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THE PROMISE NARRATIVES IN GENESIS

THE aim of the writer or compiler of Genesis was to outline the history of God's Promise to the forebears of Israel, a theme which directly or indirectly is referred to in the rest of the sacred Scriptures including the New Testament. This great historical event is at the basis of the Israelite beliefs and religious practices. If therefore the compiler of Genesis made use of any preexisting material he must have chosen such incidents of information as had any relevance to the subject; the rest would have been thrown into the background or put away altogether. If then the existing promises, together with the narratives in which they are embedded could be distributed into different groups, each with its own peculiar features, shades of meaning and points of view, one would have the necessary clue to trace, at least in their general outline, the original sources. Such analysis would then afford the criteria for the analysis of the rest of the book. In the present study we propose to analyse the several promises together with the narratives in which they are found.

There are no less than thirteen promises and promise three is again divided into two parts; they are distributed thus: seven to Abraham; three to Isaac; and four to Jacob. The main object of all these promises is practically the same throughout with some exceptions. As we shall see, however, the standpoint of the narrator is not always the same; hence there are differences of emphasis or language. Some characteristics recur in a given group and not in another.

THE ABRAHAM CYCLE OF NARRATIVES (12, 1-25, 18)

There are seven promise-narratives out of a total of seventeen forming the whole cycle. One promise before Abraham left Haran; another one after his separation from Lot; the next one on the occasion of God's covenant of circumcision; another one follows his victory over the five allied kings; again another one before the destruction of the cities of the Plain, and finally another one at the end of the narrative of Isaac's sacrifice. These promises kept the patriarch in good spirit and in constant touch with God, his powerful protector.

PROMISE ONE

Abraham leaves his country (12, 1-20)

Abraham, the son of Thare, a descendant of Sem, who was blessed by Noah, was living in Haran when he was called by God to leave his family and his country unto an unknown destination. Abraham obeyed and moved into Canaan, where he settled provisionally in Sichern. There he built an altar to the Lord. Abraham moved further south through Bethel unto the Negeb; hence, forced by famine in the land of Canaan, he migrated into Egypt, where his wife Sarah attracted the attention of the Egyptians.

The Promise (12, 1-9)

The text of this promise can be divided into two parts dealing with the object of the promise (vv. 2, 3) and the condition for such promise (v. 1). The fundamental reason for the promise is added thereto.

Three things are promised: *glorification*, *blessing* and *land*. *Glorification* is expressed by $\text{לְגַדְלֵךְ וְלְרַבְּרָבְךָ}$ (v. 2). It means either material greatness or moral greatness; at times it is not easy to establish which meaning is intended. It denotes primarily numerical greatness; a numerous posterity was considered to be one of God's blessings. In the promises numerical greatness is expressed by means of various expressions in Genesis 13, 16; 17, 2-6; 22, 17; 26, 24; 28, 3; 35, 11. This meaning is clear in this promise; v. 2 reads; *I'll make of thee a glorious nation and glorify thy name*; cfr 18, 18: *He will become a great (glorious) and a mighty nation, a source of blessing to nations*. This interpretation applies with equal force to Dt. 4, 7, 8 and to Dt. 26, 5 where we have moral greatness and material or numerical greatness coupled together: a glorious and mighty and populous nation $\text{גִּבּוֹר וְרַב וְעַמֻּלְלִים וְנִשְׁבָּחִים}$ (Dt. 26, 5) One may paraphrase thus: *I will make of thee a numerous and glorious nation*, giving to the expression $\text{לְגַדְלֵךְ וְלְרַבְּרָבְךָ}$ a double meaning; material greatness would be the basis for moral greatness. Other texts which confirm this interpretation are: Gn. 41, 40; 48, 19; Ex 32, 10; Nm 14, 12; 19; Dt 9, 1; 11, 23; 2 Sm 5, 10; 2 Ch 17, 12; Ps 92, 6; Zac 12, 7; Mic. 5, 3. The second object is the *blessing*. The glorification about which we have just spoken is intimately connected with the blessing, indeed glorification is the effect of this same blessing: God will bless Abraham, magnify and glorify his name. This blessing, symbolising the communication of divine power to men¹ will overflow to others; friendship with Abraham would mean friendship with God. *Land* is the third and final

¹ J.L. Mackenzie, *God and Nature in the Old Testament*, in CBQ 14(1952) 126ff.

object of this promise. The patriarch is required by God to move out of his country. To him and to all his posterity אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן *this land* (v.7) is promised.

Literary Structure

The text consists of two main parts. In one part there is the promise itself, in the other the order to leave the land of his birth.

Posterity as a basis for glorification is expressed by a simple verbal sentence with an imperfect consecutive *qatal* followed by the final adverbial phrases.

The blessing part consists of six verbal sentences with four imperfections consecutive and two perfects consecutive: *I bless you; magnify thy name by a blessing; I bless those who bless you; I curse those who curse you; be blessed* (Niphal).

Land: we have just a single sentence; the adverbial אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן is put at the beginning and followed by the imperfect יָשַׁב ending with the object (v.7).

The Order is expressed by the imperative קוּם - הָלֵךְ followed by the adverbial phrase אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן and closes by the determinative אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן (v.1).

PROMISE TWO

The separation of the two kinsmen (13, 1-18)

Lot enters into Canaan with Abraham; after the return from Egypt they settle together between Bethel and Hai (v.3). Their possessions increase so much as to give rise to constant quarrels between their respective servants. Abraham gives Lot the chance to choose where to settle; he chooses to go eastwards beyond the southern end of the Jordan.

The Promise (13, 14-17)

Immediately after this separation God appears to Abraham and renews the former promises: land and posterity.

No conditions are attached to these promises; the promise is absolute. God at this important stage of the life of the patriarch, left alone among the Canaanites, heartens him by confirming the arrangements arrived at between the two kinsmen. He will give him the land throughout its breadth and length as signified through the symbolical gesture of walking all over the land and looking at it. There is no reference to the blessing or to the glorification as in the preceding promise. All the stress is laid on posterity and land.

Literary Structure

The whole text is divided into three parts: in the first part God promises the land; in the second part God promises posterity; in the third part God again returns to the land, asking the patriarch to look at it and to go over it. This shows that the main purpose of the promise is the possession of the land. This form is in line with the general tendency for repetition giving well balanced short periods with a strong literary effect.

There are two commands and a double promise. The commands are expressed by means of an imperative, followed in both cases by an adverbial phrase. The promise is emphatically introduced by the particle **וַי** followed by the object **אֶת-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-אָתָּה** (v. 15) as a *nominativus pendens*. The verb **וַיִּתְּנָהּ** is a cohortative while the one relating to posterity is a perfect consecutive. The principal sentences are encumbered with secondary material intended to render the promise more solemn: adverbial phrases as **לְפָנֶיךָ וַיִּתְּנָהּ וַיִּקְרָא וַיִּבְרָח** and the introduction of comparisons as **אֶם-יִבְרַח אִישׁ לְמִנּוֹת אֶת-עַד הָאָרֶץ וְכָפַר הָאָרֶץ** and **כִּי-יִבְרַח אִישׁ לְמִנּוֹת אֶת-עַד הָאָרֶץ וְכָפַר הָאָרֶץ** (v. 16).

PROMISE THREE

The alliance between God and Abraham (15, 1-21)

In this narrative one notes a new feature, the dialogue between God and patriarch, a phenomenon that appears for the first time in Genesis except for chapter three. There are no topographical indications whatsoever; following as it does immediately after the account of the attack on the five kings it is very probable that the whole thing happened in Hebron (14, 13).

Before proceeding to analyse the promise we have to explain certain inconsistencies of detail which we believe to be due to the fact that in the chapter we have really two accounts of two different incidents strung together. The first one (15, 1-6) deals with the promise of a son by God in a vision by night (v. 5); the second one (15, 7-21) deals with an alliance between God and Abraham in the evening before the setting of the sun (v. 12). Hence we divide the chapter into two parts.

The Promise – First Part (15, 1-6)

Abraham is living in Hebron, childless; his riches are increasing steadily and he is anxious for an heir. God appears to encourage him by the promise of a son who would take the place of Eliezer, the chief servant of the patriarch's household.

God promises to the patriarch three things: a general reward, a son to inherit him, numerous posterity. Abraham has nothing to do in return except to believe in the omnipotence of God, the creator of the innumerable stars. The stress is laid on the inheritance: the son is given to inherit Abraham; the promise of protection functions as an introduction to the whole promise.

Literary Structure

The promise is cast into a dialogue between God and Abraham. It falls into three main parts corresponding respectively to the three main objects of the promise; each part is formed of an introduction laying down the reason of the promise following it:

God is his protector; therefore Abraham will be rewarded;

God wants Abraham to be inherited; hence a son is promised;

God creates the stars; therefore He is almighty. Moreover He wants to give a no less numerous posterity to Abraham.

The first part consists of two nominal sentences; the second one of three verbal sentences including a relative one.

Abraham acknowledged the power of God and believed in it. This was not enough; God wanted to give him an object lesson; he led him out to show him the countless stars that adorned the clear beautiful eastern skies. This is a sort of symbolical gesture meant to impress the mind and to move the heart. The whole episode ends by 'Abraham believed and it was reputed him unto justice.'

The Promise – Second Part (15, 7-21)

Abraham is in Hebron; there appears God to him presenting himself as the person who called him out of Mesopotamia to give him *this land*. Abraham asks for a sign whereby he would be sure of such possession. God asks him to prepare for the formalities of a contract. Abraham brought the birds and beasts to be divided into two groups. God then in the form of a flame passed between them. It was a contract, a unilateral one by that; henceforth Abraham would not doubt anymore.

The main object is *land*, promised to Abraham and his descendants. Posterity is mentioned only indirectly. The covenant appears for the first time here.

Literary Structure

The primitive text is very short; vv. 13-16 are excluded. The remaining text is divided into two parts: one promising *this land* to the patriarch; the other dealing with its possession by his descendants.

The first part forms one unit with the introduction itself: God led

Abraham out of Mesopotamia to give him this land.

The second part forms a verbal sentence by itself.

Also vv. 18-21 together with vv. 13-16 are a gloss added to the original text in the light of later history.

In this chapter therefore two promises are actually made to Abraham on two different occasions: the first promise concerns the birth of a son who would be the heir of Abraham's possessions, who in his turn would be the founder of a great nation; the other one deals with land to be possessed by Abraham and his posterity. The one was promised to the patriarch by night, the other in the evening just before sunset. The second promise is remarkable for being complete with the formalities of a covenant or contract.

PROMISE FOUR

The Covenant of Circumcision (17, 1-30)

In chapter seventeen there is the establishment of a new covenant. No time or place indication is given; the age of Abraham is given as ninety years. From the context it seems that he is living in Hebron. The literary structure is rather complicated and verbose.

The main argument of the whole section is the covenant between God and Abraham. The fundamental elements of this covenant are found in v. 1: לְפָנַי וְתָתִירָה הַמִּים וְאַתָּנָה בְּרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ God could give to Abraham something in return for his good moral behaviour in obedience to God's wishes. The elements of the covenant may be represented graphically thus:

Contracting parties: God on the one hand; Abraham, Isaac and posterity on the other.

God's Promises:

To Abraham:	Posterity	To Abraham's	Posterity:
	Birth of Isaac		Land
	Land		To be their God
	To be his God		
	Pact		
To Isaac:	Blessing	To Ismael:	Blessing
	Posterity		Posterity
	Pact		

Conditions: Good moral behaviour.

Symbolic gestures: Prostration of Abraham
Laughter of Abraham
Circumcision

The stress is on posterity; it occurs three times with Abraham, Isaac, Ismael respectively; land and blessing occur only once and twice respectively. Moreover the blessing has a peculiar meaning; it means here numerous posterity. God would bless Isaac, Ismael and Sarah and through this blessing they would be the progenitors of a numerous posterity. All elements converge to a single point, that is, posterity. Land is given as a place where they would dwell and the blessing of God would be the radical cause of this countless progeny. There is a special emphasis on moral conduct expressed by the formula $\text{וְהָיָה לְפָנַי וְהָיָה צְדָקָם}$ (v. 1)

We have also some symbolical actions or gestures. Abraham prostrates himself in the presence of God and laughs at the idea of generating a son in his old age. God asks the patriarch to circumcise himself and all his household. Circumcision would be a perennial reminder of the bond between God and Israel.

Literary Structure

The whole section is divided into two principal parts preceded by an introduction.

Introduction: a) God introduces Himself.

b) An inscription enunciating the general principles of the Covenant.

Abraham and God: An act of submission from Abraham.

a) Covenant

b) Motives for the Covenant

c) Circumcision as a memorial

Abraham's relatives and God:

a) Sarah

b) Ismael

c) Isaac

The style in general is different from that of the preceding promises: it is verbose and full of repetition through short coordinated sentences; there are special terms for land as אֶרֶץ מְנַחֵם and אֶרֶץ פְּנֵעוֹן (v. 8) and for posterity $\text{מַלְאִים מִפֶּה יְהוָה לְגוֹיִם}$; $\text{אֶבְרָהָם הָיָה לְגוֹיִם}$ (v. 6).

Blessing which recurs only twice in relation to Ismael and Sarah respectively, is expressed by piel בֵּרַךְ .

PROMISE FIVE

Abraham entertains the three travellers (18, 1-33)

This promise is embedded in the cycle of Lot's narratives, including

the destruction of the Pentapolis. It is divided into two parts: the first one forms the object of a dialogue. The whole cycle is included in chapters eighteen and nineteen.

The scene is set in the Valley of Mambre, where the tent of Abraham is found. The patriarch is sitting near his tent when three travellers approach him. He welcomes them and lavishes on them his hospitality. They accept joyfully all the compliments proffered to them, rewarding him by the promise of a son for the year following: one of them is God himself. (Several times אֱלֹהֵי אֲנִי stands for God Himself). Sarah would conceive and bear a son within a year. She however is sceptic about the whole matter and laughs at it. This forms the subject matter of the whole promise.

The three men, that is God and his two companions, set on their journey bound for the doomed cities of the Plain. On the way God informs Abraham, the recipient of the Promises and the future source of universal blessing, about his decision to destroy the sinful cities. The patriarch intercedes for them unsuccessfully because there were not enough good men to compensate for the crimes that were rampant therein. This is the context of the second promise.

The Promise - First Part (18, 1-15)

A son is promised to Sarah. Abraham is not worried about his future heir or posterity. Sarah is sceptic about the whole business and laughs at it all; hence the name Isaac to her future son: the verb שָׂרָה recurs no less than four times. This promise is a reward for the hospitality so generously and unstintingly shown to the travellers. The whole setting therefore is totally different from that of promise four in chapter seventeen.

Literary Structure

There is nothing particular to notice; a dialogue is set in a narrative with idyllic associations. The promise is expressed simply and tersely.

The Promise - Second Part (18, 16-33)

God is presented anthropomorphically as deliberating within Himself about the matter. He decided to inform Abraham about the fate of the doomed cities.

The main object of the promise is a great people; this expression, we said above, refers to moral greatness and glorification, having as a basis a numerous posterity. The patriarch would be a source of blessing to all nations; thus there would be a nation to observe the law of the Lord.

Literary Structure

It opens with a rhetorical question consisting of a nominal sentence and a relative nominal participial clause. The promise proper consists of two verbal sentences, one with an imperfect and one with a perfect consecutive. The election part is introduced by an affirmative כִּי followed by a perfect. Then follows the motives at the basis of this election: to observe the way of the Lord, לַעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה וּמַעֲשֵׂי (v. 19).

Other stylistic features to be noted are expressions such as נְוִי הַיְיָ; the hiphil of בָּרַךְ; and רָמְנוּ וְיָצִיטוּ אֶתְנוּ אֶתְנוּ.

PROMISE SIX

The Sacrifice of Isaac (22, 1-17)

God commands Abraham to offer as a sacrifice his only begotten son Isaac on an unknown mountain. Abraham obeys submissively; when he is on the point of slaughtering him an angel of the Lord מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה stops him. Immediately afterwards the angel speaks to him granting Abraham another promise to reward him for the submissiveness shown to God. The promise belongs to the whole story to which it is attached; within its text there are references to the previous narrative: an angel appears a second time out of heaven (v. 15), *because thou hast done these things and has not spared thy only begotten son for my sake* (v. 16); verse 18 *because thou hast obeyed my voice*, however, may be considered as a later additional explanatory note². The whole episode without such a promise would lose much of, if not all, its importance.

The Promise (22, 15-17)

The promises are granted directly to the patriarch unconditionally; he has already done his part. He is to be rewarded through a numerous posterity and victory over his enemies; thereby land is promised indirectly. He will be a source of blessing to others. This is the only promise mediated through an angel; the expression *Angel of the Lord*, מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה stands several times for God Himself.³

Literary Structure

The oath formula is introduced by the affirmative particle כִּי.

Blessing is again introduced by the particle בֵּרַךְ.

Posterity follows as the effect of this blessing. This time we meet again a comparison between the numerous posterity and the dust of the

² Cfr. F. Hummelauer, *In Genesim*, Paris 1908, p. 435.

³ J. Touzard, *Anges de Yahweh*, DBS col. 242 f.

earth, but not of the stars.

Victory over his enemies is promised next to posterity.

Abraham is promised to be made the source of blessing to all the people of the earth.

The conclusion recalls the beginning: reward. Other peculiarities are to be noted: God is represented by his Angel; He appears to the patriarch 'from heaven'; there is the oath; the expression יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי (v. 16) the comparison between the dust of the earth and the numerous posterity; the phrase or sentence: $\text{וְיִרְשָׁהוּ אִתָּךְ לְעַד אֲבִיבֵי}$ (v. 17).

THE ISAAC CYCLE OF NARRATIVES (25, 19-28, 9)

The exact number of narrative-units is not easy to be established as in the case of the preceding cycle. One may tentatively put it at three: Isaac settles in Gerar (26, 1-22); Isaac moves to Beersheba (26, 23-34) Isaac blesses his two sons Jacob and Esau (27, 1-28, 9). The cycle is much shorter than that of Abraham; the reason is that the story of Isaac tapers off into that of Jacob on which the interest of the writer is soon shifted. In fact we do not find more than two direct promises to Isaac (promises seven and eight); promise nine is referred to Isaac indirectly.

PROMISE SEVEN

Isaac settles in Gerar (26, 1-34)

This promise seems to be out of its proper context. Isaac compelled by hunger to migrate probably into Egypt stops at Gerar. God prohibited him from going any further; this prohibition is difficult to explain in view of the severe draught in Canaan. It is probable however that vv. 2-5 belong to another Isaac-narrative no longer preserved in its integrity: v. 6 naturally goes with vv. 2-5 to form the conclusion. The original story without this promise probably may be reconstructed thus: Isaac migrated into Gerar (26, 1); there the Gerarites set their eyes on his wife (v. 7a); he told them that she was his sister (v. 7b) in order to save his own skin; the truth was soon discovered (v. 8); Isaac was rebuked by Abimelech (vv. 9-10); Rebecca was left alone. The patriarch, having become exceedingly rich (vv. 12-15), departed from Gerar towards Beersheba (vv. 15-23); Abimelech entered into covenant with him (vv. 26-31); complaints about the wells follow (vv. 32, 33). The promise therefore stands by itself.

The promise (26, 2-6)

This promise is granted to Isaac as a reward for his settling in Canaan

and as the fulfilment of God's oath to Abraham in promise six. Land and posterity form the object of this promise. The condition laid down is that Isaac would stop in Canaan just as his father before him had to migrate into Palestine from Mesopotamia.

Literary Structure

The promise opens with a command not to go down into Egypt; it is expressed by an adverbial sentence with an imperfect negated by לֹא followed by a nominal relative sentence qualifying land. This in its turn is followed by a positive order with an imperative to wander in this land; the condition having thus been laid, the promises follow, starting with that of immediate protection.

In the second part we have the promise proper introduced by the affirmative particle $\text{וְ$ for emphasis; *these lands* would be given to the patriarch and his seed. This would be the fulfilment of God's oath to Abraham his father (a reference to promise six). The promise of a numerous posterity expressed by means of a perfect consecutive, follows $\text{וַיְהִי כִּי יִלְדֵהוּ בָנִים}$; this posterity is comparable in numbers to the stars of the heaven not to the dust on the earth; the same posterity would inherit the land promised to Isaac, that is, *these lands*. Again God promises him that his posterity would be a source of blessing to all the nations of the world. Finally God refers back to his promises to Abraham and the patriarch's faithfulness; the last words $\text{וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת-קוֹלֵי הָאֲרָמִי וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶת-קוֹלֵי הָאֲרָמִי}$ may be considered as a later addition not forming part of the original tradition.

PROMISE EIGHT

The settlement in Beersheba (26, 22-35)

This promise narrative belongs to the same cycle of narratives hinged on Southern Palestine around Beersheba. On the night of his arrival from Gerar God appears to Isaac to renew the former promises. After this promise Isaac enters into a covenant or pact with Abimelech whereby peace between the two parties is secured.

The Promise (26, 24-25)

Nothing is asked from Isaac; he is required not to fear nor to be anxious for the future. God introduces Himself as the God of Abraham and promises him his own protection, blessing and posterity. Land is not even mentioned. This would be a reward for what Abraham had done before.

Literary Structure

The promise opens with a formal introduction. God states clearly that He is the God of Abraham. Then follows an order expressed by an imperfect, negatived by ⁵לֹא not to fear. The promise itself consists of two coordinated sentences with two perfects consecutive; the motive is given right at the end depending on the particle בְּעֵבֶר.

The statement is very simple and there is nothing to note by way of special expressions. Note however the verb וְיָרַד לְיִשְׂרָאֵל for posterity. There are one nominal and four verbal sentences.

PROMISE NINE

Isaac blesses Jacob (27, 46-28, 9)

Isaac is imparting his blessing on his son Jacob before the latter's departure to Mesopotamia to stay with his uncle Laban. This is not a direct promise to Isaac; God is referring however to former promises granted to Abraham his father. It is probable that Isaac did not receive any direct promise from God, at least according to the source of this promise, but received it at the hands of Abraham his father just as he is now imparting his own blessing unto his son Jacob. This fact is of particular importance in view of the fact that Isaac indeed did receive a promise first in Gerar and then in Beersheba.

This promise, homogeneous in itself, does not seem to square with its own context; it does not seem to extend beyond 27, 46-28, 9. It exhibits differences of substance and detail of no small importance when compared with its immediate context; it is a duplicate of the blessing imparted to Jacob in 27, 27-29.

The first blessing provoked the anger of Esau against Jacob; Rebecca to avoid any clash between the two brothers advised Jacob to betake himself unto Laban, her brother, and settle there until the anger of Esau would die out. The second blessing however far from raising any hostile reactions, was in itself but a preparation for Jacob's departure into Mesopotamia to get married to a maid of his own kinsmen, without giving rise to any unfriendly feelings in his brother's heart. Esau is represented in the narrative as a man resigned to his fate, who was quick to see his fault in getting married to Canaanites who were distasteful to his mother (27, 46); he went soon to Ismael's family and got himself wives from his own kindred. In the second narrative Rebecca is not depicted as the mother anxious for the safety of her son but as a jealous woman determined not to have any more strangers in her household; hence she enjoins Jacob to proceed to her uncle and to get married there

to a maid of her own family.

There is no contradiction whatsoever between these two motives for Jacob's departure; we have here two points of view, from which different lines of tradition looked at the whole matter. One of them was interested in the intermarriages to keep the patriarch's tribe separated from and uncontaminated by Canaanite blood, an idea which is already found in chapter seventeen and later on in chapter twenty-four; the other is interested rather in family quarrels. Moreover in 27, 1 Isaac is an old man with dimmed eyes so that he cannot see. In 28, 1, ff there is no explicit reference to his age but it is very probable that Isaac was still in good health. All these considerations point to a diversity of sources and to the fact that except for 26, 34ff and 27, 46-28, 9 all the rest of chapter twenty-seven belongs to a different source.

The Promise (28, 1-4)

The object of this promise is threefold: land, posterity and blessing. There is a special relation between the first two on one hand and the third on the other. Indeed this blessing or rather this gracious disposition of God towards the patriarch would be the radical cause of all the other graces poured on the patriarch. This question will be treated more fully further on.

Literary Structure

The whole promise may be analysed thus:

- a) Opening: the order to go into Paddan-Aram
- b) Promise: Blessing
 - Posterity
 - Blessing of Abraham
 - Land to Jacob

The order to fetch a wife in Paddan-Aram is expressed by four verbal sentences; the first one includes the negative command with an imperfect negated by the particle לֹא and the rest expressed by means of a series of simple imperatives. The promise proper consists of a series of jussives, since it is cast in the form of a prayer: there are five jussives with a relative clause with אֲשֶׁר and a coordinated one with וְיָבִיא .

There are certain special phrases to be noted which echo the phraseology of chapter seventeen $\text{אֲשֶׁר יָבִיא עִמָּךְ וְיָבִיא עִמָּךְ אֵלַי וְיָבִיא עִמָּךְ אֵלַי}$.