

Four Burials

Genesis Chapter 35

Gen 35:1 1) Burial of Idols vs 1-4

Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and live there, and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau."

- *The Picture - Jacob told to leave Laban and head back to Bethel, He wrestles with God and God wins. God is ruler yet Jacob ½ heartedly obeys. The result is His daughter is raped, 2 sons are mass murderers, the rest of them are thieves and his neighbors are wanting to kill him.*
- *God Initiates the solution*
- *How does God speak to you? Here we see it is God speaking to Jacob yet the structure makes it look like a thought of Jacob.*

Gen 35:2 So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods which are among you, and purify yourselves and change your garments; ."

- *Garments throughout scripture symbolize character*
- *Jude 23*
- *Ephesians 4:22-24*

Gen 35:3 and 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 wherever I have gone."

Gen 35:4 So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods which they had and the rings which were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the oak which was near Shechem.

Gen 35:5 2) Burial of Nurse vs 5-15

As **they journeyed**, there was a great terror upon the cities which were around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.

Gen 35:6 So Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him.

Gen 35:7 He built an altar there, and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed Himself to him when he fled from his brother. ."

- *30 years later, after Fleeing Esau. He finally builds an altar to God where God told him to build an altar.*
- *El-bethel - God the house of God. Not the house of God. The person is worshiped rather than the things of the person.*

Gen 35:8 Now Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the oak; it was named Allon-bacuth. ."

- *Ch 24 Eliazer went to get wife for Isaac, Rebekah followed with her nurse.*
- *This was a person dear to Jacob. Some one that cared for Jacob's mom, brother and himself.*
- *Buried under Allon-bacuth which means "Oak of Weeping"*
- *God is removing his ties to earth. Reinforcing his pilgrim nature.*

Gen 35:9 Then God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram, and He blessed him. ."

- *God appears to Jacob and this serves as a reminder of how and where God blessed him.*
- *We need reminders. That is why there is 4 gospels. We need to hear how and where God has blessed us over and over again, and from different voices and perspectives.*

Gen 35:10 God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; You shall no longer be called Jacob, But Israel shall be your name." Thus He called him Israel.

Gen 35:11 God also said to him, "I am God Almighty; Be fruitful and multiply; A nation and a company

of nations shall come from you, And kings shall come forth from you.

Gen 35:12 "The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you, And I will give the land to your descendants after you." ."

- God reminds him
 - that his name was changed
 - that God is El Shaddai The Almighty God
 - that a great people will come from him
 - that he possesses a land that the Almighty has given his grandfather and father

Gen 35:13 Then God went up from him in the place where He had spoken with him.

Gen 35:14 Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He had spoken with him, a pillar of stone, and he poured out a drink offering on it; he also poured oil on it. ."

- 1st mention of a drink offering
- Ex 29:40-41, Lev 23:13 Numbers 15:5-7 describe this offering before the Lord
- 2 Sam 23:16 & 1 Chron 11:18-19 David pours out the drink that was given him by three brave men to show humility before the ones that risked their very life for him
- Phil 2:17 Paul considered himself an offering to be poured out before the Lord

Gen 35:15 So Jacob named the place where God had spoken with him, Bethel.

Gen 35:16 **3) Burial of a Wife** vs 16-20

Then **they journeyed** from Bethel; and when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and she suffered severe labor.

- Question?? Why is he leaving Bethel? ...no real answer
- Ephrath is ancient Bethlehem

Gen 35:17 When she was in severe labor the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for now you have another son."

Gen 35:18 It came about as her soul was departing (for she died), that she named him Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin.

- Ben oni = Son of my sorrow
- Benjamin = Son of my right hand
- Very sad scene. A beloved wife is bleeding to death on the side of the road. A husband second guessing his decisions to travel. As she dies she names her son and Jacob tells her no. ...His name shall be son of my right hand.

Gen 35:19 So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).

Gen 35:20 Jacob set up a pillar over her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day.

Gen 35:21 **4) Burial of a Father** vs 21-29

Then **Israel journeyed** on and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder.

- Such a contrast. Vs 21 Jacob builds a pillar, Isaac journeys and pitches a tent.
- God has schooled Jacob to be Israel. Who Journeys. He is now a pilgrim. No longer a heel grabber but a pilgrim who journeys with God.

Gen 35:22 It came about while Israel was dwelling in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine, and Israel heard {of it.}

- The depth of this sin is that in this culture a king would show his control over another king by dwelling in his opponants palace including his wives and condubines. Israel was away, possibly grieving. Also, Bilhah was Rachel's hand maid. The closest person to Jacob's beloved Rachel.
- Israel Heard it. Good thing Jacob wasn't the one who heard it.

- *These children we wonder why they can inherit the blessing of God. The answer is GRACE. They can receive this blessing not because they are so worthy but simply because the greatness of God. God choose them and God keeps His word.*

Gen 35:23 the sons of Leah: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, then Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Zebulun;

Gen 35:24 the sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin;

Gen 35:25 and the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid: Dan and Naphtali;

Gen 35:26 and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid: Gad and Asher. These are the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram.

Gen 35:27 Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre of Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned.

Gen 35:28 Now the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years.

- *Jacob comes to his father. A 120 year old son comes to his blind father. Again the scene of a son returned to his father. Both now have experienced life with all it's difficulties.*

Gen 35:29 Isaac breathed his last and died and was gathered to his people, an old man of ripe age; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

- *Isaac dies and both Esau and Jacob are together at their father's death and burial.*

- *All these very difficult events are lessons for us in the hand of God. God is tender towards the broken hearted knows how to use these very difficult times to school us in His great love and care.*
- *Sometimes these happen to help us let go of the things of this life and look to trust Jesus alone.*

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