

GENESIS 35-36

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Genesis chapter 35 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

As we will see as we go through this chapter, God will call Jacob to ***Return to Bethel!***

If you remember from our previous studies, back in Genesis chapter 28 Jacob leaves his home because his brother Esau wants to kill him for stealing his blessing from his father Isaac. He deceived his father into thinking he was giving the blessing to Esau, when in reality, it was Jacob.

And now Jacob is heading to his uncle Laban's house until Esau cools off.

On his way there, in Bethel, Jacob has an encounter with God and in Genesis 28:20-22 we are told of Jacob's response to this encounter.

We are told, "**Then Jacob made a vow, saying, 'If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God. And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You.'**"

In other words, "***God if you take care of me, I will serve you!***"

We don't make deals with God and so this was not a great way to start but it was a start because Jacob had an encounter with God there at Bethel!

Keep in mind that Jacob is still on the run, and he leaves Bethel and goes to his uncle Laban's house and will spend the next twenty years there!

During those years he worked fourteen years to marry the two daughters of Laban, Rachel and Leah.

He also has eleven sons while he was there working at his uncle Laban's home. Benjamin was born after they left. And those eleven sons were born to Rachel, Leah and their two maids, Bilhah and Zilpah.

God did bless Jacob just as He said He would and by the time we get to Genesis chapter 30 God stirs the heart of Jacob to return home, to return to Bethel. But Laban had Jacob work another six years and now Jacob is ready to leave.

And in Genesis 31:13, as Jacob is telling Rachel and Leah what the Lord said to him, we are told, **“I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.”**

But Jacob does not go to Bethel; he stops in Succoth, which is not even in the Promise Land, the land of Canaan. And by what the text tells us, he built a home, he built stables for his livestock, and thus, he could have been there for a number of years.

Then, after this period of time, he decides to go to Shechem, in the Promise Land, in the land of Canaan.

Yes, Shechem was in the land of promise, but it was not Bethel, he was about twenty to thirty miles away from Bethel. It was close, but no cigar!

I realize that some of you may feel this is not such a big deal; at least he is in the land. But it is a big deal and God shows us how devastating it is to be outside His will!

You see, in Genesis chapter 34 Dinah, Jacob's daughter goes **“to see the daughters of the land”** or go out and have some fun, to go out with the girls of Shechem! And it is here that Shechem rapes her.

When Jacob hears about this, he does nothing but Dinah's brothers, when they come in from the fields, they are angry.

And it gets even worse. They were told that Shechem wants to marry Dinah now! And please understand that I don't believe he was doing this out of love, but out of lust, what she could give to him and not what he could give to her.

And Dinah's brothers are not going to let this go; they are going to take care of things even if their dad won't!

Thus, Dinah's brothers make a deal with Shechem and his father Hamor that if all the men of the city are circumcised, he could then marry Dinah and they would share in their possessions.

Well, that was not the plan, it was a lie and they learned well from their father Jacob to deceive.

You see, on the third day after these men were circumcised, when they were in pain, when they couldn't walk, Simeon and Levi came in and killed the men of the city; they wiped them out and plundered the city!

And in Genesis 34:30 we are told, **“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.’”**

Jacob is not concerned about his daughter Dinah and that she was raped, his only concern is, *“What will the people of the land think of me? Are they going to destroy me for what you have done?”*

And all that Simeon and Levi could say is, “. . . **‘Should he treat our sister like a harlot?’**” Genesis 30:31.

Yes, it was wrong what was done to Dinah, but they did not handle the situation correctly and killed the people of the city for what one man did!

As we begin Genesis chapter 35 keep Genesis chapter 34 as a backdrop for what is going to take place.

It is interesting to me that in Genesis chapter 34 the name of God is not mentioned once. Why is that?

Because it is a chapter that is focused on the flesh – lust, rape, deceit, revenge, murder and the like!

But we will see here in Genesis chapter 35 the name of God is mentioned directly or indirectly some twenty-two times!

It is a walk in the Spirit and in this walk, there are going to be challenges for Jacob, heartaches, and we need to remember that in our own lives. Just because we are walking with God, in fellowship with Him, doesn't mean things are going to be perfect in our lives. We will endure hardships, tragedies, and the like.

The key is that it is never too late to return to Bethel, the house of God. It is never too late to return to that fellowship that you once had with the Lord.

With that said, let's begin reading in Genesis chapter 35 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

GENESIS 35**VERSE 1**

As I have said, here in Genesis chapter 35 the name of God is mentioned directly or indirectly some twenty-two times!

And we saw back in Genesis chapter 34 that the name of God is not mentioned once!

The point is simple. When you are not in the place God wants you to be, you will not mention God; you will not seek after God, just as we see here. It is the life of the flesh, a life that is not walking with God. And when that happens, Jacob shows us what that kind of life looks like. And look at the mess Jacob brought upon himself and his family because he did not obey God!

So here in Genesis chapter 35, what does God do here?

“That is it! I have had it up to here with you Jacob, you are done!”

No, that is not what God does.

He tells 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.’**”

Jacob does not get benched by God, but God tells him to separate from the world and go to the house of God, go to Bethel, which is the place he was supposed to go when he left Padan Aram!

I am so thankful that our God is gracious and merciful.

Yes, God does not condone our sin, our rebellion, but He does call us out of it, to return to our first love, to Jesus!

You see, it is as Barnhouse wrote, *“The only cure for worldliness is to separate from it.”*

Jacob had to leave Shechem and go to Bethel.

Is God calling you to leave those worldly things and get back to the house of God, back to Bethel as He did with Jacob?

Do as Jacob did and listen to Him!

Again, *“The only cure for worldliness is to separate from it.”*

And there at Bethel God instructs Jacob to set up an altar. What is that about?

He is calling Jacob to go to the house of God and worship Him there!

Let’s face it, if we are really following the Lord, then our hearts will be filled with the worship of Him. How can you not worship God when He bestows His love and grace upon us!

VERSES 2-4

This is interesting to me. Jacob is calling for everyone to put away their idols, which tells me that it was more than just one or two people that had idols or worshiped these foreign gods in the household of Jacob!

What was the problem? How could this happen?

Jacob was the spiritual leader of the family and as his walk with God was distant, it affected his family, those in his household – they gathered idols!

But now Jacob gets right with God, and it also affects his family in a positive way, they got rid of their idols, their gods.

Men, be a godly example to your family because it will affect your wife, your children, even other family members!

Step one – ***PUT AWAY YOUR FOREIGN GODS – IDOLS!***

Then Jacob tells his family that they need to purify themselves. It was a ceremonial washing and for us it is a washing of the Word of God upon our lives. David said in Psalm 119, **“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. . . . Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.”** Psalm 119:9, 11.

We need that daily cleansing of the Word of God upon our lives because the filth of the world likes to cling to us, and it needs to be removed!

Step two – ***PURIFY YOURSELF!***

Then Jacob tells his family that they need to change their garments, why?

Barnhouse put it like this, ***“Throughout the Bible, garments symbolized character. The inward life of the unregenerate is compared to a polluted garment.”***

You see, when God touches your life inwardly, it will overflow in your outward actions. Every aspect of your life will be affected.

We are to clothe ourselves with Christ, put on the new man, and live accordingly.

Now, new clothes, behavior, the things we do don't save us, Jesus does.

But they do show where a person is at with the Lord!

Paul put it like this in Romans 12:2, **“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”**

And Paul nails this as he tells us in Ephesians 4:17-24, **“This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”**

Thus, examine your life and get rid of, bury those things that are ungodly!

We call this the sanctification process as God is molding and shaping our life down here to fit in up there!

Step three – ***CHANGE YOUR GARMENTS!***

It is after this that we read in Genesis 35:3, **“Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God . . .”**

You see, first consecration - ***PUT AWAY YOUR FOREIGN GODS – IDOLS! PURIFY YOURSELF! CHANGE YOUR GARMENTS!***

And then we are able to worship God!

So they gather all these idols and what do they do with them?

They bury them under the terebinth tree!

That seems strange. Why did they do that?

Think about this for a minute. Where are we to bury our idols?

You might say the terebinth tree or, more specifically, at the foot of the cross, giving them to Him.

Now here's the thing. Once you bury them, don't go back to dig them up!

One writer summed it up like this for us. He wrote,

The tree in Scripture, of course, speaks of the Cross.

In other words, the picture is that Jacob left his sin at Calvary.

When Jesus died on the Cross, not only was the penalty of sin paid for completely, but power over sin was provided fully. This is an amazing and potent truth. You can leave here tonight and say, "Lord, truly You are good in allowing me to go to Bethel once more. I'm tired of my sin, and I want to make my way free and unencumbered of the junk which entangles me."

But, practically, how does this happen?

You reckon the old man dead. You say, "Lord, on the basis of your Word, I no longer have to do that, go there, be involved with the other – not because of positive thinking, but because of what You did on Calvary's tree."

Just as by faith you receive forgiveness, so too by faith you gain victory.

- Jon Courson, Jon Courson's Application Commentary – OT Vol. 1, p. 161

It is after this, that they begin their journey to Bethel!

VERSES 5-7

Why was this such a dangerous journey for Jacob and his family?

It was always dangerous to travel but remember that Simeon and Levi had caused problems by killing Hamor and Shechem, besides the rest of the males of that city.

So other nations, other family members may have sought to kill them.

But God's grace covered them as they journeyed.

You see, as they walked with the Lord, no one could touch them.

In fact, as dangerous as this journey was to Bethel, it was far safer than being anywhere else because Jacob was in the center of God's will and that is the safest place to be!

And that remains true today. As we walk with God, as we come before Him and obey His calling for us, He will protect us, watch over us. Nothing will happen to us without Him allowing it!

That is why I was at peace with my trips to Haiti and to Russia. I knew what God had called me to do and I rested in that. You see, for me, the safest place to be was in the will of God and that is true in your own life as well!

Thus, no matter what comes upon you, walk by faith and God will give you the grace you need to see you through every situation!

Let me also say this.

What does the name Bethel mean?

It means – ***HOUSE OF GOD!***

But Jacob doesn't call the place Bethel, not completely. He calls it ***EL BETHEL***. What does El Bethel mean?

It means – ***GOD OF THE HOUSE OF GOD!***

Now you may not think this is such a big deal, but I believe it is.

We are over twenty years, maybe closer to thirty years from when Jacob was at Bethel and it was there, this land called Luz, that he called it Bethel. And now something has changed with his walk with God. I believe it is richer and deeper, his faith is maturing.

Why do I say that?

Let me put it like this.

There are many people who go to the house of God because the music is great, they have a great light show, the plays are really good, they have a great kids ministry, the pastor is like a rock star, they have great coffee and great food. In other words, it is superficial.

But there are those who come to the – ***GOD OF THE HOUSE OF GOD!***

In other words, they come to worship God, they have been broken and they have truly surrendered their lives to Christ. They go to God, not some building or whatever and that is far different than just going to church!

Now, and this is important, just because you're back at Bethel, back where God wants you to be, back in fellowship with Him, that doesn't mean you will be free from loss and heartache.

The rest of the chapter will show us that reality!

VERSE 8

Now her beloved nurse, Deborah, the one who cared for Jacob has died. We truly don't know anything more about this woman, but God chose to mention her name and her death here in Genesis.

And Jacob buried here beneath the terebinth tree and called the place – Allon Bachuth, which means "*oak of weeping.*"

VERSES 9-15

When did God appear to Jacob?

After he separated himself from the world, after he returned to his first love and that relationship with God was then restored.

Now please understand this. God is not calling for Christians to isolate themselves on some island away from the worldly people. What He is saying is that we are to be in the world shining the light of Christ to the lost but don't be of the world.

In other words, a boat is of no real value out of the water, but place it in water and it works beautifully, that is what it was created to do. The problem comes not when the boat is in the water but when the water gets into the boat and then it is sunk!

The same is true for us Christians. We are to function in the world by bringing people to Jesus but as soon as we let the world get in us, our witness is gone, our light begins to dim, we are sunk!

The solution is like that for Jacob; **REMEMBER** your walk with God when you first got saved.

REPENT of your sin before the Lord.

And **REPEAT** the things you did when you first were saved, when you walked with God!

In other words, return to your first love! (Revelation 2:1-7)

In Genesis chapter 32 the Lord changed Jacob's name to Israel or governed by God.

Why did God have to remind Jacob of his name, that it was changed to Israel here in Genesis chapter 35?

Because he was acting more like Jacob than Israel and thus, God is reminding him who he really is, not what he was!

Folks, don't we struggle with that issue? Of course we do!

You see, we are a new creation in Christ, those old things have passed away, God has given to us a new heart and yet, we act like Jacob from time-to-time instead of Israel. We are schemers instead of governed by God! And God, through His Word reminds us of who we are in Christ so that we may walk accordingly!

We also see God re-affirm the covenant He made with Jacob's grandfather, Abraham and his father Isaac and now with him.

This was not something new; he just needed to be reminded of these promises.

Folks, how often do we need to be reminded of God's promises to us? We tend to base our salvation on our good works and when we fail, we get discouraged.

We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone and what God is doing on the inside of us will overflow in our actions, the things that we do. Our actions don't save us, but they can show if we are saved or not. Thus, hold onto the promises of God, they are precious.

As God finishes speaking with Jacob, Jacob sets up a pillar and worships the Lord, calling the place the house of God – Bethel!

Now this drink offering is interesting to me because Paul picks up on it in the New Testament.

In Philippians 2:17-18 Paul wrote, **“Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.”**

During Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, he wrote this to the Philippians, "**For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.**" Philippians 1:21-26.

And Paul was released from prison for a period of time but now he has been re-arrested, and he knows his time is short, he knows he is going to be put to death for his faith in Christ this time!

That is what he is talking about in II Timothy 4:6-8, "**For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.**"

Paul saw his life ending like a drink offering to the Lord. (Numbers 15:1-10)

You see, first there was the burnt offering to the Lord, then the grain offering, and the last offering was the drink offering.

It is as Hiebert said, "*His whole life has been presented to God as a living sacrifice; now his death, comparable to the pouring out of the wine as the last act of the sacrificial ceremony, will complete the sacrifice.*"

The word "**departure**," ANALUSIS (an-al'-oo-sis) in the Greek, carries with it a few different ideas.

It speaks of the unloosing of a ship from its moors, as Paul is ready to set sail home to heaven.

It speaks of the unyoking of a weary team of animals after a hard day's work, and Paul has finished the work that God has called him to do, he is going to enter that rest.

It is the striking of a tent, taking it down so you can move on, and Paul was going to leave this earthly tent for a mansion!

Paul knew he was going to die, and he is passing the mantle of ministry to Timothy, his son in the faith.

How does this relate to Jacob and what he did?

Here is the picture that I believe is being painted for us.

Yes, Jacob or Israel was to pour out his life to God, symbolized by the drink offering, the wine.

But I also see it apply to the blood of Christ that was shed for our sins on the cross of Calvary by Jesus. His blood was poured out for us!

The oil speaks of the Holy Spirit.

You see, His blood cleanses us and His Spirit empowers us to serve Him as we lay our lives on the altar of sacrifice for His use! “... ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ Says the Lord of hosts.” Zechariah 4:6.

VERSES 16-18

Rachels' first son she named Joseph, and said, “The Lord shall add to me another son.”

God did give her another son but in the process of giving birth she died!

And this time of joy became a time of sorrow and before she dies, she calls this child Ben-Oni or **“son of my sorrow.”** Not a great name, to say the least.

But Jacob, being wise, changed the name to Benjamin or **“son of my right hand.”**

Make no mistake about it, Jacob loved Benjamin and Joseph because Rachel bore them, and he loved Rachel more than he loved Leah!

And this was hard for Jacob, and we see this played out some thirty years down the road or so that some of the last words he spoke were of his wife Rachel. In Genesis 48:7 we are told, **“But as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died beside me in the land of Canaan on the way, when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).”**

Why did Jacob leave Bethel?

Did God instruct him to leave?

I don't think so. I think this was a decision that he made.

Rachel was older and was close to going into labor and they journeyed forward and when she was in labor, she died.

How can I be so sure that Jacob did this on his own?

Simply, when Jacob is walking with the Lord, he is called Israel, or governed by God.

But here, he is called Jacob and that is not a good thing!

VERSES 19-20

Why did this happen to Jacob when he got right with God?

Because walking with God doesn't mean there will be an absence of problems, an absence of tribulation.

Jesus said in John 16:33, **“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”**

The Amplified Bible puts it like this, **“I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]”**

May we not forget that because, if we do, we will end up taking our eyes off the Lord and be overwhelmed with the situation!

And, like I have said, I don't think Jacob should have journeyed while Rachel was that close to going into labor. And that could have added to the problem.

But even when we are fully walking with the Lord, difficulties arise in our lives, and we need to keep our eyes on the Lord and trust in Him no matter what comes our way.

VERSES 21-22a

We are told in Genesis 35:20 that Jacob buried Rachel. Again, I believe it was Jacob's bad decision that led to Rachel's death.

But notice what it says in Genesis 35:21, **“Then Israel journeyed . . .”**

I think that is significant. I think as Israel journeyed on, he was governed by God and prior to that, his journey was governed by the flesh and thus, he is called Jacob!

And keep an eye out for that as we read through Genesis. When God uses the name Jacob it is a walk of the flesh on his part. And when he is called Israel, he is walking with God or governed by God.

The heartaches that Jacob is going through and now Reuben, Jacob's first born had sexual relations with his concubine, in a sense, his stepmother!

What was he thinking?

Maybe he thought, since he was the oldest son, dad was getting old; he would now take over the leadership in the family.

You see, by doing this it truly was a declaration that he was the head of the family!

Remember when rebellious Absalom declared himself ruler by taking his father's concubines, King David's. (2 Sam. 16:20–23)

(We also see this played out in II Samuel 3:6-11. I Samuel 12:8)

Whatever his reason, he is going to lose everything because of his actions, just like Simeon and Levi.

In Genesis 49:3-4, as Jacob is giving the blessings to his sons, he says to Reuben, **“Reuben, you are my firstborn, My might and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, you shall not excel, Because you went up to your father's bed; Then you defiled it - He went up to my couch.”**

Jacob didn't deal with this issue until he was about to die!

VERSES 22b-26

Here are the twelve sons of Jacob, that will become the twelve tribes of Israel, not exactly a stellar group of men and yet God will use them mightily.

How can that be?

Because God is gracious and merciful and He uses imperfect people to do His work because the reality is, there are no perfect people, none are good, no not one!

It is as II Chronicles 16:9 says, **“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. . . .”**

VERSES 27-29

Remember in Genesis chapter 27 when Isaac thought he was going to die and he was giving the blessing to Esau, at least he thought it was Esau. It was really Jacob.

Well, it has been maybe fifty years since then and he is still alive.

Yes, his eyesight was poor, he was not healthy, but he reminds me of Fred Sanford from Sanford and Son who every week would cry out, *“I’m coming home Elizabeth!”* as he clutched his chest! The only reason he said that was because he was in trouble.

Here’s the point I want to make about our lives. God numbers our days and thus, may we be wise in how we use them. Our lives are in His hand and thus, we need to work until He calls us home!

So Isaac dies and we see that Jacob and Esau come together to bury their dad.

I wonder how that encounter with Esau went since years earlier Jacob said he would meet up with Esau in Seir, but Jacob lied and went the other way.

It seems like Esau let it go, he knew his brother and here they are gathered together to bury their father, Isaac.

Could he have held on to that?

You bet he could have. And many do that today. They hold onto a grudge, what someone did to them. It may be a family member or even a friend and they just can't let it go. And years go by and that anger that they are holding towards that person is only hurting them, it is not hurting the person they are mad at.

Paul made that very point in Philippians 3:12-14, as he wrote, **“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”**

Paul realized that the things he did before he was saved were not good. He persecuted Christians. And even now as a Christian he knew he was not perfect, he made mistakes.

And what did Paul do with the past that he did to others and even those things that others did to him?

He said, **“... forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”**

May we let go and press forward, forgetting those things, letting them go and do what God has called us to do – ***FORGIVE OTHERS AS HE HAS FORGIVEN US!***

As we conclude this chapter, Genesis chapter 35, Jacob is around 120 years old, and he will live to be 147 years old.

As you look at these last twenty-five or thirty years of his life, they ended up being the best years of his life because he lived as Israel or governed by God and not Jacob, schemer, deceiver!

And yes, there are times he is called Jacob and that is when he is walking in the flesh. But the focus of his life is to be governed by God, directed by God – *ISRAEL!*

Where are you living or how are you living?

Are you Jacob the schemer or Israel, governed by God?

Do you need to lay your idols at the foot of the cross, bury them and walk with the Lord?

You see, wherever your treasure is, that is where your heart will be! Bring those idols and bury them and walk in faith as you follow Jesus!

As we move into Genesis chapter 36 we will focus on Esau and his descendants and then they will no longer be the focus, the descendants of Abraham will be the focus, for that is where the Messiah will come from!

Then why are we looking at these descendants of Esau?

Because these genealogies represent the fulfillment of the promise that God spoke to Rebekah, his mom, that Esau would be the head of a nation. In Genesis 25:23 we are told, “**And the Lord said to her [Rebekah]: ‘Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger.’**”

Let’s read on and look at these descendants of Esau.

GENESIS 36**VERSES 1-5**

As we will see, Esau is going to live in the area of Edom, which is southeast of the Dead Sea, outside the Promise Land.

This is the area where Petra, the rock city is located. The area that the Jews will flee to during the Tribulation Period after the Antichrist goes into the rebuilt Temple and demands to be worshiped as God. Jesus spoke of this in Matthew chapter 24 as He spoke of the prophecy of Daniel in Daniel chapter 9.

And folks, like Esau, a child of the flesh, the flesh also lives outside the Promise Land, doing its own thing, trying to satisfy self and living outside of the blessings and promises of God.

Not only that, but Esau took Canaanite wives, something his parents and God did not want him to do. But that flesh nature does what it wants.

In fact, Esau's marriage to Canaanite women caused much grief to Isaac and Rebekah. We are told in Genesis 26:34, "**When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.**"

In the New Testament Paul tells us in II Corinthians 6:14, "**Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?**"

And yet, how many Christians do the opposite and suffer the consequences of their disobedience to God!

That is why Paul goes on to say, and I should say that this is a quote from the Lord that Paul takes out of Jeremiah and Isaiah. Paul put it like this, **“Therefore ‘Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty.’”** II Corinthians 6:17-18.

The call is to come out of the world, not go into the world or the worlds system which is at war with God!

VERSES 6-8

Isn't it amazing how the flesh can prosper!

You can cheat, steal, do whatever you want but in the end the flesh will not prosper – it will go back to the dust of the earth and what will you be left with?

Don't fall prey to this fleshly prosperity, walk with God and see the blessings He will bring into your life! Because, you can gain the whole world and lose your soul and you have lost everything! (Matthew 16:26)

And it can be difficult for us. We see them prosper and we think, ***“Lord, what about me? I am serving you, doing my best and these people mock you and hate you and look at how they are prospering. That is just not right!”***

I am glad that God has given us some insight with people who are walking with God and yet feel this way.

Asaph struggled with this in Psalm 73 where he said, **“Truly God is good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.”** Psalm 73:1-3.

Asaph felt like we do at times. And because of that he almost slipped, he almost stumbled with his walk with the Lord. And the reason why is because he was envious of what the wicked had, their prosperity and how they seemed to just enjoy life without any problems!

From there he comes to seeing their lives as great, never having problems as I have said, things going great, and that is not true. But when your eyes are not on the Lord you end up coming to wrong conclusions.

I have heard people say and maybe you have even said it, *“I wish we lived ten years ago or thirty years ago or fifty years ago [or whatever you want to put in there.] life was so much easier. There were no problems.”*

Is that true! No, in fact we want to get past those years many times. Be careful because it is a slippery slope away from the Lord when you start looking at things like that.

How did Asaph fix this problem?

How did Asaph get back to the reality of the situation?

He went to see a counselor who helped him!

No, he didn't do that!

He just tried to think positive thoughts!

No, he didn't do that!

Listen to what he did in Psalm 73:17, **“Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end.”**

There, in the sanctuary of God, he heard God speak to him and I believe God's Word gave him a correct perspective of the situation.

For the wicked, this is the best it will get for them and in reality, it is not really that good.

But for us as Christians, this is the worst it will get for us and what is ahead is beyond words, eternity with the Lord. No pain, no suffering!

Paul put it like this in II Corinthians 4:16-18, **“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”**

Amen to that! May we not forget that!

For Asaph, he needed a correct perspective of the situation and that is what we need when we become envious of the wicked and that correct perspective comes from the Word of God!

VERSES 9-13

Here in Genesis 36:12 we read of Eliphaz.

This could be the same Eliphaz the Temanite spoken of in the book of Job, which gives us then a time frame for the book of Job being one of the oldest books of the Bible since Genesis through Deuteronomy were written by Moses.

VERSES 14-16

The Amalekites, as we read in Genesis 36:16, were wicked and as Moses was leading the children of Israel to the Promise Land, they attacked those in back, the weaker and sick ones.

We see this spoken of in Deuteronomy 25:17-18 where Moses tells us, **“Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God.”**

VERSES 17-43

Some feel that the Jobab spoken of in Genesis 36:33 is Job, which is possible, we don't know for sure. But if this is the same Eliphaz, it would seem to fit!

Now I know I didn't read through all these names, mostly because I will mess them up really bad and the other reason is that this lineage is not from where the Messiah will come forth and thus, we may read of their descendants, but their history is not good.

Let me show you what I mean. This chapter concludes by saying, **“... These were the chiefs of Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possession. Esau was the father of the Edomites.”** Genesis 36:43.

As we will see as we read through the Old Testament, the Edomites will become the perennial enemies of the children of Israel. They will fight against them every chance they got!

And they were pagan to the core, so much so that God ordered the prophet Obadiah to pronounce their destruction.

As we continue on next time we will be dealing with the children of Israel once again and we will begin to focus on a man named Joseph!