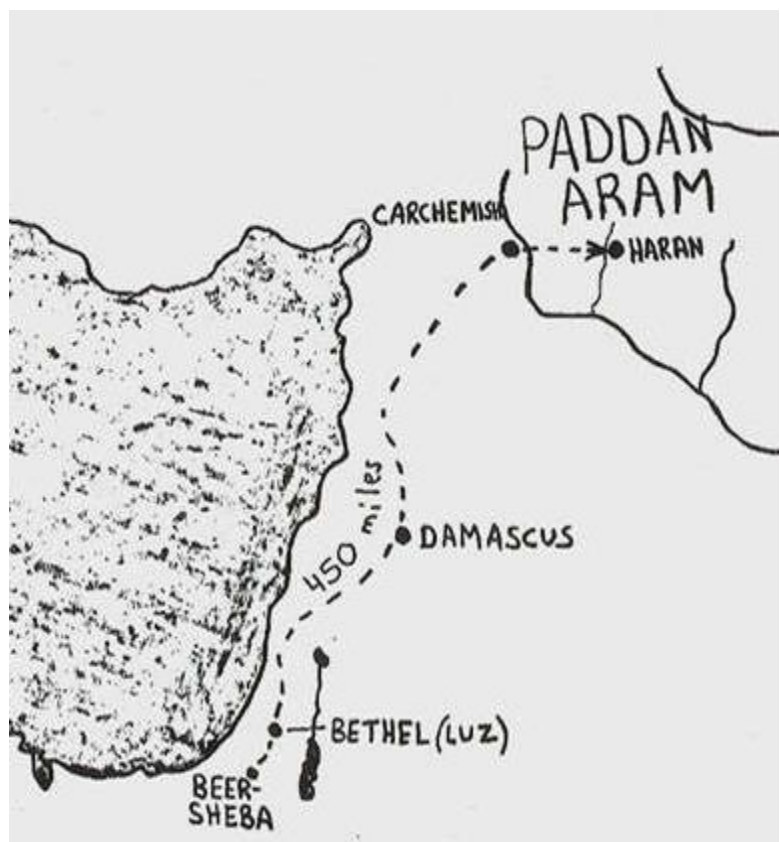


## Let's Review:

- What promise did God give to Jacob as he initially fled from his brother Esau?
  - Genesis 28:10-22 – <sup>10</sup> *Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. <sup>11</sup> He reached a certain place and spent the night there because the sun had set. He took one of the stones from the place, put it there at his head, and lay down in that place. <sup>12</sup> And he dreamed: A stairway was set on the ground with its top reaching heaven, and God's angels were going up and down on it. <sup>13</sup> Yahweh was standing there beside him, saying, "I am Yahweh, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your offspring the land that you are now sleeping on. <sup>14</sup> Your offspring will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out toward the west, the east, the north, and the south. All the peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. <sup>15</sup> Look, I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go. I will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."*
    - <sup>16</sup> *When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."* <sup>17</sup> *He was afraid and said, "What an awesome place this is! This is none other than the house of God. This is the gate of heaven."*
    - <sup>18</sup> *Early in the morning Jacob took the stone that was near his head and set it up as a marker. He poured oil on top of it <sup>19</sup> and named the place Bethel, though previously the city was named Luz. <sup>20</sup> Then Jacob made a vow: "If God will be with me and watch over me on this journey, if He provides me with food to eat and clothing to wear, <sup>21</sup> and if I return safely to my father's house, then the Lord will be my God. <sup>22</sup> This stone that I have set up as a marker will be God's house, and I will give to You a tenth of all that You give me."*



- After 20 years of serving his uncle Laban, what command did God give to Jacob?  
Note also the name God used for himself as he gave this command.

- Genesis 31:3-13 – <sup>3</sup> Then the Lord said to him, “Go back to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you.”

<sup>4</sup> Jacob had Rachel and Leah called to the field where his flocks were. <sup>5</sup> He said to them, “I can see from your father’s face that his attitude toward me is not the same, but the God of my father has been with me. <sup>6</sup> You know that I’ve worked hard for your father <sup>7</sup> and that he has cheated me and changed my wages 10 times. But God has not let him harm me. <sup>8</sup> If he said, ‘The spotted sheep will be your wages,’ then all the sheep were born spotted. If he said, ‘The streaked sheep will be your wages,’ then all the sheep were born streaked. <sup>9</sup> God has taken away your father’s herds and given them to me.

<sup>10</sup> “When the flocks were breeding, I saw in a dream that the streaked, spotted, and speckled males were mating with the females. <sup>11</sup> In that dream the Angel of God said to me, ‘Jacob!’ and I said, ‘Here I am.’ <sup>12</sup> And He said, ‘Look up and see: all the males that are mating with the flocks are streaked, spotted, and speckled, for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you. <sup>13</sup> I am the God of Bethel, where you poured oil on the stone marker and made a solemn vow to Me. Get up, leave this land, and return to your native land.’ ”

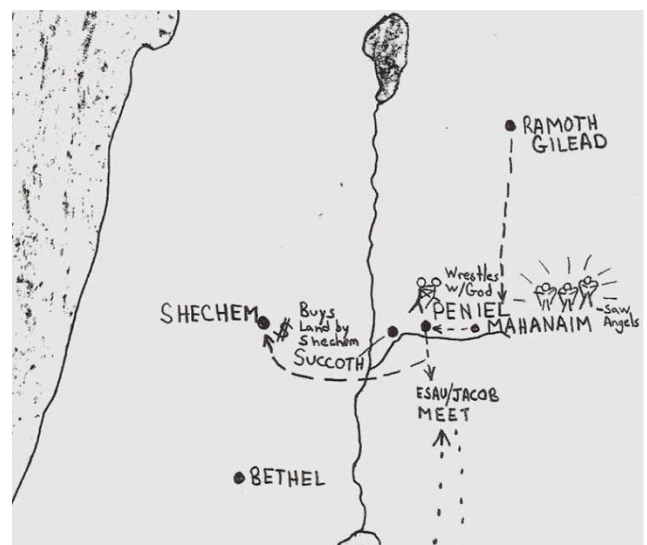
- As Jacob returns home, where might you expect him to go first?
- Where does Jacob go?

- Genesis 33:16-20 – <sup>16</sup> That day Esau started on his way back to Seir, <sup>17</sup> but Jacob went on to Succoth. He built a house for himself and stalls for his livestock; that is why the place was called Succoth.

<sup>18</sup> After Jacob came from Paddan-aram, he arrived safely at Shechem in the land of Canaan and camped in front of the city.

<sup>19</sup> He purchased a section of the field where he had pitched his tent from the sons of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for 100 qesitahs.

<sup>20</sup> And he set up an altar there and called it “God, the God of Israel.”



### Read Genesis 35:1

- As the chapter begins, remember where Jacob is. He is living on the land he purchased by Shechem. It was there that the events of chapter 34 took place (Dinah defiled; Simeon and Levi take their vengeance). How long would you guess that Jacob is living back in the land before God gave him the command here to go to Bethel?

### Read Genesis 35:2-7

- Jacob commanded his family and those that were with him to “*get rid of the foreign gods that are among you*” (v.2). Why were there so many foreign God’s in Jacob’s household?
  - Genesis 31:33-34 – <sup>33</sup> *So Laban went into Jacob’s tent, then Leah’s tent, and then the tents of the two female slaves, but he found nothing. Then he left Leah’s tent and entered Rachel’s.* <sup>34</sup> *Now Rachel had taken Laban’s household idols, put them in the saddlebag of the camel, and sat on them. Laban searched the whole tent but found nothing.*
  - Genesis 34:25-29 – <sup>25</sup> *On the third day, when they were still in pain, two of Jacob’s sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, took their swords, went into the unsuspecting city, and killed every male.* <sup>26</sup> *They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with their swords, took Dinah from Shechem’s house, and went away.* <sup>27</sup> *Jacob’s other sons came to the slaughter and plundered the city because their sister had been defiled.* <sup>28</sup> *They took their sheep, cattle, donkeys, and whatever was in the city and in the field.* <sup>29</sup> *They captured all their possessions, children, and wives and plundered everything in the houses.*
- (verse 4) An interesting connection: the place where Jacob gets rid of the foreign gods seems to be the same place where Abraham had first built an altar after entering the land of Canaan.
  - Genesis 12:4-7 – <sup>4</sup> *So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran.* <sup>5</sup> *He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated, and the people he had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan,* <sup>6</sup> *Abram passed through the land to the site of Shechem, at the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land.* <sup>7</sup> *Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “I will give this land to your offspring.” So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.*

- Remember Jacob’s response after the actions of Simeon and Levi: *“You have brought trouble on me, making me odious to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. We are few in number; if they unite against me and attack me, I and my household will be destroyed”* (34:30). How did God here answer that concern of Jacob?
- (verse 7) Note how Jacob finally now fulfills the promise he had made the last time he was in Bethel: *“This stone that I have set up as a marker will be God’s house”* (28:22).

#### Read Genesis 35:8

- Who is Deborah and why mention her here?

#### Read Genesis 35:9-15

- What is interesting about the wording of verse 9?  
*(Keep in mind that Paddan-aram is the land where Jacob lived with his uncle for 20 years. Also, keep in mind how long it has been since Jacob left there.)*
- (verse 10) God here renews the name change from Jacob (“the heel-grabber”) to Israel (“the man who fought with God and overcame”). What things had happened in roughly the last ten years that necessitated this reminder?
- Discuss the different parts of God’s message to Jacob found in verses 11-12.
  - “I am God Almighty”
  - “Be fruitful and multiply”
  - “A nation, indeed an assembly of nations, will come from you”
  - “and kings will descend from you”
  - “I will give to you the land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac. And I will give the land to your future descendants.”

- Something to think about: who heard these promises? Was it just Jacob? Or did all of Jacob's household get to hear these promises directly from God here?
- What seems strange about verse 15?

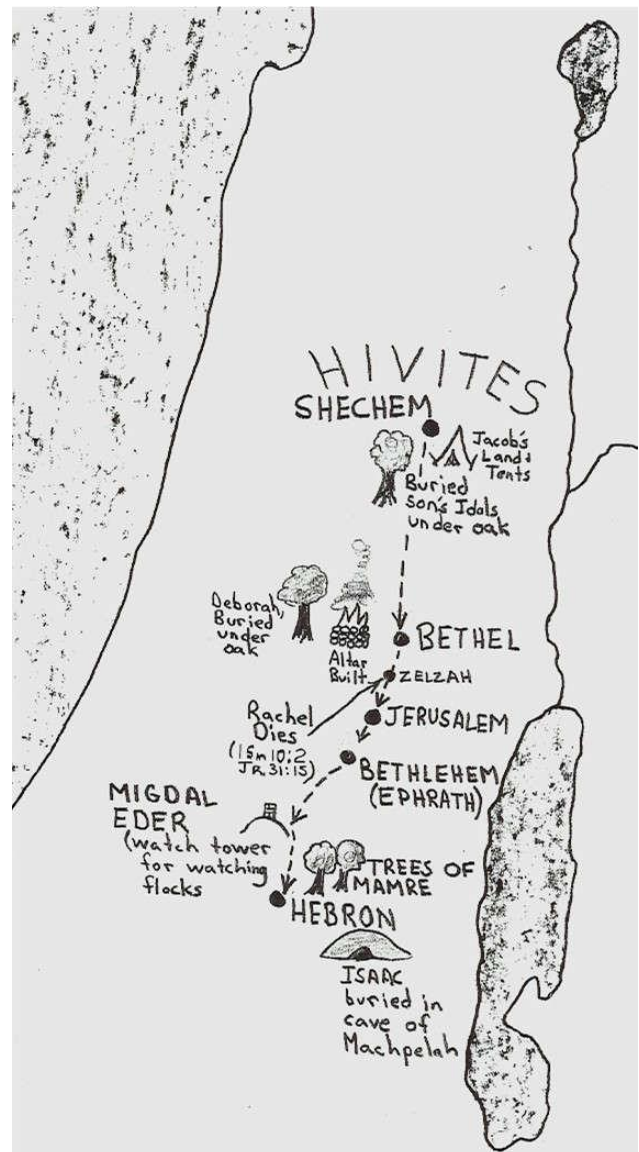
Read Genesis 35:16-20

- Rachel died during childbirth with her second son. Here we are told that Rachel's death occurred during their travels from Bethel to Ephrath (which is Bethlehem). 1 Samuel 10:2 gives us the exact location: "Today when you leave me, you'll find two men at Rachel's Grave at Zelzah in the land of Benjamin."

- Note that Rachel is not buried in the family burial plot. Where was the family burial plot started by Abraham at the death of Sarah?

- What does Genesis 49 tell us about those who are buried in the family burial plot?

- Genesis 49:29-31 – "Then he commanded them: "I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. The cave is in the field of Machpelah near Mamre, in the land of Canaan. This is the field Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite as a burial site. Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried there, Isaac and his wife Rebekah are buried there, and I buried Leah there."



- As Rachel died she named her son Ben-Oni. After her death, Jacob renamed him Benjamin. What does each name mean?
  - Ben-Oni –
  - Benjamin –

Read Genesis 35:21-26

- Another despicable act is recorded in verse 22. Reuben (Jacob's firstborn son) went in and slept with his father's concubine/wife Bilhah (Rachel's servant). This sin may have involved more than sexual lust. What might Reuben have been attempting to do by sleeping with his father's concubine? *(Hint: another son, a son of David, did a similar thing when he usurped his father's throne.)*
  
- Why is this recorded? *(consider also the previous context of chapter 34, as well as what we are told in the following verses)*
  - Genesis 49:3-4 – *Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and the firstfruits of my virility, excelling in prominence, excelling in power. Turbulent as water, you will no longer excel, because you got into your father's bed and you defiled it—he got into my bed.*
  
  - Genesis 49:10 – *The scepter will not depart from Judah or the staff from between his feet until He whose right it is comes and the obedience of the peoples belongs to Him.*
  
  - 1 Chronicles 5:1-2 – *These were the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel. He was the firstborn, but his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph son of Israel, because Reuben defiled his father's bed. He is not listed in the genealogy according to birthright.<sup>2</sup> Although Judah became strong among his brothers and a ruler came from him, the birthright was given to Joseph.*

Read Genesis 35:27-29

- Jacob and family finally return to Jacob's homeland (Kirath-arba, a.k.a. Hebron). Jacob's father is still alive when they return. Think back to what we know about the ages of Isaac and Jacob. How long would you guess that Jacob had with his father before Isaac's death?
- Note that Esau is present for the burial of his father. Jacob likely sent word down to Seir to inform Esau and to call him home.
- Note: here ends the 8<sup>th</sup> of 10 divisions in the book of Genesis.

"To appreciate the unique structure of the book of Genesis, it will be helpful to remember that Moses arranged his literary material in ten sections, each introduced by the formula 'This is the account of...' These ten accounts are minihistories and illustrate how from the very beginning of time God has been interested and active in establishing a family of believers...In each case, the account does not tell us of the *origin* of the person or thing named but of its *subsequent history*, and always with reference to God's great plan of salvation." (People's Bible: Genesis, p.5)

1. Heaven and Earth (2:4-4:36)
2. Adam (5:1-6:8)
3. Noah (6:9-9:29)
4. Sons of Noah (10:1-11:9)
5. Shem (11:10-26)
6. Terah (11:27-25:11)
7. Ishmael (25:12-18)
- 8. Isaac (25:19-35:29)**
9. Esau (36:1-27:1)
10. Jacob (37:2-50:26)

Note how when the minihistories of two brothers are listed. The less important (i.e. the one that is not directly connected to the continuing promise of the Savior) is listed first. Then the longer and more important is listed. You can see examples of that in 7 & 8. And coming up in 9 & 10.