

# The Return Of Jacob

Genesis 35:1-29

## Introduction

### I The Guidance Of God

- A. God **commanded** Jacob to go up to Bethel - Gen 31:3
  - 1. Settle there
  - 2. Build an altar to God - Gen 27:42-45
- B. Jacob **obeyed** the Lord
  - 1. He commanded his household to:
    - a. Get **rid** of their foreign gods - Josh 24:15, 23
    - b. Purify themselves and change clothes - Eph 4:22-24
  - 2. He **invited** them to go up to Bethel and worship God
    - a. Who answered him in his distress - Ps 34:17-19
    - b. Who had been with him - Gen 28:15
- C. The people **obeyed** Jacob
  - 1. They gave Jacob their foreign gods and rings
    - a. Jacob **buried** them under the oak at Shechem
  - 2. They set out for Bethel - Eph 2:12-13
- D. The result:
  - 1. The **terror** of God fell on the towns - Dt 11:25
  - 2. No one pursued them - Ps 33:16-19
  - 3. They **arrived** in Luz (Bethel) in Canaan - James 4:8

### II The Events At Bethel

- A. Jacob built an altar there called El Bethel
  - 1. It was where God **revealed** himself to Jacob - Gen 28:18
- B. Deborah, Rebekah's nurse died
- C. God appeared to Jacob again and **blessed** him
  - 1. He **changed** Jacob's name to Israel - Gen 32:27-28
  - 2. He reaffirmed His covenant promises: - Gen 17:4-7
    - a. Be **fruitful** and increase in number - Jn 15:8
    - b. A nation, nations and kings will come from you
    - c. I will give this land to you and your descendents
  - 3. He went up from him - Acts 1:7-11
- D. Jacob set up a stone **pillar** at that place - Gen 28:20-22
  - a. He poured out a drink offering and oil on it - Phil 2:17
  - b. Jacob called the place Bethel - Col 1:21-22

### III The Family Summary

- A. Rachel **died** in childbirth on the way to Ephrath
  - 1. She named her son, Ben-Oni
    - a. But Jacob renamed him Benjamin - Col 3:1-2
  - 2. She was buried on the way to Ephrath
- B. Israel moved on beyond Migdal Eder
  - 1. Reuben slept with Bilhah - 1 Chron 5:1-2
  - 2. Israel heard of it - 2 Sam 16:21-22
- C. Jacob had **12** sons - 1 Cor 1:26-29
- D. Jacob finally returned home to his father, Isaac - Prov 28:13
- E. Isaac lived **180** years and then died - Eccl 12:6-7
  - 1. He was gathered to his people
  - 2. Esau and Jacob buried him - Gen 49:30-32

## PERSONAL APPLICATION

Take some time this week to consider the following:

- 1. Has God ever asked you to go back to an unreconciled situation or relationship that held unpleasant memories for you? How did God use this experience in your life?
- 2. Jacob had avoided God's command to go to Bethel for 30 years. How would you describe those years? Wasted or vital? Why?
- 3. One of Jacob's greatest fears was potential harm from his enemies (Gen 34:30). How did God intervene to protect Jacob and his family (Gen 35:5). What does this teach you about your own walk with God? About the fruit of obedience?
- 4. Despite Jacob's character and previous disobedience, God reaffirms His covenant promises in verses 11-12. What does this teach you about God? About His promises?
- 5. If you are in "Shechem" instead of "Bethel" today, ask God for a fresh start and His renewed blessing. Get rid of your "idols", purify yourself by confessing and repenting of your sin, and then give yourself in total surrender to His will for your life.

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