



## Daily Verse and Comment

### Genesis 35:1-3

(1) Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother." (2) And Jacob said to his household and to all who *were* with him, "Put away the foreign gods that *are* among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. (3) Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone."

*New King James Version*

In [Genesis 28:20-22](#), Jacob made a vow that, if [God](#) would be with him, he would return to Bethel. Instead, however, after leaving Laban, he stops first at Succoth for a time, then settles in Shechem, fifteen miles short of Bethel. Perhaps he does not feel ready to go to Bethel, which means "House of God," because some of his family still hold to their pagan gods. Perhaps he feels that *he* knows best, and Shechem is a better spot (Bethel is about a thousand feet higher in elevation than Shechem).

God allows him this latitude, but in the Rape of Dinah and the subsequent murders (found in Genesis 34), it is obvious that God wants him to honor his promise to return to Bethel.

In [Genesis 34:30](#), we see something else about Jacob:

Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have troubled *me* by making *me* obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, . . . and since *I* am few in number, they will gather themselves together against *me* and kill *me*. *I* shall be destroyed, *my* household and *I*." (Emphasis ours)

This verse does not put Jacob in the best light! He appears to have been just a bit self-centered. At this point in the story, he was not thinking in terms of Dinah's best interests, only of his own.

It seems that Jacob failed Dinah in several ways. He put her outside Shechem where she should have never been. He allowed continuing worship of pagan gods in his home. He was concerned more with his personal honor and image than that of his daughter. Moreover, he left it to his sons to deal with this tragedy rather than taking a leadership role.

— Mike Ford

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