

ELBETHEL

GENESIS 35

Text: Genesis 35:7

Genesis 35:7 (KJV)

⁷ And he built there an altar, and called the place Elbethel: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.

Introduction:

The life of Jacob is an interesting study. Some Bible characters burst onto the scene and we can know very little about them, but Jacob's life is detailed in the Scriptures so that we can really get to know him. We know about his birth, youth, manhood, dreams, aspirations, deceptions, old age, and death. The Word of God gives us an un-retouched photo of Jacob's life. He was both bad and good. He was a cheater, a liar, a deceiver, a schemer, and a swindler. At the same time we see he wrestles with an angel of God pleading for a blessing.

Most of us are familiar with the story that took place while he was sleeping one evening, and the dream that he had, known to most as Jacob's ladder. He named the place Bethel, which means the house of God.

While at Bethel, Jacob had seen the Lord in a way that changed his life. But time and distance had taken their toll on him. He had gotten away from the Lord and been involved in all sorts of difficulty.

Now God orders him back to Bethel. He tells him to go back to that place of blessing in his past.

Notice:

1. Troubles (Gen 34)

A. Daughter is defiled (34:2)

(Genesis 34:2) "And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and **defiled her.**"

B. Sons deceive (34:13-18,25-30)

(Genesis 34:13-18) "And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister: {14} And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that *were* a reproach unto us: {15} But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we *be*, that every male of you be circumcised; {16} Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. {17} But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.

{18} And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son."

(Genesis 34:25-30) "And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. {26} And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out. {27} The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister. {28} They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which *was* in the city, and that which *was* in the field, {29} And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that *was* in the house. {30} And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I *being* few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house."

C. Jacob's distress (34:30-31)

(Genesis 34:30-31) "And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I *being* few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I

shall be destroyed, I and my house. {31} And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?"

2. Travels (Gen 35)

A. God's directions

(Genesis 35:1) "**And God said** unto Jacob, Arise, **go up to Bethel, and dwell there**: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother."

1. Go
2. Dwell

B. Jacob's discernment (35:2-3)

(Genesis 35:2-3) "Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that *were* with him, **Put away** the strange gods that *are* among you, and **be clean**, and **change your garments**: {3} And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went."

1. Put away
2. Be clean
3. Change your garments

a. Knew there was a right way to dress at the house of God, in the presence of God.

C. Families determination (vs. 4)

(Genesis 35:4) "And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which *were* in their hand, and *all their* earrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which *was* by Shechem."

1. Gave all

2. Removed all

3. Turnabout (35:6-7)

El-bethel means God of the house of God. Jacob had now got right with God, and put God in his rightful place.

A. It is one thing to in the House of God, and quiet another to recognize and acknowledge the God of the House of God.

1. Too often we never acknowledge God in His own House.

a. Programs

b. Promotions

c. Personalities

d. Prizes

2. Too many sing Oh how I love Jesus, who don't even know who He really is.

4. Truths

A. Bethel is a place of renewal (vs. 1)

(Genesis 35:1) "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: **and make there an altar unto God**, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother."

B. Bethel is a place of Remembrance (vs. 1,3)

(Genesis 35:1) "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, **that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.**"

(Genesis 35:3) "And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, **who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.**"

1. We need to remember where we came from.

2. We need to remember the blessings of God.

3. We need to remember the goodness and graciousness of God

4. We need to remember the Grace of God.

(Psalms 40:1-3) "I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. {2} He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the **miry** clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings. {3} And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."

C. Bethel is a place of removal (vs. 4)

(Genesis 35:4) "And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which *were* in their hand, and *all their* earrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which *was* by Shechem."

D. Bethel is a place of rejoicing (vs. 9)

(Genesis 35:9) "**And God appeared unto Jacob again**, when he came out of Padanaram, **and blessed him.**"

Close:

Some need to go to Bethel today. I believe that was the place that Jacob really trusted in Him for his salvation.

Others need to go back to Bethel and make God the God of the house of God, and stop playing church, and playing games with eternal issues and matters.