

Genesis Chapter 35

Genesis 35:1 "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother."

"And God said unto Jacob": When he was in great distress on account of the slaughter of the Shechemites by his sons; not knowing what step to take to steer for the safety of him and his family. Then God, for his comfort and direction, appeared and spoke to him, either in a dream or vision, or by an impulse on his mind, or by an articulate voice.

Perhaps this was the Son of God, the second Person, who might appear in a human form, as he often did; since he afterwards speaks of God as of another divine Person, distinct from him, even his divine Father.

"Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there": Which is said to be twenty eight miles from Shechem; there he is bid to go in haste, and where, it is suggested, he would be safe, and where it would be right and proper for him to dwell awhile.

"Beth-el" ("House of God"), is where God confirmed the Abrahamic covenant to Jacob nearly 30 years earlier (28:10-19).

"And make there an altar to God": and offer sacrifice to him, praise him for salvation and deliverance wrought, pray to him for present and future mercies that were needful, and pay the vows he had there made, even to that God.

"That appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother": Who resenting his getting the birthright and blessing from him, threatened to kill him. Which obliged him to flee from his father's house, and go into Mesopotamia, and in his way thither God appeared to him, at the place called by him from thence Beth-el, and gave him many precious promises.

And Jacob there made a solemn vow, that if God would be with him, and keep him, and give him food and raiment, and return him to his father's house, the pillar that was then and there set up should be God's house, as well as He should be his God.

Jacob had now been nine or ten years in the land of Canaan, and had all done for him that he desired, and much more abundantly. And yet had not been at Beth-el to make good his vow, either through forgetfulness or neglect.

And therefore, as Jarchi thinks, was chastised for it in the affair of Dinah; or rather, for one can hardly think so good a man could forget, or would willfully neglect such a vow as this, that he wanted opportunity of going there, or waited for a divine order, and now he had both, which he readily embraced.

We have touched on it several times before, but it bears repeating, that "Beth-el" means house of God. God would protect Jacob and his family, as long as they obeyed His commands. There is safety in God, even when there is danger everywhere we look. He reminded Jacob to worship Him. It was no longer safe there.

Verses 2-4: Moving to Beth-el necessitated spiritual preparation beyond the level of an exercise in logistics. Possession of idolatrous symbols such as figurines, amulets, or cultic charms (verse 4, "rings ... in their ears"), were no longer tolerable, including Rachel's troubling teraphim (31:19).

Idols buried out of sight, plus bathing and changing to clean clothes, all served to portray both cleansing from defilement by idolatry and consecration of the heart to the Lord. It had been 9 or 10 years since his return to Canaan and appropriately, time enough to clean up all traces of idolatry.

Genesis 35:2 "Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that [were] with him, Put away the strange gods that [are] among you, and be clean, and change your garments:"

"Then Jacob said unto his household": His wives and children.

"And to all that were with him": His menservants and maidservants, and such as remained with him of the captives of Shechem, who might choose to continue with him.

"Put away the strange gods that are among you": Not the teraphim or images of Laban's, which Rachel had stolen from him, but in the crisis precipitated by the Shechem massacre (34:25-26).

Rather such as might be among the Canaanitish servants that had been lately taken into Jacob's service, or that were among the captives of Shechem, or taken along with the spoil of that city.

And so the Targum of Jonathan calls them the idols of the people, which they brought from the idols' temple at Shechem; and the words may be rendered, "the gods of the strangers", that is, of the Shechemites, who were Heathens and aliens, strangers to the true God, the knowledge and worship of him.

"And be clean": Either by abstaining from their wives, as some interpret it, from Exodus 19:10; or rather by washing their bodies, as Aben Ezra gives the sense of it. Their hands were full of the blood of the Shechemites, and needed to be washed and purified, as the Targum of Jonathan has it, from the pollutions of the slain, before they went to Beth-el, the house of God.

And these outward washings and purifications were signs of inward cleansing by the grace of God, and of outward reformation of life and manners (see Isaiah 1:15).

"And change your garments": which might be stained with blood, and therefore not fit to appear in before God, or were old and worn out, or sordid apparel: changing and washing of garments

were also emblems of renewing of the mind, and cleansing of the soul, and of the change of heart and life, as well as of pleasure, delight, and cheerfulness in appearing before God.

You see, in the last lesson, that Jacob's sons took captive women and children of the heathen people. God told Jacob to clean house. Rachel still had her father's idols, unknown to Jacob, and probably, these women captives had objects of pagan worship, as well. Jacob spoke as an oracle of God, when he told them to put off idolatry, and put on the new garment.

This would indicate a cleansed garment acceptable to God, and possibly, is symbolic of the washing away of their sins. The repentance that John the Baptist taught was practiced in the Old Testament symbolically, as well.

Genesis 35:3 "And let us arise, and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went."

"And let us arise and go up to Beth-el": Thus prepared and purged, their tents clear of idols, their bodies washed with pure water, and their garments new, neat, and clean; all symbolical of inward purity, and of freedom from idolatry and evil works, as became those who go to the house of God, and are his worshippers (see Hebrews 10:22).

"I will make there an altar unto God": as he has directed, and sacrifice to him, and worship him, and give the tenth unto him, and so make it a Beth-el, a house of God indeed, as he had vowed (Genesis 28:22).

"Who answered me in the day of my distress": On account of his brother Esau, from whose wrath he fled.

"And was with me in the way which I went": From his father's house to Padan-aram; in which journey he was alone and destitute, and exposed to many difficulties and dangers. But God was with him, and preserved him, and directed and brought him to Laban's house in safety.

When fleeing Esau about thirty years before, Jacob had gone to Beth-el and found God's presence and help. Jacob wanted to make an altar and seek God and His help, again.

Genesis 35:4 "And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which [were] in their hand, and [all their] earrings which [were] in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which [was] by Shechem."

The putting away of the strange gods indicates Jacob's desire for an exclusive devotion to his sovereign God (the Suzerain 31:19; Exodus 20:3).

The "earrings" probably were amulets with idolatrous significance (Exodus 32:2-3). Later, Joshua was to demand the removal of foreign gods at a covenant renewal (Joshua 24:2, 14, 23).

"Oak which was by Shechem": Possibly this was the same tree as in Abraham's day (12:6).

There must have been many false gods. At any rate, it seems they gave all of them to Jacob. These ear rings were, probably, not ordinary earrings, but had symbols of false gods on them. Jacob destroyed them and buried them. Notice, he did not give them to anyone else. He did not sell them, either.

That should be a good lesson to us. We should clean house when we become Christians, and not keep things that pertain to other gods. A good example is rock music. Records with this type of music should be broken and burned. Christians should not have Buddha's or statues of other gods in their possession. Anything with horoscope signs should be destroyed, as well.

A house divided against its self cannot stand. We cannot serve the real God and false gods at the same time. God will not share us. He wants all of us. Our loyalty to Him should be without question.

This is a terrible thing today. People who proclaim to be Christians have things in their possession that elevate other gods. We to, must do away with these idols. This Scripture does not specifically mention Rachel's idols, but it does say that they gave all of them to Jacob. It surely included Rachel's.

Genesis 35:5 "And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that [were] round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."

"And they journeyed": Jacob and his family, with all that were with them, from Shechem to Beth-el.

"The terror of God": A supernaturally induced fear of Israel rendered the surrounding city-states unwilling and powerless to intervene and made Jacob's fear of their retaliation rather inconsequential (34:30).

Jacob's divine protector intervened with directions and defense; for "the terror of God was upon the cities ... and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob".

These heathen people knew that God protected Jacob and His own, so they were afraid to attack them. They let them go.

Genesis 35:6 "So Jacob came to Luz, which [is] in the land of Canaan, that [is], Beth-el, he and all the people that [were] with him."

"So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is Beth-el": The place Jacob had called Beth-el, when he was there before, was formerly called Luz (Genesis 28:19).

And is here said to be in the land of Canaan, that is, in that part of the land which was inhabited by those who were properly called Canaanites, to distinguish it from another Luz, which was in the land of the Hittites (Judges 1:26).

"He and all the people that were with him": Wives, children, servants, or whoever else came from Shechem, these all came safe to Luz without any molestation or loss.

Genesis 35:7 "And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother."

"And he built there an altar": As he was bid to do, and as he promised he would (Genesis 35:1).

Through this act of worship, fulfillment of his vow (28:20-22), and renaming the site, Jacob reconfirmed his allegiance to God, who also affirmed His commitment to Jacob by re-appearing to him, repeating the change of name (verse 10; 32:28), and rehearsing the Abrahamic promises (verses 11-12).

Naming the altar "El-beth-el" ("God of the House of God"), gave witness to the Lord's sovereign faithfulness.

In response, Jacob also repeated the rite he had performed when he first met God at Beth-el (verse 14), and reaffirmed its name (verse 15).

"Because there God appeared": Or the divine Persons, for both words are plural that are used. The Targum of Jonathan has it, the angels of God, and so Aben Ezra interprets it; but here, no doubt, the divine Being is meant, who appeared.

"Unto him": to Jacob in this place, as he went to Mesopotamia, and comforted and encouraged him with many promises.

"When he fled from the face of his brother": His brother Esau, who was wroth with him and sought to take away his life, therefore was forced to flee for it.

Jacob emphasized here, that he had come back to Canaan, as God had told him to. "El" means God. This is literally God-the house of God ("El-beth-el)." Jacob built an altar to God, re-establishing his position with God.

Genesis 35:8 "But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el under an oak: and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth."

"But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died": That is, when and soon after they were come to Beth-el. A nurse of Rebekah's came with her to Canaan, when she married Isaac, and is generally thought to be this Deborah, which is not improbable (Genesis 24:59).

Though she might have more nurses than one, as great personages sometimes have, and then it will not be so difficult to answer the objection made here. That Rebekah's nurse, whom Jacob is supposed to leave in Canaan when he went to Padan-aram, should now be in his family when he returned from hence.

"And she was buried beneath Beth-el": At the bottom of the hill or mountain on which Beth-el stood.

"Under an oak": of which there were many about Beth-el (1 Kings 13:14 2 Kings 2:23); and it was not unusual to bury the dead under trees (see 1 Samuel 31:13).

"And the name of it was called Allon-bachuth": The oak of weeping, because of the weeping and mourning of Jacob's family at her death, she being a good woman, an ancient servant, and in great esteem with them.

The Jews have a tradition that the occasion of this weeping, or at least of the increase of it, was, that Jacob at this time had the news of the death of Rebekah his mother. So the Targum of Jonathan, "there tidings were brought to Jacob of the death of Rebekah his mother, and he called the name of it another weeping;" and so Jarchi.

I cannot say for sure when Jacob's mother's nurse came to Jacob. Possibly, his mother sent word by this nurse, at some other time that it was safe for him to return. It really doesn't matter why she was with him.

"Allon-bachuth" means oak of weeping.

Genesis 35:9 "And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him."

"And God appeared unto Jacob again": At Beth-el, as he had at Shechem, when he bid him go thither (Genesis 35:1); or rather as he had at the brook Jabbok, where he said to him the same things as here (Genesis 32:24).

Jarchi interprets it of his appearing again to him, at the same place at Beth-el. Where he had appeared to him the first time when he was going to Haran, and now for a second time.

"When he came out of Padan-aram": Or returned from thence.

"And blessed him": With the same blessings as before, renewing and confirming them. Jarchi says, with the blessing of mourners, because of the death of his mother and her nurse.

Genesis 35:10 "And God said unto him, Thy name [is] Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel."

"And God said unto him, thy name is Jacob": Which his parents gave him at his birth, and by which he had been always called.

"Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name": not Jacob only, as Aben Ezra and Ben Melech interpret it, but Israel also, and that more commonly and frequently, and not only he himself personally, but his posterity also.

"And he called his name Israel": confirmed the name he had before given him (Genesis 32:28); and by this confirmation of it signifying, that as he had prevailed over his brother Esau, and escaped his hands, so he should prevail over all that rose up against him, and opposed him, even as he had power with God, and prevailed.

Though some think this name was only promised him before, but now actually given him. But then they take the angel that appeared wrestling with him in the likeness of a man to be a created angel, and that what he promised in the name of God was now made good by God himself. There is great reason to believe that that angel was the increased one, the Son of God, as here also.

Genesis 35:11 "And God said unto him, I [am] God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;"

"And God said unto him, I am God Almighty": And so able to protect and defend him, and to fulfil all promises made to him, and to supply him with everything he wanted. Being, as some choose to render the word, "God all sufficient", having a sufficiency of all good things in him to communicate to his people.

"Be fruitful and multiply": Which carries in it a promise or prophecy that he should increase and multiply, though not he himself personally, he having but one son born after this, yet in his posterity.

"A nation, and a company of nations, shall be of thee": The nation of Israel, called so after his name, and the twelve tribes, which were as so many nations, of which the above nation consisted.

"And kings shall come out of thy loins": As Saul, David, Solomon, and, many others, who were kings of Israel and of Judah, and especially the King Messiah; yea, all his posterity were kings and priests, or a kingdom of priests (Exodus 19:6).

God's words, here included for the first time since His promises at Abraham's circumcision (17:6, 16), served as a reminder of future royalty.

Genesis 35:12 "And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land."

"And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it": Meaning the land of Canaan, which, as he had by promise given it to his grandfather and father, so he would give it to him.

Thus renewing the grant of it for his comfort and the encouragement of his faith, when he had been in danger of being destroyed by the inhabitants of it; and was obliged to remove from one part of it to another.

"And to thy seed after thee will I give the land": and not only make a grant of it to them, but put them into the possession of it, as in the process of time he did.

Notice, this appearance was not a dream, but a daytime encounter with God. This was reaffirming of the covenant of God with Jacob. God also reminded him that his name was no longer Jacob, but Israel. God Almighty meant that this was the unblameable, perfect God. God, at any rate, reiterates the blessings of Israel through Abraham and Isaac.

This is never-ending blessing.

Genesis 35:13 "And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him."

"And God went up from him": Or "from above" him. By this it seems that there was a visible appearance of the glory of the Lord, as Onkelos, or of the Shekinah, as Jonathan; even of the Son of God in a human form. The presence of God was there in some visible form.

Who either appeared just above him, or on the same spot with him, conversing with him as above related then when he was done, ascended in a visible manner from him, till he disappeared.

"In the place where he talked with him": whether it was over him, or by him; thence he removed from him, and ceased talking with him. For communion with a divine Person is not constant and uninterrupted in the present state.

Genesis 35:14 "And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, [even] a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon."

"And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him": He had set up a pillar in this place before he went to Padan-aram (Genesis 28:18).

Some think this pillar is here referred to, and render the words, "had set up a pillar". But as that was done thirty years ago, it is very likely it was demolished by the heathens before this time, or was fallen to ruin, wherefore this must be at least a renewal or reparation of it.

The stone "pillar" was the customary covenant witness. Thus, Jacob made it clear that he was returning to God, not just to His house. This decision became the turning point of his life.

Though it rather seems to be another pillar, and quite a new one, being set up in that very spot of ground, over or on which God had been talking with him: and the following account of it seems to confirm the same.

"Even a pillar of stone": Made of several stones hewed and polished, and well put together; whereas the former was but a single stone, rude and unpolished, though it is probable it was one of these.

"And he poured a drink offering thereon": Of wine, of which drink offerings under the law were, thereby consecrating it to the worship and service of God. Aben Ezra says it was either of water or of wine, with which he washed it, and after that poured oil on it; and the Targum of Jonathan says, he poured a drink offering of wine, and a drink offering of water.

"And he poured oil thereon": As he did before; this was a commonly done way to make a covenant (see note on 28:18-21).

Genesis 35:15 "And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Beth-el."

"And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Beth-el": He confirmed the name he had before given it, when he went to Mesopotamia, and now upon his return renews and establishes it.

Or he gave this name more especially to that particular spot where God conversed with him, and on which he erected a pillar, and consecrated it to religious worship, and so made it God's house, as he promised he would (Genesis 28:22). Both building an altar for sacrifice, and setting up a pillar, which was beginning a house for God.

Jacob set up the pillar to recognize God for all His power, and might, and blessings He had spoken upon Jacob. He made an offering on this pillar that he had erected to God. Oil and water were poured over this pillar as a special appreciation to God.

Genesis 35:16 "And they journeyed from Beth-el; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labor."

"And they journeyed from Beth-el": Jacob and his family; how long they stayed there is not certain, some say four months; hence they removed towards Bethlehem, which was twelve miles from Beth-el, in their way to Hebron.

"And there was but a little way to come to Ephrath": Or Bethlehem, as it was also called, (verse 19: 48:7; 5:2). Benjamin of Tudela, who was on the spot, says that Rachel's grave is about half a mile from Bethlehem.

"And Rachel travailed, and she had hard labor": The time of childbirth was come, and which came suddenly upon her, as travail does, even while journeying. Which obliged them to stop; and her pains came upon her and these very sharp and severe, so that she had a difficult time of it.

Genesis 35:17 "And it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also."

"And it came to pass, when she was in hard labor": In the midst of it, and at the worst.

"That the midwife said unto her, fear not": For Rachel, big with child, it was necessary to take a midwife with them in the journey. And perhaps this might be one that was always kept in the family, and had been assisting to all Jacob's wives and concubines at their labors.

And this seems probable from what follows, since she not only bids her be of good courage, and not fear. Comforting her under her pains, giving her hopes they would soon be over, and that she would have a safe delivery, and do well.

"Thou shalt have this son also": As she had one before, at whose birth she said, "the Lord shall add to me another son"; and therefore, called his name Joseph (Genesis 30:24). This the midwife remembered, and endeavors to comfort her with the accomplishment of it.

Genesis 35:18 "And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin."

"Ben-oni ... Benjamin": The dying mother appropriately named her newly born son "Son of my sorrow," but the grieving father named him "Son of my right hand," thus assigning him a place of honor in the home. Her prayer at the birth of her firstborn was answered (30:24).

Jacob's renaming of his son as Benjamin," or "Son of My right Hand," emphasized the positive aspect of this event. Perhaps this indicated Jacob's understanding of "right hand" in its normal sense, accompanied by its providential overtones of honor (Psalm 110:1), skill (Psalm 137:5), and soundness (Eccl. 10:2).

The phrase "her soul was in departing" indicates only that the life was departing.

Jacob had his twelfth son. The twelve tribes of Israel were complete.

"Benjamin" means son of my right hand, or son of my strength.

This was an interesting turn of events. It had been, probably, sixteen or so years since Joseph had been born. Many times, when children were born of older women, the women have problems with the birth. I really believe this problem went back to Rachel stealing her father's idols, and the statement Jacob made about what would happen to the one that was found with it.

He had said let him not live. Jacob's beloved Rachel was gone.

Ephrath is an ancient name for Bethlehem. The Tomb of Rachel is on the hill right out of Bethlehem even today. It is one of the tourist sights.

"Bethlehem" means house of bread. Bethlehem is about five miles out of Jerusalem.

Genesis 35:19 "And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which [is] Bethlehem."

"And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem": Hence called Bethlehem Ephrath (Micah 5:2). With great relevance is Rachel represented as if risen from her grave, and weeping for her children, when the children of Bethlehem, and thereabout, were slain by Herod, she being buried so near that place (Matthew 2:16).

At what age she died is not said. Polyhistor, out of Demetrius, reports that she died after Jacob had lived with her twenty three years.

Genesis 35:20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that [is] the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day."

"And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave": A sepulchral monument erected in memory of her; this according to Benjamin of Tudela was made of twelve stones, according to the number of the sons of Jacob. And over it was a vault or roof, supported by four pillars.

It continued to the times of Moses, the writer of this history, and to the times of Samuel, as appears from (1 Samuel 10:2); and even travelers of late times affirm it to be seen still. The memorial to Rachel could still be seen in Moses' day, about one mile north of Bethlehem.

Genesis 35:21 "And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar."

"And Israel journeyed": Having stayed near Bethlehem, as it is said, about two months. This is the first time Jacob is by Moses called Israel, after this name, was given him. The reason of which the Jews say is, because he bore the death of Rachel with so much patience.

"And spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar": Which was a place of pasturage, and fit for his flocks (see Micah 4:8). It was about a mile from Bethlehem to the south, and is supposed to be the place where the shepherds were watching their flocks, when the angel reported to them the birth of Christ (Luke 2:8).

Pretty remarkable are the words added here in the Targum of Jonathan, "the place from whence the King Messiah will be revealed in the end of days".

"Edar" means flock.

Genesis 35:22 "And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard [it]. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:"

"Sons of Jacob were twelve": The birth of Benjamin in Canaan (verse 18), furnished reason to simply review the sons born outside of Canaan, with only one sad note preceding it, i.e., the sin of Reuben, which tainted the qualifier "Jacob's firstborn" in the listing (see 49:3-4; Deut. 22:30; 1 Chron. 5:1-2).

Reuben's sin of incest cost him his birthright forever, and he was replaced by Joseph (49:3-4; 1 Chron. 5:1-2), again demonstrating the concept of rank and not origin (see note on 25:19-34).

The blessing of messianic ancestry went to Judah (49:10).

This act was incest and caused the son of Israel to be disinherited. We had spoken earlier of how this family, because of the Godly call on their lives, had to live holy lives. This was not only a sin against this woman, but against Jacob and the eleven brothers. The statement "Now the sons of Jacob were twelve" should actually be attached to the next few verses.

Genesis 35:23 "The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun:"

"The sons of Leah": Jacob's first wife, which are six, and are named in order, according to their birth: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

Genesis 35:24 "The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin:"

"The sons of Rachel": Then Rachel's, Jacob's next wife, though in right his first and only one, who had two children, Joseph and Benjamin.

Genesis 35:25 "And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali:"

"And the sons of Bilhah": Then Bilhah's sons, who was Rachel's handmaid, and these were two, Dan and Naphtali.

Genesis 35:26 "And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these [are] the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram."

"And the sons of Zilpah": And lastly, the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, which were two also, Gad and Asher.

"These are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram": All excepting Benjamin. And because they were by far the greater part, even all but one that were born there, this is said in general.

There having been given in the context such a particular account of the birth of Benjamin, and of the place of it, there was no need for the historian particularly to except him, since the reader would be in no danger of being led into a mistake.

This above, and the last sentence of verse 22, were just listing the sons of Jacob and helping us remember who was the mother of each. Twelve is a representative number.

Joseph and Benjamin were two that we must remember especially, because their mother was the beloved of Jacob.

Genesis 35:27 "And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which [is] Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned."

"And Jacob came unto Isaac his father": No mention being made of his mother, it is very probable she was dead; and Isaac being alone, and very old, and the time of his death drawing nigh, he might send for Jacob to come with his family, and be with him.

For it can hardly be thought that this was the first time of Jacob's visiting his father since he came into the land of Canaan, which must be about ten years. But as yet he had not come with his family to him, and in order to abide with him.

"Unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron": Mamre was a plain, so called from the name of a man, a friend and confederate of Abraham (Gen. 13:18). Where, or near to which, stood a city, called Kirjath-arba, or the city of the four, Arbah and his three sons. So that it might be called Tetrapolis, and was later called Hebron.

"Where Abraham and Isaac sojourned": lived good part of their days (see Genesis 13:18); it was about twenty miles from Bethlehem, and the tower of Edar, where Jacob was last.

Finally, Jacob has made it home.

Genesis 35:28 "And the days of Isaac were a hundred and fourscore years."

"And the days of Isaac were a hundred and fourscore years": He lived, forty years after he had made his will, and blessed his two sons. Jacob was now one hundred and twenty years of age, being born when his father was sixty.

Joseph was now twenty nine years of age, so that Isaac lived twelve years after the selling of Joseph into Egypt. He was five years older than his father Abraham was when he died.

Genesis 35:29 "And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, [being] old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him."

"And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died". And his children buried him in the cave in which Abraham was buried.

"And was gathered unto his people": his soul was gathered to the righteous, his body was laid where Abraham and Sarah were buried.

"Being old, and full of days": The number of which is observed (in Genesis 35:28),

"And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him": in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, where he lived and died, and where his parents had been buried, and Rebekah his wife.

"His sons Esau and Jacob" (ca. 1885 B.C.). Isaac's funeral brought his two sons back together, as Abraham's funeral had done for Isaac and Ishmael (25:9). Jacob, back in the land before his father's death, fulfilled yet another part of his Beth-el vow (28:21, "return to my father's house in safety").

Isaac lived to be 180 years old. Death many times brings families together. When Isaac died, Esau and Jacob, together, buried him.

Genesis Chapter 35 Questions

1. Where did God tell Jacob to go?

2. What was Jacob to do when he got there?
3. "Beth-el" means what?
4. When danger surrounds us, there is safety where?
5. What did Jacob tell his people to do before they left? Two things.
6. Why were these false gods in their company?
7. What was practiced in the Old Testament that John the Baptist teaches later?
8. Jacob had fled from Esau and gone to Beth-el, how many years ago?
9. What did Jacob do with the false gods?
10. Why were earrings included?
11. What should Christians do today to cleanse their lives?
12. What kept the cities from attacking Jacob?
13. What is another name for Beth-el?
14. What did he call the place, because God appeared to him?
15. What does "El" mean?
16. What was the name of Rebekah's nurse?
17. In verse 11, what did God call himself?
18. What did God do for Jacob by appearing to him again here?
19. What did Jacob set up to commemorate his meeting God here?
20. What offering did he make?
21. Where were they when Rachel birthed Benjamin?
22. What had Rachel called him as she died?
23. What does the name of this son mean?
24. What does Benjamin mean?
25. Ephrath was an ancient name for where?
26. What does it mean?

27. Where was Rachel buried?
28. What did Jacob do to remember the spot?
29. What disgraceful thing did Reuben do?
30. What was his punishment?
31. Name Leah's sons.
32. Name Rachel's sons.
33. Name Bilhah's sons.
34. Name Zilpah's sons.
35. Where was Isaac?
36. How old was Isaac when he died?
37. Who buried him?