

## **And God Went Up 05, The Merciful Miracle of God**

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### ***(BHS-T) Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (Groves-Wheeler Westminster Heb Morphology):***

“went up” {״עַל} <H5927> *Lexeme/Lexical Form Search OT: Gen. 17:22*

Genesis 17:22 (NKJV) Then He finished talking with him, and God went up{״עַל}<5927> from Abraham.

### ***Humility to Receive from The Eternal Well, The Eternal Fountain***

Genesis 24:16 (NKJV) 16 Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down{״רָד} <3381> to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up{״עַל} <5927>.

### ***The Stairway to Heaven (Context)***

Genesis 28:1-5 (NKJV) 1 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. 2 Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother’s father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother’s brother. 3 “May God Almighty bless you, And make you fruitful and multiply you, That you may be an assembly of peoples; 4 And give you the blessing of Abraham, To you and your descendants with you, That you may inherit the land in which you are a stranger, Which God gave to Abraham.” 5 So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

### ***Humility of The Messenger***

Genesis 28:11-13 (NKJV) 11 So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. 12 Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending{״עֲלִים} <5927> and descending{״יִרְדִים} <3381> on it. 13 And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: “I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.

### ***Born Blind***

John 9:1-5 (NKJV) 1 Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. 2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3 Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. 4 I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

John 9:24-25 (NKJV) 24 So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, “Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner.” 25 He answered and said, “Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.”

### ***Have Mercy on Me! (Bartimaeus)***

Mark 10:46-52 (NKJV) 46 Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road begging. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 48 Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” 49 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, “Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you.” 50 And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus. 51 So Jesus answered and said to him, “What do you want Me to do for you?” The blind man said to Him, “Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.” 52 Then Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.

Luke 18:35-43 (NKJV) 35 Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. 36 And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. 37 So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. 38 And he cried out, saying, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 39 Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” 40 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, 41 saying, “What do you want Me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, that I may receive my sight.” 42 Then Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.” 43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

### ***The Stairway to Heaven***

John 1:43-51 (NKJV) 43 The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46 And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!” 48 Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” 49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” 50 Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” 51 And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

## **References:**

Believer's Bible Commentary (William McDonald): John 1:43-51

**1:45 Philip** wanted to share his new-found joy with someone else, so he went and **found Nathanael**. New converts are the best soul-winners. His message was simple and to the point. He told Nathanael that he had **found** the Messiah who had been foretold by **Moses** and **the prophets—Jesus of Nazareth**. Actually his message was not entirely accurate. He described Jesus as being **the son of Joseph**. Jesus, of course, was born of the Virgin Mary and had no human father. **Joseph** adopted Jesus and thus became his legal father, though not His real father. ...

**1:46 Nathanael** had problems. **Nazareth** was a despised city of Galilee. It seemed impossible to him that the Messiah would live in such a poor neighborhood. And so he voiced the question that was in his mind. **Philip** did not argue. He felt that the best way to meet objections was to introduce men directly to the Lord Jesus—a valuable lesson for all who are seeking to win others to Christ. Don't argue. Don't engage in prolonged discussions. Just bid men to **come and see**.

**1:47** Verse 47 shows that **Jesus** knew all things. Without any previous acquaintance with **Nathanael**, He declared him to be **an Israelite indeed, in whom** there was **no** trickery or **deceit**. Jacob had gained a reputation for using business methods that were not entirely honest, but Nathanael was an "Israel"-ite in whom there was no "Jacob."

**1:48 Nathanael** was obviously surprised that a total Stranger should speak to him as if He had known him previously. Apparently he had been completely concealed when he was sitting **under the fig tree**. Doubtless the overhanging branches of the trees and the surrounding foliage hid him from view. But Jesus **saw** him, even though he was so hidden.

**1:49** Perhaps it was the power of the Lord Jesus to see him when he was shut off from human view that convinced **Nathanael**, or this knowledge was perhaps given to him in a supernatural way. In any event, he now knew that Jesus was **the Son of God** and **the King of Israel**.

**1:50** The Lord had given Nathanael two proofs that He was the Messiah. He had described his character, and He had seen Nathanael when no other eyes could have seen him. These two proofs were sufficient for Nathanael, and he believed. But now the Lord Jesus promised that he would **see greater** proofs **than these**.

Baker's New Testament Commentary: John 1:43-51

**And said to him ...** What Philip said to Nathaniel is recorded in verse Joh 1:45. It is important to preserve the word-order of the original. When this is done, it becomes apparent that in his great enthusiasm Philip begins the sentence with a reference to the Messiah, and that the very last word which Nathaniel hears is *Nazareth*. These two concepts (Messiah — Nazareth) seemed to Nathaniel to be utterly self-contradictory.

Filled with enthusiasm Philip exclaims, **The one about whom Moses wrote in the law and about whom the prophets wrote, we have found...** Up to this point Philip is expressing a great truth, for *Moses and the Prophets* (i.e., the entire Old Testament) *can never be understood unless the Christ is seen in them*. As long as one does not perceive this, the Old Testament remains a closed book. As soon as this idea is grasped, the scriptures are opened, as the following passages clearly indicate: Luk 24:32, 44; Joh 5:39,

Joh 5:46; Act 3:18, Act 3:24; Act 7:52; Act 10:43; Act 13:29; Act 26:22-23; Act 28:23; and 1Pe 1:10. When Philip added, **Jesus, son of Joseph, the one from Nazareth**, he was not uttering a falsehood, for legally Jesus was, indeed, the son of Joseph (cf. Mat 1:16). Moreover, by adding that he was the one from Nazareth, Philip simply indicated that Jesus had spent nearly all of his days in that town. Philip says nothing with reference to the Savior's place of *birth*. It is not fair to accuse him of errors which he did not make. On the other hand, at this early stage Philip had probably not yet arrived at the exalted view of Christ's *divine* sonship which the author of the Fourth Gospel expressed so beautifully in the Prologue (Joh 1:1-18), nor at the mountain-peak of Nathaniel's confession (Joh 1:49).

Joh 1:46. **Philip said** ... Philip gives the best possible answer — one that closely resembles Christ's reply to Andrew and John, recorded in Joh 1:39 —, **Come and see**.

Joh 1:47. **Jesus saw Nathaniel coming toward him, and said of him, Look, truly an Israelite in whom deceit does not exist**. Jesus says this with respect to Nathaniel, who, accompanied by Philip, was approaching him. Jesus spoke of *deceit* (**δόλος**, bait for fish; hence, a snare; then: deceit, guile). In the light of the entire context (see verse Joh 1:51) it becomes apparent that throughout this account of his conversation with Nathaniel, Christ is thinking of the patriarch Jacob. With reference to the latter, father Isaac had complained, speaking to his son Esau, “Thy brother came *with guile*, and has taken away thy blessing” (Gen 27:35; see also the following verse). The employment of trickery for selfish advantage characterized not only Jacob himself (see also Gen 30:37-43) but also his descendants (cf. Gen. 34). A really honest and sincere Israelite, a Jew without duplicity, had become such an exception that at the approach of Nathaniel Jesus exclaimed, “Look, truly an Israelite in whom deceit does not exist.”

Joh 1:48. A man of lesser integrity might have thanked Jesus for the compliment and kept his real thoughts to himself, but not so Nathaniel. With pleasing candor **Nathaniel said to him, How do you know me?** He desires to become informed about the source of Christ's knowledge. Was it Philip who had supplied the information upon which Jesus had based his judgment? The Lord now shows that this possible inference would be incorrect. Jesus answered and said, **Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig-tree, I saw you**. Nathaniel learns, to his great astonishment, that the penetrating eye of his new Master had entered even the sanctuary of his inner devotions beneath the fig-tree (cf. Ps. 139).

Joh 1:49. Deeply moved, **Nathaniel answered him, Rabbi** (see on Joh 1:38, footnote ), **thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel!** The context, as has been shown, forbids us to tone down the meaning of this confession. It is not claimed that Nathaniel's consciousness of Christ's exalted character remained on that high level. We do maintain, however, that this confession must be read in the light of the revelation of our Lord's supernatural knowledge which is recorded in the immediately preceding context. To Nathaniel, at the moment when he uttered this exclamation, Jesus was nothing less than God's own Son. (See on Joh 1:14.) How, then, would he not be the King of Israel, the long-expected Messiah? (cf. Ps. 2).

...

The great promise which Jesus now makes is addressed not only to Nathaniel but to all those present: do I say to you. And the contents of the promise is this, **You shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man**.

As in verse Joh 1:47 so also here in verse Joh 1:51 the reference is to the story of Jacob, but while verse Joh 1:47 has Gen. 27 as its background, verse Joh 1:51 is based on Gen. 28. According to the latter chapter Jacob, resting one evening during his flight from his brother Esau, whom he had deceived, had a dream. He saw a ladder standing on the earth, its top reaching heaven. Ascending and descending upon it were the angels of God. In connection with this dream Jacob hears the voice of God pronouncing upon him a glorious blessing, which was climaxed by these words, "And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Jacob's ladder finds its antitype or fulfilment in Christ. That is the meaning of the words of the Lord to Nathaniel, "You shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." The latter is here represented as *the link between heaven and earth, the bond of union between God and man*, the One who by means of his sacrifice reconciles God to man. With the eye of faith the disciples will be able to see him in that light. They will be able to see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the *Son of man*. For Jesus this mysterious term (Son of man) is as rich in meaning as is the concept Messiah. The term is based on Dan. 7. We discuss it in detail in connection with Joh 12:34.

The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges Commentary: John 1:48

*under the fig tree*] This probably means 'at home,' in the retirement of his own garden (1Ki 4:25; Mic 4:4; Zec 3:10); the Greek implies *motion to* under. Nathanael had perhaps been praying or meditating there; he seems to see that Christ knew what his thoughts had been there. It was under a fig tree that S. Augustine heard the famous '*Tolle, lege.*'

John Gill's Exposition of the Bible: John 1:48

**before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee;** in which words Christ gives two instances of his omniscience; the one is, that he knew Philip had called him; he was privy to all that passed between them, though they were alone, and the conversation was had in the most private manner. Christ knew what an account Philip had given of him, and what objection Nathanael had made; and what an invitation Philip had given him to go along with him to Christ, and judge for himself; which is here meant by calling him, and with which he complied: and the other is, that he saw him under the fig tree before that: he was sitting under it, as men in those countries used to do; see Mic 4:4, where he might be reading the Scriptures, and meditating upon them; and if, as some observe, he was reading, and thinking upon Jacob's dream, concerning the ladder which reached from earth to heaven, and on which he saw the angels of God ascending and descending, the words of Christ in Joh 1:51 must strike him with fresh surprise, and give him another convincing proof of his omniscience: or he might be praying here in secret, and so acted a different part from the generality, of religious men of that nation, who chose to pray in synagogues, and corners of the streets, that they might be seen; and likewise proved him to be what Christ had said of him, a true and rare Israelite, without guile and hypocrisy, which were so visible and prevailing among others. It was usual with the doctors to read, and study in the law, under fig trees, and sometimes, though rarely, to pray there. It is said (t),

"R. Jacob, and his companions, were "sitting", studying in the law, תחזות הדא תא"נה, "under a certain fig tree".

And the rule they give about praying, on, or under one, is thus (u):

"he that prays on the top of an olive tree, or on the top of a "fig tree", or on any other trees, must come down, and "pray below".

It is said of Nathanael, in the Syriac dictionary (x); that his mother laid him under a fig tree, when the infants were slain, i.e. at Bethlehem; which, if it could be depended upon, must be to Nathanael a surprising and undeniable proof of the deity of Christ, and of his being the true Messiah; since, at that time, he was an infant of days himself, and was the person Herod was seeking to destroy, as the Messiah, and king of the Jews,

(t) T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 3. Vid. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 16. 4. (u) Ib col. 1. & T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 16. 1. (x) Bar Bahluli apud Castell. Lexic. Polyglott. col. 8437.

(NIC-NT) The New Int'l Commentary on the NT (Joel B. Green, General Editor): John 1:48

Why a fig tree? Assuming that it was simply because that was where Philip found Nathanael, the question still remains, Why call attention to such a detail? One proposed answer is that “Under what tree?” was an accepted way of asking for evidence. [C. F. D. Moule (“A Note on ‘under the fig tree’ in John i 48, 50,” *JTS* n.s. 5 [1954], 210-11) cited the story of Susanna in the additions to Daniel (*Susanna* 51-59), together with some talmudic evidence (compare Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 310). Brown classifies this with a number of other proposals as “pure speculation” (1.83), while Barrett regards it as “anything but conclusive” (185).] Another is that a specific biblical text is in view, *Zec* 3:10, against the messianic backdrop of *Joh* 3:8. [C. R. Koester, “Messianic Exegesis and the Call of Nathanael (John 1.45-51),” *J&NT* 39 (1990), 23-34.]...

Genesis 28:12-13 (NKJV) 12 Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending{עֲלִים}<H5927> and descending on it. 13 And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: “I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.

Genesis 32:24 Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking{עֲלוֹת}<H5927> of day.

Genesis 32:26 And He said, “Let Me go, for the day breaks{עֲלָה}<H5927>.” But he said, “I will not let You go unless You bless me!”

Genesis 32:31 Just as he crossed over Penuel the sun rose{רָאָה}<H5927> on him, and he limped on his hip.

Gen. 35:1, 3, 13

Genesis 35:1-7 (NKJV) 1 Then God said to Jacob, “Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother.” 2 And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. 3 Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone.” 4 So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which were in their hands, and the earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem. 5 And they journeyed, and the terror of God was upon the cities that were all around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. 6 So Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. 7 And he built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.

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Genesis 35:8-15 (NKJV) 8 Now Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the terebinth tree. So the name of it was called Allon Bachuth. 9 Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram, and blessed him. 10 And God said to him, “Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name.” So He called his name Israel. 11 Also God said to him: “I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. 12 The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land.” 13 Then God went up from him in the place where He talked with him. 14 So Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He talked with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it. 15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel.