

Minority Reports – Part 5 **One Big Dysfunctional Family – Gen.35:1-26**

0.0 Introduction

- 0.1 “To err is human” (*Errare est humanum*) – multiplied in families & societies
- 0.2 Whole biblical message: image of God + universal corruption (Rom.3:23)
- 0.3 Firm hope: God determined to complete his projects (Phil.1:6) → redemption (Mt.1:2-3)

1.0 Jacob’s Purge (35:1-8)

- 1.1 God selected Jacob as he had Isaac & Abraham: freely & graciously
- 1.2 Yet his life was complex & messy: from family gyrations in Canaan (Ch.25-27) to entanglements & deceit in Haran (Ch.28-31)
- 1.3 Back in Canaan decades later, needs disconnection from gods and rings (vv.2,4)
- 1.4 Respecting family & culture while avoiding bonds of toxic systems

2.0 Jacob’s Dream (35:9-15)

- 2.1 Theophany (v.9 // Gen.12,15,17) @ Bethel (v.15, “house of God”)
- 2.2 From *Ya’akov* (“Supplanter”) → *Yisrael* (“God fights”/“He who strives with God, v.10)
- 2.3 God reaffirms divine gifts of land + population growth (vv.11-12)
- 2.4 “I am El Shaddai” (v.11a; also 17:1)
- 2.5 God often uses family to encourage responsiveness

3.0 Jacob’s Loss (35:16-20)

- 3.1 Favored wife Rachel dies during labor (#2 = Benjamin; #1 = Joseph)
- 3.2 Naming conflict: *Ben-Oni* → *Benjamin* (“Son of my sorrow...right hand”)
- 3.3 Traditional Tomb of Rachel near Hebron today
- 3.4 Bubbling grief mixed with relational conflicts

4.0 Jacob’s Chaos (35:21-27)

- 4.1 Blessing & pain may arrive bundled (see family roster in vv.22-26)
- 4.2 Isaac (“a quiet man of faith”) dies (vv.27-29) in local, cross-gen towns (vv.27-29)
- 4.3 Incest + power (v.22): first-born Reuben + dad’s concubine (“And Israel heard of it”)
- 4.4 Children are incredible gifts (Ps.127:3; 128:3) yet their life course brings...whatever

5.0 Importance of This for Us Today

- 5.1 If God worked with such families, there is hope for all (no matter how messy)
- 5.2 Two levels of Bible stories: human narrative + divine directions (redemption, Kingdom)
- 5.3 While American culture adores perfection, biblical stories portray anything but that.

Next week (Oct.10) – Minority Reports – Part 6
Joseph Over Egypt - Gen.50:15-21