

Genesis 35: Jacob Renamed Israel

God is Mighty

Section1: 35:1-7

²So Jacob said to his family and all who were with him, “Get rid of the foreign gods that are among you. Purify yourselves and change your clothes. ³We must get up and go to Bethel. I will build an altar there to the God who answered me in my day of distress. He has been with me everywhere I have gone.”

Jacob finally calls for all the foreign gods to be throw out. This could imply that up to this point Jacob has tolerated foreign gods being a part of his camp’s life.

When revival comes...foreign gods are vanquished. For example:

King Josiah

- 2 Kings 22:1-2; 2 Kings 22:8-13; 2 Kings 23:3; 2 Kings 23:4-7

Paul at Ephesus

- Acts 19:18-27

Idolatry was a massive temptation for OT saints and the early church. In the US we don’t often thing about idolatry because we don’t have statues of gods and goddess everywhere like much of Asia. But that is what Jacob, King Josiah and Paul battled. The lesson we need to learn? When it comes sin...sin must delt with quickly and dramatically. Repentance means you turn from sin and make lifestyle changes to avoid that sin in the future. For Jacob...he removed all the idols. For king Josiah...he burned and ground the idols to dust.

Discussion Questions:

- ❖ How does sin impact our lives?
- ❖ How should we biblically respond to sin?
- ❖ What role should repentance play in our daily lives?

Section 2: 35:8-15

⁹God appeared to Jacob again after he returned from Paddan-aram, and he blessed him. ¹⁰God said to him, “Your name is Jacob; you will no longer be named Jacob, but your name will be Israel.” So he named him Israel. ¹¹God also said to him, “I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply. A nation, indeed an assembly of nations, will come from you, and kings will descend from you. ¹²I will give to you the land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac. And I will give the land to your future descendants.” ¹³Then God withdrew from him at the place where he had spoken to him. ¹⁴Jacob set up a marker at the place where he had spoken to him—a stone marker. He poured a drink offering on it and poured oil on it. ¹⁵Jacob named the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

Four observations:

1. Jacob is now Israel.
 - a. Israel – *Let God Persist* – to persist: to continue firmly in a course of action in spite of difficulty, opposition, or failure.
2. God declares... “I am God Almighty.”
 - a. Knowing who God is...is important. Unlike the idols...God alone is mighty!
3. Renewed Covenant

- a. God reiterates the covenant He made to Abraham. The similarities are:
 - i. Abram to Abraham → Jacob to Israel
 - ii. Kings will come from your lineage.
 - iii. A command to be fruitful and multiple.
 - iv. A multitude of nations will come from your lineage.
- 4. Jacob marks the occasion.
 - a. Often, we see the OT saints establishing markers to remember the works of God. Our marker today...God's Word.

Discussion Questions:

- ❖ God is persistent...how should that truth impact our daily lives?
- ❖ Why is it important to understand who God is...as revealed in Scripture?
- ❖ Why is it important to remember the works of God?

Section 2: 35:16-29 - Rachel's Death, Reuben's Moral Failure, Jacob's Sons and the death of Isaac

¹⁹So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). ²⁰Jacob set up a marker on her grave; it is the marker at Rachel's grave still today. ²²While Israel was living in that region, Reuben went in and slept with his father's concubine Bilhah, and Israel heard about it. Jacob had twelve sons: ²⁸Isaac lived 180 years. ²⁹He took his last breath and died, and was gathered to his people, old and full of days. His sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Verses 16-29 recap for us some of the dramatic events that happened to Jacob once he has arrived in the promise land. Often, we may be tempted to think... "if I do it the right way and follow God...everything will be easy." In Genesis 32 we read about how Jacob wrestled with God...everything changes...and in Genesis 33 he walks into the promised land. Then:

- Dinah violated.
- Reuben commits a sexual sin.
- Rachel dies.
- Isaac dies.
- Joseph soon after is sold into slavery.

God makes a lot of promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. One promise He never makes is...it will be easy.

James 1:2-4 (CSB):

²Consider it a great joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you experience various trials, ³because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴And let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.

Charles Spurgeon once said, "God is near, and therefore hope is near."

Discussion Questions:

- ❖ We aren't promised easy, however, we are promised strength to endure...Why is that important to understand?
- ❖ What does it practically look like to live out James 1:2-4 in our daily lives?