

# Torah Portion Vayetzeh

“Then He went out”

# Cityscape

- With a mountain in the middle







Babylon

linea  
america



# The City and its Tower

- Babylon: “gate of the gods”
- Ziggurat: Man-made mountain
- Shrine on top
- A god’s dwelling on earth





# Etemenanki Ziggurat

- Tower of Babel?
- King of Babylon
- “Come, let’s build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let’s make a name for ourselves” – Gen. 11:4





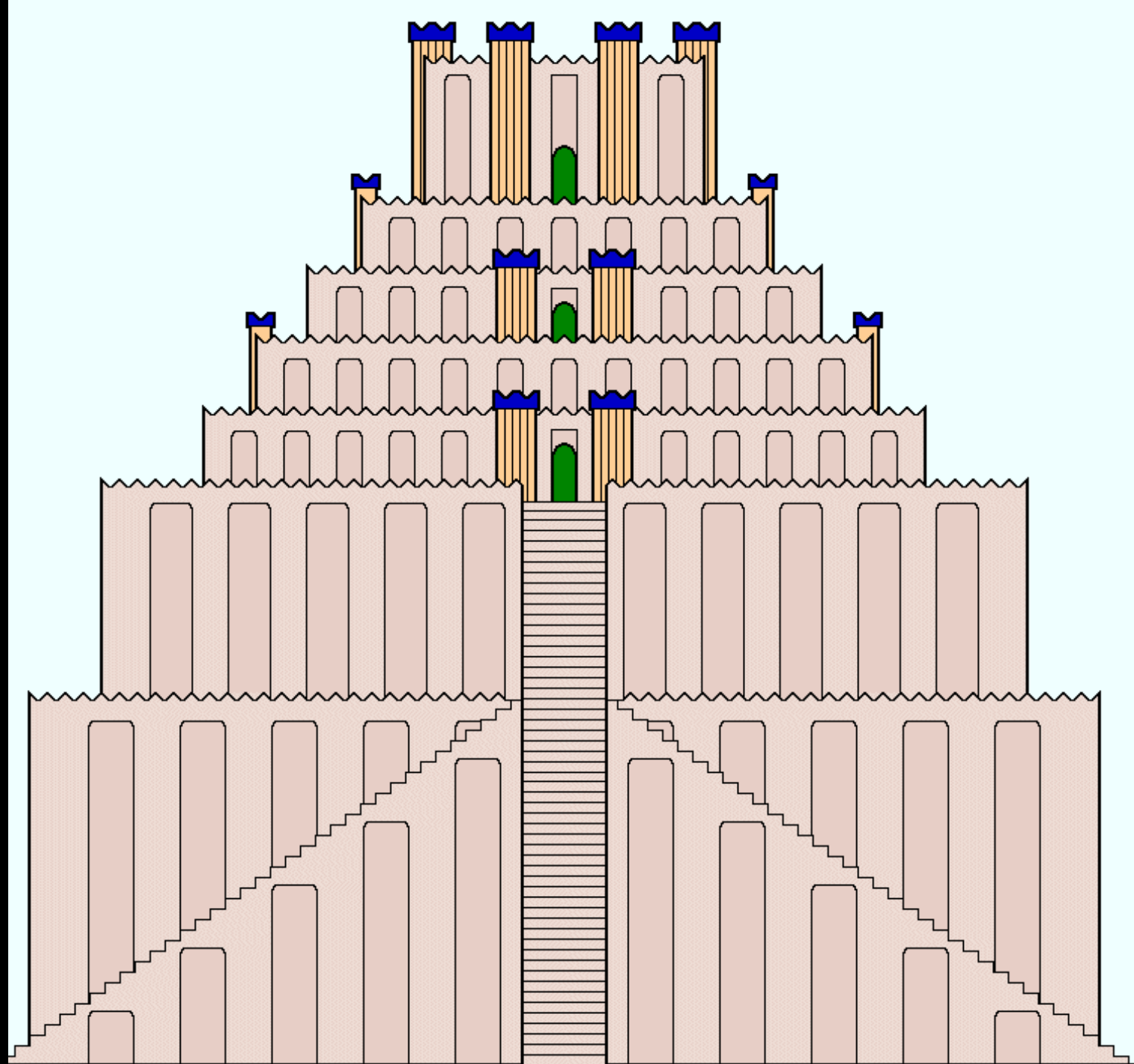


US soldiers descending Ziggurat of Ur (Iraq - 2009)



# Reconstruction of the Etemenanki Ziggurat

- Special spot for descent
- Etemenanki = “Foundation of heaven and earth”
- Marduk
- Intercessors – priests



# Conclusion: Ziggurat of Babylon

- Man-made mountain
- Made the king's name great, reputation great
- Intercessors ascended, descended
- Scattering of peoples
- Next story: Abram
- “And I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing...in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” – Gen. 12:2-3





# Jacob's Dream

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While reading: what do you notice or wonder?

# Gen 28:10-11

Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Harran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep.





# Gen 28:12-13

He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to the heavens, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

There above it stood YHWH, and he said: “I am YHWH, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying.



# Gen 28:14-15

14 Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.

I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”





# Gen 28:16-17

When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, “Surely YHWH is in this place, and I was not aware of it.”

17 He was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of the heavens.”



# Gen 28:18-19

Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it.

19 He called that place Bethel [“House of God”] though the city used to be called Luz.





# Gen 28:20-22

then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear 21 so that I return safely to my father’s household, then YHWH will be my God 22 and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God’s house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth.”



What did you notice or wonder?



# What I noticed

- I. Jacob's arrogance – “this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house”
- II. Said nothing about the blessing and his legacy
- III. “Surely YHWH is in this place, and I was not aware of it.” ? ? ?
- IV. “stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to the heavens”
  - *let us build ourselves...a tower that reaches to the heavens”*
- V. “This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven”

# similarities

## Ziggurat of Babel

Ziggurat starts on earth and  
**is meant** to reach into the heavens

Intercessors ascend and descend – Priests

“Foundation of heaven and earth”

Babylon – “gate of the gods”

Made the king’s name “great”

## Jacob’s Stairway

Jacob’s ladder starts on earth and  
**does** reach into the heavens

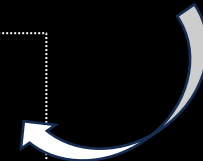
Intercessors ascend and descend – Angels

A place where heaven and earth  
meet for Jacob

Jacob: “This is the house of God;  
this is the gate of the heavens”

Jacob’s name would be great  
as father of all his descendants

And I will make you into a great nation, And I will bless you, And  
make your name great – Gen. 12:2





# differences

## Ziggurat of Babel

Babylonians had to create by the works of their hands

Had to serve and provide food, drink and etc. to the god

Ziggurat is immovable; made of mudbrick

So-called “god” had to descend into the shrine on the ziggurat

scattered the people to the nations

Made the king’s name “great” by work of his “hands” (or slaves); needs ziggurat for deity to come

## Jacob’s Stairway

God presents himself to patriarchs any time, anywhere

going to do a great thing for Jacob’s family and all people

YHWH’s stairway can go anywhere

no shrine, no temple, no need to descend

bless and reunite the nations – Messiah, Pentecost

Jacob’s name great because of God; wombs of matriarchs, no temple needed, God comes on his own terms

Yeshua refers to Jacob's stairway - John 1:51

Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."

- *Is he the stairway?*
- *Is he the intercessor?*
- *Is he the meeting spot of heaven and earth?*



1 Timothy 2:5 – an intercessor

For there is one God and one mediator  
[intercessor] between God and mankind,  
the man Messiah Yeshua

John 14:6 – a stairway between God and Man

“I am the way and the truth and the life.  
No one comes to the Father except  
through me.”



Colossians 2:9 – merging heaven and earth

For in Messiah all the fullness of the  
Deity lives in bodily form



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“The Word  
became flesh  
and Tented  
among us”

- John 1:14



# Meeting Spot of Heaven and Earth

Matthew 12:6 - I tell you that something greater than the temple is here.

John 2:19, 21 – “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days”; the temple he had spoken of was his body.

## His new Congregation – Ephesians 2

You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Messiah Yeshua himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in Yeshua you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.