

## Timeline of Truth – God Blesses Jacob Amidst Hardships (Gen 35:1-29)

<p><sup>1</sup> Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to <u>Bethel</u> and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother."</p>	<p><b>1. God Tells Jacob to Return to Bethel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Then" (Jacob at an all-time low?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– After Dinah's defilement</li> <li>– After Simeon and Levi's murderous revenge</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Was Jacob was reluctant to return home? (10 years...)</li> <li>• Bethel was about 15 miles south of Shechem</li> <li>• Bethel would have been between Shechem &amp; Hebron! <p>"Jacob certainly must have journeyed to Hebron on one or more occasions during this period to see his father Isaac. It almost seems that he had deliberately avoided Bethel. If this is so, it is probably because he knew he had not completely followed God's will, nor had he fully kept the promise he had made to the Lord at Bethel." (Henry Morris, <i>Genesis Record</i>, p. 518)</p> </li> <li>• God prompted Jacob to finish what he promised (28:22)</li> </ul>
<p><sup>2</sup> And Jacob said to his household and to all who <i>were</i> with him, "Put away the foreign gods that <i>are</i> among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments."  <sup>3</sup> "Then let us arise and go up to <u>Bethel</u>; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone."  <sup>4</sup> So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which <i>were</i> in their hands, and the earrings which <i>were</i> in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which <i>was</i> by <u>Shechem</u>.</p>	<p><b>2. Jacob Prepares His Household</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put away foreign gods (idols)</li> <li>• Purify yourselves (attitudes &amp; actions)</li> <li>• Change your garments (clothing...); earrings... <p>"They were trying, like so many professing Christian people today, to worship God while at the same time hanging on to some of the superstitions and practices of the world around them." (Morris)</p> </li> <li>• Who? Servants? Shechemites (34:28-29)? Family?</li> <li>• Buried them under the terebinth tree (Gen 12:6?) <p>"Jacob did what he should have done long ago: he required his family and servants to abandon all remnants of idolatry..." (Morris)</p> </li> </ul>
<p><sup>5</sup> And they journeyed, and the terror of God was upon the cities that <i>were</i> all around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.</p>	<p><b>3. God Divinely Protects Jacob</b></p>
<p><sup>6</sup> So Jacob came to Luz (that <i>is</i>, <u>Bethel</u>), which <i>is</i> in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who <i>were</i> with him.  <sup>7</sup> And he built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.</p>	<p><b>4. Jacob Builds an Altar at Bethel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bethel "House of God"</li> <li>• El Bethel "The Strong God of the House of God"</li> </ul>
<p><sup>8</sup> Now Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried below <u>Bethel</u> under the terebinth tree. So the name of it was called Allon Bachuth.</p>	<p><b>5. Jacob Loses His Mother's Helper</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately 150 years since she came with Rebekah</li> <li>• Connection to his mother; she likely mothered Jacob</li> <li>• Likely went with Jacob after he returned</li> <li>• Indicates Rebekah had died already; Jacob visited</li> <li>• Connection to Padan Aram (Leah &amp; Rachel's home)</li> </ul>
<p><sup>9</sup> Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from <u>Padan Aram</u>, and blessed him.  <sup>10</sup> And God said to him, "Your name <i>is</i> Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name." So He called his name Israel.  <sup>11</sup> Also God said to him: "I <i>am</i> God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body.  <sup>12</sup> "The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land."  <sup>13</sup> Then God went up from him in the place where He talked with him.</p>	<p><b>6. God Appears to Jacob Again</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God appears again</li> <li>• When he came from Padan Aram (never made it...)</li> <li>• God Blessed Him <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– After all the tragedies (Gen 34), failures, &amp; delays</li> <li>– Jacob was still Israel – God reaffirms this</li> </ul> </li> <li>• God Almighty (El Shaddai) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Abram (Gen 17:1)</li> <li>– Isaac (Gen 28:3)</li> <li>– Now Jacob</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Blessing Reaffirmed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Be fruitful</li> <li>– Nation and a company of nations</li> <li>– Kings shall come from your body</li> <li>– Land to you, your descendants after you</li> </ul> </li> <li>• God went up...</li> </ul>

<p><sup>14</sup> So Jacob set up a pillar in <u>the place where He talked with him</u>, a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it.</p> <p><sup>15</sup> And Jacob called the name of <u>the place where God spoke with him</u>, Bethel.</p>	<p><b>7. Jacob Re-Sanctifies Bethel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why name it Bethel again? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Altar named</i></li> <li>– <i>Named in the company of all his household (v. 6)</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><sup>16</sup> Then they journeyed from <u>Bethel</u>. And when there was but a little distance to go to <u>Ephrath</u>, Rachel labored <i>in childbirth</i>, and she had hard labor.</p> <p><sup>17</sup> Now it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said to her, "Do not fear; you will have this son also."</p> <p><sup>18</sup> And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni; but his father called him Benjamin.</p>	<p><b>8. Rachel Bears Another Son</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Around 15 years after Joseph was born (Gen 30:22-25)</li> <li>• Near Ephrath (Bethlehem – v. 19)</li> <li>• Foretold by Rachel (Gen 30:24)</li> <li>• Benoni – “son of sorrow”</li> <li>• Benjamin – “son of my right hand”</li> <li>• Right hand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Rachel? (emphasis on her)</i></li> <li>– <i>Honor? (emphasis on Benjamin)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Importance of a name...</li> </ul>
<p><sup>19</sup> So Rachel died and was buried on the way to <u>Ephrath</u> (that <i>is</i>, Bethlehem).</p> <p><sup>20</sup> And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which <i>is</i> the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day.</p>	<p><b>9. Jacob Loses His Wife Rachel</b></p>
<p><sup>21</sup> Then Israel journeyed and pitched his tent beyond the <u>tower of Eder</u>.</p> <p><sup>22</sup> And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard <i>about it</i>.</p>	<p><b>10. Jacob's Oldest Son Sins Against Him</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two people who could have been of great comfort:</li> <li>• Bilhah, as Rachel's handmaid</li> <li>• Reuben, Jacob's firstborn (30 years old?)</li> <li>• Israel (not “Jacob”) heard about it...</li> <li>• Reuben eventually lost birthright over it (Gen 49:3-4)</li> </ul>
<p>Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:</p> <p><sup>23</sup> the sons of Leah <i>were</i> Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun;</p> <p><sup>24</sup> the sons of Rachel <i>were</i> Joseph and Benjamin;</p> <p><sup>25</sup> the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant, <i>were</i> Dan and Naphtali;</p> <p><sup>26</sup> and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, <i>were</i> Gad and Asher.</p> <p>These <i>were</i> the sons of Jacob who were born to him in <u>Padan Aram</u>.</p>	<p><b>11. Jacob's Sons Reviewed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Order of marriage chronology</li> <li>• God's blessing evident</li> </ul>
<p><sup>27</sup> Then Jacob came to his father Isaac at <u>Mamre</u>, or Kirjath Arba (that <i>is</i>, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt.</p> <p><sup>28</sup> Now the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years.</p> <p><sup>29</sup> So Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people, <i>being old and full of days</i>. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.</p>	<p><b>12. Jacob Loses His Father</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jacob returns <u>home</u> with his entire household</li> <li>• Full circle...</li> <li>• 25 years after Jacob returned from Padan Aram</li> <li>• Isaac dies AFTER Joseph is sold (12-13 years later) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“when Joseph was sold into Egypt, he was seventeen years old. When he stood before Pharaoh he was thirty (41:46). Seven years later when Joseph was thirty-seven, Jacob came to Egypt at the age of 130 (47:9). Consequently Jacob must have been ninety-three at Joseph's birth and at the time of our chapter 93+15, i.e. about 108 years. But Isaac was sixty years old when Jacob was born; 108+60 = 168 = Isaac's age when Jacob returned home.” (<i>Exposition of Genesis</i>, H.C. Leupold, p. 929)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Isaac dies at 180 years old (in “after flood” terms)</li> <li>• No mention of blessing, etc. (feeble? senile?)</li> <li>• Gathered to his people (life after death)</li> <li>• Esau and Jacob – still connected</li> <li>• Isaac buried in Abraham's cave (Gen 49:29-31)</li> </ul>

**KEY LESSON THOUGHTS:**

1. God's Blessing Is **NOT** Free of Pain, Loss, and Hardship
2. God Works in the **Midst** of These Pains, Losses, & Hardships
3. God Works **Through** These Pains, Losses, & Hardships
4. God Remains **Faithful** to His Plan, His Purposes, and His People
5. God Desires Us to Follow Him **Fully**, and **Finish** the Race

Four locations: Shechem, Padan Aram, Bethel (Luz), Mamre (Kirjath Arba, Hebron)

Four burials (including the idols) and three funerals: Deborah, Rachel, Isaac.

One birth: Benjamin

People mentioned:

- Abraham
- Isaac
- Esau
- Jacob/Israel
- Leah
- Rachel
- Bilhah
- Zilpah
- 12 sons
- Midwife
- Jacob's household (servants, etc.)

<sup>1</sup> Then God said to Jacob,

"Arise,

go up to Bethel and

dwell there; and

make an altar there to God,

who appeared to you

when you fled

from the face of Esau your brother."

<sup>2</sup> And Jacob said

to his household and

to all who were with him,

"Put away the foreign gods that are among you,

purify yourselves, and

change your garments.

<sup>3</sup> "Then 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

in the way which I have gone."

<sup>4</sup> So they gave Jacob

all the foreign gods which were in their hands, and

the earrings which were in their ears;

and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree

which was by Shechem.

<sup>5</sup> And they journeyed,

and the terror of God was upon the cities that were all around them,

and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.

<sup>6</sup> So Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel),

which is in the land of Canaan,

he and all the people who were with him.

<sup>7</sup> And he

built an altar there and

called the place El Bethel,

because there God appeared to him

when he fled from the face of his brother.

<sup>8</sup> Now Deborah,

Rebekah's nurse,  
died, and  
she  
was buried  
below Bethel  
under the terebinth tree.  
So the name of it was called Allon Bachuth.

<sup>9</sup> Then **God**  
appeared to **Jacob** again,  
when **he** came from Padan Aram, and  
blessed **him**.

<sup>10</sup> And **God**  
said to **him**,  
"Your name *is* **Jacob**;  
your name shall not be called **Jacob** anymore,  
but **Israel** shall be your name."  
So **He** called his name **Israel**.

<sup>11</sup> Also **God**  
said to **him**:  
"**I am God Almighty**.  
Be fruitful and multiply;  
a nation and  
a company of nations  
shall proceed from **you**, and  
kings shall come from **your** body.

<sup>12</sup> "The land  
which **I** gave Abraham and Isaac  
**I** give  
to **you**, and  
to **your** descendants after **you** **I** give this land."

<sup>13</sup> Then **God**  
went up from **him**  
in the place where **He** talked with **him**.

<sup>14</sup> So **Jacob**  
set up a pillar  
in the place where **He** talked with **him**,  
a pillar of stone; and  
**he** poured a drink offering on it, and  
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And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath,  
Rachel labored *in childbirth*, and  
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<sup>17</sup> Now it came to pass,  
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that she called his name Ben-Oni;  
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<sup>19</sup> So Rachel  
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on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).

20 And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day.

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

22 And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard about it.

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:

23 the sons of Leah were Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun;

24 the sons of Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin;

25 the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant, were Dan and Naphtali;

26 and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, were Gad and Asher.

These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Padan Aram.

27 Then Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt.

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

29 So Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people, being old and full of days.

And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.