



## MEETING WITH GOD

On the way from his home in Be'er Sheva, Yaakov happened upon a particular location, VAYIFGA BAMAKOM.

A rabbinic interpretation of the Hebrew is "He encountered God", since HAMAKOM is one of ninety or so rabbinic names for the Almighty.

Literally it means "The Place", since it indicates that there is no place where God cannot be found. He is Omnipresent, always there, present in every moment of life and every corner of the universe.

The Bible says (Yishayahu 55:6), "Seek the Lord B'HI'MATZ'O - wherever He may be found". Some say that the Hebrew does not indicate "wherever" but "whenever". Both alternatives mean much the same thing, i.e. that God is always accessible.

## Why he went to Haran

Why did Yaakov go to Haran (B'reishit 28:10)?

It all depends on where and what was Haran. The name seems to come from a root that means "road".

Haran was probably a caravan-station north of the Syrian border, a significant stopping place on the caravan routes through the Middle East. Traders met there and it must have had a political and commercial importance.

Rashi says that it was the sort of place where one could make an impact. So we can take it for granted that Yaakov deliberately chose to set his sights on Haran.

It is also a place with a family connection since it was the birth-place of Yaakov's mother Rivka.

The climate in Haran is dry and parched, but weather was not the main consideration. **OZ**