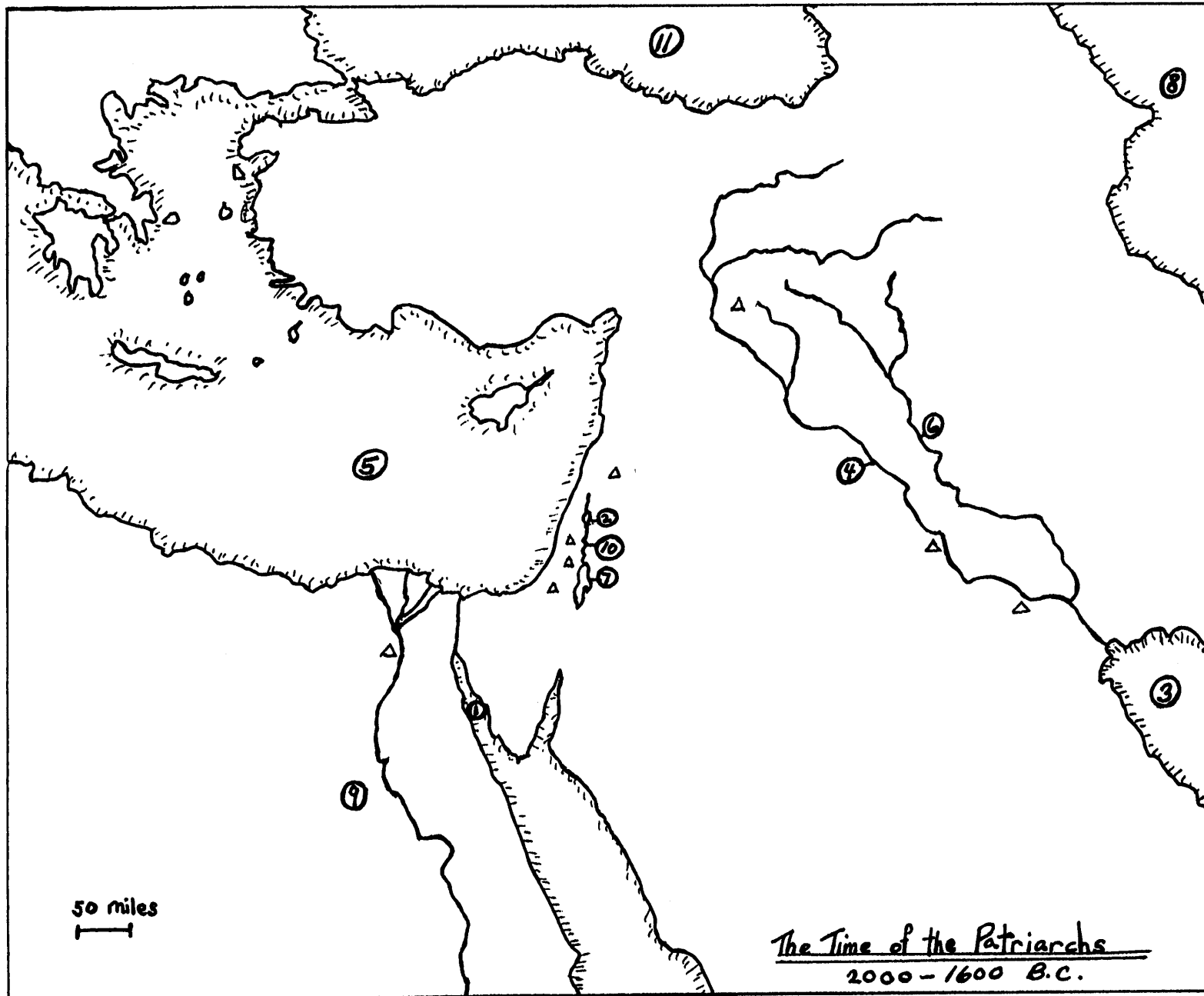
(B) Some of the cities and locations familiar to the Patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—are marked by a 8. The cities are listed below.

Write the name of the correct city next to each 8 on the map.

(To help you, a map of the Bible lands at the time of the Patriarchs is on the last page.)

Beersheba	Shechem
Ur	Damascus
Bethel	Babylon
Haran	Memphis

(Answers are on page 3)



Answers

(A)

- 1 - Red Sea
- 2 - Sea of Galilee
- 3 - Persian Gulf
- 4 - Euphrates River
- 5 - Great Sea
- 6 - Tigris River
- 7 - Dead Sea
- 8 - Caspian Sea
- 9 - Nile River
- 10 - Jordan River
- 11 - Black Sea

B)

Ur.....on the lower Euphrates River

Babylon.....About 100 miles north of Ur

Haran.....Near the upper northern waters of the Euphrates

Damascus.....To the north-east of the Sea of Galilee

Shechem.....The northernmost city in the land of Canaan of the three listed

Bethel.....The middle triangle in the land of Canaan about fifteen miles north of the city that would later become so famous —Jerusalem

Beersheba.....The southernmost of the three cities listed in the land of Canaan

Memphis.....A great city along the Nile River in the land of Egypt

