**HOMECOMING AT BETHEL**

**GENESIS 35:1-10**

**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.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-1/)

**2**[**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:**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-2/)

**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.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-3/)

**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.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-4/)

**5**[**And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that *were* round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-5/)

**6**[**So Jacob came to Luz, which *is* in the land of Canaan, that *is*, Bethel, he and all the people that *were* with him.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-6/)

**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.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-7/)

**8**[**But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak: and the name of it was called Allonbachuth.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-8/)

**9**[**And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-9/)

**10**[**And God said unto him, Thy name *is* Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-10/)

**INTRO:**

**\*\*Real homecoming only takes place when you go back to your Bethel (which means the House of God) and it has to be a special Home Place, a special Holy Place, and a special Heart Place for you!**

**BODY – Homecoming at Bethel**

**1. Notice the Command**

**Genesis 35:1 Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God**

**\*\*We have a lot of church people that go to Bethel, but they don’t stay there! There is no dwelling there.**

**\*\*We also have a lot of church people that dwell in Bethel, but they never make an altar there!**

**\*\*Who on this day, in this hour, will obey God’s command?**

**2. Notice the Charge**

**Genesis 35:2-3 2** [**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:**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-2/)

**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.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-3/)

**\*\*When Jacob was away from Bethel he lived among the heathens with strange gods, and it affected his family.**

**Genesis 34:2 - His daughter committed fornication.**

**Genesis 34:25 - His sons committed murder and were thieves.**

**\*\* Like Jacob’s household, is it your household that has been playing in the unclean filthiness of sin with strange gods? You can’t play in mud and no one not know it and see it all over you! That’s why some families looks strange, act strange, and are strangers to the holiness of God and the house of God because they play with strange gods!**

**\*\* God is speaking to those who know better and know where Bethel is, and He is saying, take Charge, give a Command, make Changes, get Clean and bring your Companion and your Children to a Homecoming at Bethel!**

**3. Notice the Change**

**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.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-4/)

**A. Their gods changed. (Gave up Strange gods.)**

**\*\*Would you trade your strange gods in for a Sovereign God?**

**B. Their glamour changed. (Gave up Stylish glamour.)**

**\*\*Would you be willing to trade your luxuries and looks for your Lord?**

**C. Their garments changed.**

**(Gave up Suggestive garments.)**

**\*\*In V-2 Jacob told them they had to change their garments before they went to Bethel (the House of God).**

**\*\*Why? Because their garments suggested that they had been with strange gods and living sinful. (Same as today.)**

**\*\* Would you be willing to change your garments from ungodliness to godliness?**

**\*\*Bethel was NOT a “come as you are” kind of church!**

**C. Their goals changed. (Gave up Satanic goals.)**

**\*\*Are you willing to have a Funeral for your Sinful Accessories so you can have a Future with your Supreme Almighty?**

**\*\*This is a demonstration of true repentance, and they are cleaning things up for a homecoming at Bethel!**

**4. Notice the Compliance**

**5 And they journeyed:**

**A. The Family Journeyed Trusting God’s Man**

**B. The Friends Journeyed Trusting God’s Man**

**\*\*People will not comply and take a journey to the Lord until they first believe in and trust God’s man and God’s people to lead them.**

**\*\*Look around – Is there a godly person here today that you trust that has dwelled at Bethel (the House of God) and has made an altar time and time again in the house of God? \*\*Will you follow their lead and do as they have done?**

**5. Notice the Cities**

**5  . . . and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.**

**\*\*God protected them from the adversaries and the attackers!**

**\*\*When you start changing how you live and making your journey to the House of God, the Lord is with you and watching over you!**

**6. Notice the Community**

**6**[**So Jacob came to Luz, which *is* in the land of Canaan, that *is*, Bethel, he and all the people that *were* with him.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-6/)

**\*\*They are now in the Lord’s City, the Lord’s Country, the Lord’s Corner, the Lord’s Canaan!**

**\*\*They may have started singing, “I’m Living in Canaan Now!”**

**\*\*Once you make up your mind to shed that old life and journey back to the house of God, the community will change around you!**

**7. Notice the Creation**

**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.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-7/)

**A. Jacob made an Altar**

**\*\*No matter how well you clean yourself up, change your ways, bury strange gods, and go to church, it will not do you a bit of good unless you make yourself an altar where you kneel and weep and worship in God’s house!**

**B. Jacob made an Adjustment**

**\*\*He called the place Elbethal because God appeared to him there.**

**\*\*Bethel means “House of God,” and Elbethal means “God’s House” Jacob made that adjustment because he knew God had made an appearance. It was not just a building titled as the House of God; rather, it was God’s House and had a testimony of God showing up there!**

**\*\*There are a lot of churches having a Title that says it is the House of God, but there are few churches that have the Testimony that it is God’s House where God shows up!**

**8. Notice the Crying**

**8**[**But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak: and the name of it was called Allonbachuth.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-8/)

**\*\*Deborah died; she was buried under an oak, and the oak tree was called Allonbachuth which means “oak of weeping.”**

**\*\*Deborah was a nurse or servant to Rebekah, Jacob’s mother. Rebekah had been dead for awhile, so when Deborah died, they gave a great tribute to Deborah and to her service because she was like a mother to them.**

**\*\*Two thoughts:**

**1. A part of Homecoming at Bethel is remembering those who have gone on that have lived their lives as faithful servants.**

**2. When you go back to Bethel for homecoming, look around and see who is missing? Don’t wait so long about coming back to Bethel that you miss the good fellowship with all those faithful Christians that have been pillars and servants of God.**

**9. Notice the Confirmation**

**9**[**And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-9/)

**A. Confirmation happens when the Lord Appears**

**\*\*Has the Lord appeared in your life? If not, go to Bethel and make you an altar and pray until He does!**

**B. Confirmation happens when the Lord Approves**

**\*\*Has the Lord stamp His approval upon your worship by spiritually blessing you?**

**\*\*Don’t leave Bethel until you have prayed through and see God’s appearance and approval!**

**10. Notice the Calling**

**10**[**And God said unto him, Thy name *is* Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.**](http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Genesis-35-10/)

**\*\*The name Israel means “Triumphant with God.” It would be wise of the leaders and politicians to study that meaning and take it to heart.**

**\*\*The Lord himself looked at the acts of Jacob, and said, “I’m going to call you ‘Triumphant with God!’”**

**\*\*Have you repented, took a journey to God’s house, made an altar to worship Him? Has he called you Triumphant?**

**CLOSE**

**I. BETHEL IS A PLACE OF ACQUAINTANCE**

**\*\*You can get acquainted with . . .**

**A. The Power of God**

**B. The Purity of God**

**C. The Peace of God**

**II. BETHEL IS A PLACE OF AFFIRMATION**

**A. Go and get affirmation about Grace**

**B. Go and get affirmation about Goals**

**C. Go and get affirmation about God**

**III. BETHEL IS A PLACE OF ALTARS**

**A. There’s an Altar of Repentance**

**B. There’s an Altar of Rededication**

**C. There’s an Altar of Revival**

**IV. BETHEL IS A PLACE OF ASSURANCE**

**\*\*It’s here in Elbethel – God’s House I get Assurance . .**

**A. That God is Still Alive!**

**B. That God is Still Appearing!**

**C. That God is Still Approving!**

**1. He calls us Children!**

**2. He calls us Conquerors!**

**(Triumphant with God!)**

**\*\*Don’t you think it’s time to have a Homecoming at Bethel? Bury those old strange gods right now and make yourself an altar and come home to Bethel!**