

Women in the Word
Genesis 33,34 and 35
March 17, 2016

Friends of God
★ A Study of Genesis ★

1. What do you remember about Esau and Jacob's relationship from our past study?
2. Read Genesis 33:1-11. In verse 1, how does Esau approach Jacob after years of estrangement?

Describe how Jacob organizes his entourage as Esau approaches. What does it reveal about Jacob's feelings? Read Genesis 27:41-42 and Genesis 32:11.

Now list the verbs used to describe Jacob and Esau's first meeting in verse 4.

3. After reading of Jacob and Esau's reunion in verses 1-11, what evidence do you see that Jacob is a changed man? How has Esau's character also changed?

What evidence do you see of God's grace as these brothers reconcile?

4. Read Genesis 33:12-20. The brothers part company and go different directions. According to verse 18, where does Jacob arrive safely?

What does Jacob do in verse 20 that is reminiscent of his grandfather Abraham? Read Genesis 12:6-7.

As Jacob returns to Canaan, the land promised by God to Abraham, where do you see God's faithfulness in his story? Read Genesis 28:15.

5. Genesis 33 is the last mention of Jacob and Esau's tumultuous relationship. Share what you have learned about family relationships and sibling rivalry as you look back over their story.

How does our relationship with God make a difference in our family relationships?

6. The pages of Genesis often read like a soap opera. Read Genesis 34:1-31. What insight do you glean about the character of the Canaanites from this story?
7. As in any drama, there are many personalities and motives involved in the story. Describe how the following people respond as the drama plays out:

Jacob (verses 5, 30) –

Hamor (verses 8-10) –

Jacob's sons (verses 13-17) –

Canaanite men (verses 23-24) –

Simeon and Levi (verses 25-29, 31) –

8. Now answer these questions about the people involved:

What seems unusual about Jacob's reaction to Dinah's kidnapping and rape?

Why is Hamor's suggestion that they intermarry with the Canaanites a bad idea?
See Genesis 28:1

What influences the Canaanite men to go along with Hamor and be circumcised?

How do Jacob's sons repeat their father's past deceitful behavior?

What do you think motivated Simeon and Levi to take matters into their own hands and avenge Dinah?

9. Although their concern for their sister was appropriate, Simeon and Levi's anger and deceit has not represented God well to the nations around them. What lessons can we learn from them as we strive to be God's representatives each day in our fallen world?

10. In Genesis 28:10-22, Jacob encountered God in a dream at Bethel as he initially fled from Esau. Because of that encounter, he made a vow, left a memorial stone, and called it *God's house*. Now read Genesis 35:1-15. What does God call Jacob to do in verse 1?

Describe the actions Jacob has his household take in verses 2 and 4 before he returns to Bethel.

What does this tell you about the life they had been living in Shechem?

In spite of the presence of idols, how does Jacob portray God in verse 3?

11. Where do you see God's protection for Jacob and his family as they travel to Bethel?

As Jacob finishes the altar at Bethel, God appears to him. Summarize God's message to Jacob in verses 9-12.

Why do you think God calls Himself *God Almighty* as He affirms His promises to Jacob?

12. Read Genesis 35:16-29. As with all families, Jacob's story has highs and lows. What blessings does Jacob experience in these verses?

What difficulties does he encounter?

13. Genesis 35:22 lists Jacob's twelve sons, who will become the heads of the original twelve tribes of Israel. As you think about Jacob's journey and the promises God has made to him, how does this concrete evidence of God's perfect plan encourage you? Read Jeremiah 29:11-14 and Proverbs 19:21.

14. Do you have a personal prayer request to share with your small group?

Returning Wholeheartedly to God

“Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love; Here’s my heart O take and seal it, Seal it for thy courts above.” Robert Robinson

Jacob returns to face Esau.

33:1-20

- *Jacob’s fear is evident as he prepares to meet Esau.*
- *He approaches Esau with humility and gifts.*
- *Esau embraces his brother with evidence of a changed heart.*
- *God has answered Jacob’s prayer for protection, but Jacob still relies on deception.*

***Wandering hearts show _____ in their lives and relationships.
Wholehearted commitment to God means living a life that is trusting and truthful.***

Jacob returns to the land of Canaan.

34:1-31

- *Jacob buys land in Shechem and erects an altar to worship.*
- *His daughter Dinah is raped and kidnapped by a Canaanite.*
- *His sons rely on deception to unleash vengeance on the people.*
- *Jacob realizes that serious consequences may follow.*

***Wandering hearts are _____ hearts.
Wholehearted commitment to God means seeking Him in every situation and
leading others to do the same.***

Jacob returns to Bethel to fulfill his vow.

35:1-29

- *God prods Jacob to return to Bethel where God spoke to him.*
- *Jacob’s household removes their idols before returning to Bethel.*
- *After Jacob worships at Bethel, God confirms his promises to Jacob and calls him by his new name, Israel.*
- *A new chapter in the family begins with the birth of Benjamin, the deaths of Rachel and Isaac, and the sin of Reuben.*

***Wandering hearts are _____ by the God who loves them.
Wholehearted commitment to God leads to fellowship and blessings from God.***

Returning whole heartedly to God means:

- **Facing our fears.**
- **Putting away our idols.**
- **Never stopping short of full obedience to God’s plans and purposes.**

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Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 24:7 I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.

Genesis 27:41 Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

Genesis 28:20-22 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house. And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you.”

Genesis 31:13 “ I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now arise, go out from this land and return to the land of your kindred.”

Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Psalms 138:8 The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.

James 4:8 Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.