

“Renewed” - Genesis 35:1-15

Ask - “Have you ever had a prescription, subscription, lease, etc. that had to be renewed?”

Background - After returning to Judah, Jacob initially settled in Shechem. However, one of the prominent men of the city raped his daughter Dinah. In retaliation, 2 of Jacob’s sons slaughtered the men of Shechem, an act of revenge which angered many others in the area. Jacob’s family was no longer safe there and needed to move.

“Preparing to Move” - Genesis 35:1-4

(v1) Where did God tell Jacob and his family to go? What was he to build there? When had he been in Bethel before (Genesis 28:19)?

(v2-3) What did Jacob instruct his family and servants to do? How does this reflect the growth of his faith? What did he say about the LORD’s presence?

(v4) Did his household comply with Jacob’s order? What did he do with the things that he gathered?

GOD TOLD JACOB TO MOVE TO BETHEL. HE ORDERED HIS HOUSEHOLD TO PUT AWAY THEIR FOREIGN GODS AND TO PURIFY THEMSELVES. THEY DID SO, JUST AS JACOB COMMANDED.

“Settling in Bethel” - Genesis 35:5-8

(v5-6) Did any of the Canaanites bother or harass Jacob and his family as they journeyed? Why not? Did they make it safely to Bethel?

(v7) What did Jacob do when he arrived? What did he name the altar and why?

(v8) Who died while they were there? Who was Deborah and what happened to her body?

WHEN JACOB AND HIS FAMILY ARRIVED AT BETHEL, HE BUILT AN ALTAR JUST AS GOD HAD INSTRUCTED HIM TO. WHILE THEY WERE THERE, DEBORAH DIED AND WAS BURIED.

“Renewing the Covenant” - Genesis 35:9-15

(v9-10) Who appeared to Jacob again? What did God repeat to him? When had God already said this (Genesis 32:28)? Why did He say it again?

(v11-12) What else did God say to Jacob? How was this a continuation and renewal of the Abrahamic covenant? (see Genesis 12:1-3, 26:3-4, 28:14-15)

(v13-15) After speaking with Jacob, what did God do? What did Jacob do? What did he name that place? What does Bethel mean?

GOD SPOKE TO JACOB AND RENEWED THE COVENANT WITH HIM AGAIN. HE ALSO REMINDED JACOB THAT HIS NEW NAME WAS ISRAEL. JACOB SET UP A PILLAR TO MEMORIALIZE THE LOCATION.

Application - Jacob had left Judah some 20 years or more earlier. Now he had returned to Judah, ultimately settling in Bethel, with wives, children, servants, and many possessions. God had blessed him greatly. The LORD again appeared to Jacob and renewed the covenant he'd spoken of previously. Jacob, whose new name was Israel, would be the father of God's chosen nation. Why is it important to renew or reaffirm your long-term promises and commitments from time to time?