Day 32 - WEDNESDAY: November 23rd

Genesis 35

Genesis 35:1-29 NKJV

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." 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. 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." 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. 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. So Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. 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. 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. Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram, and blessed him. 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. 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. The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land." Then God went up from him in the place where He talked with him. 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 he poured oil on it. And Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel. Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel labored in childbirth, and she had hard labor. 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." 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. So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day. Then Israel journeyed and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder. 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: the sons of Leah were Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; the sons of Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin; the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant, were Dan and Naphtali; 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. Then Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt. Now the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years. 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.

Daily Deep Dive:

Verse 1 – You'll remember at the end of yesterday's reading that Jacob was concerned that the Canaanite tribes around them would hear what Simeon and Levi had done and would destroy his family. We see at the beginning of this next chapter that God tells Jacob to leave and go to Bethel. John Gill's commentary says this is about 28 miles from Shechem.

Verse 2 – Jacob instructs everyone under his household to get rid of foreign gods and to both purify themselves and to change clothes. It is worth noting that coming into God's presence is not something we should ever take lightly. God wants us to have a close and intimate relationship with Him, but it would be a mistake to take coming into the presence of the Almighty God lightly. For this reason, when we go to church, we should strongly consider our outward attire, recognizing we are dressing to go before the Almighty, and also consider our inward thoughts and attitudes. We will see these two themes develop more as we move through the Bible. Verse 5 – It appears that Jacob was right to fear these surrounding cities, but with God's intervention, great fear falls upon those cities and they do not pursue Jacob's family.

Verse 8 – We aren't told when Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, joined Jacob's family. According to Jarchi, he records that Rebekah sent Deborah to bring Jacob home, according to Rebekah's promise in Gen 27:45. About that, John Gill's commentary states: "it is not very probable that she should send a woman, and one so ancient, on such an errand: rather, this nurse of hers, after she had accompanied her to Canaan, and stayed awhile with her there, returned to Haran again, and being very useful in Jacob's large family, and having a great respect for them, returned again with them, and which she might choose in hopes of seeing Rebekah once more, whom she had a strong affection for; or, when Jacob was come into the land of Canaan to Shechem, he might send for her from Hebron to be assisting in his family; or going to visit his parents, which he might do before he went with his whole family to them,

might bring her with him to Shechem, who travelling with him to Bethel died there" [END]

Jamieson-Faucet-Brown has this to say about Deborah "Deborah (*Hebrew*, a "bee"), supposing her to have been fifty years on coming to Canaan, had attained the great age of a hundred eighty. When she was removed from Isaac's household to Jacob's, is unknown. But it probably was on his return from Mesopotamia; and she would have been of invaluable service to his young family. Old nurses, like her, were not only honored, but loved as mothers; and, accordingly, her death was the occasion of great lamentation. She was buried under *the* oak – hence called "the terebinth of tears" [END]

Verse 11 – God tells Jacob that He is "El Shadday" (meaning God Almighty or God Most Powerful). This is now the third time this name has been used for God.

The first time was in Genesis 17:1 when Abram was 99 years old and in that chapter, God changed Abram's name to Abraham and required them his family to be circumcised and promised that a year later he would have a son with Sarah. The second time was in Genesis 28:3 when Isaac used this name "God Almighty" when both blessing Jacob & sending Jacob off to Laban.

Here in verse 11 we see a new piece added in to this promise. The UCG reading program states the following: ". God seems pleased with Jacob's faith and obedience, as He reaffirms with Jacob the promises made to Abraham and Isaac. God even repeats His renaming of Jacob with the new name of Israel, having originally done so in chapter 32. God gives again the promise of a line of kings (given before in Genesis 17:4–6). But in giving the promise of national blessing, God adds something mentioned for the first time in Scripture—the promise of a single nation and a company (or "group" in the Moffatt Translation) of nations. The Ferrar Fenton Translation says, "a Nation and an Assembly of Nations." The New International Version reads, "a nation and a community of nations." We will see more about this prophecy when we get to Genesis 48, where the birthright blessing passes on to Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh—Manasseh becoming the great single nation and Ephraim becoming the company or group of nations. (These prophesies are fully explained in our free booklet *The United* States and Britain in Bible Prophecy.)" [END]

Verse 14 – This is the first time we are introduced to a "drink offering". It's interesting to me how many various practices we see subtly woven into God's Word, long before there is a nation of Israel, or Mt. Sinai. We won't see this word for "drink offering" used again until Exodus 29:40 when the Priests were being consecrated and where wine was used as a drink offering.

John Gill Commentary: "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:" [END] Drink offerings throughout the Old Testament were usually wine, and the amount of wine varied due to which animal was being sacrificed. This wine was poured upon the altar or the object of worship. This pointed to the total devotion to the one who being worshiped. We ultimately understand that like the rest of the sacrifices, the drink offerings pointed to & were fulfilled by Jesus Christ (see Isaiah 53:12, Luke 22:20, John 19:34, Phil 2:7–8).

Besides Jesus Christ, the New Testament uses this idea of the drink offering to how a Christian is to give their whole life in service to the Almighty God! (See Phil 2:17–18, 2 Tim 4:6).

The question for us is, are we doing that? Are we really pouring out our lives for God & Jesus Christ? In part, you and I are doing that right now. You could be watching TV or posting on Facebook (and there is time and place for those things), but instead you are prioritizing the study of God's Word when you have many demands on your time. Let's continue to pour out our lives in our daily choices and commitment.

We also see Jacob pour olive oil on the stone, as he had also did back in Gen 28:18.

Verse 16 – It's incredibly sad to me how many women have died during childbirth down through time. A moment that is meant to be exciting and a blessing, is so terribly marred by the enemy death. Rachel, Jacob's beloved wife, dies in giving birth to her second son.

Verse 18 – As she is dying, Rachel names her son Benoni meaning "son of my sorrow" but Jacob called him Benjamin meaning "son of the right hand". Adam Clarke's commentary says that the intended meaning of "son of the right hand" is "the son peculiarly dear to me" and signifies one much loved and regarded.

Verse 22 – Here we have another sad example, this time of Reuben, Jacob's oldest child through Leah, lying down with (having sex) with Bilhah. Why? We aren't told. This is pure speculation, but this may have been a power play of sorts, or some sort of revenge. While Rachel was alive, it would have been no secret that she was Jacob's preferred wife. It must have been hard for Leah's sons to see their mother loved so little. With Rachel's death, maybe they had hoped that Leah would rise in status. Bilhah was Rachel's maid. Maybe Bilhah was now Jacob's preferred companion. Did Reuben do this to humble and dishonor Bilhah? I don't know. Again, that's just speculation.

The UCG reading program adds this as well: "Reuben was Jacob's firstborn by Leah, which bestowed on him the double-portion birthright inheritance. Yet as just mentioned, the birthright would actually pass to the sons of Joseph. According to 1 Chronicles 5:1–2, this sin of Reuben is what caused Israel to give the birthright to Joseph instead. So not only was this a sin of defilement and adultery, it had long-lasting consequences on future events, determining the ultimate recipients of the promises of wealth God made to Abraham." [END] Verse 23 – 26: With the birth of Benjamin, Jacob now had 12 sons and 1 daughter.

Verse 27 – 29: Jacob now is reunited with his father. Isaac is now 180 years old and he dies, and is buried by Jacob & Esau.

From the UCG reading program: "When Jacob returned to Hebron, his father Isaac was still alive and would live another 15 years or so before dying at the age of 180. When Isaac died, Esau and Jacob came together again to bury him with his father, mother and wife—that is, Abraham, Sarah and Rebekah—at the cave of Machpelah (compare Genesis 49:31). Leah and Jacob would later be buried there also (49:29–50:13)." [END]