

The Dinah Incident

Genesis 34:28 They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, what was in the city and what was in the field, :29 and all their wealth. All their little ones and their wives they took captive; and they plundered even all that was in the houses.

Genesis 34:30 Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, “You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I.”

Vengeance exacted meant retaliation expected. Total loss of respect (“making me odious”) and of peaceful relations (v. 21) put both him and them in harm’s way with survival being highly unlikely. This threat tested God’s promise of safety, giving Jacob cause for great concern (28:15; 32:9, 12).

Genesis 34:31 But they said, “Should he treat our sister like a harlot?”

Jacob Returns to Bethel

Genesis 35:1 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.”

Genesis 35:2 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.

Genesis 35:3 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.”

Genesis 35:4 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.

Genesis 35:5 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. :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.

Genesis 35:7 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. :8 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.

God Blesses Jacob at Bethel

Genesis 35:9 Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram, and blessed him.

Genesis 35:10 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.

Genesis 35:11 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. :12 The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land.”

Genesis 35:13 Then God went up from him in the place where He talked with him.

Genesis 35:14 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. :15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel.

Benjamin is Born

Genesis 35:16 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. 1

Ephrath. A more ancient name for Bethlehem. 1

Genesis 35:17 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.”

Genesis 35:18 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. 1

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).1

Genesis 35:19 So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).

Genesis 35:20 And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which is the pillar of Rachel’s grave to this day.

Genesis 35:21 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: **1**

The birth of Benjamin in Canaan (v. 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. **1**

Jacob's Twelve Sons

Genesis 35:23 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.

Isaac Dies

Genesis 35:27 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.

Genesis 35:29 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. **1**

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 Bethel vow (28:21, "return to my father's house in safety"). **1**

Genesis 36 (Summary)- The Family of Esau, The Chiefs of Edom, The Sons of Seir, The Kings of Edom, The Chiefs of Esau

Joseph Dreams of Greatness

Genesis 37:1 Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. **1**

This by-line into the story of Jacob's son, Joseph, informs the reader that Jacob's father, Isaac, hence his sons as well, though in the land, had not yet entered into possession of their inheritance. They were still alien residents. **1**

Genesis 37:2 This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father. **2**

Eleven years had passed since he had entered the land of Canaan with his family, since Joseph was born 6 years before departing from Haran. **12**

Whether Joseph brought this bad report at his own initiative or reported back at the father's demand on 4 of his brothers (e.g., v. 14) is not elaborated upon, nor specifically cited as the cause of the brothers' intense dislike of Joseph. **22**

Genesis 37:3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. **1**

It marked the owner as the one whom the father intended to be the future leader of the household, an honor normally given to the firstborn son. **1**

Genesis 37:4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.

Genesis 37:5 Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more.

Genesis 37:6 So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: **:7** There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf."

Genesis 37:8 And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

Genesis 37:9 Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."

Genesis 37:10 So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?"