**SDG - Lesson #20**

**Genesis – Chapter 35**

1. Where did God tell Jacob to take his family? What had happened previously at this place? (28:10-22)

God told Jacob to move to Bethel. It was at this place that God had appeared to Jacob in a dream and confirmed the Covenant.

2. What was the original name of this location? Who gave it the new name? Why?

Bethel was originally called Luz. Jacob gave it the name Bethel following his dream. Bethel means “House of God.”

3. What was Jacob to do once he got to this new dwelling place?

Jacob was to build an altar there.

4. What is unique about this command? (Note: This is a challenge question! To answer this question you will need to consider the history of God’s people.)

This is the first time that God commanded for an altar to be built.

5. Why was this command appropriate? (28:18-22)

Jacob had told God that if He fulfilled His covenant then He would be Jacob’s God. God had fulfilled His covenant. It was now appropriate that Jacob would worship Him.

6. How are the pillar (28:18) and the altar (35:1) connected?

The pillar was set up as a witness or memorial stone to the Covenant. The altar is the consummation of the Covenant that the pillar witnessed.

7. What were the three commands that Jacob gave to his family? What is the significance of each?

1. Put away the foreign gods. Jacob had told God that he would honor God as his God if God fulfilled the covenant. God had done so. Jacob had to abide by his word.
2. Purify yourselves. Jacob understood that he/they were going to worship God at the altar he would build. He realized that he was a sinner and fell short of God’s glory. Therefore, there was a need to purify, reconcile and prepare to meet God.
3. Change your garments. Purification was the inward or spiritual act of preparation. This is the physical act of preparation.

8. How did Jacob identify God? (vs. 3) Why?

Jacob identified God as:

1. “The God who answers me in the day of my distress”
2. The God, “who has been with me wherever I have gone.”

Both of these descriptions relate back to chapter 28 when God affirmed the covenant with Abraham to Jacob. God had fulfilled His part.

9. What did Jacob do with the foreign gods? Why?

Jacob hid them. You hide something you don’t want others to find. This prevented his family members from going back to worship them.

10. What is meant by, “the rings that were in their ears?”

These could be earrings that his family wore or charms that were in the ears of the foreign gods.

11. Why did Jacob get rid of the earrings?

It would appear that earrings were a part of pagan worship. Either they were put on the idol as the part of some pagan ceremony or they were worn as a symbol or part of pagan worship.

12. Why would God strike terror on the cities around Jacob when he left? (34:30-31)

What Simeon and Levi had done was morally offensive and could have led the other Canaanites to seek revenge. God stopped this from happening.

13. What does El-bethel mean? Why is this name appropriate?

God of Bethel or God of the House of God. It literally is Jacob’s way of saying, “God is the God of the vision and covenant given to me in the place I called the house of God.”

14. Who was Deborah? Why might she have been with Jacob? (27:45) What happened to her?

Deborah was the nurse or servant of Jacob’s mother Rebekah. Rebekah had said that she would send for Jacob once Esau had cooled down. Deborah died at Bethel.

15. What name does God again give to Jacob? When was this name first given to him? What does it mean?

God had first given the name “Israel” to Jacob after wrestling with him at Peniel. Israel means, “He strives with God.”

16. How does God identify Himself? (vs.11)

God said, “I am God Almighty.” This is the title “El-Shaddai.”

17. Why would God identify Himself to Jacob with this name? (17:1-2 & 28:3)

This is how God revealed Himself to Abraham and also how Isaac identified God when he blessed Jacob.

18. What was God’s two-part command to Jacob? When was this command first given by God?

God told Jacob to be fruitful and multiply. This was His command to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28.

19. What is meant by this command?

Be fruitful and multiply is both a physical and spiritual command:

1. Physical – have godly children
2. Spiritual – bear fruits of righteousness and grow in doing so

20. What did God promise Jacob?

God said that:

1. A nation and a company of nations would come from him
2. Kings would come from his own body
3. Jacob and his offspring would inherit the land.

21. How is “a nation and a company of nations” a Messianic prophecy?

The Jewish or Hebrew nation is a nation. No other physical nations come from the descendants of Jacob. However, through the Messiah, people from all nations would become the Children of Abraham or God’s people.

22. Who are the kings who would come from his own body? What is the significance of this?

This is a reference to Saul, David, and Solomon. This is very unique. There were no kings at this time, just Jacob and his family. It is prophetic and identifies what will happen. This also answers a criticism that is brought up in chapter 36:31.

23. How did Jacob respond to God’s word to him? Why?

Jacob set up a pillar and poured a drink offering on it. This served as a memorial stone or witness to the covenant that was made. The drink offering (wine and/or oil) consecrated it.

24. Why did Jacob leave Bethel?

Since God had promised to give him the land that had been promised to Abraham, Jacob started to head towards Hebron where Abraham had lived.

25. Rachel went into hard labor and died in the process of giving birth. What did she name her son? Jacob? Why?

Rachel named him Ben-Oni, which means, “son of my sorrow.” Jacob changed it to Benjamin, which means, “son of my right hand.” While Rachel names in sorrow, Jacob names in honor and elevates his youngest son to a high position.

26. What is the significance of Rachel’s delivery, death and burial on the way to Ephrath or Bethlehem? (Jeremiah 31:15; Matthew 2:6 & 18)

It was in Bethlehem that the Son of God’s right hand, Jesus, would be born. The loss of Rachel would have led to mourning; this was flipped in Jeremiah’s prophecy and fulfilled in Herod’s killing of the babies in the area. Rachel wept for them.

27. Why would Reuben lay with Bilhah? What was the result? (49:3-4)

The firstborn son would inherit everything that belonged to his father including the concubines. As the firstborn, Reuben evidently felt he was entitled to Bilhah even though his father had not yet died. As a result, Jacob withdrew the blessing from Reuben.

**Chapter 36**

28. Compare the names of the wives of Esau in 36:2-5, 26:34 & 28:8. What do you find? How do we explain this?

The names of the wives are different. We don’t know why there is this discrepancy. The two most likely answers are:

1. The women were known by different names, one Canaanite and the Hebrew.
2. Esau took additional wives. This is the more unlikely explanation since children are only listed for the wives found in chapter 36.

29. What do we know about Timnah’s son, Amalek? (vs. 12 & Numbers 14:39-45)

Amalek became a people that were enemies of Israel, the Amalakites.

30. In the middle of the genealogy of Esau we find the genealogy of Seir the Horite in verses 20-30. What do we learn about these people in the following verses?

36:20 -- They were the inhabitants of the land that Esau moved into.

36:2, 12, 14, 22, & 25 – The sons of Esau intermarried with them.

Deuteronomy 2:22 – The sons of Esau destroyed them.

31. As you look at the genealogies, you should notice a shift in terminology. How are the people identified in:

36:9-14 – They are listed as sons.

36:15-19 – They are listed as chiefs.

36:31-39 – They are listed as kings.

32. The final title is introduced with the phrase, “before any king reigned over the Israelites.” This has led to a critique of the Bible. There are those who contend that this shows that Genesis was not written by Moses but by someone after the monarchy in Israel had been established. How can such a claim be countered? (Consider question 20 and verse 35:11)

God had already stated that kings would come from Jacob. This verse simply states that the Edomite kings came before the fulfillment of God’s promise to Jacob. This delineates that the kings from Esau are not a part of that promise.