28

Gen 28:1 **Then Isaac called for Jacob and blessed him, and commanded him and said to him, “Do not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan.**

**Then Isaac**

“So Isaac” or “{Because of what Rebekah said,} Isaac” (See: grammar-connect-logic-result)

**called for Jacob**

“called/sent for Jacob {to come to him}” or “summoned Jacob” (See: writing-quotations)

**and blessed him,**

“blessed him,” or “{When/After Jacob/he came,} Isaac blessed him”. For some languages it may be necessary to make it explicit that Jacob arrived. Do what is best in your language. (See: figs-explicit)

**and commanded him and said to him,**

“and told/instructed him,” or “and said to him,” (See: writing-quotations)

**“Do not**

“You must not“

**take a wife from the daughters of Canaan.**

“take/marry a woman who is a descendant of Canaan.” or “take/choose a wife from among the Canaanite women.” or “marry a Canaanite woman.” If the word “woman” is used here in your translation, make sure it refers to a virgin woman who has never been married, or is general enough to include that.

Gen 28:2 **Get up, go to Paddan Aram, to the home of Bethuel the father of your mother, and take a wife for yourself from there, from the daughters of Laban the brother of your mother.**

**Get up, go**

“{Rather} get up/ready and go” or “{Instead} you must go right away”. See how you translated “get up” in Gen 27:43. (See: grammar-connect-logic-contrast)

**to Paddan Aram,**

“to {the land/region of} Paddan Aram,” Be consistent here with how you translated “Paddan Aram” in Gen 25:20. (See: translate-names)

**to the home of Bethuel the father of your mother,**

“to the home/family of your mother’s father Bethuel,” or “to your grandfather Bethuel’s home/family,”

**and take a wife for yourself from there, from**

“and choose/find a woman from there to marry from among” or “and marry one of”

**the daughters of Laban the brother of your mother.**

“the daughters of your mother’s brother Laban.” or “your uncle Laban’s daughters.” Laban was Rebekah’s older brother. Some languages have a special term for this that is used here. (See: translate-kinship)

Gen 28:3**And may God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you so that you become a community of peoples.**

**And may God Almighty bless you**

“I pray that Almighty God will bless/prosper you” or “I ask God, {who is} all-powerful, to bless/prosper you” or “I pray that God, {who is} all-powerful, will bless/prosper you”. Most translation teams translate the meaning of God’s title here (for example, “God Almighty”). Other teams transliterate the title as “El Shaddai” (as if it were a name) and put the meaning of the title in a footnote. See how you handled “God Almighty” in Gen 17:1.

**and make you fruitful**

“and give you many children” or “and enable you to have many children”

**and multiply you**

and increase {the number of} your descendants” or “so that you have many descendants and”. See how you translated “fruitful and multiply” in Gen 17:20. It may need to be translated differently depending on the context.

**so that you become a community of peoples.**

“so that you become {the ancestor of} many people groups.” or “so that many people groups will descend/come from you.” or “so that they become many people groups.”

Gen 28:4**And may he give the blessing of Abraham to you, to you and to your offspring with you, so that you possess the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham.”**

**And may he**

“I {also} pray that he/God will” or “I {also} ask him/God to”

**give the blessing of Abraham to you, to you and to your offspring with you,**

“give Abraham’s blessing to you and your descendants,” or “bless you and your descendants the same way that he blessed Abraham,”

**so that you possess the land**

“so that you will own the/this land” or “so that you will take possession of the/this land”

**of your sojournings,**

“where you have been living/residing as a foreigner/outsider,” or “where you {and your ancestors} have been living as foreigners/outsiders,” See how you translated “land of your sojournings” in Gen 17:8; it may be necessary to translate this differently here because of the different context.

**which God gave to Abraham.”**

“{the same land} which God gave/promised to Abraham/him.”

Gen 28:5**Then Isaac sent Jacob, and he went to Paddan Aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Aramean and the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.**

**Then Isaac sent Jacob,**

“Then Isaac sent Jacob {on his way},” or “Then Isaac said good-bye to Jacob,”

**and he went**

“and he/Jacob left to go/travel” or “and/so Jacob started traveling”. Make sure your translation of this phrase does not sound like Jacob had already arrived at Paddan Aram.

**to Paddan Aram, to Laban**

“to/toward {the land/region of} Paddan Aram, to Laban” or “to/toward {his uncle} Laban{‘s house} {which was} in {the land/region of} Paddan Aram.” Consider whether is more natural in your language to refer to Paddan Aram first or to Laban first in this sentence. Also see how you translated “to Paddan Aram” in verses 2 and 5. (See: figs-infostructure)

**the son of Bethuel the Aramean**

“{who/Laban was} the son of Bethuel the Aramean”. Be consistent with how you spelled the name “Bethuel” in the book of Genesis. See Gen 22:22-23; 24:15, 24, 47, 50; 25:20; 28:2, 5.

**and the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.**

“and {also} the brother of Rebekah, {who was} Jacob and Esau’s mother.”

*28:6-9* **Esau Takes Another Wife**

Gen 28:6**Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him to Paddan Aram to take a wife for himself from there, {and that} when he blessed him, then he commanded him, saying, “Do not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan.”**

**Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him to Paddan Aram**

“Now Esau had seen/observed Isaac bless Jacob and send him to {the land/region of} Paddan Aram”

**to take a wife for himself from there,**

“to choose/marry a wife from {among his relatives} there” or “to marry a woman from there”

**{and that} when he blessed him, then he commanded him, saying,**

“{and that} when/as Isaac was blessing him/Jacob, he told/instructed him/Jacob,” or “When/As Isaac was blessing him/Jacob, {Esau heard} him tell/instruct him/Jacob,” Consider whether or not it is more natural in your language to begin a new sentence here.Also see how you translated “commanded” in verse 1.

**“Do not**

“You must not”

**take a wife from the daughters of Canaan.”**

“take/marry a woman who is a descendant of Canaan,” or “take/choose a wife from among the Canaanite women,” or “marrya Canaanite woman,” See how you translated this sentence in verse 1.

Gen 28:7**and {that} Jacob listened to his father and to his mother and went to Paddan Aram.**

**and {that} Jacob**

“and {also} {saw/observed that} Jacob” or “{Esau also saw/noticed that} Jacob”. Consider whether or not it is better in your language to begin a new sentence here.

**listened to his father and to his mother**

“obeyed his/their father and mother” or “obeyed his/their parents”

**and went to Paddan Aram.**

“and {immediately} left to go to Paddan Aram.” or “and started traveling to Paddan Aram.”

Gen 28:8**Then Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan were displeasing in the eyes of Isaac his father.**

**Then Esau saw that**

“That is when/how Esau realized/understood that”

**the daughters of Canaan were displeasing in the eyes of Isaac his father.**

**“**his father Isaac did not approve of {his sons marrying} Canaanite women.” or “his father Isaac did not want {his sons to marry} Canaanite women.”

Gen 28:9**So Esau went to Ishmael and he took as a wife Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael Abraham’s son, the sister of Nebaioth, in addition to his wives {who belonged} to him.**

**So Esau went to Ishmael**

“So/Then Esau went/traveled to {the family/clan of} Ishmael” or “So/Then Esau went to {the region where} Ishmael’s descendants were living”. Most likely Ishmael was already dead by this time, so that Esau went to the region where Ishmael’s children and other descendants were living.

**and he took as a wife Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael Abraham’s son,**

“and married Abraham’s granddaughter Mahalath, who was Ishmael’s daughter” or “and married Mahalath, who was the daughter of Abraham’s son Ishmael”. It may be more natural to move “Abraham’s son” earlier in this sentence and say, “So/Then Esau went to {the family of} Abraham’s son Ishmael and married Ishmael’s daughter Mahalath, whose brother was Nebaioth.” (See: figs-infostructure)

**the sister of Nebaioth,**

“and {who was} the {younger} sister of Nebaioth,” or “and whose {older} brother was Nebaioth,” Be consistent here with how you spelled “Nebaioth” in Gen 25:13. Since Nebaioth was Ishmael’s oldest child, Mahalath was his younger sister, probably from the same mother. Use a kinship term here in your language for “sister” or “brother” that fits with those facts. (See: translate-kinship)

**in addition to his wives {who belonged} to him.**

“besides the {two} wives he already had.” Consider whether it is better in your language to put this phrase earlier in this sentence and say, “So, in addition to the {two} wives he already had, Esau...” (See: figs-infostructure)

*28:10-22* **Jacob’s Dream At Bethel**

Gen 28:10**And Jacob left from Beersheba and set out for Haran.**

**And Jacob left from Beersheba and set out for**

“{After} Jacob left from {his family’s home in} {the city of} Beersheba, he started traveling to/toward” or “{Meanwhile} Jacob had left {the city of} Beersheba and was traveling to/toward”. Verse 10 refers back to verse 5, where Jacob had left his parents’ home in Beersheba to go to Paddan Aram. Make sure your translation does not sound like he left a second time here in verse 10. (See: figs-explicit)

**Haran.**

“{the city of} Haran {in the region/land of Paddan Aram}.” Make sure it is clear in your translation that Jacob was heading toward the same place that his father had told him to go to in verse 2. The author assumed here that his audience knew that Haran was a city located in the Paddan Aram region. It may be helpful to include a map in your translation that shows the locations of the city of Haran and the region of Paddan Aram. (See: figs-explicit)

Gen 28:11**Then he reached a {certain} place, and he stopped there because the sun had gone. And he took {one} of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and he lay down in that place.**

**Then he reached a {certain} place, and he stopped there**

“{That evening} he reached a {good} place {to camp/sleep}, so he stayed/spent the night there” or “{Late that evening} he came to a place where he stopped/stayed {for the night}”

**because the sun had gone.**

“because the sun had gone {down}.” or “because the sun had set.” For some languages it is more natural to put the information in this clause first in this sentence and say, “After the sun went down, he reached a good place {to camp/sleep}, so he stopped/stayed there {for the night}.” Do what is best in your language. (See: figs-infostructure)

**And he took {one} of the stones of the place**

“He chose {one} of the stones that was there” or “He picked out a large {flat} stone {that he found} there”. The way you translate “stone” should refer to something that would be large enough to support Jacob’s head, but not so large that it would be too heavy for him to lift. For example in English, a pebble is too small and a boulder is too big.

**and put it under his head,**

“and rested his head on it {as a headrest/pillow}” or “and used it as a headrest/pillow” or “to use as a headrest/pillow”

**and he lay down in that place.**

“then he lay down there {and went to sleep}.” or “Then he lay down there {on the ground} {and went to sleep}.” or “then he went to sleep there.”

Gen 28:12**And he dreamed, and behold, a stairway was set up on the earth and its top reached to the heavens, and behold, angels of God were ascending and descending on it.**

**And he dreamed, and**

“And {as} he dreamed,” or “{As/While he slept,} he had a dream and” or “While he was dreaming,”

**behold, a stairway was set up on the earth**

“he saw a stairway/staircase whose base was resting on the ground” or “he saw a stairway/staircase. The bottom/base of the stairway was/rested on the ground”. This stairway was wide enough for there to be angels moving up and down on it at the same time. (See: translate-unknowns)

**and its top reached to the heavens,**

“and its top reached up to heaven,” or “and the top of it went/reached {all the way} up into the heavens/sky,”

**and behold, angels of God were**

“and there were angels of/from God who were” or “and he saw God’s angels”. See how you translated “angel” in Gen 24:7, 40. (See: translate-key-terms)

**ascending and descending on it.**

“going up and coming down on the stairway.” or “going up and down on the stairway.”

Gen 28:13**And behold, Yahweh was standing above it, and he said, “I {am} Yahweh, the God of Abraham your grandfather and the God of Isaac. The land that you are lying on I will give to you and to your offspring.**

**And behold, Yahweh was standing above it,**

“Then suddenly Yahweh was standing at the top {of the stairway},” or “And there standing at the top {of the stairway} was Yahweh,” or “And Yahweh was {also} there, standing at the top {of the stairway}”. The phrase for “above it” in the Hebrew text is ambiguous. It could mean: 1) “above it” or “at the top {of the stairway}”; or 2) “above/beside him/Jacob”. The interpretation that is not followed in your translation could be put in a footnote.

**and he said, “I {am} Yahweh,**

“and he/Yahweh said {to him/Jacob}, “I {am} Yahweh,” (See: writing-quotations)

**the God of Abraham your grandfather and the God of Isaac.**

“the God whom your forefathers/ancestors Abraham and Isaac serve/worship.” or “the God {who takes care} of your forefathers/ancestors Abraham and Isaac.” Abraham was Jacob’s grandfather and ancestor.

**The land that you are lying on I will give to you and to your offspring.**

“The/This land where you are lying/sleeping I am giving to you and your descendants.” or “I will give you and your descendants this land that you are lying/sleeping on.” In the Hebrew text, “the land that you are lying on” comes first in this sentence in order to emphasize it and show its importance. Do what is natural in your language. (See: figs-infostructure)

Gen 28:14**And your offspring will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south. And in you and in your offspring all the families of the earth will be blessed.**

**And your offspring will be**

“And your descendants will be” or “They will be” or “You will have so many descendants that they will be”

**like the dust of the earth,**

“{as numerous/many} as the dust {specks} on the ground,” See how you translated “dust” in Gen 13:16. (See: figs-simile)

**and you will spread out**

“and your descendants/people will spread out” or “so that they expand {their territory}” or “so that they live throughout this land”. In this clause “you” refers to Jacob’s descendants. Make sure that is clear in your translation. (See: figs-metonymy)

**to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south.**

“to the west, east, north and south.” or “to the north, south, east and west.” or “in every direction.” See how you translated the names of the directions “west”, “east”, “north” and “south” in Gen 13:14. Notice that they are in a different order there.

**And in you and in your offspring**

“In/Through you and your offspring/descendants” or “Because of you and your offspring/descendants” or “By means of you and your offspring/descendants”. Be consistent here with how you translated “your offspring” in Gen 22:18 and 26:4.

**all the families of the earth will be blessed.**

“all the families/people on the earth will be blessed {by me}.” or “{I} will bless all the families/clans/people in the world.” For some languages it may be better to change the order of phrases in this sentence and say, “And {I} will bless all the families in the world through you and your offspring/descendants.” or “I will use you and your offspring/descendants to bless all the families on earth.” See how you translated similar Messianic blessings in Gen 12:3, 18:18, 22:18, and 26:4. (See: figs-activepassive)

Gen 28:15**And behold, I {am} with you, and I will watch over you in every {place} that you go, and I will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”**

**And behold,**

“Listen to this:” or “Remember that”

**I {am} with you,**

“I {will always be/stay} with you.” or “I {promise to always be/stay} with you {and help you}.” See how you translated “I {am} with you” in Gen 26:24 and “I will be with you” in Gen 26:3.

**and I will watch over you**

“I will protect/guard you” or “I will take care of you”. Consider whether or not it is better in your language to begin a new sentence here.

**in every {place} that you go,**

“everywhere that you go/live,” or “wherever you go/live,”

**and I will bring you back to this land.**

“and I will lead/guide you back to this land.”

**For I will not leave you**

“In fact, I will never leave/abandon you”

**until I have done what I have spoken to you.”**

“and I will do everything that I have promised you {that I will do}.” Make sure your translation of “until” does not sound like God will only be with Jacob up to the time that he fulfills his promises. Rather the focus is on the period of time between now when God is speaking to Jacob and the time later on when Jacob would see the fulfillment of God’s promises to him.

Gen 28:16**Then Jacob woke up from his sleep and said, “Surely Yahweh is in this place, but I did not know {it}!”**

**Then Jacob woke up from his sleep and said,**

“Suddenly Jacob woke up from his dream and said/exclaimed {to himself},” or “When Jacob woke up from his dream, he said/exclaimed {to himself},”

**“Surely Yahweh is in this place,**

“Certainly Yahweh is/lives {here} in this place,” or “Yahweh definitely lives here,”

**but I did not know {it}!”**

“but I did not know/realize {it} {before now}!” or “but I was not aware of {that} {before}!”

Gen 28:17 **So he was afraid and said, “How awesome this place is! This is nothing other than the house of God, and this {is} the gateway of heaven!”**

**So he was afraid and said,**

“He was afraid, so he {also} said/exclaimed,”

**“How awesome this place is!**

“This is an awesome/terrifying place!” or “This place is terrifying!” The word “awesome” refers here to the terror that Jacob was feeling from being in the holy presence of Almighty God.

**This is nothing other than the house of God,**

“This/It can only be God’s house!” or “This/It must be the house/place where God himself lives!”

**and this {is}**

“This/It {can only be}” or“This/It {must be}”. Consider whether or not it is best in your language to begin a new sentence here.

**the gateway of heaven!”**

“the gateway/entrance to heaven!”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Paragraph Break\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Gen 28:18**Then in the morning Jacob got up early, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and stood it up {as} a pillar, and he poured oil on its top.**

**Then in the morning Jacob got up early,**

“Early the next morning Jacob got up,” or “Jacob got up early the next morning,”

**and he took the stone that he had put under his head**

“took the stone that he had used as a headrest/pillow”. See how you translated “stone” and “under his head” in verse 11.

**and stood it up**

“and stood/set it up {on its end}”

**{as} a pillar,**

“{as} a monument” or “{as} a memorial stone” or “to commemorate/mark the/that place {where God had appeared to him}”. The word “pillar” refers here to a stone that is used to commemorate something. In this case, Jacob used a stone to mark and help him remember the place where God had appeared to him.

**and he poured oil on its top.**

“Then he poured {some} {olive} oil on top of the stone/pillar {to dedicate the place to God}.” In Bible times people poured olive oil on a person’s head or on objects (as here) to dedicate that person or object to God. Make sure that the way you translate “oil” does not refer to motor oil. (See: translate-symaction)

Gen 28:19**And he called the name of that place Bethel, even though Luz {had been} the name of the town at first.**

**And he called the name of that place Bethel,**

“He named that place Bethel, {which means “God’s house,”}” Be consistent here with how you spelled “Bethel” in Gen 12:8 and 13:3.

**even though Luz {had been} the name of the town at first.**

“even though originally/previously that town was named/called Luz.” or “Originally/Previously the name of that town {had been} Luz.” Consider whether or not it is more natural in your language to begin a new sentence here.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Paragraph Break\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Gen 28:20**Then Jacob vowed a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and watch over me on this road that I am walking on and he gives to me bread to eat and clothes to wear,**

**Then Jacob vowed a vow, saying,**

“Then Jacob/he made a vow/pledge/promise {to God} and said,” See how you translated a clause that has a similar meaning (“swear to...”) in Gen 21:23, 31.

**“If God will be with me**

“God, if {you,} will be/stay with me”. Since Jacob is making this vow to God, for some languages it is more natural to address God directly (as “you”) throughout verses 20-22, rather than only in the last half of verse 22 (as the Hebrew text does). Do what is best in your language. (See: figs-123person)

**and watch over me**

“and protect/guard me” or “and take care of me”. See how you translated “watch over” in verse 15.

**on this road that I am walking on**

“on/during this {long} journey I am taking” or “as I travel on this {long} journey”. The way you translate this phrase should reflect that fact that Jacob’s journey from his home to the city of Haran was about 725 kilometers (450 miles) long.

**and he gives to me bread to eat and clothes to wear,**

“and if you give/provide me food to eat and clothes to wear,” or “and if you provide me with food and clothes”. In this context “bread” refers to food in general, not just bread. (See: figs-metonymy)

Gen 28:21**and I return in peace to the home of my father, then Yahweh will be God to me,**

**and I return in peace**

“and {if} I come back safely” or “so that I return safely”

**to the home of my father,**

“to my father’s/family’s home,” or “to my family,”

**then Yahweh will be God to me,**

“then Yahweh, {you} will be the God whom I serve/worship,” or “then I will serve/worship {you} Yahweh as my God,” (See: figs-123person)

Gen 28:22 **and this stone that I have stood up {as} a pillar will be the house of God, and all that you give to me I will tithe a tenth to you.”**

**and this stone that I have stood up {as} a pillar will be the house of God,**

“This stone that I have set up will be your house and will mark the/this place {where you appeared to me},” or “and this memorial stone that I set up will remind people that you live here,” See how you translated “as a pillar” in verse 18. Consider whether or not it is better in your language to begin a new sentence here.

**and all that you give to me I will tithe a tenth to you.”**

“and everything that you give to me, I will give a tenth of it back to you.” or “and I will give back to you ten percent of everything that you give to me.” Consider again how you translated the way Jacob refers to Yahweh in verses 20-22; see the note about this at verse 20. Also see how you translated “tithe” in Gen 14:20. (See: figs-123person)