

Bible reading

Genesis 35:1–15

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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.” 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.

Genesis 35:1–15

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.

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.

Genesis 35:1–15

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. 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.

A new start

'God moves in mysterious ways'

part 13

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New beginnings

- ▶ Western new year



New beginnings

- ▶ Chinese new year



A new start

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.”

- ▶ God starts a new phase in Jacob’s life
- ▶ Three lessons from his response
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 - ▶ E
 - ▶ W

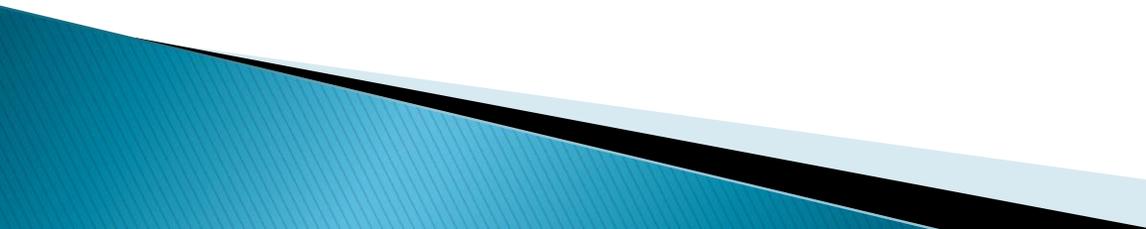
NEW: No more false gods

- ▶ Vs 1–4
- ▶ Purification
 - Get rid of all false gods
- ▶ To appear clean before God
 - Change garments
 - All family involved

NEW: Embrace God's path

- ▶ Vs 5–13
- ▶ From Jacob to Israel
 - To become a great nation of chosen people
- ▶ Jacob: heel (wrestled with his brother)
 - Genesis 25:26: Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; so his name was called Jacob
- ▶ Israel: wrestle with God
 - God doesn't use perfect people
 - Following God's path is a struggle
- ▶ God prepares the road ahead (vs 5)
 - To arrive there where you are called

NEW: **W**orship Him

- ▶ Vs 14–15
 - ▶ Bethel = house of God
 - ▶ Drink offering
 - an offering to God when His work is completed
 - Gods lessons to Jacob are taught
 - The promise for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is restored
 - A new phase is starting: Israel is born
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3 lessons from Jacob

- ▶ Starting new (again) with God:
 - Get rid of things that distract you from God
 - Embrace what God taught you, and what lies ahead
 - Worship Him, give thanks for His completed work