

Genesis 35 New American Standard Bible

Jacob Moves to Bethel

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.”² So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Remove the foreign gods which are among you, and purify yourselves and change your garments;³ and let’s arise and go up to Bethel, and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me on the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone.”⁴ So they gave 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.

⁵ As they journeyed, there was a great terror upon the cities which were 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 Then 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. ⁸ Now Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the oak; and it was named Allon-bacuth.

Jacob Is Named Israel

Then God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram, and He blessed him. ¹⁰ God said to him, “Your name is Jacob; You shall no longer be called Jacob, But Israel shall be your name.”

So He called him Israel. ¹¹ God also said to him, “I am God Almighty; Be fruitful and multiply;

A nation and a multitude of nations shall ^[1]come from you,
And kings shall come from you.

¹² And the land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you, And I will give the land to your descendants after you.” ¹³ Then God went up from him at the place where He had spoken with him. ¹⁴ So Jacob set up a memorial stone in the place where He had spoken with him, a memorial of stone, and he poured out a drink offering on it; he also poured oil on it. ¹⁵ And Jacob named the place where God had spoken with him, Bethel.

¹⁶ Then they journeyed on from Bethel; but when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and she suffered severe difficulties in her labor. ¹⁷ And when she was suffering severe difficulties in her labor, the midwife said to her, “Do not fear, for you have another son!” ¹⁸ And it came about, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she named him Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin. ¹⁹ So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). ²⁰ And Jacob set up a memorial stone over her grave; that is the memorial stone of Rachel’s grave to this day. ²¹ Then Israel journeyed on and pitched his tent beyond the ¹tower of Eder.

The Sons of Israel

And it came about, while Israel was living in that land, that Reuben went and slept with his father’s concubine Bilhah, and Israel heard *about it*. Now there were twelve sons of Jacob— ²³ the sons of Leah *were* Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn, then Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; ²⁴ the sons of Rachel *were* Joseph and Benjamin; ²⁵ and the sons of Bilhah, Rachel’s female slave, *were* Dan and Naphtali; ²⁶ and the sons of Zilpah, Leah’s female slave, *were* Gad and Asher. These *were* the sons of Jacob who were born to him in

Paddan-aram. ²⁷ Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre of Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had resided. ²⁸ Now the days of Isaac were 180 years. ²⁹ Then 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.

1. God said to Jacob – so how did God ‘say’?
2. Clear instructions always help, but what if things don’t seem that clear?
3. Why was it important to make an altar to God at the place Jacob met with God?
4. Notice how it is God who recalls what happened to Jacob.
5. God is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. The ability to be everywhere at the same time, having unlimited power, all seeing and all knowing.
6. Jacob takes hold of the pathway of an exclusive relationship with the God of his father Isaac and Abraham.
7. Jacob instructs the people under his care to give up on the uncertainty of deity that speak not and hear not.
8. To focus on the only true and living God the creator of the universe.
9. Jacob reflects back to his Godly encounters and is convinced he has made the right choice.
10. He seems to take the people under his care with him on his journey to connect to God.
11. The people abandon all connection to man inspired perspectives of God and choose Yahweh.
12. Letting go of the past is essential, God will not share your heart with any other so called God.
13. Why did Jacob hide the artefacts that the people gave him?
14. The people of the land did not attack Israel as the fear and dread of Yahweh came upon them, they allowed them to freely roam the land.
15. At Luz/Bethel in Canaan, Jacob sets up camp.
16. How would that make you feel if you were living in Luz/Bethel, having Jacob move in down the street?
17. Jacob renamed the place of the altar El Bethel, where God revealed himself to Jacob.
18. God met with Jacob and blessed him, how did God do that? By giving him a new name because he had become a new person.
19. God called Jacob Israel.
20. God proclaimed over Jacob a blessing of prosperity and favour.
21. When is a blessing not a blessing? When it never came from God.
22. Jacob offered water and oil on the altar and named it Bethel.
23. After this he made his way to Ephrath where Rachel gave birth to Benjamin.
24. Sadly, during the birth process Rachel died.
25. The midwife tries to encourage Rachel and rejoices at the birth of the son.
26. Notice it says Rachel’s soul departed. The soul is the mind, the emotions and the will. Departed – it was no longer there in the body because it left.
27. Where did it go?
28. Rachel being dead was buried on the way to Bethlehem.
29. Why did Rachel call him Boni and Jacob called him Benjamin?
30. They set up a pillar as a memorial to Rachel.
31. Notice the narrator of the book of Genesis writes (Moses) changes the use of the name Jacob and uses Israel.

32. One of Jacob's sons Reuben, lay with Israel's concubine wife. Why did he do this?
33. Had she been abandoned and left alone, rejected by Israel. Israel heard of this deed done by Reuben, what will he do?
34. Isaac dies and is buried by his two sons Israel and Esau, he is 180 years old.
35. Notice death came when Israel breathed his last breath, death happens when breath leaves his body. Notice the brothers are reunited.

Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence

Omnipotence means all-powerful. Monotheistic theologians regard God as having supreme power. This means God can do what he wants. It means he is not subject to physical limitations like man is. Being omnipotent, God has power over wind, water, gravity, physics, etc. God's power is infinite, or limitless.

Omniscience means all-knowing. God is all all-knowing in the sense that he is aware of the past, present, and future. Nothing takes him by surprise. His knowledge is total. He knows all that there is to know and all that can be known.

Omnipresence means all-present. This term means that God is capable of being everywhere at the same time. It means his divine presence encompasses the whole of the universe. There is no location where he does not inhabit. This should not be confused with pantheism, which suggests that God is synonymous with the universe itself; instead, omnipresence indicates that God is distinct from the universe, but inhabits the entirety of it. He is everywhere at once.