

1 **RETURN TO BETHEL**

Genesis 35:1-15

2 **Genesis 35:1-3**

- 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."

3 **Genesis 35:4-7**

- ⁴ So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which were in their hands, and the earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem. ⁵ And they journeyed and the terror of God was upon the cities that were all around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. ⁶ So Jacob came to Luz (that is Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. ⁷ And he built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.

4 **Genesis 35:8-11**

- ⁸ Now Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the terebinth tree. So the name of it was called Allon Bachuth. ⁹ Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram and blessed him. ¹⁰ And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name." So He called his name Israel. ¹¹ Also God said to him: I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you and kings shall come from your body.

5 **Genesis 35:12-15**

- ¹² The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land. ¹³ Then God went up from him in the place where He talked with him. ¹⁴ So Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He talked with him, a pillar of stone, and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it. ¹⁵ And Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel.

6 **Respice – Adspice – Prospice**

- *Remember the Past - Respice*
- *Consider the Present – Adspice*
- *Look to the Future - Prospice*

7 **REMEMBER THE PAST**

- Remembering Jacob's past – Genesis 28
 - His birth – Jacob = supplanter – younger twin
 - Living up to his name
 - The red bean porridge
 - Cheating Esau out of their father's blessing

– Running for his life

8 **God appeared to him**

- Genesis 28:12-13a: Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.
¹³ And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac."

9 **God renewed the covenant**

- Genesis 28:13b-14: "The land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. ¹⁴ "Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

10 **God's Promise**

- Genesis 28:15: "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you."

11 **Pastor's Bethel**

- Shinnery Lake schoolhouse/church
 - Where my mother went to school
 - Where I went to church from birth to 9th grade
- Pastor's advantage – Can return to Bethel every day.
 - Boards and Plaque
 - End of Shinnery Lake pew
- Testimony of salvation
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12 **First Baptist – 164th anniversary – Return to Bethel – Remember the past**

- Our founding – May 15, 1853 – Nine charter members
- Our foundation – 2nd article of Articles of Faith: "We believe that the old and new testaments are of divine authority and is the only Rule of faith and practice."
- Interesting items in the church minutes:

13 **January 4, 1854**

- On motion the church took up the case of building a meeting house and appointed a building committee to superintend the building of said house also to procure a bond from Isham Crowley for two acres of land donated to the church by him on Sunday.

14 **August 4, 1855**

- Paid Mr. E. Rogers \$120 for putting up the meeting house.
- May 2, 1863 – Bro. Summar reported that he had not been able to procure wine for sacramental purposes therefore must postpone communion indefinitely.

15 **February 4, 1865**

- Jane Cruse excluded because she joined the Methodist Society.
- June 30, 1866 – Minters Chapel Methodist preacher challenges Baptists to a debate on the mode of baptism. Bear Creek endorsed their pastor to meet Rev. Bates in debate.

16 **October 1, 1868**

- On motion voted that the committee appointed at a former meeting of the Church, draft a plan and obtain means to erect a suitable Church House be instructed to proceed immediately to the discharge of said duty.

17 **January 2, 1869**

- On motion and second the Church voted to build a House of Worship on the site where the old meeting house now stands.
- December 31, 1870 – Voted that the Church donate the old Church House to Bro. Carter (pastor).

18 **September 15, 1873**

- Voted to tax the members to raise funds for the new building.
- January 3, 1874 – The building committee reported that the wealth of the church was about \$40,000 and would need to tax the members at 5% of their wealth to raise the \$2,000 needed for the new building.
- May 2, 1874 – Voted to rescind the order passed by the Church to raise means to build a Church House by taxation.

19 **May 16, 1874**

- Resolved: That the building committee be instructed to proceed to purchase materials for the erection of a house of worship and collect means for said purposes as opportunity may offer.

20 **February 6, 1875**

- Ordered that the Trustees proceed to procure a deed to 4 acres of land from Isham Crowley for burying ground, and yard where the Church House now stands.
- 1876 – Isham Crowley deeded 4 acres of land to church trustees in 1876.

21 **October 1, 1887**

- Resolved that Bear Creek Church and Church House be moved to the place known as the Goodfellow Schoolhouse.

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22 **Church building built in 1875**23 **CONSIDER THE PRESENT**

- For Jacob
 - The Place – Return to Bethel, 35:1a: "Arise, go up to Bethel ."
 - The Purpose, – Renew His Faith
 - Reside at Bethel, 35:1a: Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there."
 - Rebuild the Altar, v. 7: And he built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.

24 **The Preparation:**

- Put Away your idols

–v. 2a: 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
 - v. 2b: purify yourselves, and change your garments.

25 **The Praise**

- Consider the Lord’s blessing,
- v. 9: Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram and blessed him.

26 **For First Baptist - Las Colinas**

- The Place – 1930 Gateway Dr., Irving, Texas
 - Humanly speaking, not an ideal location
 - Chosen by God
 - Blessed by God
- The Purpose – What is God’s purpose for us?
- The Preparation – How is God going to Prepare us for the future?
- The Praise

27 **LOOK TO THE FUTURE**

- For Jacob
 - A New Name, v. 10: And God said to him, “Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name.”
 - A New Revelation of God, v. 11a: Also God said to him: “I am God Almighty. . .”

28 **The Covenant Renewed**

- vv. 11-12: Also God said to him: I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you and kings shall come from your body. ¹² The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land.
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29 **God’s Promises**

- Multiplication of his people
- Perpetuity of the promise – “The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land.”
- God’s Faithfulness

30 **First Baptist – Consider the Future**

- We don’t need a new name
- Like Jacob we need a new revelation of God:
- God has not changed –
 - He is the God of grace, love, mercy and provision.
 - He is the God of miracles and power.
 - He is the God Who moves heaven and earth, and suspends the laws of nature.
- Our church needs to know that God has not changed

31 **History of our church**

- Growth – Plateau – Decline
- Gone through that cycle many times.
- What can we do to maintain growth – Avoid Decline?
 - Revive – We need revival!
 - Utilize – In this modern age, use the tools that God has made available to us.
 - Multiply