

Genesis 35-36 - Lesson 40

Jacob Returns to Bethel

1. Gen 35:1 - Jacob Returns to Bethel

- a. Men sin and they die. God sends a promised son that obeys and gives hope.
- b. Gen 34 is an account of life in the world without God, Gen 35 the opposite
- c. Jacob had been living in Shechem (Gen 34) with the altar to the God of Israel
 - i. It is easy after we've started to stop depending on God, but our own success
- d. But he made a vow (Gen 28:21-22) and God tells him to return to his house: Bethel
- e. It wasn't enough that God was in Israel's house, Israel needed to be in God's house
- f. God gets glory not by being in your house, but you being in his- Gal 6:14, 1Cor 1:31
- g. The altar Jacob builds there would be the altar to the God of God's own house

2. Gen 35:2-8 - Jacob Cleans House

- a. It is easy to live how you want, and give God glory; but God wants you sanctified
- b. Going to Bethel meant they had to bury their ungodliness - Exo 20:2-5, Gen 28:21
- c. "*strange gods*" - the first mention of gods is in Jacob's life when he leaves Bethel
- d. "*be clean*" - This is the teaching of James 4:8, water baptism, and Ps 119:9
 - i. Under grace we are made clean in Christ - Titus 3:5, 1 Cor 1:30, 6:11
 - ii. Put off the old, put on Christ - Eph 4:21-24, Rom 13:12, 1 Th 4:7, 2 Cor 7:1
- e. "*change your garments*" - This is where 'church clothes' comes from.
- f. In the Bible change of clothes = a changed life, new beginning - Exo 19:10, Rev 19:8
 - i. The right clothes are God's righteousness - Gen 3:21, Isa 64:6, 61:10; 1 Ti 2:10
- g. "*earrings*" - at that time because they worshipped other gods - Judges 8:24
- h. The sacrifice was a tenth as Jacob promised in Gen 28:22

3. Gen 35:9-15 - God of Bethel

- a. The covenant reaffirmed after Jacob fulfills his vow.
- b. The land Jacob is in will be his forever, and he will be multiplied - Gen 48:4
- c. The drink offering was considered a pouring out of one's life - Isa 53:12, 1 Sam 1:15

4. Gen 35:16-20 - Benjamin's birth, Rachel's death, Isaac's Death

- a. "*soul was in departing*" - the Biblical definition of death, not non-existence
- b. Benoni = son of sorrow; Benjamin = son of my right hand; a type of Christ.
- c. Rachel dies in Bethlehem, Christ is born there with joy and sorrow - Matt 2:16-18
 - i. Saul comes from Benjamin, as does Paul
- d. Doing right, obeying, living in God's house does not mean bad doesn't happen

5. Gen 35:21-29 - Jacob Returns to Isaac

- a. Jacob obeys in Gen 35, and what does he get? Death and dishonor.
- b. 35:21 - Reuben lost his birthright for this - 1 Chron 5:1-2, Gen 49:4
- c. Isaac lived longer than the other patriarchs, but we know the least about him.
- d. Gen 36:31 lists a larger family than Jacobs, and Esau reigned before Israel
- e. Gen 37:1-2 - Esau's line grows faster; God's people slowly, but everlasting