

Invitation to Live in the House of God: Remember, Return and Renewal

Text: Genesis 35: 1- 15



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¹ Then God said to Jacob, “**Go up to Bethel** and settle there, and build an altar there to God, **who appeared to you** when **you were fleeing** from your brother Esau.”

² **So Jacob said** to his household and to all who were with him, “**Get rid of the foreign gods** you have with you, and **purify yourselves** and **change your clothes**.”

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- ³ Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone." ⁴ So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods they had and the rings in their ears, and Jacob buried them under the oak at Shechem. ⁵ Then they set out, and the terror of God fell on the towns all around them so that no one pursued them.

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Jacob and all the people with him came to Luz (that is, Bethel) in the land of Canaan. ⁷ There he built an altar, and he called the place El Bethel, because it was there that God revealed himself to him when he was fleeing from his brother.

⁸ Now Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died and was buried under the oak outside Bethel. So it was named Allon Bakuth.

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After Jacob returned from Paddan Aram, **God appeared to him again and blessed him.** ¹⁰ God said to him, “Your name is Jacob, but you will no longer be called Jacob; **your name will be Israel.**” So he named him Israel.

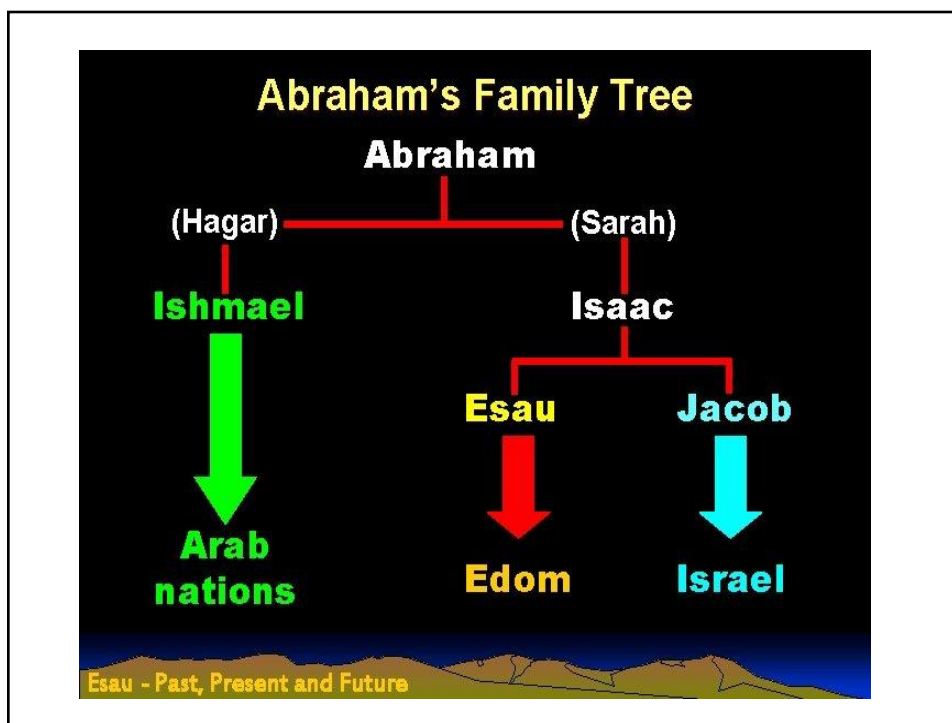
¹¹ And God said to him, “**I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation** and a **community of nations** will come from you, and **kings will be among your descendants.** ¹² The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I also give to you, and I will give this land to your descendants after you.” ¹³ Then God went up from him at the place where he had talked with him.

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¹⁴ Jacob set up a stone pillar at the place where **God had talked with him,** and he **poured out a drink offering** on it; he also **poured oil** on it.

¹⁵ Jacob called the place where God had talked with him **Bethel**

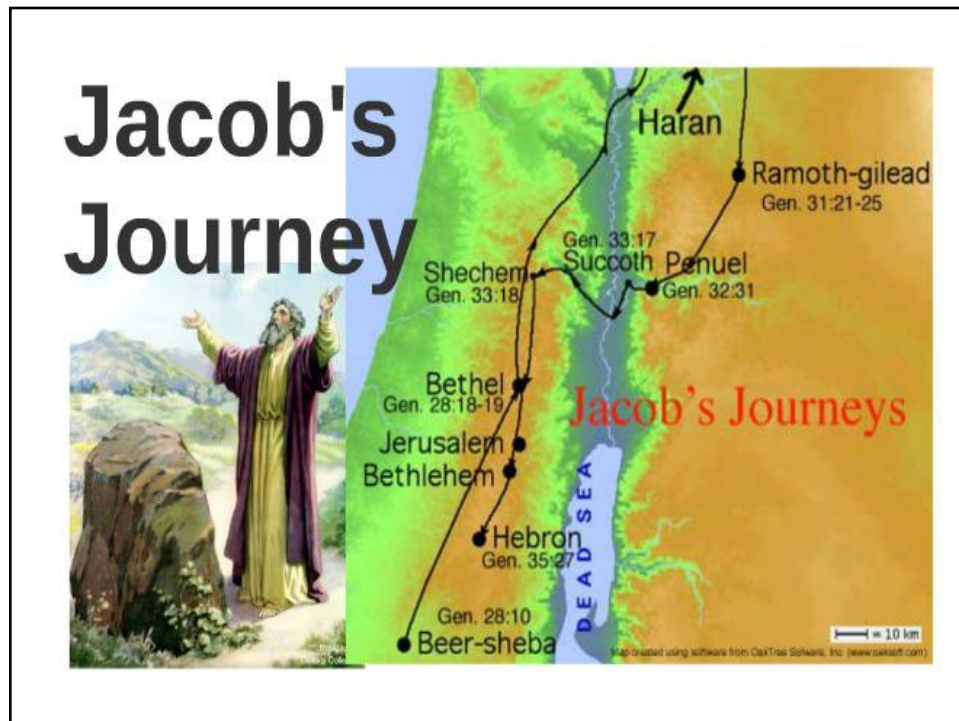
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#	Journey	Genesis...
1	From Beersheba to Bethel – fleeing from Esau	28:10–22
2	From Bethel to Haran (Paddan Aram) – to find a wife	29:1
3	Lives in Haran for ~20 years – works for Laban	29–31
4	Leaves Haran → travels through Gilead, Mahanaim, and Peniel on return to Canaan	31:21–55; 32:1–32
5	Settles in Succoth and Shechem (Canaan)	33:17–20
6	Trouble in Shechem (Dinah incident) → returns to Bethel to fulfill vow	34; 35:1–15
7	Journeys to Hebron , passing Ephrath (Bethlehem) where Rachel dies	35:16–29

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Big Idea

The invitation to live in the House of God is a privilege that involves

- Remembering His faithfulness
- Restoring our Relationship with Him
- Reaffirming His promises.

Overview

Genesis 35:1-15: God calls Jacob to return to Bethel, where He first appeared to him. Jacob responds by removing idols, purifying his household, and building an altar. God reaffirms His covenant, changes Jacob's name to Israel, and renews His promises, marking a fresh beginning in Jacob's walk with God.

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1. God Leads us to Remember His Faithfulness (Genesis 35:1-4)

- It is God's covenantal faithfulness.
- Hebrew Word – **Hesed** Meaning **Loyal Love**, **Steadfast Love** or **Covenantal Faithfulness**.
- God's covenantal faithfulness never comes to an end. It never fails but remain forever upon His people. (Vv. 9-12)
- God invites Jacob to remember His steadfast love.

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- God tells Jacob to go back to BETHEL, the place where He first revealed Himself during Jacob's time of fear and loneliness (Gen. 28).
- This call is a reminder of God's covenant, presence, and protection throughout Jacob's journey.
- Remembering helps us respond in repentance —Jacob removes foreign gods and purifies his household.
- In moments of drift, God reminds us of where He first met us and proved Himself faithful. We must reflect on our spiritual journey and respond with reverence.

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2. God Leads us to Return to His House - Presence (Gen. 35:5-7)

- Jacob's Yes to Return shows His obedience to the voice of God.
- God showers His Protection and Provision on Jacob as he returns.
- His return is not just geographical, but **spiritual**—a return to dependence, worship, and presence.
- God doesn't abandon His people. He invites us back into His presence to realign our hearts and worship with Him at the center.

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3. God Leads us to Renewal of Relationship and Blessing (Gen. 35:9-15)

- God reaffirms Jacob's identity: "Your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name." Israel Meaning: *He struggles with God* or God prevails.
- God renews the covenant blessings: fruitfulness, multiplication, and the promise of land.
- A new revelation of God's name ("El Shaddai") is given—a deeper experience of who God is.
- Meaning – All Sufficient God or Almighty.

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- Jacob sets up a pillar—symbolizing a lasting response to a renewed relationship.
- When we return, God doesn't just restore; He **renews**—identity, calling, and purpose. The past doesn't define us; His promises do.
- As the earthy father remembers and looks his son's and daughter's return, so our heavenly father remembers and looks for our returns.

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Summary Statement

- Genesis 35:1–15
- shows us that when we wander, God doesn't give up on us. He invites us to remember His faithfulness, return to His presence, and be renewed in identity and purpose. Living in the House of God means walking daily in remembrance, repentance, and relationship with the One who never leaves us.

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