

**THE ALMIGHTY IN LOSS  
AND DISAPPOINTMENT**  
**Genesis 35:16-29**

**INTRODUCTION**

Since Genesis 25, Jacob's life has provided many lessons to the student of Scripture. Chosen by God before birth, Jacob is now 105 years old. Genesis 35:16-29 records a final character study on Jacob. Separated from home for decades, Jacob's family is finally heading back to Hebron from Bethel. Rebekah's nurse Deborah, reunited earlier with Jacob, has died. No doubt Jacob is dealing with this loss. God reconnects and reinstates Jacob's ultimate future. Jacob worships Him, but must now learn to see **The Almighty In Loss And Disappointment**.

**DIGGING DEEPER**

Read through Genesis 35:16-29 several times. As Jacob's family journeyed from Bethel to Hebron, several tragic events take place. Generally speaking, we understand that losses in life happen. But when a loss happens personally, pain and emotions have to be dealt with. Because of the pain and loss, our view of God can become distorted, making it hard to see Him properly. In this study, we will consider the process of coping with personal loss. We will learn how to keep our eyes on **The Almighty In Loss And Discouragement**.

*Pray for wisdom and understanding, and let's begin.*

I. Genesis 35:16-17. Hard labor in Ephrath. Rachel has already had one son, and named him Joseph ("give me another"). Now, after all these years, she is in hard labor and ready to give birth again. This son will be born in Ephrath, also known as Bethlehem. There is an important prophesy to consider – see **Micah 5:2, Luke 2:4-7**.

II. Genesis 35:18. Benjamin is born. Rachel names her son Ben-Oni ("son of sorrow") at birth, but he was renamed by Jacob Benjamin ("son of my right hand"). This also points us to Jesus, a man of sorrows. **Luke 2:33-35, Isaiah 53:3**.

III. Genesis 35:19-20. Rachel dies. Rachel's death was another loss for Jacob. Leah was still with him, but Jacob was heartbroken as the wife he loved was torn away from him. Experiencing personal loss and pain is costly. As Jacob begins to work through this with the Lord, he surely had doubts – but take heart... **Psalms 73:13, Psalm 27:13-14, Job 19:25-27**

IV. Genesis 35:21-22. Reuben disappoints. When Jacob needed his eldest son to comfort him, Reuben was completely self-absorbed and unreliable. Reuben's actions will seal his fate. **Genesis 49:3-4**. It is easy to have a wrong view of God because people who represent God disappoint. Don't expect too much from people when you are hurting. Be careful not to base an opinion of God's goodness on disappointing people. **Psalms 108:12, Psalm 46:1, Psalm 62:5-8**

V. Genesis 35:23-26. An infant nation. Jacob's sons, born in hard labor while in Padan Aram, are chosen by Almighty God to be fruitful and multiply. From Israel all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

V. Genesis 35:27-29. Jacob loses his father. Finally reunited with aged Isaac, perhaps Jacob was able to communicate his love to Isaac. Being old and full of days, Isaac was gathered to his people (joined his ancestors). On death, absent from the body, Isaac joined with Abraham, Sarah, Deborah, and all the forefathers. Glorious! *Selah*. Now today, every believer is immediately brought into the presence of the Lord and all those who have preceded him in death. **1 Corinthians 15:51-55, What a glorious reunion as songs of worship are sung to the Lamb in heaven! Hallelujah!** Take heart, beloved.

Studying Jacob's life in Genesis 35, we can only imagine the state of mind he might be in as the pain and personal losses pile up. Grief and hurt are overwhelming as Jacob tries to cope with life going forward. So much has changed, and this is uncharted territory spiritually. How do I survive when things are turned upside down? What do I do now? Will I find God in all of this?

**CONSIDER .....** God is present in the darkest of times. He alone understands suffering, pain, and loss. When we grieve...

- We tend to isolate ourselves. Understandable, but don't let it go on. **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, 1 Corinthians 12:24-26**
- We need encouragement with God's people in the sanctuary. **Psalms 77:10-15, Psalm 122:1, Psalm 134:2**
- We need to worship and hear Scripture that tells how God is still mighty **Psalms 42:5-8 & 11 Psalm 63:1-4, Psalm 150**

*Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. Psalm 30:5b*

**PRAY .....**

- For the people of Texas as they deal with the devastation from the hurricane! For direction for teams to go and help.
- For Pastor Scott and the other pastors – that the Lord would give direction as they plan for the new year.
- Your eyes would be open to someone who may be going through a hard time and needs the comfort of the Lord.
- Whatever you are going through right now that you would see the Lord as your comfort and strength.
- Pastor Denny Barger and his wife, Sue as they minister in Bahrain.