

## A Word from Kathy

We are all on a journey. Our lives are lived one day at a time; as the day's string together, they weave the tapestry of our life. In Genesis 35-36 we see some of Jacob's episodes coming to a close and the beginning of a new chapter of his life. God is calling him back to the place of worship, back to Bethel where he personally met the LORD. From time to time amid all the confusion and happenings of life, God will call us back to a place of worship to renew our commitment and remember his promises.

Read the chapters twice before starting to answer, pray, and ask God to speak to you as you study His word.

## Observation

1. Where was God instructing Jacob to go?
  
2. What was he to do when he arrived?
  
3. What instructions did Jacob give his family as they were about to return to Bethel?
  
4. Notice how he described God in verse 3. He referred to him as the God  
who \_\_\_\_\_  
and the God who \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. What were the members of Jacob's family instructed to turn over to him?  
What did Jacob do with all of it?
  
6. As Jacob and his family were on their journey to Bethel, the scripture said, "the terror of God fell upon the towns all around them so that no one pursued them." What fear had Jacob expressed to his sons in Genesis 34:30? Was God's care sufficient?
  
7. What had God promised Abraham in Genesis 12:3; Isaac in Genesis 26:3-5, 24; and Jacob in Genesis 27:29?

8. God made a permanent change in Jacob's life; what was it (Gen. 35:10)?

The name Jacob means supplanter - *to take the place or position of somebody by force or intrigue.*

The name Israel means God prevails.

What had changed in Jacob's heart and life to bring about this type of permanent name change?

9. God gave Jacob some specific promises. What promises did God make him?

10. Genesis 35:16-21 described a very sad time in Jacob's life. What happened?

11. What were the two distinctively different perspectives on the birth of Jacob's 12<sup>th</sup> son?

Rachel

Jacob

The right hand is always a place of honor. This was Jacob's twelfth son; why do you believe he named him this prestigious name?

12. Genesis 35:21-22 is a story changer. Where did Reuben fall in the birth order of Jacob's sons?

What did he stand to gain because of his birth order?

Even though we do not see Reuben immediately punished for this terrible sin against his father and his God, read Genesis 49:3-4, 8-12, 33.

What did it cost him?

13. Who did Jacob reunite with in Mamre, near Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron)?

Locate this area on a map to see the journey Jacob had been on.

14. In Genesis 35:28 we see that Isaac was 180 years old when he died. Who do we see coming together to bury him? Time has a way of healing old hurts. What did Esau say, in Genesis 27:41-42, that he would do when his father died? Have you allowed

the Lord to use time to heal your hurts? The Holy Spirit will not force us to do anything, but he will continue to stir our hearts to obedience to God's will.

15. Genesis 36 is a list of the descendants of Esau. In the four columns below list the wives of Esau and the children born to them (you don't need to list all the grandsons that are named).

His sons grew up to be kings and princes in the land where they lived. Had God blessed Esau?

Wife#1(Gen.26:34)	Wife #2(Gen. 36:2)	Wife #3(Gen. 36:2)	Wife #4 (Gen. 36:3)

16. Esau and Jacob separated again; this time it was for a happier reason. Why did they separate?

17. Locate Seir on a map so you will be familiar with the area of the Edomites, the descendants of Esau. We will see them again when we study the exodus.

## **Application**

18. As you read in Genesis 35, where Jacob was purifying his family in order to return to Bethel to worship God, what thoughts went through your heart about the importance of proper preparations for worship?

19. In what ways do you help your family purify their hearts in order to worship the God who answers your prayers and watches over you?

20. Read Exodus 20:3 and consider the underlined section; what are we commanded?

Ex. 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before me.

What might these look like in our lives?

**Taken from the ESV study Bible notes on Ex. 20:3 “Yahweh demands exclusive covenant loyalty. As the one true God of heaven and earth, Yahweh cannot and will not tolerate the worship of any “other gods.”**

In other words, monotheism, the worship of the one true God, is the only acceptable belief and practice. We are not to have any other thing “in preference to him” or “in competition with him.”

21. What are some things believers might allow to compete with or unconsciously place in front of God?
22. Take a few minutes to quietly ask yourself the next three questions. Ponder them carefully; your most important relationship depends on it.  
Who takes first place in your heart and life?  
How carefully do you clear idols from your life?  
Are you willing to part with things that influence you and draw you away from God?
23. Jacob feared retaliation from the surrounding cities after Simeon and Levi had killed the men of Shechem. God’s protection of Jacob and his descendants was sufficient, just as he had promised.  
Do you fear something or someone today?  
What promises has God made that would help you put your fears to rest?  
You might want to look up Psalm 23:4; Isaiah 41:13; Deuteronomy 31:6; 2 Timothy 1:7; Psalm 27:1; Hebrews 13:6; and John 14:27.
24. This was not the first time God taught Jacob that He was able to protect him from the retaliation and hatred of others. How had God worked in Esau’s heart all the years Jacob was with Laban?  
What are we to do with the bad feelings we may have toward others?  
Read Matthew 18:21-35 and Ephesians 4:32.
25. God changed Jacob’s name to Israel to reveal to others the change God had made in Jacobs heart. What changes has God made in your heart and life that are apparent to those around you?